



# Official Community Plan

## City of Fort St. John



This consolidated Version includes the following amending bylaws:

| <b>Bylaw Number</b> | <b>Type of Amendment</b>   | <b>Date Amending Bylaw was adopted</b> |
|---------------------|--|--|
| 2440, 2018          | Parkwood Southlands  | October 9, 2018                        |
| 2453, 2018          | Land Use Re-designation of Lot A, Plan EPP59891  | January 14, 2019                       |
| 2466, 2019          | Land Use Re-designation of Lot 1, Plan PGP38300  | July 23, 2019                          |
| 2540, 2021          | Land Use Re-designation of the North West ¼ of Section 5   | August 23, 2021                        |
| 2569, 2022          | Affordable Housing   | June 13, 2022                          |
| 2580, 2023          | <p>Land Use Re-designation of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lot 143, Plan EPP50221</li> <li>• Lot 1, Plan PGP47077, excluding part in Plan EPP48704</li> <li>• Lot 2, Plan PGP46097, excluding part in Plan EPP48704</li> <li>• Lot 1, Plan PGP46097</li> </ul> <p>Urban Development Area 7 – The Station of Section 7.8 was repealed in its entirety</p> <p>The addition of Schedule I as well as repealing and replacing the following Schedules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule B – Land Use Map</li> <li>• Schedule D – Parks, Natural Areas and Trails Network Map</li> <li>• Schedule E – Transportation Map</li> <li>• Schedule F – Water Servicing Map</li> </ul> | July 10, 2023                          |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schedule G – Sanitary Sewer Servicing Map</li><li>• Schedule H – Development Permit Areas Map</li></ul> |  |
|--|---|--|

# City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan 2017

## In Appreciation

Fort St. John’s energy comes from its citizens and, true to that, we are very much the “Energetic City.” This Official Community Plan is the vision of our tomorrow. It is the legacy that we seek to achieve for our children and grandchildren.

Mayor and Council extend our deepest appreciation for your participation in the creation of this plan. Your extensive knowledge, insight and input to make our community the best it can be was instrumental in the creation of this plan.

Warmest regards for the brightest of futures,

Mayor Lori Ackerman

Councilor Larry Evans

Councilor Trevor Bolin

Councilor Gord Klassen

Councilor Bruce Christensen

Councilor Byron Stewart

Councilor Lilia Hansen



Image 1: Canada 150 Celebrations



**CITY OF FORT ST. JOHN**  
**BYLAW NO. 2388, 2017**

**OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW**

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Fort St. John wishes to repeal “Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2076, 2011” and amendments thereto, and wishes to adopt a new Official Community Plan pursuant to Section 472 of Part 14 of the *Local Government Act*

AND WHEREAS, Council has considered this Official Community Plan in conjunction with the City’s most recent financial plan and other relevant plans to ensure consistency between them

AND WHEREAS, Council has met the consultation requirements pursuant to Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*

AND WHEREAS, Council has met the adoption procedure requirements pursuant to Section 477 of the *Local Government Act*

AND WHEREAS, Council has held a Public Hearing pursuant to Section 464 of the *Local Government Act*

NOW THEREFORE, the City of Fort St. John in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. This Bylaw may be cited as “City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017”.
2. The following schedules are attached to and form part of this Bylaw:
  - a. Schedule A – Official Community Plan Text
  - b. Schedule B – Land Use
  - c. Schedule C – Development Constraints
  - d. Schedule D – Parks, Natural Areas and Trails Network
  - e. Schedule E – Transportation
  - f. Schedule F – Water Servicing
  - g. Schedule G – Sanitary Sewer Servicing
  - h. Schedule H – Development Permit Areas
3. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or map in this bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalid portion shall be severed and the decision that it is invalid shall not affect the validity of the remainder.
4. Bylaw No. 2076, 2011, cited as the “City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No.2076, 2011” and amendments thereto as it applies to the City of Fort St. John is hereby repealed.

|                            |                  |        |           |      |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------|-----------|------|
| READ A FIRST TIME THE      | 14 <sup>th</sup> | day of | November, | 2017 |
| READ A SECOND TIME THE     | 13 <sup>th</sup> | day of | August,   | 2018 |
| PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON THE | 27 <sup>th</sup> | day of | August,   | 2018 |
| READ A THIRD TIME THE      | 27 <sup>th</sup> | day of | August    | 2018 |
| ADOPTED THE                | 27 <sup>th</sup> | day of | August,   | 2018 |

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LORI ACKERMAN  
MAYOR

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JANET PRESTLEY  
DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

# SCHEDULE A

**Official Community Plan Text**



## Table of Contents

|            |   |           |
|------------|---|-----------|
| <b>1.0</b> | <b>INTRODUCTION</b>                                   | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1        | WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?                   | 2         |
| 1.2        | WHY DO WE NEED AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?            | 4         |
| 1.3        | WHY UPDATE OUR OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?               | 5         |
| 1.4        | WHAT'S NEW IN THIS OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?           | 7         |
| 1.5        | HOW TO USE THIS OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?              | 8         |
| <b>2.0</b> | <b>DEFINITIONS</b>                                    | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>3.0</b> | <b>COMMUNITY CONTEXT</b>                              | <b>13</b> |
| 3.1        | HISTORY   | 13        |
| 3.2        | CLIMATE   | 16        |
| 3.3        | REGIONAL CONTEXT                                      | 16        |
| 3.4        | LABOUR FORCE AND INCOME                               | 17        |
| 3.5        | DEMOGRAPHICS  | 18        |
| 3.5.1      | <i>Existing Population</i>                            | 18        |
| 3.5.2      | <i>Population Projections</i>                         | 20        |
| 3.6        | OUR HOUSING INVENTORY AND PROJECTED NEEDS             | 21        |
| 3.6.1      | <i>Housing Inventory</i>                              | 21        |
| 3.6.2      | <i>Projected Land and Housing Needs</i>               | 23        |
| <b>4.0</b> | <b>SETTING THE STAGE</b>                              | <b>25</b> |
| 4.1        | INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY                               | 25        |
| 4.1.1      | <i>Summary of Stakeholders Involved</i>               | 26        |
| 4.1.2      | <i>Overarching Themes</i>                             | 28        |
| 4.2        | VISION  | 29        |
| 4.3        | GUIDING PRINCIPLES                                    | 29        |
| <b>5.0</b> | <b>GROWING TOGETHER</b>                               | <b>33</b> |
| 5.1        | BOUNDARY EXTENSION                                    | 35        |
| 5.2        | PLANNING ON OUR FRINGE                                | 36        |
| 5.3        | INDIGENOUS INCLUSION AND PARTNERSHIPS                 | 37        |
| <b>6.0</b> | <b>BUILDING A RESILIENT FORT ST. JOHN</b>             | <b>39</b> |
| 6.1        | TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION                        | 39        |
| 6.2        | BEING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY                         | 40        |
| 6.3        | MAKING INFILL DEVELOPMENT A PRIORITY                  | 43        |
| 6.4        | VACANT, UNDERUTILIZED OR BROWNFIELD LANDS DEVELOPMENT | 45        |
| 6.5        | EMBRACING AN ACTIVE YEAR-ROUND LIFESTYLE              | 46        |
| 6.6        | ACTIVATING THE DOWNTOWN                               | 52        |
| <b>7.0</b> | <b>LAND USE PLAN</b>                                  | <b>54</b> |
| 7.1        | AGRICULTURE   | 54        |
| 7.2        | RESIDENTIAL   | 56        |
| 7.2.1      | <i>Low Density Residential</i>                        | 58        |
| 7.2.2      | <i>Medium Density Residential</i>                     | 59        |
| 7.2.3      | <i>High Density Residential</i>                       | 60        |
| 7.2.4      | <i>Downtown Residential</i>                           | 61        |
| 7.3        | COMMERCIAL  | 62        |
| 7.3.1      | <i>Neighbourhood Commercial</i>                       | 63        |
| 7.3.2      | <i>General Commercial</i>                             | 64        |

|             |        |  |            |
|-------------|--------|--|------------|
|             | 7.3.3  | <i>Highway Commercial</i> .....                                  | 64         |
|             | 7.3.4  | <i>Downtown Commercial Mixed Use</i> .....                       | 65         |
| 7.4         |        | INDUSTRIAL.....  | 66         |
| 7.5         |        | INSTITUTIONAL.....   | 68         |
| 7.6         |        | PARKS, NATURAL AREAS & TRAILS.....                               | 69         |
| 7.7         |        | PUBLIC UTILITY .....   | 76         |
| 7.8         |        | URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREAS .....                                    | 77         |
| 7.9         |        | NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS.....   | 94         |
|             | 7.9.1  | <i>Neighbourhood Plan – Parkwood Southlands</i> .....            | 95         |
| <b>8.0</b>  |        | <b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b> .....                               | <b>103</b> |
| 8.1         |        | AFFORDABLE HOUSING.....  | 103        |
| 8.2         |        | CREATING AN ACCESSIBLE AND MULTI-GENERATIONAL FORT ST. JOHN..... | 104        |
|             | 8.2.1  | <i>Accessible Community</i> .....                                | 104        |
|             | 8.2.2  | <i>Age-Friendly</i> .....  | 105        |
| 8.3         |        | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....  | 107        |
| 8.4         |        | ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE.....                                  | 110        |
|             | 8.4.1  | <i>Arts</i> .....  | 110        |
|             | 8.4.2  | <i>Culture</i> .....   | 111        |
|             | 8.4.3  | <i>Heritage</i> .....  | 112        |
| 8.5         |        | TRANSPORTATION .....   | 113        |
|             | 8.5.1  | <i>Transportation Master Plan</i> .....                          | 113        |
| 8.6         |        | MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES.....           | 117        |
| 8.7         |        | ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP .....                                  | 119        |
|             | 8.7.1  | <i>Water</i> .....   | 120        |
|             | 8.7.2  | <i>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</i> .....                            | 121        |
|             | 8.7.3  | <i>Solid Waste Management</i> .....                              | 122        |
|             | 8.7.4  | <i>Energy</i> .....  | 123        |
| 8.8         |        | CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION .....                                  | 124        |
| 8.9         |        | URBAN AGRICULTURE AND COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY .....              | 125        |
| 8.10        |        | FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY.....                                    | 127        |
| <b>9.0</b>  |        | <b>DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS</b> .....                            | <b>129</b> |
| 9.1         |        | EXEMPTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT PERMITS .....                          | 129        |
| 9.2         |        | DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA.....                            | 130        |
| 9.3         |        | GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA.....                             | 131        |
| 9.4         |        | GENERAL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA.....                  | 132        |
| 9.5         |        | MAJOR CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA .....                     | 133        |
| 9.6         |        | MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA .....        | 133        |
| 9.7         |        | FISH CREEK DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA .....                         | 135        |
| <b>10.0</b> |        | <b>MAKING THE PLAN WORK</b> .....                                | <b>138</b> |
| 10.1        |        | BUILDING THE INFORMATION BASE .....                              | 138        |
| 10.2        |        | MONITORING THE PLAN .....  | 140        |
| 10.3        |        | REVIEWING THE PLAN .....   | 141        |
|             | 10.3.1 | <i>Short Term Reviews</i> .....                                  | 141        |
|             | 10.3.2 | <i>Medium Term Reviews</i> .....                                 | 141        |
|             | 10.3.3 | <i>Long-term Reviews</i> .....                                   | 141        |
|             | 10.3.4 | <i>Neighbourhood Planning Framework</i> .....                    | 141        |
|             | 10.3.5 | <i>Development Approval Information</i> .....                    | 142        |

|        |   |     |
|--------|---|-----|
| 10.3.6 | Official Community Plan Amendments..... | 142 |
| 10.3.7 | Zoning Bylaw Amendments.....            | 143 |
| 10.3.8 | Temporary Use Permits.....              | 143 |
| 10.4   | CITIZEN PARTICIPATION.....              | 144 |

## Other Schedules

**Schedule B: Land Use**

**Schedule C: Development Constraints**

**Schedule D: Parks, Natural Areas and Trails Network**

**Schedule E: Transportation**

**Schedule F: Water Servicing**

**Schedule G: Sanitary Sewer Servicing**

**Schedule H: Development Permit Areas**

**Schedule I: Neighbourhood Plan – The Station**

This  
schedule  
was added  
by Bylaw  
No. 2580,  
2023



# 1.0 Introduction

The City of Fort St. John (City) is the largest community in northeastern British Columbia and the oldest non-First Nations settlement in British Columbia. Originally established in 1794 as Rocky Mountain Fort, today Fort St. John has a population of 20,115 (2016 Census) **citizens**<sup>1</sup> and is growing strong. Incorporated in 1947, the municipality is one of seven municipalities in the Peace River Regional District.

Fort St. John is known as the “Energetic City”, which reflects not only our large resource base of energy, forestry and agriculture, but also the professional and information economy and the vitality of our **citizens** who are keen to live and work in a community that gives back so much.

Fort St. John is surrounded by wilderness which is home to some of the best hunting and fishing opportunities in North America. The City features excellent year-round sports facilities. From an arts and cultural perspective, Fort St. John is home to a growing arts scene and an ever-increasing diversity of ethnic groups, resulting in a culturally diverse community. In addition, many festivals and events occur within and around Fort St. John.



*Image 2: Pomeroy Sports Centre*

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions of key terms can be found in Section 2.

## 1.1 What is an Official Community Plan?

An Official Community Plan represents a community’s vision for the future and provides a framework to guide growth and decisions about the use and management of land resources in the municipality.

An Official Community Plan is a bylaw of the local government. In BC, requirements of an Official Community Plan are defined in the *Local Government Act*, which requires the following content:

- Approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development to meet anticipated housing needs for at least five years
- Approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses
- Approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction
- Restrictions on the use of land subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development
- Approximate location and phasing of major road, sewer and water systems
- Approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites
- Policies for affordable, rental and special needs housing
- Targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and policies and actions of the local government to achieve those targets
- Consideration of applicable provincial policy guidelines



Image 3: Business on 100th Avenue

*An Official Community Plan may also include the following:*

- *Social strategies*
- *Environmental strategies*
- *Development Permit Area (DPA) designations and associated guidelines*



Where the municipality does not have jurisdiction, the Official Community Plan may only state broad objectives related to the topic. This typically includes matters within provincial or federal jurisdictions, other local government jurisdictions, and may also include areas regulated by organizations such as BC Transit, health authorities, school districts or universities.

After the adoption of an Official Community Plan, all bylaws enacted and works undertaken by the municipality must be consistent with the Official Community Plan, unless the Official Community Plan is amended.

This Official Community Plan draws extensively from 2011 and 2016 census data, 2016 BC Stat analyses, the City's 2011 Official Community Plan, and from community engagement conducted in 2016 and early 2017. It should be recognized that communities are not static and that change is always occurring. An Official Community Plan that reflects the community is therefore a living document that is amended from time to time. Such amendments may be initiated by Council or as the result of an approved Official Community Plan amendment application. While the primary planning time frame for an Official Community Plan is approximately twenty years, best practice is to review an Official Community Plan approximately every five to ten years. This is because many of the goals, objectives and strategies contained within an Official Community Plan have broader implications for a much longer term and it is important to ensure that they are still relevant and current, and also to replace those that have been completed with new goals, objectives and strategies where appropriate.



*Image 4: Skateboard Park*

## 1.2 Why Do We Need an Official Community Plan?

Fort St. John's Official Community Plan will benefit the community in a number of ways, including:

- Providing clear directions to applicants considering making an application for development and for staff in reviewing applications
- Guiding decisions by Council when considering applications for development
- Guiding the decisions of private landowners, developers and other authorities
- Improving the quality of life of **citizens**
- Providing a foundation for the municipality's financial planning, especially for infrastructure
- Ensuring that the community vision is being followed

An Official Community Plan provides multiple benefits for the community. Preparing an Official Community Plan requires a process through which a community can identify and address emerging issues and challenges that affect the community and its well-being. In addition, an Official Community Plan that introduces a clear planning and decision-making framework to guide development and redevelopment provides certainty for **citizens**, business owners, developers and other stakeholders regarding the future use and management of land within the community.

## 1.3 Why Update Our Official Community Plan?

Fort St. John’s current Official Community Plan was last updated in 2011. Since that time, the City has experienced significant change. Some of these changes include:

- An increasing population
- Incorporation of new land into the City’s boundaries, some of which is anticipated to be developed in the very near future
- Completion of a 50 Year Growth Study that helps the City prepare for future growth and the required land and infrastructure needs associated with different levels of growth
- Many initiatives identified in the 2011 Official Community Plan have been completed, such as:
  - Establishment of an **Affordable Housing** Committee
  - Liquid Waste Management Plan and Stormwater Master Plan
  - Transportation Master Plan that informs the City’s other strategic plans and how they relate to the future of transportation in Fort St. John
  - Facilities Master Plan and Condition Assessment
  - Waste diversion initiatives
  - **Downtown** Action Plan which provides direction on the revitalization of Fort St. John’s **downtown** core
  - City Core Infrastructure Analysis
  - Parks and Recreation Master Plan
  - Public Realm & Streetscape Master Plan
  - Carbon Neutral Plan





Additional initiatives not identified in the 2011 Official Community Plan have arisen and also been undertaken, such as:

- School Site Acquisition Charges
- Opening of the Pomeroy Sports Centre
- Opening of a new fire hall
- Corporate review and restructure
- Acquisition of a sand and gravel quarry in the District of Taylor
- Let's Talk Site C community engagement and Joint Review Panel hearings
- Signatory to the Peace River Agreement
- Update to the City's Development Cost Charges
- Increasing Energy Literacy
- Negotiation of BC Hydro Community Measures Agreements
- Development of new commercial establishments, such as the area south of the Totem Mall and the hospitality and retail uses south of the Alaska Highway
- Extensive residential development occurred between 2011 and 2016, including 428 single family dwellings, 468 semi-detached dwelling units and 739 multiple family dwelling units
- A total of 280 commercial building permits approved
- New institutional development, including a recently opened hospital and an elementary school currently under construction, with an additional two school sites identified
- Conversely, industrial development within the City has been limited, with only three industrial building permits being approved since 2011

An Official Community Plan must continue to plan for the land use needs of the community. However, it must also consider various community development aspects, such as the environment, economic development, **affordable housing**, arts, culture and heritage, parks and recreation programming, and various other quality of life elements. Along with changes as a result of new developments has come an evolution of community values. The quality of life of Fort St. John continues to be of importance to its **citizens**, as was communicated during the engagement undertaken as part of this Official Community Plan. The public's desire to know what projects, studies and initiatives the City is involved in has also increased, as is evident by input provided by the community.

In addition, federal and provincial reallocation of responsibilities, as well as continual changes to municipal grant funding programs continue to challenge the City and all local governments. While the recently signed Peace River Agreement works to reduce those challenges, the Agreement is not necessarily a long-term solution. The creation of an



updated Official Community Plan is a necessary step in addressing these widespread changes and challenges, as well as maintaining and enhancing our quality of life.

## 1.4 What's New in this Official Community Plan?

This Official Community Plans builds on the great work that went into the previous Official Community Plan. Many components have been carried over and expanded upon, and some re-organization has occurred. The following sets out the sections of this Official Community Plan and identifies which are new and which are carried over and expanded:

- **Section 1.0 – Introduction** – new section that describes the context of an Official Community Plan, its legislative requirements, why one is needed and should be updated. This section also highlights what is new in the Official Community Plan and how to use it.
- **Section 2.0 – Definitions** – this section is new and serves to provide clarity on some of the terms used within this Official Community Plan.
- **Section 3.0 – Community Context** – this section is mostly carried over. Much of this section is statistical in nature and has been updated to reflect the most current information available at the time. The subsections on *Climate*, *Regional Context* and *Projected Land and Housing Needs* are new to this Official Community Plan.
- **Section 4.0 – Setting the Stage** – this section contains both new elements and elements from the previous Official Community Plan. A summary of the community engagement and stakeholder involvement is new, along with the overarching themes that arose from the engagement. While the vision presented in this section is very similar to the previous vision, the guiding principles in this Official Community Plan are new.
- **Section 5.0 – Growing Together** – this section is brand new and focuses on partnerships that extend beyond those within the City. This section overarches both the land use and community development sections of this Official Community Plan.
- **Section 6.0 – Building a Resilient Fort St. John** – another overarching section, this one focuses on key initiatives that the City wants to emphasize. Initiatives that are new to this Official Community Plan include *Vacant, Underutilized or Brownfield Lands Development* and *Activating the Downtown*.
- **Section 7.0 – Land Use Plan** – much of the content contained within this section is carried over from the previous Official Community Plan. New land uses in this Official Community Plan reflect those that implement the **Downtown** Action Plan: **Downtown Residential** and **Downtown Commercial Mixed Use**, as well as the *Public Utility* and *Urban Development Area* land uses.



- **Section 8.0 – Community Development** – the majority of the subsections within the Community Development portion of this Official Community Plan are carried over. The three new subsections focus on *Creating an Accessible and Multi-Generational Fort St. John, Climate Change Adaption* and *Financial Sustainability*.
- **Section 9.0 – Development Permit Areas** – this section has been reworked. While the previous Official Community Plan also had a section on Development Permit Areas, the majority of the specific development permit areas within this Official Community Plan are new, including the **Downtown**, *Gateway* and *Major Corridor*. Two development permit areas, the *General Commercial* and *Multiple Family*, are carried over from the previous Official Community Plan.
- **Section 10.0 – Implementation** – this section has been refreshed to provide clearer direction on how this Official Community Plan will be implemented over time.

## 1.5 How to Use This Official Community Plan?

This Official Community Plan is guided by the vision and guiding principles contained in the *Setting the Stage* section. The Official Community Plan contains two overarching sections that encompass both land use and community development – they are the *Growing Together* and *Building a Resilient Fort St. John* sections.

In addition, each of the main sections (*Growing Together*, *Building a Resilient Fort St. John*, *Land Use* and *Community Development*) contain goals, objective and strategies that serve to guide Fort St. John towards its vision.

In using this Official Community Plan, the strategies work towards implementing the objectives, which in turn move the City closer to achieving the goals set forth in this document. Collectively, all of the strategies, objectives and goals should move the City closer to its vision. In this Official Community Plan, strategies will be viewed as policies under the lens of the *Local Government Act*.

This Official Community Plan reflects the best ideas at the time of writing. In addition, while the City does adopt this Official Community Plan as a bylaw, an Official Community Plan does not commit a municipality to proceed with any project that is specified herein. It does, however, commit the municipality to ensuring that all actions taken once the Official Community Plan is adopted are consistent with the direction set forth within it.

## 2.0 Definitions

This section was  
amended by Bylaw  
No. 2569, 2022

**Accessible Housing** refers to units that are designed to promote accessibility for individuals with disabilities. This sometimes includes physical elements such as low height cupboards or light switches, wide doorways, and adapted bathrooms.

**Adaptive Housing** means a residential dwelling unit that is designed to allow easy conversion or modification that will ensure that the unit is physically accessible to everyone and that occupants can age-in-place as their ability levels change.

**Affordable Housing** means housing that does not cost greater than 30% of 70% of the median household income and includes **Renter Household Affordability** and **Owner Housing Affordability**.

**Agricultural Land Reserve** is a collection of land in BC where agriculture is recognized as the priority use. Farming is encouraged and non-agricultural uses are controlled. In total, the Agricultural Land Reserve covers approximately 47,000 km<sup>2</sup> in British Columbia and includes private and public lands. The reserve is administered by the Agricultural Land Commission, consisting of a chair and six vice-chairs appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council of British Columbia (cabinet) and twelve regular commissioners appointed by the provincial Minister of Agriculture.

**Attainable Housing** means housing that is market housing that is affordable to households with a range of incomes, but most often at the low or moderate end of the scale and is provided without ongoing senior government subsidies.

**Brownfield** means an abandoned, vacant, derelict or underutilized commercial and industrial property where past actions have resulted in actual or perceived contamination and where there is an active potential for redevelopment. A site that is contaminated may also not be a **brownfield** (i.e. due to the migration of contaminants from an adjacent area via groundwater).

**Business Retention and Expansion** means a set of programs or strategies to assist and encourage existing businesses to continue to do business, increase efficiency, or to grow. Programs or strategies may include such things as providing technical assistance, improving relationships between government and businesses, offering subsidies for business retention or expansion, among others.

**Business Improvement Area (BIA)** means an area designated by municipal council at the request of a business community. A BIA can develop and undertake programs to improve and beautify the improvement area. Tree planting, street furniture, improved parking, flower boxes and baskets and street banners are typical examples of commercial area public improvements which can be implemented by a BIA. BIAs respond to and reflect the needs of individual areas. They can act as merchant associations, initiators of



revitalization projects, coordinators of civic planning processes, a key spoke in the economic development team and a positive voice when addressing street issues.

**Citizen** means a person who inhabits a particular district, city, town, village or place and has rights and duties to that place.

**Climate Change** means a change of climate that is attributed directly to or indirectly to human activity and is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

**Community** means:

1. The people of a specific place considered collectively, especially in the context of social values and responsibilities.
2. A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.

**Community Food Security** means a state that “exists when all community residents obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes health choices, community self-reliance and equal access for everyone” (Bellows and Hamm, 2002).

**Contaminated Site** means an area of land in which the soil or underlying groundwater or sediment contains a hazardous waste or substance in an amount or concentration that exceeds provincial environmental quality standards. A site is contaminated if it is unsuitable for specific uses of land, water and sediment. Many sites in the province became contaminated during past industrial or commercial uses.

**Creative City Movement** means a concept developed in the late 1980s, which emphasizes a shift in planning for cities to one that promotes ideas, creativity, innovation and implementation. The creative city is a city that has a brand and reflects a personality unique to it.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** means a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behaviour through environmental design. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts by affecting the built, social and administrative environment.

**Development Permit Area (DPA)** means a specific area with a set of development regulations designed to achieve specific purposes as set out in Section 488 of the *Local Government Act*. The flexibility of Development Permit Area (DPA) guidelines enables council to fairly exercise its discretion in granting or refusing a development permit on a case by case basis, while providing principles to guide Council’s condition for approving or refusing a development permit application. Any proposed building and subdivision within a DPA requires the issuance of a development permit.



**Downtown** means the area predominantly located along 100<sup>th</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue and has traditionally been centered around the intersection of these two roads.

**Environmental Stewardship** means taking care of our environment and leaving it in a good of condition, or better, for future generations.

**Green Roof** means a roof of a building that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing membrane. A green roof may include container gardens on roofs and drainage and irrigation systems.

**Greenfield** means the development of large parcels or multiple lots that are undeveloped land.

**Gross Density** means a residential unit per area measurement that includes in the calculation rights-of-way, recreational, civic, commercial and other non-residential land uses.

**Gross Household Income** is the total income of all members in a household before taxes and other deductions.

**Inclusive Neighbourhood** means a safe and accessible neighbourhood for all residents of the City. It should include seniors and be culturally acceptable to the residents. Universal design is typically integrated into an inclusive neighbourhood.

**Infill** means the planned conversion of empty lots, underused or rundown buildings and other available space in urban and suburban areas for use as sites for commercial buildings and housing, frequently as an alternative to overdevelopment of rural areas.

**Median Housing Price** is determined by arranging all the house prices for homes sold in a year from lowest to highest value and picking the middle price. If there are an even number of homes sold, then there is no single middle value; the median is then usually defined to be the mean (or average) of the two middle values. This determinant of housing cost can provide a rough idea of housing affordability.

**Neighbourhood Plan** means a secondary land use plan that supplements the Official Community Plan. Neighbourhood plans provide detailed neighbourhood-level land use planning for developing areas throughout the city. Neighbourhood plans, once complete, plan for the servicing, development and ultimate build-out of an area.

**Owner Household Affordability** is a unit for which the purchase price is affordable to households earning 70% of median owner household income, where affordable means not spending more than 30% of gross household income on housing costs.

**Renter Household Affordability** is a unit for which the rent is affordable to households earning 70% of median renter household income, where affordable means not spending more than 30% of gross household income on housing costs.

**Service Boundary** means the line that delineates the maximum extent to which a municipality will extend water, sewer and storm infrastructure.



**Smart Growth** means an approach to development that aims to create communities that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, through the provision of choices in housing, jobs, transportation and amenities. This is done through the use of planning principles that guide, design, develop, manage, revitalize and build inclusive communities.

**Suites** means attached or detached suites commonly found in residential areas. Each suite is considered one dwelling unit.

**Sustainable Community Development** means the integration of economic, social and environmental objectives in community development. Sustainable community development and community well-being are inherently linked, as the two concepts strive to balance a prosperous economy with the social and environmental aspects of a community.

**Underutilized parcel** means a parcel that is being used less than fully or below its potential maximum use. Examples of underutilized parcels can include vacant lands that are being used as parking lots, but which could be developed, or lands containing low density development but could accommodate medium or high density development.

**Universal Design** refers to broad-spectrum ideas meant to produce buildings, products and environments that are inherently accessible to the widest range of people possible, and that are safer, easier and more convenient for everyone. Universal design evolved from Accessible Design, a design process that addresses the needs of people with disabilities.

**Urban Agriculture** means the cultivation and sale of produce or seeds and the keeping of bees and chickens. Urban agriculture typically occurs as a secondary land use on parcels where another primary land use is already present.

**Urban Reserve** means First Nations reserve lands located within municipal boundaries. Urban reserves would generally comprise land purchased through funds made available to First Nations from specific claim and Treaty Land Entitlement settlements.

**Vacant (land)** means land with no houses, offices, or other permanent structures or infrastructure. Vacant land may be available for development, or it may be set aside by a government or private owner to remain vacant.

**Winter City Elements** means climate-sensitive design strategies and principles incorporated into site planning and building design that focus on enhancing the safety and comfort experienced by a community during the winter season.

# 3.0 Community Context

## 3.1 History

Fort St. John is located just west of the confluence of Peace and Beatton Rivers at Mile 47 of the Alaska Highway in the heart of the Peace River country. Fort St. John also lies within the traditional lands of the Beaver people (Dane-zaa First Nation). The Fort St. John area was home to the Beaver people, who were stewards of the lands.

Archeological evidence has shown that Indigenous people have lived in northeastern British Columbia for approximately 11,000 years. The Charlie Lake Caves, known as Tse'Kw'a and located to the west of Fort St. John, are one of the oldest archeological sites in North America and demonstrate the longstanding roots that Indigenous peoples have had as the original settlers of the Fort St. John area.

The Dane-zaa, often referred to as the Beaver People, lived in small groups along the Peace River from Alberta to the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains. As the main decedents of the earliest Indigenous peoples in the Peace region, the Dane-zaa followed a nomadic pattern based on the season rather than establishing permanent villages. They were joined by Cree, who had migrated westward during the 1700s due to pressures resulting from European settlement in Eastern and Central Canada. The two groups convened at Tsadu or Beaver Point, later to be called Peace Point, on the lower Peace River in 1796 to agree upon a truce known as Wachegee.

In addition to the Beaver and Cree, the Iroquois and Saulteau peoples also migrated to the Peace River region to settle during the 17th and 18th century. Iroquois presence in the Peace Region dates back to 1819, when they acted as guides for traders and explorers. The Saulteau were descendants of the Ojibway residing primarily around the areas east of Lake Superior. Saulteau peoples began migrating westward in the 1800s after being pushed out of their traditional territories by the Federal Government. They were led to the Moberly Lake area by a spiritual leader who had visions of two sacred snow tipped mountains which are today known as the Twin Sisters.

The first direct contact between the Beaver and European settlers was not until 1793 in British Columbia, when Alexander Mackenzie, traveling by canoe up the Peace River looking for fur trading opportunities, passed through in search of a route to the Pacific Ocean. When he reached the Fort St. John area, he determined that it would be a great place for a fur trading post due to its proximity to five rivers that flow into the Peace River within a 40 km radius. The following year, a trading post was established by the North West Company, making Fort St. John the oldest non-native settlement on the BC mainland. Early trading relationships led to the intermarriage of fur traders and local Indigenous peoples. The descendants of those Métis families continued to settle in the Peace Region.



*Image 6: Hudson's Bay Co. buildings, Fort St. John, British Columbia*

Originally established in 1794 as Rocky Mountain Fort, it was used as a trading post for the Beaver and Sikanni First Nations and as a supply depot to further expeditions into BC. Since then, Fort St. John has undergone five location changes in response to various impacts, such as fire, the need to have better access and to adapt to the needs of a growing community. Although there is no absolute record, Fort St. John is thought to have been named when one of the Hudson's Bay Company posts was opened on Saint Jean Baptiste Day.

The signing of Treaty 8 signaled a key moment in Indigenous people and settler relationships in the Peace River region and beyond in the Treaty's 840,000 km<sup>2</sup> territory, which includes northeastern British Columbia, northern Alberta, northwestern Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories south of Hay River and Great Slave Lake. The signing of the Treaty between the local Beaver and Cree groups along with Chipewyan groups from the prairies in 1899 and the Government of Canada was followed by Prophet River and Fort Nelson Indigenous groups signing the Treaty in 1910. Under the Treaty, signatories were promised access to maintain traditional activities, such as hunting, fishing and trapping, in their traditional territory.

The Peace River Block, an area encompassing 6,700 km<sup>2</sup>, was held by the Canadian government on behalf of the Canadian National Railway as compensation for undevelopable railway right-of-way in the south. No settlers were allowed on the Peace River Block, all settlement happened outside of the Block, particularly in the Halfway River Valley and Hudson's Hope.



In 1912, Canada released quarter sections in the Peace River Block to settlers upon completion of clearing 12 hectares and a payment of \$10 after the first year. After 1918, veterans were given quarter sections upon clearing 12 hectares.

In 1923, up on a flat away from the river, C.M. Finch built his store that became the centre of the community in the years that followed. The C.M. Finch store was located at what is now 100<sup>th</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue – the heart of **downtown**. A large influx of people came in the 1930's when the Peace River area was opened for home stading, and remaining untitled lands were handed over to the Province of British Columbia. Farming replaced trapping as the main industry at the time. Many farming families came from the Prairies during the "Dirty 30's" to find new opportunities in the Peace country. Many of those same families, now into their third generation, are still farming in the surrounding area today. The

building of the Alaska Highway brought the next big rush of people to the area. In the 1950's the first oil well was drilled near Fort St. John, bringing in a whole new era and helping shape the community that exists today.

*Image 7: Fort St. John skier*



*Image 8: PB4Y Airplane (1945) Photographed in Fort St. John, BC (September 15th, 1945)*

## 3.2 Climate

The City of Fort St. John (City) is located on the northwest edge of the Interior Plains region and experiences a range of temperatures with cold winters and warm summers, similar to the prairies. The Rocky Mountains to the west provide a barrier to the arctic air masses which results in milder winters than much of the rest of northern Canada.

Average daily high temperatures range from -9°C in January to 22°C in July and the average annual snowfall is 190 cm and the average annual precipitation as rain is 445 mm, with about 40% occurring between June and August. The climate, when combined with the extended sunshine hours, allows crops such as wheat and canola, to grow in the area.

The City recognizes that **climate change** is occurring, and has for quite some time. Moving forward, **climate change** could result in a decline in snowpack and increase in rainfall, meaning shorter winters and earlier snowmelt as temperatures continue to increase for Fort St. John. In addition, an increased range of extremes and a shift in plant and animal species could also occur. **Climate change** may also result in an increase in agricultural opportunities, by expanding existing growing seasons to go along with milder and shorter winters. Moving forward, the City will continue to participate in conversations regarding **climate change** and will evaluate and manage opportunities that **climate change** presents.



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### Did you know?

*Fort St. John saw a record low of -54°C in 1911 and a record high of 38°C in 1941.*

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## 3.3 Regional Context

The City of Fort St. John is a member of the Peace River Regional District and the largest community and predominant service centre for the region. Fort St. John maintains a prominent role in regional affairs. Recent City initiatives have taken a regional planning approach, recognizing the importance of aligning the long-term priorities of the City with surrounding rural areas. This includes the recently developed Fort St. John Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The plan identified the importance of regional park and recreational opportunities for Fort St. John **citizens**. The objectives and strategies contained in the plan address lands within a 50 km radius around the City.

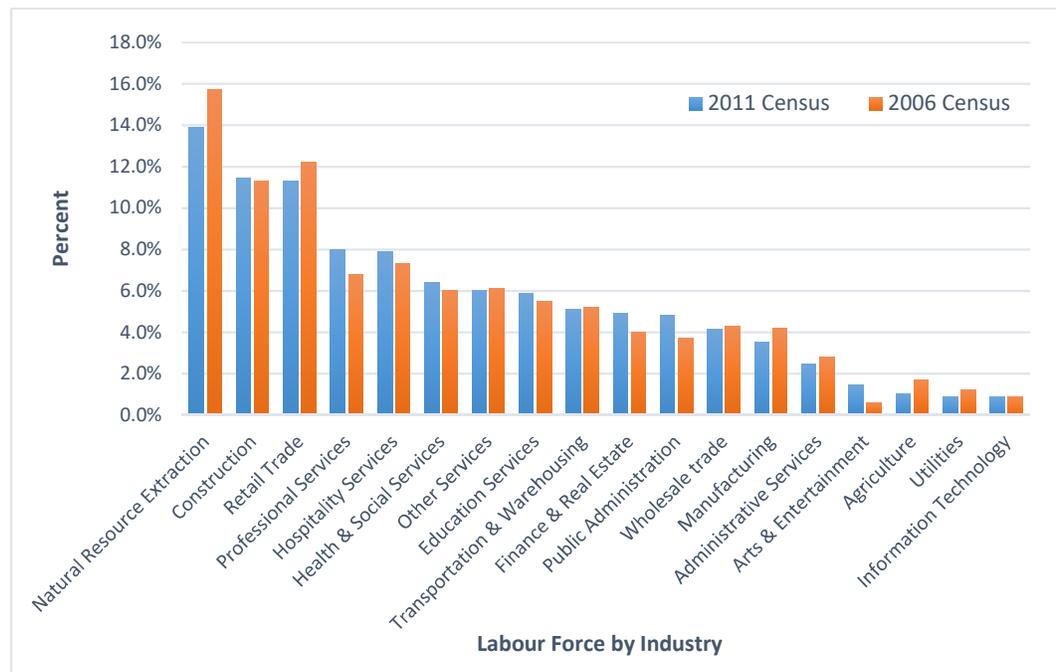
The large-scale of development occurring in rural areas surrounding the City has an immediate impact on Fort St. John's local economy and municipal services, such as recreation and emergency services. Working with the Peace River Regional District, Indigenous peoples, rural **citizens** and stakeholders to address City strategic priorities and long-term planning can ensure mutually beneficial outcomes. Coordinating Peace River Regional District planning activities with the City's will ensure consistency between local governments, preventing potential conflicts in the future.

### 3.4 Labour Force and Income

Fort St. John’s economy is based upon the energy sector, specifically oil and gas extraction. Labour force statistics are regional statistics, and due to the nature of the economy, it is difficult to extract statistics specific to the City of Fort St. John. The energy sector makes up almost 14% (over 1,500 jobs) of Fort St. John’s total labour force. The construction, retail trade, professional, manufacturing, scientific and technical services, and hospitality sectors provide over 4,300 jobs, many of these being indirectly linked to income generated from the oil and gas sector (Statistics Canada, 2011). Forestry and agriculture also contribute to the local economy.

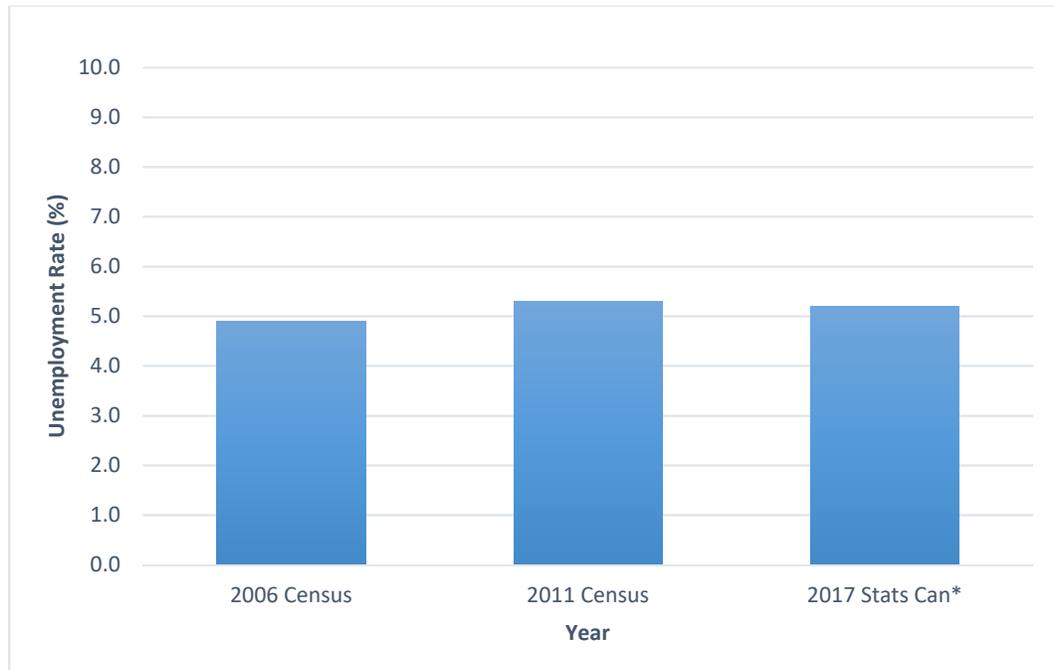
In 2015, the reported median household income for Fort St. John was nearly \$103,000, which was \$33,000 more than the typical household income in BC.

Figure 1: City of Fort St. John Labour Force by Industry



In the past, the northeast region has had one of the lowest unemployment rates in BC. In 2011, only 5.3% of the working population was unemployed (2011 Census) and in late 2014, the unemployment rate in the region was 4.0% according to Statistics Canada. In 2015 and 2016, as a result of world commodity prices, especially energy prices, unemployment rates have increased in the City, peaking at 9.7% in March, 2016. Since then, the region’s unemployment rate has decreased to 5.2% in August, 2017 (Statistics Canada, 2017). While unemployment rates are higher than they have been, this is anticipated to change as large-scale industrial projects in the region continue to move forward in their development.

Figure 2: Regional Unemployment Rate



\* August 2017 Stats Canada Unemployment Rate for the region

## 3.5 Demographics

### 3.5.1 Existing Population

The City of Fort St. John has experienced dynamic population growth over the past five years placing it among the fastest-growing municipalities in BC. From 2013 to 2014, BC Stats analyses show that the City of Fort St. John was the fastest growing community in the Peace River Regional District and had the second-largest population percentage increase out of any BC municipality at 4.5%. The 2016 Census identified the City's population at 20,155, an 8.3% increase over the 2011 Census of 18,609. The recent wave of high growth has slowed, but still remains positive. Looking ahead, the City is poised to regain its place as one of the fastest growing communities in BC through construction of projects identified on the Major Projects Inventory and continuing economic activity in the oil and gas, forestry, construction, retail trade, professional, manufacturing, scientific and technical services, and hospitality sectors.

In addition to high rates of population growth, the 2011 Census also provided the following notable demographic characteristics for Fort St. John:

- A median age of 30.6 years, placing Fort St. John as one of the youngest communities in the country (40.6 years) and in BC (41.9 years)

- 21% of Fort St. John’s population is under the age of 14 years old, as compared to 15% in BC
- The 65 years old and over population of Fort St. John grew by 12% from 2006 to 2011

Figure 3: City of Fort St. John Historical Population Growth (BC Stats)

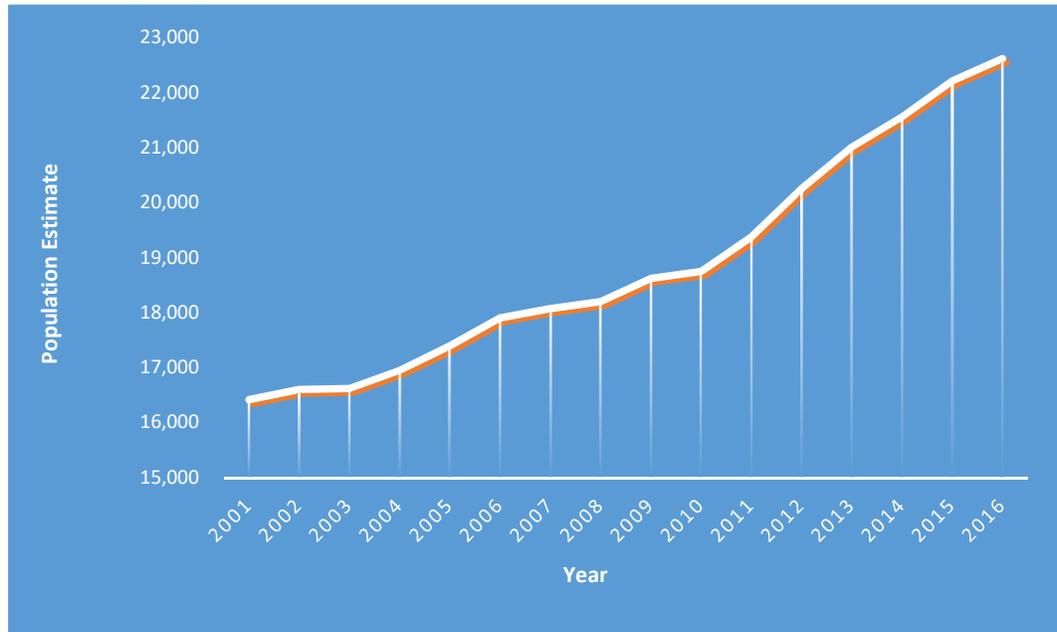
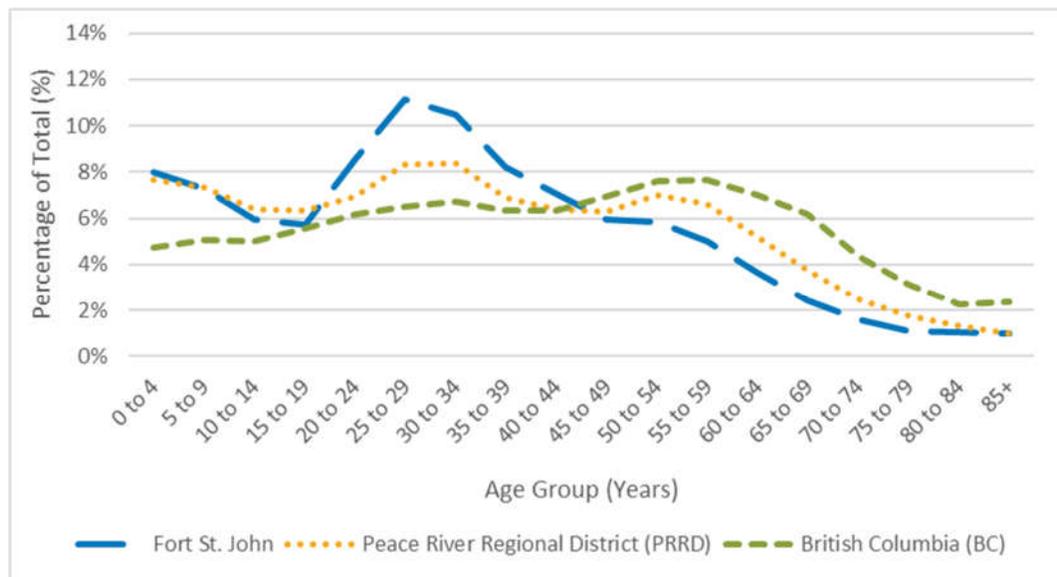


Figure 4: 2016 Census Age Group Comparison



### 3.5.2 Population Projections

The growth of Fort St. John’s population will continue to create new demands for developable land, City services and other amenities, which are required to service a rapidly growing community. Long-term population projections are required to ensure that the City is prepared to respond to these new demands. The City of Fort St. John recently completed a 50 Year Growth Study that provides population projections for the City up to the year 2065. These projections include an annual growth rate of 2.2% up to the year 2036, which is consistent with the time frame within which this Official Community Plan is intended to operate in.

The population projections have been updated to reflect the 2016 BC Stats population estimate of 22,618 for Fort St. John. Applying a 2.2% growth rate from 2016 to 2036 results in an estimated population of 34,952 in 2036. This is an estimated population increase of 12,334 over the BC Stats 2016 estimate of 22,618.

Figure 5: City of Fort St. John Population Projection

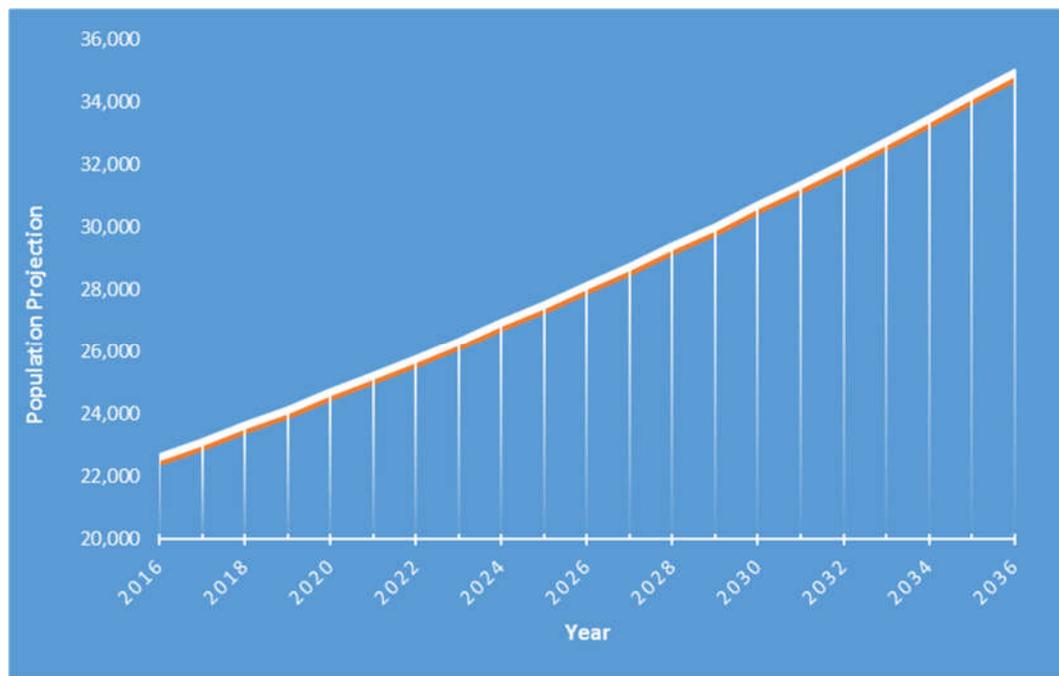




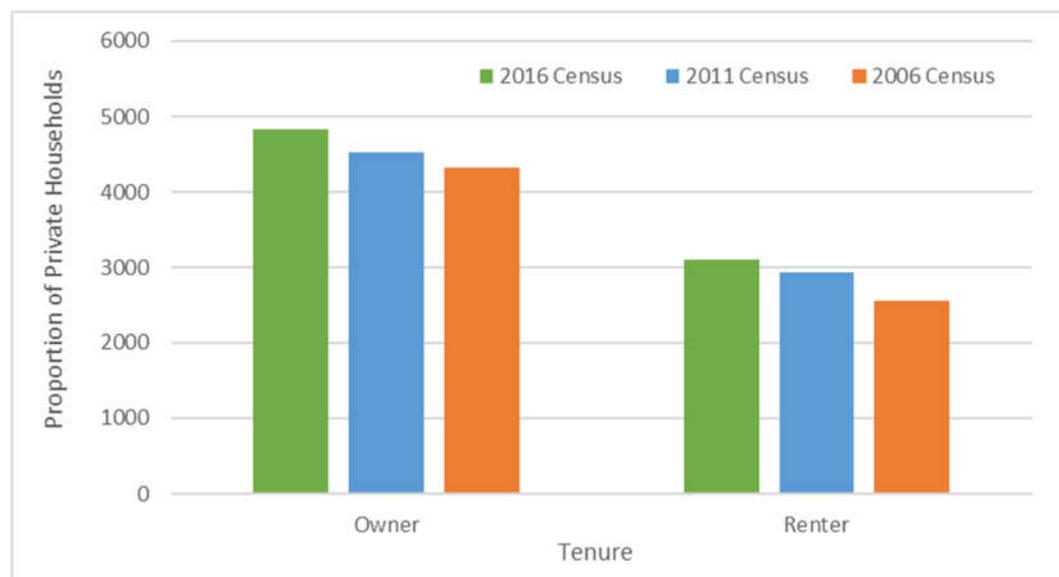
Image 9: Canada Day Celebrations

## 3.6 Our Housing Inventory and Projected Needs

### 3.6.1 Housing Inventory

Approximately one-third of all the land in Fort St. John is used for housing. Over 60% of private households are owned, with the remaining 40% rented.

Figure 6: City of Fort St. John Private Household Tenure

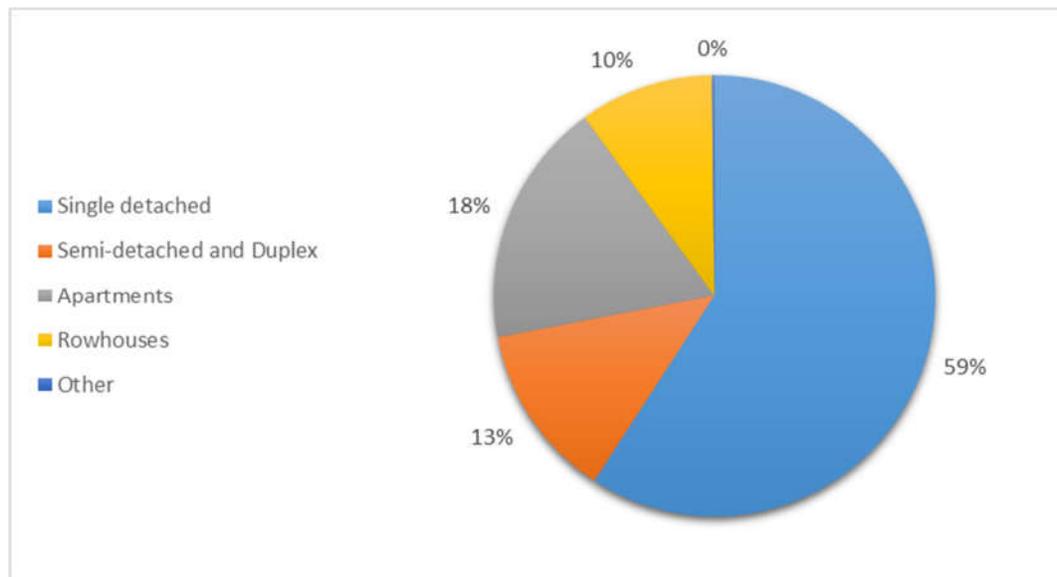


The composition of the housing stock in Fort St. John as of the 2016 Census is 59% single-detached, 18% apartments, 10% rowhouses, and 13% semi-detached and duplex. The **median housing price** in 2011 in Fort St. John was approximately \$292,000. The **median housing price** for 2016 in Fort St. John has increased to \$382,000 (Northern Real Estate Board).



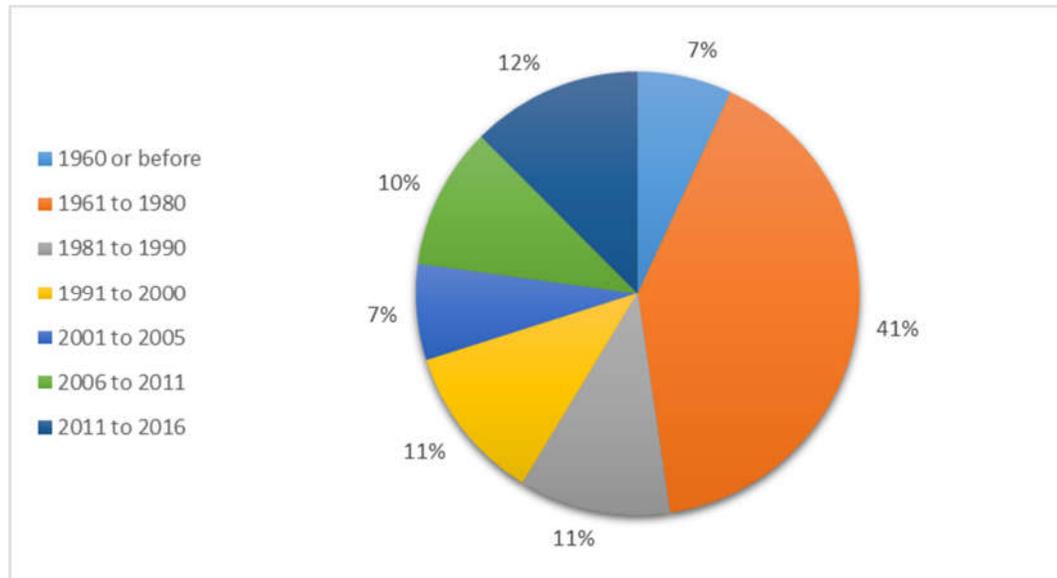
Image 10: Residential Development

Figure 7: City of Fort St. John Housing Stock



The 2016 Census indicated that 59% of the homes in Fort St. John were built before 1990, however, only about 7% are reported to need major repairs.

Figure 8: City of Fort St. John Housing Stock Period of Construction



### 3.6.2 Projected Land and Housing Needs

The 50 Year Growth Study prepared in 2015 provides the most current growth projections for the City of Fort St. John. The growth projections below represent the *medium growth scenario* from this study, which has been determined to be the most appropriate projection of the future. It assumes a population growth of 40,000 over 50 years and that 15,400 new residential units would be required in this time frame.

Table 1: City of Fort St. John Medium Growth Scenario – Projected Land Needs to 2065

| Land Use                   | Amount of Land Required (ha) | Amount Within City | Amount Outside City |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Residential                | 665                          | 150                | 515                 |
| Road                       | 315                          | -                  | 315                 |
| Industrial                 | 285                          | 110                | 175                 |
| Institutional/Recreational | 285                          | 10                 | 275                 |
| Commercial                 | 135                          | 100                | 35                  |
| Agricultural               | 150                          | -                  | 150                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>1,835</b>                 | <b>370</b>         | <b>1,465</b>        |

\*Note – the areas of land within this table do not reflect the inclusion of lands incorporated into the City in late 2016

In order to accommodate this growth scenario, the City of Fort St. John would require a total of 1,835 hectares of land. During the work to complete the 50 Year Growth Study, another 270 hectares of land to the northwest was incorporated into the municipal boundary. In addition, in late 2016, the City acquired approximately 670 hectares of land through a boundary extension.



Using the most recent population estimate of 20,778 from the 2016 Census and applying an annual growth rate of 2.2% would result in the housing requirements set out in the table below.

*Table 2: City of Fort St. John Projected Housing Needs*

| Time Frame   | Projected Population Growth | Average Number of New Units/Year | Total Number of New Units |
|--------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2016 - 2020  | 2,388                       | 184                              | 919                       |
| 2021 – 2025  | 2,663                       | 205                              | 1,024                     |
| 2026 – 2030  | 2,969                       | 228                              | 1,142                     |
| 2031 - 2035  | 3,310                       | 255                              | 1,273                     |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>11,331</b>               |                                  | <b>4,358</b>              |

The required residential development to meet anticipated housing needs is satisfied in this Plan over the next five years. And further, it is expected that approximately 4,300 new residential units will be required in the next 20 years, or roughly over the timeframe of this Official Community Plan.

# 4.0 Setting the Stage

## 4.1 Involving the Community

The City of Fort St. John (City) implemented a Communications and Engagement Strategy which served to ensure that all **citizens** and community stakeholders were provided with opportunities to contribute to the Official Community Plan throughout its development. A visual representation of the overall process is shown in the figure below.

Figure 9: Official Community Plan Update Process





*Image 11: World Cafe Engagement*

Early in the Official Community Plan update, a community visioning phase was held. This phase was completed in June, 2016 and it consisted of a series of initial community engagement events. Events had activities designed to gather public feedback on the direction that the community felt the City should take. In September of 2016, an update of work on the draft Official Community Plan was provided at the MooseFM Block Party. The public was provided with a high-level update on what was heard from the initial engagement in June and July, and how that input was incorporated into the draft Official Community Plan in order to ensure that the direction that the draft was moving in was reflective of the community’s desires. Two workshops with boundary extension property owners were held in late February and early March of 2017 to discuss their vision for Fort St. John for 2030. Finally, additional engagement was held in May of 2017, where the final Official Community Plan was presented to the community prior to going through the formal public adoption process.

#### 4.1.1 Summary of Stakeholders Involved

Through the Official Community Plan engagement process, an extensive list of stakeholders was compiled which included approximately 60 community stakeholder groups, including Indigenous peoples, cultural groups, business owners and targeted individuals who became key stakeholders. These key stakeholders were engaged in a variety of ways throughout the process and participants included representatives from the following stakeholder groups:



### Key Stakeholder Groups

- Fort St. John general public (all City tax payers)
- Provincial Governments and Agencies
- Businesses and Related Organizations
- Fort St. John Youth Advisory Council
- Fort St. John Family Organizations
- Seniors Organizations
- Newcomer and Multi-Cultural Groups
- Indigenous People
- Social Services Organizations
- Service Clubs
- Local Interest Groups
- Environmental Organizations

In addition to these stakeholders, required consultation with a variety of government agencies and jurisdictions was also undertaken, including:

### Government Agencies and Jurisdictions

- Agricultural Land Commission
- British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
- Canadian National Rail
- Oil and Gas Commission
- Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
- Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- Northern Health Authority
- Peace River Regional District
- School District No. 60



## 4.1.2 Overarching Themes

From the initial engagement undertaken, some overarching themes arose which have been integrated into this Official Community Plan.

**Quality of Life:** Participants noted that quality of life is rooted in living an active lifestyle and being engaged with the community. This could be achieved by having easy access to parks, trails and natural areas, along with recreational, artistic and cultural facilities and their programming.

**Diversity:** Participants noted the growing diversity in Fort St. John through young families, newcomers and seniors as an important area of focus for the Official Community Plan. In addition, the City's ethnic diversity is also increasing. Growing diversity is creating desires for new opportunities, programs, services and experiences to be offered such as multi-generational recreational programs and facilities, more cultural spaces, improved communications for different groups, different retail forms and greater educational opportunities.

**Economic Opportunity:** Ensuring a range and diversity of economic opportunities are available for **citizens** with different skill sets, abilities and aspirations were consistently identified as a priority for many participants.

**Environmental Sustainability:** Fort St. John is surrounded by a valued natural environment. The connection between **citizens** and the natural environment is a significant component of life in northeastern British Columbia and an inherent part of the Fort St. John's identity. Participants expressed a desire to shelter areas of natural value within and around Fort St. John and to act as a regional leader in balancing development with environmental conservation.

**Mix:** Participants expressed the desire to see a greater mixture of uses, including mixed uses and residential housing types, architectural stylings and greenspaces that balanced equally with each other in new and existing neighbourhoods. A desire for more mixed use developments and different housing forms integrated in neighbourhoods was expressed.

## 4.2 Vision

*Fort St. John is the major centre in the British Columbia Peace Region and is known as the Energy Capital of BC. Citizens of Fort St. John epitomize the spirit of innovation and opportunity that was illustrated by the City's founders. Fort St. John has grown by embracing its position as the Energetic City and has capitalized on the work ethic of its citizens. Fort St. John grew from a pioneer village to a camp town to a city; throughout its growth, it has always remained a community. Fort St. John will continue to grow and attract people to the beautiful North Peace region, and the City and its citizens will continue to create a high quality of life by fostering a safe, secure, inclusive and prosperous community for all to call home.*

*The City's Official Community Plan anticipates the evolution of the community. It sets out goals, objectives and policies to guide the city towards a prosperous future. The vision statement attempts to summarize the intent of the Official Community Plan and capture the essence of the community's aspirations for their Fort St. John in 2030:*

**Fort St. John will be a flourishing community where nature lives, businesses prosper, families are active and diversity is celebrated.**

## 4.3 Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were developed as a result of the overarching themes heard from **citizens** and stakeholders alike during the public engagement process.



### GUIDING PRINCIPLE #1 – ENHANCING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Priority will be given to initiatives focused on improving the local quality of life for **citizens** by enhancing spaces, places and activities for **citizens** to remain active and social.

What could enhancing our quality of life look like?

- Investing in parks, recreation and public spaces
- Developing multi-purpose trails and walking paths
- Developing and expanding arts and cultural facilities
- Enhancing programming, public events and festivals
- Incorporating passive low impact activities in natural areas



## GUIDING PRINCIPLE #2 – VALUING PARTNERSHIPS

Long-term planning will be undertaken using an approach that strives for cooperative, collaborative and proactive partnerships and agreements with other levels of government including local, provincial and Indigenous, agencies and organizations.

### What could valuing partnerships look like?

- Developing strategic partnerships with other levels and types of governments, agencies and organizations
- Entering into mutually beneficial agreements with other governments, agencies and organizations to solve problems and challenges present in the region
- Undertaking broad initiatives with other levels of government in order to benefit Fort St. John



## GUIDING PRINCIPLE #3 – EMBRACING OUR DIVERSITY

The unique needs of different groups in the City will be considered in fostering decision-making and financial and capital planning that is inclusive to all groups. Investment in services, infrastructure and programs will consider the physical, social, cultural and communication needs of seniors, young families, newcomers, Indigenous and other key emerging groups in the City.

### What could embracing our diversity look like?

- Accessible and age-friendly infrastructure
- Services for newcomer groups
- Developing partnerships between the City, Indigenous and cultural / social / demographic groups
- Developing cultural plans and strategies



## GUIDING PRINCIPLE #4 – INCREASING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

A prosperous economy that has a diverse cross-section of employment sectors including – but not limited to – oil and gas, green energy, agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, education and training, retail, tourism and others will be encouraged. A diverse local economy will afford **citizens** of different skill sets and abilities the opportunity to secure employment and contribute to the local economy.

What could increasing economic opportunities look like?

- Developing an attractive, vibrant and active **downtown**
- Developing partnerships between local business, industry and the City
- Exploring tools and incentives to encourage business growth
- Developing partnerships with post-secondary institutions to enhance training and education opportunities



## GUIDING PRINCIPLE #5 – BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE

Proactive planning practices will ensure development is delivered in a manner that has the least possible impact on areas of high natural value within and around Fort St. John, while setting up Fort St. John as a regional leader in sustainable building practices.

What could being environmentally sustainable look like?

- Incorporating local ecosystems and ecological processes into development
- Applying construction methodologies and retrofitting buildings to be energy efficient
- Encouraging local food production
- Reducing community water and energy needs





Our Vision  
Our Future

## 5.0 Growing Together

The current update of the Official Community Plan provides the City of Fort St. John (City) with an opportunity to advance the planning of the City's land base and services through a 20 year lens. While the *Local Government Act* states that an Official Community Plan should consider a minimum five year time frame when planning for future residential needs, it is common practice to develop Official Community Plans with a longer timeframe (20 years) in mind to ensure the most efficient, cohesive and proactive urban form.

Proactive long-term planning requires extensive collaboration and partnerships with other local, provincial and Indigenous governments. Historically it has been common practice for local governments to focus inward when making decisions related to land use and community servicing. The advances in collaborative regional planning practices, growth of relationships between local governments and other levels of government and emergence of Indigenous fee-simple land acquisition and **urban reserve** development has ushered in a new era of municipal decision-making. No longer is inward and short-term land use planning viewed as a practice that can deliver long-term sustainable outcomes for a local government. Local governments must plan and grow in a cooperative, collaborative and proactive manner with other governments.



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### Goal:

1. To acknowledge the development of mutually beneficial, cooperative and proactive relationships with other levels of government as a high-level priority for the City.

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### Objectives:

1. Develop strategic partnerships with the provincial government, local governments in northeastern British Columbia, Indigenous people and industry to develop creative solutions to challenges that exist in the region.
2. Continue to raise the profile of the region.
3. Continue to advance broad initiatives that have direct, positive impacts on Fort St. John.
4. Develop partnerships with other levels of government, including Indigenous governments, to plan for and address land use and municipal servicing with a 20 year focus.

## Strategies:

1. Acknowledge the work of the Northeast BC Resource Municipalities Coalition and partnerships.
2. Continue to work with the local governments in the region to create a better future for all and to raise the profile of this region.
3. Continue to work with the development community, not-for-profits and provincial agencies in establishing partnerships for the development of **affordable housing** and for development designed to result in low environmental impact.
4. Work collaboratively with the provincial government on initiatives that impact local governments.
5. Encourage respect for agricultural lands and support the Peace River Regional District in the completion and implementation of the North Peace Fringe Area Official Community Plan.
6. In partnership with neighbouring local governments, support fire protection services of Fort St. John and the surrounding area.
7. In partnership with neighbouring local governments, enhance investment and economic development on a regional level.
8. Work with neighbouring jurisdictions to implement the Parks and Recreation Master plan and establish parks and recreation facilities that are cross-jurisdictional and connect to rural resources.
9. Ensure that the quality of life of the community is enhanced by agencies that receive grant support and/or permissive tax exemptions from the City of Fort St. John.



Image 12: 2015 U-17 Hockey Tournament

## 5.1 Boundary Extension

Boundary extensions are at times required by a municipality in order to manage and accommodate growth requirements that cannot be met by **vacant** or **underutilized** lands within a municipality's existing boundaries. In addition, boundary extensions may be required in order to protect the strategic interests of the City with respect to future growth and development.

In 2013, City Council adopted a set of guiding principles that were used to evaluate any proposed boundary extensions. The objectives and strategies below build upon those guiding principles.



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### Goal:

1. To ensure that any boundary extension applications have been considered with the City's strategic interests in mind.

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### Objective:

1. Evaluate every public or private boundary extension request using the strategies identified within this Official Community Plan.

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### Strategies:

1. Identify how the boundary extension area will accommodate future growth and incorporate **Smart Growth** principles.
2. Consider if the boundary extension area will protect the strategic interests of the City in terms of future growth and development, and how it will do so.
3. Require the boundary extension area to be consistent with the direction set out in the City's Official Community Plan.
4. Consider the compatibility of land uses between the City and the Peace River Regional District when evaluating boundary extension areas.



Image 13: Aerial Overview of Fort St. John

## 5.2 Planning on our Fringe

Development on the fringe of the City of Fort St. John is of paramount importance to the City, as it impacts the lands and services within the City itself today and in the future when lands on the fringe of the City may be considered for incorporation into the City's boundaries. In general, development on the fringe of the City should be rural in nature, further away from urban centres and not require community infrastructure, whereas urban development should be of a higher density, in closer proximity to urban centres and connected to community infrastructure.




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### Goal:

1. To work collaboratively with the Peace River Regional District to promote and develop a well-planned urban and fringe area.

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### Objectives:

1. Work with the Peace River Regional District to create strategies for development on the fringe of Fort St. John that are mutually beneficial for the Peace River Regional District and the City.
2. Promote planning best practices for development on the outskirts of Fort St. John.
3. Work collaboratively with the Peace River Regional District in reducing future sprawl and encouraging compact development.

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### Strategies:

1. To direct higher-density developments that require connection to water and sewer systems to locate within urban centres.
2. Collaborate with the Peace River Regional District, other neighbouring local governments and provincial agencies in the creation and implementation of plans and initiatives related to the fringe of Fort St. John.
3. Work collaboratively with the Peace River Regional District to enhance the referral processes for both jurisdictions with respect to Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendments and **Agricultural Land Reserve** applications.

## 5.3 Indigenous Inclusion and Partnerships

The City of Fort St. John is located on the traditional territory of the Dane-zaa. With Fort St. John serving as a regional service centre for people and industry, the seamless integration of neighbouring First Nations and Métis communities and all Indigenous peoples is of importance to the City. Collaboratively, the City and its neighbouring First Nations have and will continue to develop strategic partnerships that mutually benefit all.



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### Goal:

1. To have respectful, growing and mutually prosperous relationships with our First Nations and Métis governments and Indigenous neighbours.



*Image 14: Canada Day Parade*

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### Objectives:

1. Support awareness and recognition of First Nation and Métis communities and the importance of respecting treaty rights.
2. Acknowledge and respect First Nation and Métis communities and their role in our community's history and development.
3. Work in partnership with local First Nation and Métis communities for the betterment of Fort St. John and the strengthening of communities within the greater regional community.
4. Ensure a proactive and transparent planning process is established for potential reserve development within Fort St. John.

---

### Strategies:

1. Consider developing a framework and process for establishing Memorandums of Understanding with First Nations.
2. Work proactively with Indigenous peoples to ensure efficient and effective land use planning for future reserve and fee-simple lands.
3. Ensure **urban reserves** in the City are compatible with the surrounding land uses and long-term land use planning.
4. Ensure any **urban reserve** lands in the City are developed using the same development standards that apply to all other properties in the City.

# 6.0 Building a Resilient Fort St. John

An Official Community Plan typically sets out a land use component and a community development component. In addition to these distinct components, there may be themes that overarch all aspects of the Official Community Plan, or to which a community wants to bring special attention. These themes are contained within this section and are of significant importance to the community and the City of Fort St. John (City).

## 6.1 Transparency and Communication

Planning for the City of Fort St. John effectively requires that our **citizens** are able to access the information they need, whether through the internet, social media, mail, radio or other mediums. Fort St. John, being an accountable and responsible municipal government, strives to provide different forums using different mediums for discussion and feedback on the direction and decision-making of the City. These forums work to account for the diversity in which Fort St. John **citizens** access information, which is essential for meaningful dialogue between the **citizens** of Fort St. John and the City.




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### Goals:

1. To increase **citizen's** understanding about municipal decisions and increase their participation in the municipal decision-making process.
2. To have well-informed and engaged **citizens** that make use of clear, two-way channels of communication with the City.
3. To foster community discussions, dialogue and participation of **citizens**.

---

### Objectives:

1. Support the principles of transparency and accountability in governance through open and consistent communication with **citizens**.
2. Inform **citizens** regarding the achievements the City has made and the direction the City is taking moving forward.
3. Hold ongoing meaningful engagement with the **citizens** of Fort St. John regarding community achievements, needs and the quality of life in Fort St. John.

## Strategies:

1. Obtain input from the community to understand their preferred means of communicating with the City to be engaged in decision-making.
2. Continue to raise the profile of City-led and community-led initiatives.
3. Increase the diversity and frequency of communications from the City to the **citizens** of Fort St. John to increase the understanding and awareness regarding initiatives in the community.
4. Examine the level of internal communications within City departments to provide a holistic approach to municipal decision-making.
5. Consider developing a strategy for increasing the level of engagement of the community through public participation and fostering a two-way dialogue.
6. Create a municipal process guide tailored towards **citizen** understanding of the most common processes undertaken by **citizens** of Fort St. John.
7. Consider developing a municipal open data initiative and make data free and accessible to the public for **citizen** use and research.

## 6.2 Being a Sustainable Community

Throughout the Official Community Plan process, **citizens** talked about the importance of being a sustainable community. It is clear that beyond access to greenspace, **citizens** feel their City can take action to lead the community in this direction. This has led to the overarching theme of sustainable development within a sustainable community.

“A sustainable community is one that is economically, environmentally and socially healthy and resilient. It takes a long-term perspective - one that is focused on the present and future, well beyond the next budget or election cycle. As a result, **a sustainable community manages its human, natural and financial resources to meet current needs, while ensuring that adequate resources are equitably available for future generations.**”

- (Taken from the President’s Council on Sustainable Development, Institute for Sustainable Communities Elements of a Sustainable Community, *Sustainable Communities Task Force Report, 1997*)



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## Goals:

1. To create a community increasing in economic, environmental and social sustainability.
2. To be a leader in sustainable development in northern communities and a global contributor in this regard.
3. To promote and foster sustainable development.

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## Objectives

1. Demonstrate leadership by applying sustainable practices throughout the City.
2. Ensure future community planning implements and builds sustainable and complete neighbourhoods that foster a sense of community within the municipality.
3. Develop partnerships with other local governments, Indigenous communities, and industry who can assist the City in achieving sustainability objectives.
4. Adopt a holistic approach to achieving sustainability that is forward-looking, responsible, adaptive, innovative and integrated.
5. Ensure an adequate and suitable land base exists to accommodate responsible urban growth needs.
6. Ensure new growth pays for itself and will not be a burden on existing ratepayers.
7. Develop a Land Assembly Strategy that guides City land acquisitions.
8. Ensure the efficient use of land, infrastructure and other resources in accommodating growth.

---

## Strategies:

1. Continue working nationally and internationally with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, provincially with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and regionally with the North-Central Local Government Association and other agencies on sustainability initiatives.
2. Use **Neighbourhood Plans** for new development to direct growth in a manner that addresses social, economic and environmental considerations.
3. Recognize that large agricultural land uses will primarily be located outside of City boundaries.
4. Manage and direct growth using conservation design-based principles to conserve natural areas.



5. With the support of local **citizens**, identify opportunities in older neighbourhoods to intensify through **infill** development with the objective of creating complete and sustainable communities.
6. Develop educational materials and programming to enhance the general public's understanding of sustainability issues and processes.
7. Promote household practices and skills such as water conservation, local food production, native landscaping, recycling and composting and host events in partnership with local organizations to educate people on such practices.
8. Promote and encourage initiatives that work to create a sustainable community, such as car share spaces, geothermal and solar energy, district heat, stormwater retention, multi-modal transportation, and a wireless **downtown**.
9. Consider and encourage a range of housing types that work to create a sustainable community.
10. Ensure new growth areas incorporate **Smart Growth** and sustainable principles, such as:
  - a) Efficient water, sanitary sewer, stormwater, purple pipe and shallow utility infrastructure
  - b) Conservation and preservation of open space, urban agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas
  - c) Public transit access
  - d) Diversity of uses where possible including employment, housing, social housing, community services and other social needs
  - e) Resource and energy efficient buildings, infrastructure, waste management
  - f) Urban design principles that emphasize:
    - i. Sense of place
    - ii. Safe, accessible public spaces
    - iii. Internal and external connectivity
    - iv. Pedestrian and active transportation oriented streets
    - v. Winter design guidelines
    - vi. **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**
11. Develop design guidelines for a neighbourhood level rainwater capture and irrigation systems.

12. Encourage the use of conservation easements and other tools to protect the environment.

## 6.3 Making Infill Development a Priority

**Infill** development is a term used to describe new development that is constructed in an already developed area. **Infill** can come in different forms, scales and character and for many different land uses, such as agricultural, residential, commercial, institutional and industrial. From a residential perspective, placing additional housing units on a residential lot, dividing detached homes into multiple units, building on a **vacant** lot, redeveloping a surface parking area and rebuilding an apartment with more units are all forms of **infill**.

**Infill** development of all types makes use of existing infrastructure and already disturbed land, reduces development pressure on natural areas, and can support increased walking, biking and transit use. In addition, under-utilized parcels may benefit from the demolition of old buildings and subsequent redevelopment.



Image 15: Brown's Social House

In Fort St. John, **infill** also has the added advantage of bringing more people closer to existing and planned mixed use and commercial centres, particularly in the **downtown**, increasing the viability and vitality of the community and contributing to urban renewal.

Successful **infill** development must be carefully planned to minimize potential impacts on adjacent properties. Neighbourhood character, school catchment areas, infrastructure capacity, traffic safety, accessibility, parking, trees and landscaping,

public spaces, overshadowing and property values are some concerns often raised by **citizens**.

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### Goals:

1. To have a well-designed, high-quality, balanced municipality which promotes active lifestyles.
2. To support **infill** development, as **infill** is a priority.

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### Objectives:

1. Ensure efficient use of land resources.
2. Require **infill** development to fit with the existing neighbourhood context, to respect the scale, form, massing, style and materials of the neighbourhood and to

incorporate other design elements that create a transition between the new development and the existing neighbourhood.

3. Promote the development of walkable communities.
4. Support development which is high quality, accessible and sustainable, and meets the needs of the community.

### Strategies:

1. Require new developments to design sidewalks, trails and parks in compliance with **universal design** and crime prevention through **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** guidelines.
2. Apply a hierarchy of street users and give priority to walking, cycling and public transit before private vehicle use.
3. Promote and develop incentives for the development of existing **vacant** and **underutilized** lands.
4. Use **Neighbourhood Plans** to provide a cost-benefit analysis where viable **infill** sites are available.
5. Encourage timely sequencing for new **greenfield** development.
6. Consider the impact on **downtown** when making development and infrastructure decisions elsewhere in the City.
7. Conduct a **downtown** residential development capacity analysis to identify the maximum residential redevelopment potential of **vacant** and **underutilized** sites in the **downtown**.
8. Accommodate 10% of the projected housing needs through residential **infill** development in the **downtown**.
9. Ensure that all residential development provides access to at least one alternative form of transportation within 400 metres.



#### Did you know?

*Universal design refers to broad-spectrum ideas meant to produce buildings, products and environments that are inherently accessible to the widest range of people possible, and that are safer, easier and more convenient for everyone. Universal design evolved from Accessible Design, a design process that addresses the needs of people with disabilities.*

## 6.4 Vacant, Underutilized or Brownfield Lands Development

The City of Fort St. John has approximately 900 **vacant** or **underutilized parcels**. In addition, 66 parcels have been identified as potentially being **contaminated**, some of which are currently occupied by businesses that engage in activities that potentially cause contamination. Within the **downtown** area, seven parcels have been identified as **vacant, underutilized** and potentially contaminated. These parcels are often in visible, easily accessible locations and their development or redevelopment should be encouraged.



Image 16: H & R Block Building




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### Goal:

1. To facilitate the remediation and redevelopment of existing **brownfield** and **contaminated sites** within Fort St. John with uses that are consistent with the direction set forth in this Official Community Plan.

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### Objectives:

1. Identify and assess the environmental contamination, if any, of all **brownfield** sites within the City.
2. Encourage the use of **vacant, underutilized, brownfield** and **contaminated sites** for temporary uses.
3. Work with other levels of government and government agencies, the private sector and community partners to encourage the remediation of the existing **brownfield** sites within the current municipal boundary by 2030.



4. Work with other levels of government and government agencies, the private sector and community partners to develop and redevelop all **vacant brownfield** sites within the **downtown** by 2030.

---

### Strategies:

1. Compile a publicly accessible inventory of all existing **brownfield** sites within the current municipal boundary.
2. Develop an information package for **brownfield** sites that makes landowners and the community-at-large aware of programs and incentives available for remediation and redevelopment.
3. Seek financial assistance from agencies and organizations to create a **brownfield** development strategy that:
  - a) Considers waiving fees associated with the development approvals process for **brownfield** developments.
  - b) Considers developing a Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw that provides tax abatement incentives for the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites within the City.
  - c) Supports the undertaking of Environmental Site Assessments for brownfield sites and help property owners seek financial assistance from a variety of agencies and organizations to conduct the required field tests.
4. Work with the public and land owners of **brownfield** sites to identify temporary uses such as plazas, park space or parking facilities, until remediation or development can occur on the site.
5. Consider temporary use permits to encourage activities on **vacant, underutilized, brownfield** or contaminated parcels.

## 6.5 Embracing an Active Year-Round Lifestyle

While living an active lifestyle in the spring, summer and fall is relatively easy for most **citizens** of Fort St. John, embracing an active lifestyle year-round, particularly in the winter months, can be challenging. Fort St. John is one of the largest communities in Canada located north of the 56° parallel. The City's northerly location ensures that our community experiences a lengthy winter season that typically stretches from mid-October to mid-April. Colder temperatures, snowfall, strong winds resulting in wind chill and blowing snow and shorter sunny days typify the winter experienced in Fort St. John.

Fort St. John, like most communities that experience the winter season, has been planned and built with the spring, summer and fall seasons in mind. Rather than adapt practices to capture the positive features of winter, previous planning and policy have focused on

simply enduring winter until a more “favorable” season emerges. Rather than celebrate winter and its offerings, we are conditioned to protect ourselves from it.

Winter is an inherent part of the community’s identity and must be embraced as a feature of living in Fort St. John. The snowy landscape provides unique opportunities to provide new recreational and economic opportunities. Winter also presents challenges associated with harsher elements, such as longer periods of darkness, windchill and blowing snow. A livable winter city must embrace the season and capitalize on winter’s unique features, while working to mitigate its harsher effects.

Traditionally, **winter city elements** have focused on the design of buildings, streets and public spaces. A more integrated approach is needed that also considers the economic, social and policy implications of a winter city. In addition, Fort St. John must strive to capture the fun and enjoyable aspects of winter by creating spaces and places where **citizens** can be comfortable with and appreciate the winter elements. The City will focus on creating change in four pillars of a winter city: the *physical* realm, the *social* realm, the *economic* realm and the *policy* realm. Each of these realms is defined below.




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#### Did you know?

*The average winter temperature in Fort St. John is -15°C and the average monthly winter accumulation of snow is 29 cm.*

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- **Physical:** The built environment of a community, including buildings, streets, public open spaces and urban patterns of development.
- **Social:** The welfare of a community, including health, safety and environmental considerations.
- **Economic:** The opportunities and constraints experienced within a community on a general and individual level.
- **Policy:** The administration of policies and programs that guide the decision-making and service provision for a community.



Image 17: Embracing Winter




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### Goal:

1. To be a city which remains vibrant and active both indoors and outdoors through the winter months.

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### Objectives:

1. Celebrate the winter season and unique elements that it brings.
2. Take a holistic approach to winter planning that addresses the physical, social, economic and policy implications of the winter season.
3. Create a more climate responsive community that mitigates the impacts of harsher winter elements.
4. Provide community infrastructure, recreational opportunities and municipal services that are responsive to winter conditions.
5. Support initiatives and programs that improve social issues and conditions that arise and intensify during the winter season.
6. Utilize the winter season to develop new recreational and economic opportunities.

## Strategies:

### PHYSICAL:

1. Ensure new developments incorporate **winter city elements** as set out in the appropriate development permit area guidelines.
2. The City of Fort St. John will integrate **winter city elements** into the Zoning and Subdivision and Development Servicing bylaws by identifying key techniques and methods to achieve the elements of the guidelines.
3. Encourage the site planning and alignment of buildings in new subdivisions to be oriented to capture maximum passive solar gain and to mitigate prevailing westerly winds.
4. Investigate options for remaining active year-round and create an urban micro-climate in the **downtown** through **infill** development of different uses, building heights and footprints.
5. Encourage **infill** development and increased development densities in areas surrounding or adjacent to shopping centres and large retail areas to create winter heat islands that also mitigate strong winter winds.
6. Ensure new park and recreation infrastructure enables multi-season use. For example, constructing outdoor skating rinks that can be converted to sand volleyball courts during non-winter months or playgrounds with multi-seasonal equipment.
7. Encourage the orientation of new outdoor parks and playgrounds to capture and maximize solar passive gain.
8. Consider developing ice ribbons along multi-purpose trails in the winter months.
9. Consider strategic investment in bus shelters, tree screening and other public realm infrastructure that provide protection from harsher winter elements, such as wind and blowing snow.
10. Develop a seasonal winter themed park at a strategic central location that provides winter based recreational opportunities, such as ice skating, tobogganing and cross-country skiing.
11. Consider investing in placemaking initiatives to create public spaces that allow **citizens** to enjoy the winter elements in comfort, while highlighting and embracing the “fun” of winter.



*Image 18: High on Ice Festival*

## SOCIAL:

1. Encourage community groups and organizations to provide snow removal services for the homes of seniors and individuals with disabilities.
2. Consider developing a new indoor playground in a central location provided that it is connected to or in close proximity to outdoor winter themed recreational infrastructure.
3. Support developing programming that educates newcomers from warmer climates on Fort St. John's winter conditions, preparation and clothing needs required for winter.
4. Recognize the unique mobility challenges of seniors and persons with disabilities during the winter and ensure those challenges are considered during winter maintenance planning for roads and sidewalks.
5. Encourage local social agencies to develop secure warm spaces for vulnerable people during the winter.
6. Consider seasonally adjusting transit services to provide more frequent service during the winter months.



## ECONOMIC:

1. Consider developing a winter-specific tourism guide.
2. Continue to support and expand winter festivals and market them to a wider audience.
3. Continue to attract and host winter themed sporting and cultural events, such as the U-17 World Hockey Challenge, BC Winter Games and winter carnivals.
4. Consider providing support to Fort St. John based clubs, groups and organizations that maintain and operate snowmobile and cross-country ski trails throughout Fort St. John.

## POLICY:

1. Ensure the City's planning and policy frameworks respond to the unique needs, challenges and opportunities experienced during the winter season.
2. Update all City bylaws and policies in order to integrate and incorporate **winter city elements** into all aspects of development.
3. Incorporate **winter city elements** practices into existing municipal plans, bylaws, policies and operations.
4. Continually seek innovating winter design, planning and policy solutions and best practices from leading high-profile winter cities.
5. Consider a twinning or sister winter city to promote and enhance the winter city opportunities that exist.
6. Consider developing a Winter Strategy for Fort St. John which includes:
  - a) Identifying the needs, challenges and barriers associated with winter conditions from **citizens** and stakeholders
  - b) Adapting public spaces to become multi-seasonal
  - c) Expanding the outdoor recreational opportunities available in winter
  - d) Growing and strengthening the winter economy
  - e) Working with local community, service and social organizations to address the unique winter challenges experienced by different groups of people
  - f) Developing a winter maintenance planning framework
  - g) Developing an implementation plan

## 6.6 Activating the Downtown

The most effective way to activate a **downtown** is by making it a people-friendly destination that is vibrant throughout the day and night. An active and vibrant **downtown** is not achieved by any single initiative, project or development. Generating the movement of people throughout the **downtown** requires a diversity of reasons to go there. The **downtown** cannot be a singular place for the community to either work, live, access entertainment or purchase goods. Creating a mix of uses that operate at different times of the day and the public realm that generates a “sense of place” will also improve the sense of safety of the area. This will further bring life and activity to the **downtown**.




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### Goal:

1. To develop the **downtown** core into a people-friendly, vibrant, green and active neighbourhood that is the primary destination within Fort St. John for commercial, social, arts and cultural activities.

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### Objectives:

1. Implement the **Downtown** Action Plan.
2. Achieve a diverse mix of residential, commercial and civic uses in the **downtown**.
3. Create and maintain attractive, safe and comfortable **downtown** streetscapes.
4. Maintain and enhance the street tree canopy **downtown**.
5. Encourage the development of a “Restaurant Row” along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
6. Ensure a public space element is incorporated into the **downtown**.
7. Create streets that are walkable and comfortable for people.

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### Strategies:

1. Maintain and support the enhancement of civic and community uses in the **downtown**, such as City Hall, RCMP, the Library and North Peace Cultural Centre.
2. Support the relocation of civic and community uses in other parts of the City to the **downtown** as opportunities arise.
3. Consider developing a “sponsor-a-tree” program that enables businesses, community groups and residents to contribute to tree planting efforts in the **downtown**.
4. Prioritize the **downtown** when considering budgets for tree planting and beautification.

5. Support the development of outdoor on-sidewalk patios along the north side of 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue for restaurants and food establishments where appropriate.
6. Encourage the relocation of restaurants and pubs to spaces along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue and ensure those activities are supported by City regulations.
7. Focus professional and business offices, specialty retail, entertainment, restaurants and civic uses to locate in the **downtown** core.
8. Encourage niche retail businesses along 100<sup>th</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the **downtown** core.
9. Implement pilot projects that create temporary or potentially permanent changes to the **downtown** streetscape, such as temporary pocket parks, dedicated bike lanes and bike parking, designated on-street parking spaces for food trucks and pop-up patios.
10. Consider investment for the beautification of targeted rear lanes in the **downtown** that service higher density areas through the pedestrian scaled lighting, landscaping and public art installation.
11. Implement **downtown** parking strategies so that each block maintains an 80% occupancy rate.



Image 19: East along 100th Avenue

## 7.0 Land Use Plan

Land use is one of the primary functions of the Official Community Plan. Managing land resources is essential for the long-term viability and competitiveness of the community. Ensuring an adequate amount of land for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional development is key to a healthy and vibrant community. The way we manage our land resources is directly linked to infrastructure and growth and all areas of future development. The land use plan is shown in Schedule B.



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### Goals:

1. To focus on well-designed neighbourhoods to promote active lifestyles.
2. To identify the location of land uses that support community development and efficient use of land resources.
3. To provide high-quality, effective and efficient development in the community.
4. To work with neighbouring local governments and other partners to support, foster, and stimulate the North Peace Region as a significant and sustainable economic driver, through collaborative processes, the appropriate allocation of land uses, attracting investment and labour and building well-rounded communities.

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### Objectives:

1. Ensure efficient use of land resources within the **service boundary**.
2. Develop a consistent level of community quality and character in new development.

## 7.1 Agriculture

The City of Fort St. John (City) is fortunate to be surrounded by extensive farmland within the broader Peace River region. The majority of this farmed land is within the **Agricultural Land Reserve**. From a provincial perspective, 32% of the province's **Agricultural Land Reserve** land is located within our region.

Agricultural activities within the boundaries of the City can be considered from two viewpoints. First, **urban agriculture** in the form of backyard gardens, community gardens and similar small-scale activities which yield produce generally for consumption by individual households, is scattered throughout the community. Second, more extensive agricultural operations are currently underway in only two areas – the Fish Creek lands brought within the City as part of the 2014 boundary extension (crop production), and on selected lands included in the City in the 2016 boundary extension (pasture, notably in the northeast). Very little agricultural reserve land has previously

been included with the City boundaries since the inception of the **Agricultural Land Reserve**.

The 2014 and 2016 City boundary extensions resulted in 650 hectares of **Agricultural Land Reserve** land being brought within City boundaries. The intention of the City and the landowners is that these ALR lands be utilized for urban development. The provincial government was made aware of these intentions and supported the boundary extension, though the Agricultural Land Commission expressed reservations. The Agricultural Land Commission has provided support for approximately 144 hectares of land within the ALR for future urban development through the Official Community Plan review process. This carries forward the Commission's 2009 decision to support the exclusion and development of these areas for non-farm designations. The Commission supports the remaining approximately 480 hectares of land within the ALR to be retained in agricultural use.

Specific circumstances surrounding these lands, as well as their intended future designations, are described in Section 7.8 – Urban Development Areas of this Official Community Plan. In order to realize this vision, the City understands that removal of relevant lands from the **Agricultural Land Reserve** will be required through a principled, planned, responsible and staged removal. The **Agricultural Land Reserve** and development constraints are shown in Schedule C. The City and the Commission continue to have ongoing discussion regarding the inventory of land for urban development in the community throughout the life of this Official Community Plan, and leading up to the City's next Plan review.



*Image 20: Typical agricultural field in the Peace Region*



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## Goal:



1. To encourage and support appropriate agricultural uses and associated activities within the City.

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### Objective:

1. Ensure compatibility between agricultural land uses and other land uses.
2. Provide for an orderly transition of lands currently being used for extensive agricultural operations within the City to urban development.

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### Strategies:

1. Allow agricultural operations to continue within boundary extension areas until they are redeveloped in the future.
2. Collaborate with local farmers to encourage compatibility between agriculture and urban development through the application of the Guide to Edge Planning and other applicable resources prepared by the Agricultural Land Commission and provincial government.
3. Create a subdivision policy for lands located within City boundaries and within the **Agricultural Land Reserve**.
4. Promote small-scale **urban agriculture** intended to supply food to households, on private and public lands within the City. Small-scale **urban agriculture** may include, but is not limited to, community gardens and orchards, apiaries, edible landscaping and rooftop gardens.
5. Work collaboratively with the Agricultural Land Commission to assess community demand for urban development land regarding lands within the **Agricultural Land Reserve** and located within City boundaries, to identify suitable land for exclusion in a staged and responsible manner.
6. Explore the development of an agricultural strategy to provide direction and guidance on agricultural lands and use within an urban environment.



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#### Did you know?

*32% of all farmland in British Columbia is located in the Peace River Region (2011 Census of Agriculture).*

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## 7.2 Residential

Providing sufficient land to meet the evolving housing needs of Fort St. John **citizens** is vital. It is also critical to the sustainability and quality of life for the community. Through





the engagement process for the development of this Official Community Plan, it has been recognized that there is a desire for neighbourhoods that encompass a wide range of housing types for all income levels and family composition.

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### Goals:

1. To maintain a mix of tenures, price points and housing types to foster development in Fort St. John while providing **affordable, attainable** and **inclusive housing** options for **citizens**.
  2. To diversify the housing stock in Fort St. John.
  3. To foster densification within the existing boundary, specifically in the City's **downtown** while diversifying the housing stock.
- 

### Objectives:

1. Strive to achieve residential land uses of approximately 35% of the City's land base.
  2. Support residential growth and development while addressing concerns related to the environment, access to parks and natural areas, parking, traffic, noise, lights, and odour effects on other properties and neighbourhood character.
  3. Encourage and support more diverse housing options that respond to needs as they change over time, including **affordable, attainable** and **inclusive housing**.
  4. Encourage the development of new housing that integrates with the character of existing neighbourhoods.
  5. Encourage and support the upgrading and retrofitting of older houses.
  6. Support the development of supportive housing and community care facilities, preferably close to community services and public transit.
  7. Support the development of **adaptive housing** to meet the changing needs of a household over its lifespan and enable aging in place.
  8. Encourage the development of a range of seniors living facilities, from independent living to extended care, within the community.
  9. Continue the partnership with School District No. 60's Residential Construction Program.
- 

### General Strategies:

1. Encourage all residential development and redevelopment projects to minimize the disturbance of existing trees, topographic features and landscaped areas that contribute character and quality to the streetscape. Where these areas are disturbed, encourage the installation of new features and landscaped areas that

contribute to the streetscape and are consistent with other well-developed landscapes in the neighbourhood.

2. Ensure that new residential subdivisions include a mandatory dedication of park space included in the development, or require a cash-in-lieu payment as an alternative approach, only if the park space does not meet the minimum park size of 0.4 ha.
3. Ensure that a planned subdivision or development incorporates a rhythm in its design, rather than a repetition or pattern of building types.

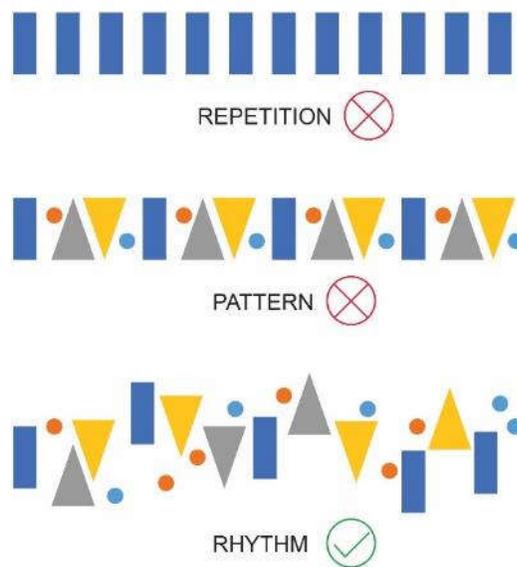


Figure 10: Demonstration of rhythm of development  
(Source: <http://artbvss.weebly.com/pod/category/all>)

### 7.2.1 Low Density Residential

The low density residential land use designation is designed to enable the development of residential areas containing primarily single family residential development. This style of residential development will have a maximum **gross density** of 20 units per hectare.

#### Strategies:

1. Encourage Low Density Residential development to a maximum of 20 units per hectare in areas designated Low Density Residential on the Land Use map (Schedule B).
2. Encourage the development of detached **suites**, such as carriage houses or garage **suites**, in Low Density Residential areas that have rear lane access.



3. Encourage the development of attached **suites** in single-detached homes by permitting **suites** in selected zones.
4. Support closer front setbacks of residential dwellings to sidewalks in the Zoning Bylaw to increase pedestrian friendliness.
5. Support home based businesses, provided that they are clearly secondary and incidental to the principal residential use.
6. Encourage more open green space and better snow storage capacity in subdivisions.

## 7.2.2 Medium Density Residential

Medium density residential development is intended to contain a mix of single family and multiple family residential developments with a maximum **gross density** of 55 units per hectare.

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### Strategies:

1. Encourage Medium Density Residential development to a maximum of 55 units per hectare in areas designated Medium Density Residential on the Land Use map (Schedule B).
2. Manage the density of developments and neighbourhoods by ensuring that attached **suites** are not developed within duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes.
3. Encourage new medium density residential areas to be rear lane accessible, with required parking for individual dwelling units to be accessible by rear lanes where appropriate.
4. Support a pedestrian environment by requiring underground or below grade parking on larger projects with higher densities, and accessed from rear lanes. For smaller projects where parking is at grade, locate parking lots or parking garages behind buildings away from the primary street to the greatest degree possible.
5. Required parking facilities and open space for residential developments must include **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** principles in their design and construction.
6. All medium density residential development must incorporate **winter city elements**.
7. Council may consider applications for the reduction of the outside open space requirement in proposed developments with four or greater units up to 50% where:
  - a) South-facing indoor amenity space is provided at a minimum of 3 m<sup>2</sup> per unit
  - b) A **green roof** is proposed as an open space offset
  - c) Landscape enhancements are proposed that will increase the aesthetic and usability of the proposed open space



- d) The landscape design integrates the **winter city elements**
  - e) Garden plots are planned
  - f) There is inclusion of no-step entries and accessible design for at least 25% of the dwelling units
8. Use Medium Density Residential designated lands to act as a buffer between Low Density Residential and High Density Residential designated lands.

### 7.2.3 High Density Residential

High density residential land uses are designed to enable the development of primarily multiple family residential developments with a minimum **gross density** of 55 units per hectare.

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#### Strategies:

1. Encourage High Density Residential development with a minimum density of 55 units per hectare in areas designated High Density Residential on the Land Use map (Schedule B).
2. High density residential areas will be generally located on arterial roads and within and along the periphery of the **downtown** core.
3. Support a pedestrian environment by placing parking underground, below grade, or at grade under cover on larger projects with higher densities. For smaller projects where parking is at grade, locate parking lots or parking garages behind buildings away from the primary street.
4. Required parking facilities and open space for residential developments must include **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** principles in their design and construction.
5. All high density residential development must incorporate **winter city elements**.
6. Council may consider applications for the reduction of the outside open space requirement in proposed developments with four or greater units up to 50% where:
  - a) South-facing indoor amenity space is provided at a minimum of 3 m<sup>2</sup> per unit
  - b) A **green roof** is proposed as an open space offset
  - c) Landscape enhancements are proposed that will increase the aesthetic and usability of the proposed open space
  - d) The landscape design integrates **winter city elements**
  - e) Garden plots are planned

- f) There is inclusion of no-step entries and accessible design for at least 25% of the dwelling units

## 7.2.4 Downtown Residential



The **downtown** core of Fort St. John should be developed to enable a mix of multiple family residential types and configurations as envisioned in the **Downtown** Action Plan.

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### Goals:

1. To develop a vibrant and active **downtown** core.
2. To support residential **infill** development in single family detached residential neighbourhoods surrounding the **downtown** core.
3. To support the redevelopment of single-detached homes into higher density forms in the **downtown** core.
4. To encourage the amalgamation of lots in the **downtown** to encourage redevelopment.
5. To develop the **downtown** core as a viable and thriving urban community.

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### Objectives:

1. Facilitate the **infill** and redevelopment of designated areas in the **downtown** core for medium **gross density** residential of 20 to 55 units per hectare consisting of a variety of housing types as envisioned in the **Downtown** Action Plan.
2. By 2030, increase the number of residential dwellings units in the **downtown** by 310 units, or 10% of the projected housing needs for 2030.

---

### Strategies:

1. Apply **Downtown Development Permit Area** guidelines to all developments within the **Downtown** Commercial Mixed Use designation.
2. Council may consider applications for buildings over six storeys as opportunities occur.
3. Require parking for new residential development to be lane accessible and in enclosed structures.
4. Require larger residential redevelopment sites to develop a rear lane.
5. Place parking underground or below grade on larger projects with higher densities. For smaller projects where parking is at grade, locate parking lots or parking garages behind buildings away from the primary street to the greatest degree possible.

6. Required parking facilities and open space for residential developments must include **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** principles in their design and construction.
7. Council may consider applications for the reduction of the outside open space requirement in proposed developments with four or greater units up to 50% where:
  - a) South-facing indoor amenity space is provided at a minimum of 3 m<sup>2</sup> per unit
  - b) A **green roof** is proposed as an open space offset
  - c) Landscape enhancements are proposed that will increase the aesthetic and usability of the proposed open space
  - d) On-site gardening plots are provided at a minimum of 3 m<sup>2</sup> per unit
  - e) There is inclusion of no-step entries and accessible design for at least 25% of the building.
8. All **downtown** residential development must incorporate **winter city elements**.

## 7.3 Commercial

Historically, commercial development began in the heart of the City, at 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 100<sup>th</sup> Street. Commercial development radiated out along these two corridors, and then commercial clusters began developing, including the Totem Mall area, and the western and eastern entrances to the City along the Alaska Highway. It is anticipated that these areas will continue to develop over the next five to ten years and beyond. By meeting the needs of the **citizens** of Fort St. John for local commercial and large format establishments, the City encourages **citizens** to shop locally and continue to build the commercial capacity of the City.



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### Goals:

1. To provide adequate amounts of commercially-designated land to facilitate economic development, without contributing to commercial sprawl.
2. To encourage a wide range of retail, office, financial, institutional, service, entertainment, food and beverage, and accommodations that provide amenities for local **citizens**.

---

### Objectives:

1. Recognize the existing commercial businesses serving the community.
2. Encourage a range of commercial uses that focuses on meeting the needs of **citizens** and visitors alike, while also maximizing local retail.

3. Encourage a range of tourism accommodations, services and activities that cater to tourists and the travelling public alike.



*Image 21: Looking north on 100th Street*

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### General Strategies:

1. Investigate options to encourage owners of **vacant** or **underutilized** land to develop their properties to meet market demands.
2. Ensure that all new commercial developments are visually appealing and built to a high standard.
3. All commercial developments must incorporate **winter city elements**.

#### 7.3.1 Neighbourhood Commercial

The neighbourhood commercial land use designation is designed to facilitate the creation of complete neighbourhoods by providing opportunities for small-scale retail, food and beverage and personal service oriented commercial development in new and existing residential areas.

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### Strategies:

1. Generally locate neighbourhood commercial areas in the centre of new neighbourhood developments.
2. Restrict neighbourhood commercial uses to neighbourhood pubs and restaurants, smaller retail, grocery and other similar commercial uses.



3. Encourage the development of public spaces in neighbourhood commercial areas.
4. Encourage the development of neighbourhood commercial areas within Urban Development Areas.
5. Consider neighbourhood commercial uses in multiple-family areas.
6. All commercial developments must incorporate **winter city elements**.

### 7.3.2 General Commercial

The general commercial land use designation is designed to accommodate the temporary and permanent general commercial needs of the community, such as retail, food and beverage and personal services oriented developments.

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#### Strategies:

1. Encourage owners of sites which may have been subject to soil contamination to mitigate the contamination and promote the redevelopment of these sites for future commercial development.
2. Consider the redesignation and rezoning of lands in the northeast, northwest and southeast quadrants to support small to medium scale grocery store development.
3. Continue to work with land owners of **brownfield** sites to identify interim uses such as plazas, park space or parking facilities, until remediation or development can occur on the site.
4. All commercial developments must incorporate **winter city elements**.

### 7.3.3 Highway Commercial

The highway commercial land use designation is designed to ensure a continuous and visually appealing commercial development along the portion of the Alaska Highway within the municipal boundary, focused on meeting the needs of the travelling public.

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#### Strategies:

1. Encourage the **infill** of existing **vacant** Highway Commercial parcels and areas before designating any new Highway Commercial areas.
2. Encourage commercial uses to front along the Alaska Highway and identified major corridors to improve the first impressions of the City.
3. Encourage permanent structures in all Highway Commercial designated areas.
4. Require landscaping to screen new developments to create an **attractive streetscape** for travelers on the Alaska Highway.

5. All commercial developments must incorporate **winter city elements**.

### 7.3.4 Downtown Commercial Mixed Use



This land use designation is designed to direct commercial and mixed use development to the **downtown** core to create a vibrant and active **downtown** neighbourhood as envisioned in the **Downtown** Action Plan.

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#### Goal:

1. To promote **infill** and redevelopment of higher density forms of commercial, residential and mixed used developments in designated areas of **downtown** as envisioned in the **Downtown** Action Plan.

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#### Objectives:

1. Implement the **Downtown** Action Plan to revitalize the **downtown** area.
2. Encourage and support commercial businesses to locate in the **downtown** area.

---

#### Strategies:

1. Apply **Downtown Development Permit Area** guidelines to all developments within the **Downtown** Commercial Mixed Use designation.
2. Require buildings fronting on 100<sup>th</sup> Street and/or 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue within the **downtown** core to have pedestrian-oriented, ground floor commercial uses.
3. Encourage parking for new and existing commercial and mixed use development to be lane accessible and in enclosed structures.
4. Require larger commercial and mixed use redevelopment sites to develop a rear lane that bisects the entire site.
5. Develop a **downtown** core commercial mixed use zone in the *Zoning Bylaw* that reflects the desired **downtown** commercial and mixed use development envisioned in the **Downtown** Action Plan.
6. Encourage the development of rooftop patios and open space.
7. Explore strategies and funding mechanisms to stimulate development as envisioned in the **Downtown** Action Plan in the **downtown** core.
8. Consider reduced parking requirements for all uses within the designated **downtown** core in instances where other parking solutions or options are presented.
9. All commercial mixed use development in the **downtown** must incorporate **winter city elements**.



10. Required parking facilities and open spaces for commercial and mixed use developments must include **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** principles in their design and construction.

## 7.4 Industrial

Industrial activity in and around Fort St. John has been primarily geared towards the energy, forestry and agriculture sectors and supporting industry. Ensuring that the City's industrial lands are used to their full potential and serve a diversity of sectors is of importance to the community. While the City has a wide range of smaller industrial parcels, it only has a few parcels large enough to accommodate heavy industrial development.



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### Goal:

1. To provide adequate amounts of industrial designated land to facilitate economic development without contributing to industrial sprawl.

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### Objectives:

2. Encourage convenient combinations of highway uses and industrial focused commercial in the City while providing efficient access to services within the City.
3. Maximize the use of lands designated as industrial, before seeking new industrial lands.
4. Ensure a combination of small and large parcels are available to accommodate a diversity of industrial uses within the City.



*Image 22: Industrial operation*

### Strategies:

1. Continue to work with the Peace River Regional District to plan for industrial development in and around the City through the development of a fringe area policy.
2. Continue to encourage existing industrial users located within commercial areas to relocate to areas designated as industrial.
3. Promote the location of industrial office buildings and landscaping fronting on main roads within lands designated as industrial to visually buffer industrial activities from vehicle and pedestrian traffic.
4. Prioritize the **infill** of existing **vacant** industrial parcels before designating any new industrial areas.
5. Encourage the use of permanent structures in industrial areas wherever practical.
6. Direct heavy industrial developments to the large industrial parcels located southwest of the North Peace Regional Airport and north of the Alaska Highway.
7. All industrial developments must incorporate **winter city elements**.

## 7.5 Institutional

Institutional properties may be in public or private ownership and often have high community value – some for the social innovation opportunities that they provide and many for the character of the buildings and landscapes on the grounds. Institutional uses generally include hospitals, public health facilities, community centres, tourist information centres, government buildings, places of worship, schools and cemeteries.



### Goal:

1. To provide an adequate amount of institutional-designated land to facilitate **sustainable community development**.

### Objectives:

1. Enhance and expand public institutional facilities where practical, including education, library, health care facilities and cemeteries.
2. Encourage institutional facilities to provide spaces that can be made available for use by the community.



Image 23: Fort St. John Hospital and Residential Care

## Strategies:

1. Continue working with School District No. 60 to identify new school sites.
2. Collaborate with School District No. 60 in the development of new schools in the community.
3. Partner with School District No. 60, post-secondary institutions, independent schools, preschools and the Fort St. John Public Library to expand community education opportunities.
4. Work with post-secondary institutions to explore how the City can support their plans for providing an increase in their range of services and programs in the City.
5. Continue to encourage local, provincial and federal offices to locate above the ground floor within the **downtown** in order to help enhance the vitality of the **downtown**.
6. Encourage institutional facilities to provide opportunities for community use of their properties for indoor programs and outdoor and indoor recreation uses where possible.
7. Consider accessory and supportive commercial and multiple-family residential developments on institutional properties where this will not prevent or hinder the primary institutional use.
8. Encourage social enterprises to partner with institutional organizations to work towards achieving a sustainable future by using shared facilities and spaces for the delivery of social enterprise programming. Social enterprises could encompass a range of programming, including but not limited to daycares, cafes, pre-schools, skills and literacy training, impact micro-lending, or vehicle/bike share programs.
9. Continue to permit community care facilities in both institutional and residential designated areas.
10. All institutional developments must incorporate **winter city elements** into their designs.

## 7.6 Parks, Natural Areas & Trails

Parks, natural areas and trails are often associated as main contributors to the quality of life of a community. This is one of the foundations to developing a lasting healthy and sustainable community in the present and future.



### Did you know?

*Fort St. John has a total of 193.55 hectares of park space, which includes 67.9 hectares of community parks, 14.6 hectares of neighbourhood parks, 68.5 ha of natural parks, 15.5 ha of greenspace and 27.1 hectares of school sites/playgrounds.*



### General Goal:

1. To provide a sufficient, accessible, well maintained and interlinking parks, natural areas and trails systems that provide a range of environmental, social and economic benefits for Fort St. John.

### General Objectives:

1. Work towards ensuring all residential dwelling units are within a 400 metre radius or five minute walk of a neighbourhood park and within an 800 metre radius of a community park.
2. Undertake the planning and redevelopment of key community parks within the City.
3. Work towards the development of 50% of all the trails and parks in the City to be accessible with “eyes on the space” and lighted for safe night-time use.
4. Continue to acquire parkland through various avenues to ensure future City growth maintains the existing parkland supply ratio.
5. Continue to expand and build upon the existing multi-purpose trail network on a yearly basis.
6. Consider developing ice ribbons along multi-purpose trails in the winter months.
7. Consider indigenous and historical names for new parks, street and institutions.
8. Plant trees in conjunction with the development of new trails.
9. Expand and protect natural areas and natural parks within the City and the City’s periphery.

### General Strategies:

1. Adopt a park hierarchy as set out in the Park Hierarchy table on the following pages.

Table 3: City of Fort St. John Park Hierarchy Table

| Park Category   | Examples  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Community Park</b></p> <p><u>Intent:</u><br/>To serve several neighbourhoods and in some instances, the entire City and provide a range of recreational amenities.</p> <p><u>Catchment Area Radius:</u> 800 metres and beyond</p> <p><u>Size:</u> 11+ hectares and greater</p> <p><u>Amenities and Facilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sports fields and bleachers</li> <li>• courts</li> <li>• play areas</li> <li>• walkways or trails</li> <li>• washrooms</li> <li>• parking lots</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centennial Park</li> <li>• Kin Park</li> <li>• Surerus Park</li> <li>• Toboggan Hill Park</li> <li>• Matthews Park</li> <li>• Parkwood Southlands (to be developed)</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Neighbourhood Park</b></p> <p><u>Intent:</u><br/>To serve a single neighbourhood or neighbourhoods within a 400 metre radius that are accessed primarily by walking.</p> <p><u>Catchment Area Radius:</u> 400 metres</p> <p><u>Size:</u> 0.4 to 1+ hectares</p> <p><u>Amenities and Facilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• play equipment</li> <li>• small sports field or courts</li> <li>• pathways</li> <li>• open grass and seating</li> <li>• washrooms</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panorama Ridge Park</li> <li>• Concorde Park</li> <li>• WI Centennial Park</li> <li>• Triangle Park</li> <li>• Garrison Park</li> <li>• Pickell Park</li> <li>• Estate Park</li> <li>• Princess Crescent Park</li> <li>• Tot Lot Park</li> <li>• Greenspace on 86<sup>th</sup> Street / 98<sup>th</sup> Avenue</li> <li>• Parkwood Southlands (to be developed)</li> </ul> |

Table 4: City of Fort St. John Park Hierarchy Table (cont....d)

| Park Category   | Examples   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Natural Parks</b></p> <p><u>Intent:</u><br/>To provide access and recreational opportunities to parks dominated by natural features, such as forests and watercourses</p> <p><u>Catchment Area Radius:</u> Entire City and beyond</p> <p><u>Size:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Amenities and Facilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails</li> <li>• Gathering areas</li> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Washrooms</li> <li>• Parking lots</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fish Creek Community Forest</li> <li>• Parkwood Southlands (to be developed)</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Green Space</b></p> <p><u>Intent:</u><br/>To provide additional publicly-owned parkland that is undeveloped or that does not support a significant amount of use but contributes to the visual character of the community. Green spaces may include small grassed or treed properties or boulevards that do not have significant trails or recreation amenities.</p> <p><u>Catchment Area Radius:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Size:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Amenities and Facilities:</u><br/>N/A</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chiulli Triangle</li> <li>• 111<sup>th</sup> Avenue triangle near Peace River Road</li> <li>• Cadet Park</li> <li>• Tahltan Road at 112<sup>th</sup> Street</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>School Sites</b></p> <p>Intent: The green space portion of public school sites that excludes any school buildings or parking lots. These sites are under the jurisdiction of School District No. 60, but have parklike values and are used as de facto parks outside of school hours.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Peace Secondary School</li> <li>• Bert Ambrose, Duncan Cran, Robert Ogilvie, Alwin Holland, C.M. Finch, “Ma” Murray and Ecole Central Elementary Schools</li> <li>• Bert Bowes and Dr. Kearney Middle Schools</li> <li>• Key Learning Centre</li> </ul> |

2. When new parkland is opened, consider acquiring natural, low maintenance areas, or lands in a natural undeveloped state until the City has the staff and resources to develop and maintain the parkland.
3. Continue to encourage local service clubs and community groups to assist in developing and maintaining parks.
4. Implement the direction for park development as contained within the Fort St. John Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
5. Expand the park and trail network set out in Schedule D.
6. Preserve creek banks, steep slopes, ravines, important plant life, wildlife habitat and environmentally sensitive areas under a new natural area zone.



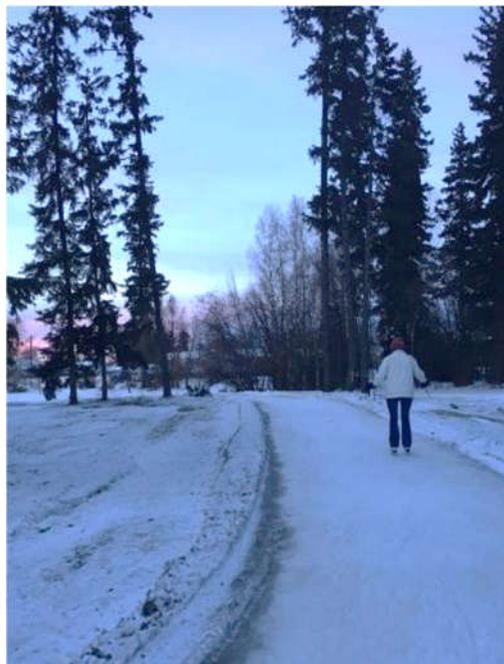
*Image 24: City Trails*

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### Park Acquisition Strategies:

1. Generally, acquire parkland in areas designated for future parks as directed by Schedule D and the Proposed Parks and Trails map in the Fort St. John Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
2. Ensure **Neighbourhood Plans** for new subdivisions contain park locations that generally align with the areas designated for future parks as directed by the Proposed Parks and Trails map in the Fort St. John Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

3. Acquire parkland through the 5% parkland dedication for subdivision, as set out in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
4. For industrial developments, acquire parkland through the 5% parkland cash-in-lieu.
5. Seek opportunities to acquire parkland through City purchases using general revenues, land donations from landowners and partnerships with other local governments, the local business community, community groups and residents.
6. Work with developers and property owners to acquire environmentally sensitive lands that are undevelopable for the intention of establishing natural areas.
7. Consider acquiring trail corridors as part of the required 5% parkland dedication when development occurs in order to ensure continuous trail corridors and networks throughout the City.
8. Investigate the potential of crowdsourcing within the community as a tool for acquiring parkland.
9. When acquiring parkland, generally prioritize the acquisition of land for community parks in locations directed by the Parks and Recreation Master Plan over neighbourhood parks.
10. Pedestrian walkways or paths that provide pedestrian connections between cul-de-sacs and local streets will not be considered parkland or contribute to the parkland dedication requirements of a subdivision application.



*Image 25: Matthews Park Skating Loop*

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## Park Design and Development Strategies:

1. Develop Master Plans for the following parks to direct their future redevelopment:
  - Centennial Park
  - Kin Park
  - Toboggan Hill Park
  - Surerus Park
  - Fish Creek Community Forest
2. Ensure Master Plans for key parks are developed in accordance with the Park Master Planning Process contained in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
3. Ensure processes and planning for upgrades to neighbourhood parks follow the Neighbourhood Park Planning Process contained in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
4. Ensure future park design and improvements provide multi-seasonal recreation opportunities, specifically for the winter season.
5. Apply the Park Design Guidelines contained in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to the design of new and upgraded parks.

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## Trail Design and Development Strategies:

1. Ensure extensions to the existing community trail network generally follow the future trail network as directed by the Proposed Parks and Trails Map in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
2. Ensure **Neighbourhood Plans** for new subdivisions incorporate the guidelines for the planning of trails in new developments as contained in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
3. Apply **universal design** and **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** principles when planning and designing trails.
4. Exclusive of the **Downtown** Action Plan, coordinate the development of on-road bike lanes with the development of off-road multi-purpose trails to ensure connectivity between the two trail types.
5. Investigate opportunities to coordinate trail development with the Peace River Regional District to connect City trails with regional trails to destinations such as Charlie Lake, Beaton River (Cactus Trails), Baldonnel, Taylor and the Peace River.
6. Coordinate trail investment to build connections between the City's trail system and the future 100<sup>th</sup> Street Greenway.

## 7.7 Public Utility



Public utility uses generally include water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer municipal infrastructure, such as sewage lagoons, water treatment plants, bulk water stations, water reservoirs and major stormwater detention ponds. Schedules F and G show the City's water and sanitary sewer infrastructure and public utility land use designations are shown in Schedule B.

### Goals:

1. To provide public utilities in a suitable and efficient manner for long-term fiscal and environmental sustainability.
2. To ensure the security of the City's municipal infrastructure against vandalism and/or preventable damage.
3. To ensure the safety of the public with respect to municipal infrastructure by restricting public access to infrastructure as required.

### Objectives:

1. Maintain public utilities to ensure the City's municipal infrastructure is efficiently used.
2. Enhance and expand public utilities where practical and feasible.

### Strategies:

1. Ensure sufficient land is available to accommodate the public utility land requirements for a minimum 50 year period.
2. Generally locate public utility areas away from residential areas except in the case of stormwater detention ponds.
3. Permit public utilities in industrial designated lands, provided that there is a surplus of **vacant** industrial land available to accommodate the five year projected need for industrial land.



Image 26: South Lagoons



4. Ensure public utility structures, buildings, lagoons and ponds are adequately buffered from adjacent land uses, or incorporate landscaping and other beautification measures to improve their aesthetics.
5. Continue to review and implement the Stormwater Master Plan and Liquid Waste Management Plan.
6. Work with the Peace River Regional District in the implementation of the region-wide Solid Waste Management Plan that was completed in 2008.
7. Develop long-term utility plans.

## 7.8 Urban Development Areas

There are a number of land areas within the boundaries of the City on which the City envisions urban development will take place in the coming years. A number of these areas were brought within the City's boundaries as part of boundary extensions in 2014 and 2016. In addition, there are **vacant** sites of special significance within the City's **downtown**. These lands have been collectively referred to as Urban Development Areas and are so-designated in this Official Community Plan and shown on Schedule B.

Beyond the fact that the City envisions urban development on these lands are two additional common features which unite them. First, general directions have been established for future land uses in these areas, comprising one or a combination of residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, park / natural area uses. Second, further planning is required within these Urban Development Areas to more specifically locate land uses and associated infrastructure, services and amenities through the development of **neighbourhood plans**. In addition, exclusions from the **Agricultural Land Reserve** will be supported by the City when a complete **neighbourhood plan** is adopted within the OCP, and with the support of the Agricultural Land Commission.

It is recognized that several of the Urban Development Areas are wholly or partially within the **Agricultural Land Reserve**, which is shown on Schedule C. The City of Fort St. John recognizes that this broader regional agricultural land base is under continuing pressure for subdivision and development and is committed to working with the Agricultural Land Commission to facilitate future exclusion of these lands only when development demand necessitates their exclusion, and provided this demand is based on justifiable data and that development occurs based on sound planning principles. Simultaneously, the City has worked with the Province to expand its municipal boundaries with the intent of hosting more urban density development within its corporate limits. The City believes that this will lessen the pressure on the regional agricultural base, and allow more orderly development within the City. This will require collaboration with the Agricultural Land Commission to accomplish the intent of **Agricultural Land Reserve** exclusions.

The City recognizes that land with non-agricultural designations that are within the **Agricultural Land Reserve** and without the endorsement of the Agricultural Land Commission is considered to be inconsistent with the Agricultural Land Commission Act and the related regulations, and is, to the extent of the inconsistency, of no force or effect in this OCP Bylaw. Furthermore, the City understands that removal of relevant lands from the **Agricultural Land Reserve** will be required through a principled, planned, responsible and staged removal.



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### General Goal:

1. Ensure the orderly development of designated Urban Development Areas which takes into account sound community planning principles.

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### General Objectives:

1. Work with landowners and other stakeholders, including the Agricultural Land Commission where relevant, to prepare and implement plans which will guide the evolution of the Urban Development Areas.
2. Encourage a logical and sequential pattern of urban expansion from one Urban Development Area to another, as well as within individual Urban Development Areas, in contrast to uncoordinated, ad hoc and /or non-sequential development.

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### General Strategies:

1. Require the preparation of **Neighbourhood Plans** for all Urban Development Areas where the owner wishes to advance development.
2. Once a **Neighbourhood Plan** has been adopted as an amendment to the City's Official Community Plan, those Urban Development Area lands will be redesignated to other Official Community Plan designations.
3. Consider infrastructure and other service provisions, as well as cost recovery tools, as means to encourage the logical and sequential pattern of urban expansion.
4. Work collaboratively with the Agricultural Land Commission to assess community demand for urban development land regarding lands within the **Agricultural Land Reserve** and located within the City boundaries, to identify suitable land for exclusion in a staged and responsible manner.
5. Create a subdivision policy for lands located within City boundaries and within the **Agricultural Land Reserve**.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA 1 – FORMER HOSPITAL SITE

The former Fort St. John Hospital was located on 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue, between 96<sup>th</sup> Street and 98<sup>th</sup> Street. The hospital was closed in mid-2012, when the new regional hospital opened. Demolition began shortly thereafter. This site is approximately 2.5 hectares in size. While the land is still currently owned by Northern Health, the City’s **Downtown** Action Plan envisions this area as a mixed use energy innovation district.



### Goals:

1. Work in partnership with Northern Health to complete the redevelopment of the former hospital site by 2030 to act as the eastern gateway into the **downtown** core.
2. Ensure redevelopment on the site embodies the vision for the site as provided in the **Downtown** Action Plan as a mixed use energy, health and innovation district.
3. Work in partnership with Northern Health, to develop a component of social, student and seniors housing as part of an energy, health and innovation district.

### Objectives:

1. Form a partnership with educational and health institutions and resource industry leaders to develop a satellite campus focused on energy and health innovation.



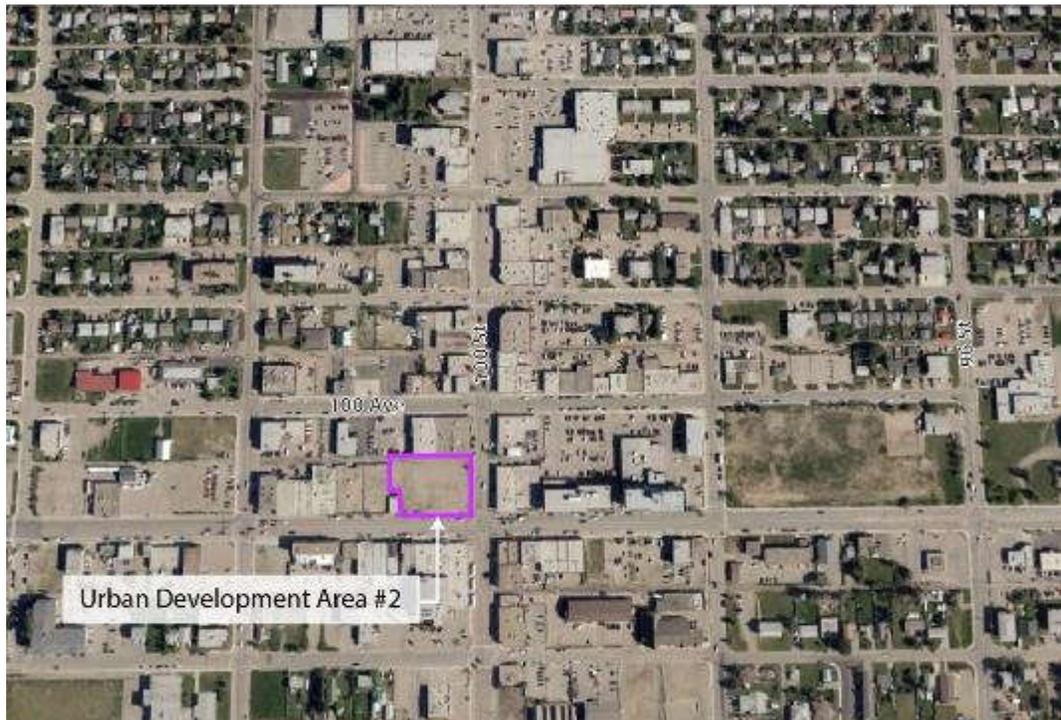
2. Through innovative partnerships, complete the satellite campus portion of the project by 2030.
  3. Complete the residential, office, retail and public plaza components of the project by 2025.
- 

### Strategies:

1. Require that the development concept incorporates design aspects provided for the site in the **Downtown** Action Plan that includes:
  - a) Commercial office and retail components
  - b) Institutional component
  - c) Multiple family residential component
  - d) Public plaza component
2. Ensure all required parking for development is provided through tuck-under, garage and internally located surface or underground parking that is only accessible by 98<sup>th</sup> Street and 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue.
3. Ensure no surface parking lots have any portion of the parking lot fronting onto 98<sup>th</sup> Street, 96<sup>th</sup> Street, 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
4. Ensure the proposed development concept and plan incorporates the **Downtown Development Permit Area** guidelines and **winter city elements**.
5. Consider providing development and/or financial incentives, as identified in the **Downtown** Action Plan, for the site if the proposed development provides amenities, such as **affordable housing** or off-site community infrastructure including but not limited to parks, schools, public transportation facilities or libraries.
6. Consider creating a development concept plan for the site and issuing a Request for Proposal for ownership and development of the site that follows the concept.
7. Maintain a continuous street front along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA 2 – FORT HOTEL SITE (100<sup>TH</sup> STREET AND 100<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE)

The Fort Hotel site is the former location of Fort St. John’s historic Fort Motor Hotel, which caught fire in 2009 and was demolished in 2011. The site is currently being used as a temporary public space and is approximately 0.5 hectares in size. The **Downtown** Action Plan contains short and long-term development concepts for the site. This Urban Development Area is intended to oversee the development of the **Downtown** Action Plan’s long-term vision for the site, as a mixed use commercial development with a public space component.



### Goal:

1. Develop the Fort Hotel Site to become the focal destination for the **downtown** core.

### Objectives:

1. Complete the redevelopment of the Fort Hotel site within a five year time period.
2. Ensure redevelopment on the site embodies the vision for the site as provided in the **Downtown** Action Plan as a mixed use development with an accessible public space.



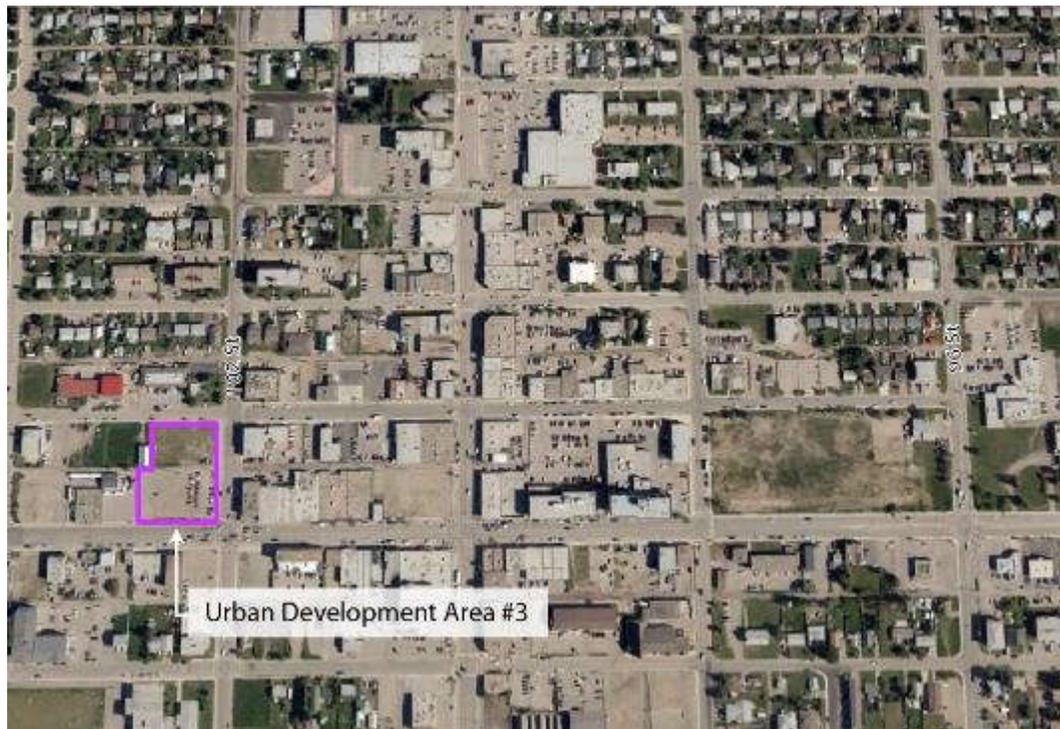
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## Strategies:

1. Require that the development concept incorporates design aspects provided for the site in the **Downtown** Action Plan that includes:
  - a) Commercial component
  - b) Multiple family residential or institutional component
  - c) Open spaces and plazas
  - d) Landscaping
  - e) Passive recreation opportunities
  - f) Supports multi-modal transportation opportunities, with a special focus on walkability, cycling and pedestrian linkages
2. Consider creating a development concept plan for the site and issuing a Request for Proposal for ownership and development of the site that follows the concept plan.
3. Consider providing development and/or financial incentives, as identified in the **Downtown** Action Plan, for the site if the proposed development provides amenities, such as **affordable housing** or off-site community infrastructure including but not limited to parks, schools, public transportation facilities or libraries.
4. Complete upgrades to the rear lane at the rear of the site to ensure good access to future parking facilities associated with development of the site.
5. Require the public space component to incorporate public seating, pedestrian scaled lighting and public artwork.
6. Ensure the proposed development concept and plan incorporates the **Downtown Development Permit Area** guidelines and **winter city elements**.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA 3 – FRONTIER SITE (102<sup>ND</sup> STREET AND 100<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE)

The Frontier site is the location of the former Frontier Hotel, which was demolished in the 1980's. The site is approximately 0.9 hectares in size. The **Downtown** Action Plan contains development concepts for the site that include public and/or park space and multiple family residential development. This Urban Development Area is intended to oversee the development of the **Downtown** Action Plan's long-term vision for the site, as a mixed use commercial development with a public space component.



### Goal:

1. Develop the Frontier site into a higher density mixed use development that acts as the western gateway into the **downtown** core.

### Objectives:

1. Complete the redevelopment of the Frontier site within a five year time period.
2. Ensure redevelopment on the site embodies the vision for the site as provided in the **Downtown** Action Plan as a mixed use and with an accessible public space.



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## Strategies:

1. Require that the development concept incorporates design aspects provided for the site in the **Downtown** Action Plan that includes:
  - a) Commercial component
  - b) Multiple family residential component
  - c) Park space or public plaza component
2. Consider creating a development concept plan for the site and issuing a Request for Proposal for ownership and development of the site that follows the concept plan.
3. Ensure all parking required for development on the site is accessible only by rear lanes.
4. Complete upgrades to the lane that bisects the site to ensure good access to future parking facilities associated with development of the site.
5. Ensure no surface parking lots have any portion of the parking lot fronting onto 102<sup>nd</sup> Street, 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
6. Encourage active uses, such as restaurants, pubs or entertainment uses on the site to enhance and activate the site outside of traditional business hours.
7. Consider providing development and/or financial incentives, as identified in the **Downtown** Action Plan, for the site if the proposed development provides amenities, such as **affordable housing** or off-site community infrastructure including but not limited to parks, schools, public transportation facilities or libraries.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA 4 – CONDILL HOTEL SITE (100<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE)

The Condill Hotel site is the location of the former Condill Hotel. The Condill Hotel opened in 1942, and after more than seven decades, is slated for demolition in 2017/18. This Urban Development Area is approximately 0.9 hectares in size. The **Downtown** Action Plan contains development concepts for the **downtown** that include public and/or park space and multiple family residential development. This Urban Development Area is intended to oversee the development of the **Downtown** Action Plan’s long-term vision for the area, as a mixed use commercial development.



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### Goal:

1. Develop the Condill site into a higher density mixed use development as set out in the **Downtown** Action Plan.

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### Objectives:

1. Complete the redevelopment of the Condill site within a five year time period.
2. Ensure redevelopment on the site embodies the vision for the site as provided in the **Downtown** Action Plan as mixed use.

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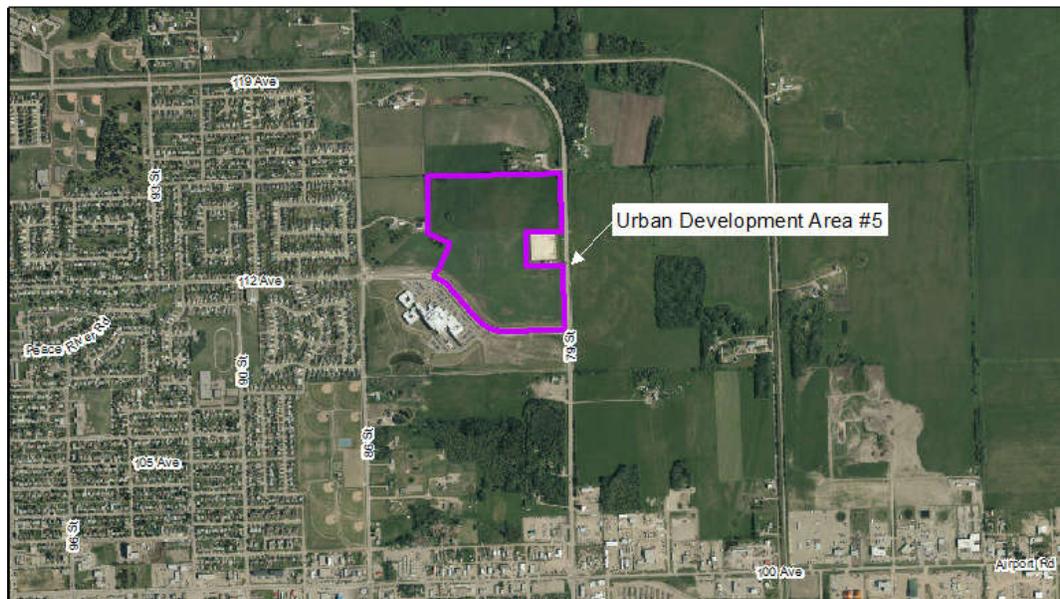
## Strategies:

1. Require that the development concept incorporates design aspects provided for the site in the **Downtown** Action Plan that includes:
  - a) Commercial component
  - b) Multiple family residential component
2. Consider creating a development concept plan for the site and issuing a Request for Proposal for ownership and development of the site that follows the concept plan.
3. Ensure all parking required for development on the site is accessible only by rear lanes.
4. Complete upgrades to the lane that bisects the site to ensure good access to future parking facilities associated with development of the site.
5. Ensure no surface parking lots have any portion of the parking lot fronting onto 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
6. Encourage active uses, such as restaurants, pubs or entertainment uses on the site to enhance and activate the site outside of traditional business hours.
7. Consider providing development and/or financial incentives, as identified in the **Downtown** Action Plan, for the site if the proposed development provides amenities, such as **affordable housing** or off-site community infrastructure including but not limited to parks, schools or libraries.
8. Once demolition has been completed, and prior to the redevelopment of the site, encourage interim uses such as public art, temporary public spaces, markets and food trucks.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA 5 – GREENRIDGE HEIGHTS

This section was amended by Bylaw No. 2540, 2021

The area identified as Greenridge Heights is situated northeast of the Fort St. John Hospital. This area saw the development of a concept plan in 2009 through a charrette process, and sustainable neighbourhood guidelines in 2011. The area also contains a new future school site. However, the lands have so far remained undeveloped. It is intended that this land will be thoughtfully and carefully developed in the near future through the development of a **neighbourhood plan** that is adopted by Council. This **neighbourhood plan** should accommodate a mixture of institutional-style residential that is complementary to the hospital. In addition, commercial and park and natural areas would help create a hub of land uses and development that complements the hospital. Finally, the viewscales and visual corridors that are present on this area should be preserved.



### Goal:

1. Develop the Greenridge Heights lands in a sustainable, well-planned manner to accommodate a variety of land uses and to become a desirable new neighbourhood in Fort St. John.

### Objectives:

1. Ensure that a **neighbourhood plan** is developed prior to any development occurring on the site.
2. Ensure that development on the site embodies the **neighbourhood plan** as adopted by Council.

### Strategies:



1. Require that any development concepts for the site adheres to the direction provided in the **neighbourhood plan** and includes the following components:
  - a) Residential, including a diversity of housing types
  - b) Commercial, including neighbourhood commercial components dispersed throughout the site
  - c) Institutional uses, including seniors and critical care housing
  - d) Open spaces, plazas and natural areas
  - e) Landscaping
  - f) Active and passive recreation opportunities
  - g) Supports multi-modal transportation opportunities, with a special focus on walkability, cycling and pedestrian linkages
2. Require the public space component to incorporate public seating, pedestrian-scaled lighting, public artwork, **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** and **winter city elements**.
3. Consider providing development and/or financial incentives for the site if the proposed development provides amenities, such as **affordable housing** or off-site community infrastructure including but not limited to parks, schools or libraries.
4. Encourage development in the Greenridge Heights lands.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA 6 – EAST 86<sup>TH</sup> STREET

This section was amended by Bylaw No. 2466, 2019

The area identified as East 86<sup>th</sup> Street was incorporated into the City of Fort St. John in late 2016. A portion of these lands are contained within the **Agricultural Land Reserve**. There is support for future exclusion from the **Agricultural Land Reserve** through the Agricultural Land Commission approval process. This area is currently developed and contains primarily large (approximately 2 hectare) parcels of residential development. A few parcels larger than 2 hectares exist, and one of those has an existing commercial use on it. Applicable lands within the **Agricultural Land Reserve** must receive endorsement from the Agricultural Land Commission (e.g. through exclusion or non-farm use approval) prior to any non-agriculture development occurring on those lands. In the future, it is intended that this Urban Development Area will be thoughtfully and carefully developed through the development of a **neighbourhood plan** that is adopted by Council. It is anticipated that these lands should see primarily urban residential development and be developed such that they complement the existing neighbourhoods to the east, north and northeast.



### Goal:

1. Develop the East 86<sup>th</sup> Street lands in a sustainable, well-planned manner to accommodate primarily urban residential development.

### Objectives:

1. Ensure that a **neighbourhood plan** is developed prior to any development occurring on the site.





2. Ensure that development on the site embodies the **neighbourhood plan** as adopted by Council.
  3. Ensure that any development on the site is complementary to the existing development around the site.
- 

### Strategies:

1. Require that any development concepts for the site adhere to the direction provided in the **neighbourhood plan** and includes the following components:
  - a) Residential, including a diversity of housing types
  - b) Open spaces, plazas and natural areas
  - c) Landscaping
  - d) Active and passive recreation opportunities
  - e) Supports multi-modal transportation opportunities, with a special focus on walkability, cycling and pedestrian linkages
2. Require the public space component to incorporate public seating, pedestrian-scaled lighting, public artwork, **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** and **winter city elements**.
3. Encourage higher-density forms of residential development to locate on lands fronting on 79<sup>th</sup> Street and on 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue to act as a buffer between commercial uses adjacent the southern boundary of the site.



This section was  
repealed in its  
entirety by Bylaw  
No. 2580, 2023

REPEALED

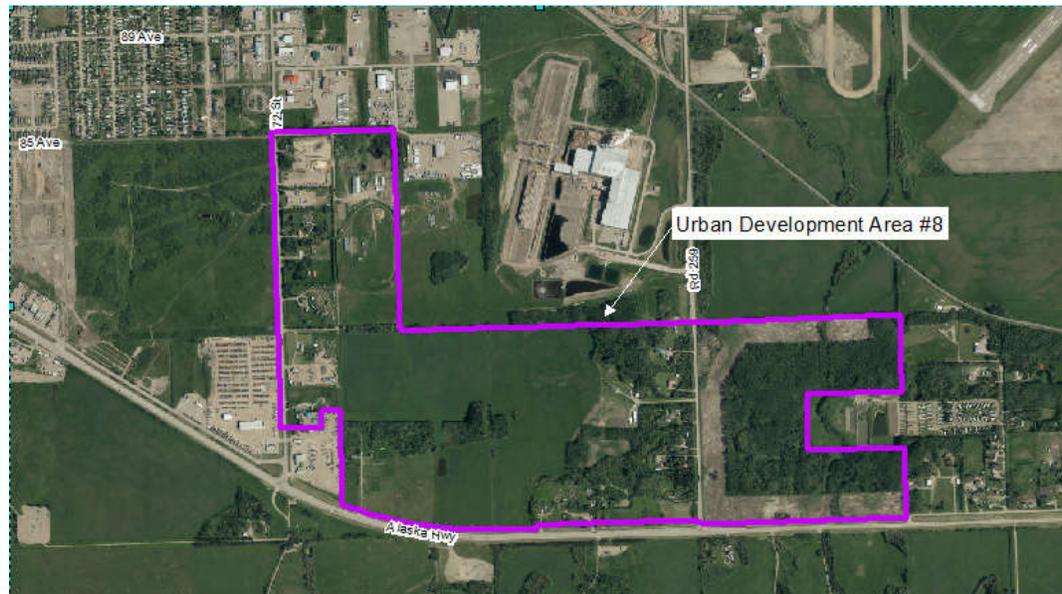


This section was  
repealed in its  
entirety by Bylaw  
No. 2580, 2023

REPEALED

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA 8 – SWANSON LUMBER ROAD

The area identified as the Swanson Lumber Road was incorporated into the City of Fort St. John as part of a boundary extension in 2016. The majority of this Urban Development Area is located within the **Agricultural Land Reserve**. There is support for future exclusion from the **Agricultural Land Reserve** through the Agricultural Land Commission approval process. This area is a mix of pasture land, some larger parcels with homes and some industrial developments. It is intended that these lands will see cluster-style industrial development which complements heavy industrial developments in the area. A greenspace buffer is desired along the Alaska Highway and along adjacent non-industrial developments. In addition, visual corridors and viewsapes should be preserved. Prior to any development occurring on these lands, applicable lands within the **Agricultural Land Reserve** must receive endorsement from the Agricultural Land Commission (e.g. through exclusion or non-farm use approval) and a **neighbourhood plan** must be developed and adopted by Council.



### Goal:

1. Develop the Swanson Lumber Road lands in a sustainable, well-planned manner that minimizes impacts on surrounding developments.

### Objectives:

1. Ensure that a **neighbourhood plan** is developed prior to any development occurring on the site.
2. Ensure that development on the site embodies the **neighbourhood plan** as adopted by Council.



3. Ensure that all industrial uses are buffered from the Alaska Highway and other non-industrial developments located around the Urban Development Area.

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### Strategies:

1. Require that any development concepts for the site adhere to the direction provided in the **neighbourhood plan** and include the following components:
  - a) Primarily cluster industrial development that is required to support large parcel, heavy industrial development in the area
  - b) Greenspace buffer along the Alaska Highway, creating a buffer between travelers and industrial development
  - c) Institutional
  - d) Open spaces and natural areas
  - e) Landscaping
  - f) Supports multi-modal transportation opportunities, with a special focus on walkability, cycling and pedestrian linkages
2. Ensure that extensive buffering is a component of any industrial development to minimize impacts on adjacent agricultural, residential or commercial uses.
3. Ensure that lighting, **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** and **winter city elements** are incorporated in all development in this area.

## 7.9 Neighbourhood Plans

A **Neighbourhood Plan** is a secondary land use plan that supplements the Official Community Plan, and once completed, is linked to the Official Community Plan through an amendment. The development of a **neighbourhood plan** may be triggered by a variety of conditions including:

- whether the proposed development will occur on raw land
- the size of the development area
- the applicable Official Community Plan and zoning designations in place and their congruency with proposed future land uses
- if the proposed development will see the revitalization of a previously developed area

**Neighbourhood plans** are designed to be community building blocks that provide guidance and direction on a variety of topics including land use, urban design, housing, transportation, community facilities and parks and recreation.



### Goal:

1. To require the development of **neighbourhood plans** to further define and communicate the proposed development of lands within the City of Fort St. John.

### Objective:

1. Establish **neighbourhood plans** to create a livable, diverse, inclusive community that meets the needs of all demographics, family structures and income levels.

This section was amended by Bylaw No. 2569, 2022

### Strategies:

1. Implement the Neighbourhood Plan for the **Downtown**.
2. Develop a Neighbourhood Planning Guide that explains the considerations and requirements for completing **neighbourhood plans**.
3. Communicate completed **neighbourhood plans** to **citizens**.
4. Ensure all **neighbourhood plans** are incorporated into the Official Community Plan.
  - a) Ensure that **neighbourhood plans** are developed for all urban development areas as shown in Schedule B.
5. Require **neighbourhood plans** with residential use to include targets on the percentage of housing units for a variety of forms.
6. Require **neighbourhood plans** with residential use to include targets on the percentage of housing units for a mixture of **Renter Household Affordability** and **Owner Household Affordability**.

## 7.9.1 Neighbourhood Plan – Parkwood Southlands

This section in its entirety was repealed and replaced by Bylaw No. 2440, 2018

### 1. APPLICATION AREA & SITE CONTEXT

The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan Area is located in northwest Fort St. John (see *Figure 1*) within the jurisdiction of the City of Fort St. John. It is bound by Fish Creek to the north, 116 Street (West Bypass Road) to the east, Alaska Highway to the south, and Blackberry Street to the west. The western and a portion of the southern limits of the Amendment Area share a jurisdictional boundary with the Peace River Regional District (PRRD).

The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan Area consists of two parcels of land, totalling approximately 89.5 hectares (221 acres) in area.



Figure 1: Amendment Area Location

The existing land use in the amendment area is dominated by agricultural uses primarily consisting of cropland that is being actively farmed by a leaseholder.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

The land is generally flat and gently sloping centrally toward the Fish Creek Coulee. Currently it is actively farmed, with the exception of the wide, vegetated valley area along Fish Creek. South of Fish Creek, the site generally drains south to north towards the coulee. There is also a drainage ditch running along 116 Street (West Bypass Road) that drains from south to north.

There are raised railway tracks at the northeast portion of the Plan Area that enter the site from the east side to cross Fish Creek. There is one known buried pipeline owned by Spectra Energy that parallels the west side of 116 Street.



### 3. NEIGHBOURHOOD VISION

Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood represents the opportunity to shift the traditional patterns of how cities are developed. Historically neighbourhoods that were focused around a town square and offered a mix of services, met many of the daily needs of the residents. By having a wide variety of residential and retail opportunities within these neighbourhoods, people tended to walk more and community was created through intentional connections and chance meetings throughout the day; residents knew their neighbours, looked out for them, and supported each other.

These types of neighbourhoods show us that a wide range of housing types and densities can, and must, include a variety of housing options, such as for singles, new families, empty nesters and the elderly, all supporting each other in close proximity.

### 4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PRINCIPLES

Council acknowledges it will be intentional in the creation of new neighbourhoods by incorporating the following time tested community building fundamentals:

- Putting the health and wellbeing of residents and neighbours front and centre by creating a walkable, cycling friendly, socially connected neighbourhood where citizens can gather, find fresh food, places to play and create, and can easily access a commercial village centre and the broader City amenities.
- Creating a versatile mix of land-uses and densities that are economically viable and enduring in the local economy.
- Encouraging unique architectural form and character that respects the public realm, view corridors, and existing single-family residential form and character.
- Enhancing the protection and preservation of the site's natural features.
- Supporting an active residential population through accessible pedestrian-oriented streets, connective trail networks that celebrate biodiversity, and high-quality parks that offer natural places of respite and calm.
- Demonstrating the importance of sustainability through building design, public realm design, transportation and mobility and servicing choices.
- Designing a neighbourhood that will adapt throughout all four seasons (e.g. winter city design).
- Valuing a community that welcomes and supports a range of socio-economic backgrounds, ages, and cultures through a diversity of housing, activities and commercial amenities.
- Providing a wide variety of housing opportunities, tenures, and sizes, to ensure that a wide range of options are available to serve local demand.
- Planning for community facilities that are available to all Fort St. John residents.
- Promoting architecture and landscapes that offers inspiring and sustainable places for those who live, work, and visit.



- Crafting identifiable neighbourhood architectural character through the design of homes and commercial buildings that are reflective of our neighbourhood values.

## 5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives used to create this Neighbourhood Plan are:

- a) Create a complete and comprehensively planned neighbourhood, focused on the natural areas and open space of the Fish Creek Coulee
- b) Develop a neighbourhood with exceptional design standards, offering a range of housing opportunities, facilities and services that will foster a high quality of life, in keeping with the residential, commercial, environmental and sustainability policies of this plan
- c) Develop a neighbourhood with a mix of residential densities and unit types that will serve a broad spectrum of Fort St. John's projected housing needs
- d) Provide a range of neighbourhood commercial and service uses to support the day to day needs of local residents, and create local employment opportunities

## 6. CONTEXT FOR LAND USE AREAS

The Plan Area integrates parks, open space, clustered residential neighbourhoods, and dynamic mixed-use residential/commercial areas.

The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan is intended to provide the basis for a comprehensively developed mixed-use area that is to be further defined through a Comprehensive Development Zone. The Parkwood Southlands is intended to provide the broadest mix of housing options along with complimentary commercial uses. Housing options may include seniors' facilities, micro-units, townhomes and apartments. The intent is to focus the neighbourhood around a Village Square, which will be surrounded by neighbourhood-focused mixed-use commercial spaces forming the Village Centre.

## 6. CONTEXT FOR LAND USE AREAS (continued)

Table 5: Land Use Projections

| Land-Use Type                     | Area in Hectares | Area in Acres | Share of Area | Total Units | Density  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|----------|
| <i>High Density Residential</i>   | 21.20            | 52.4          | 24%           | 2650        | 125      |
| <i>Medium Density Residential</i> | 17.63            | 43.6          | 20%           | 670         | 38       |
| <i>Low Density Residential</i>    | 4.00             | 9.9           | 4%            | 80          | 20       |
| <i>Commercial</i>                 | 12.10            | 29.9          | 14%           | -           | -        |
| <i>Institutional</i>              | 2.00             | 4.9           | 2%            | -           | -        |
| <i>Public Park</i>                | 4.48             | 11.1          | 5%            | -           | -        |
| <i>Private Green Space</i>        | 16.00            | 39.5          | 18%           | -           | -        |
| <i>Roads</i>                      | 12.09            | 29.9          | 14%           | -           | -        |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>89.50</b>     | <b>221.2</b>  | <b>100%</b>   | <b>3400</b> | <b>-</b> |

Despite the figures in Table 1, and the specific map designations in Schedule B - Bylaw No. 2388, 2017, significant flexibility is incorporated into this plan. The intent of the flexibility for density and land use supported in the Plan Area is provided as follows:

- Table 1 illustrates land use projections and total residential dwelling units for the Plan Area, anticipated to be developed only generally in accordance with Table 1.
- The transfer of residential and commercial densities and location of those land uses will be identified and implemented through the City’s Zoning Bylaw.

This flexibility is not intended to affect the commitment to the mixed-use town square vision, the preservation and enhancement of the Fish Creek Coulee nor to the provision of parks, trails and other greenspace. The overall maximum number of units, identified in Table 1, shall not increase, but residential and commercial uses and density can be moved within the lands according to regulations identified through zoning and subdivision.



## 7. PARKS AND TRAILS

Parks and open space should provide important neighbourhood gathering areas and strengthen the health and well-being of a connected neighbourhood. The concept for the neighbourhood green spaces and parks places a high value on the integration of natural areas, trails/pathways, and both passive and active parks into the overall neighbourhood plan.

There is approximately 20.5 ha (50.6 ac) of land for park and natural areas resulting in over 23% of the neighbourhood being reserved for parks and recreational opportunities.

The availability of strategically placed, accessible trails and viewpoints to the Fish Creek Coulee will be a featured priority for Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan. The intent is to provide connections to the current Fish Creek corridor at the eastern neighbourhood boundary with a new trail system throughout the neighbourhood. The trail system is anticipated to run throughout the Coulee and be accessible from both the rim and basin areas. A “green corridor” consisting of a multi-use pathway and associated landscape is also proposed as a major public amenity and the continuation of the multiuse bypass trail.

## 8. PUBLIC PARKS

In addition to the green corridor, the plan illustrates four major new public park spaces and three privately held parks spaces. The preservation and enhancement of the Fish Creek Coulee is the principal park focus. The proposed public parks include:

- a) Community Greenways: Pedestrian trail/sidewalk connections will also be provided to link with 105th Avenue, enabling a safe route to the adjacent neighbourhood schools and parks. A “green corridor” linear park consisting of a multi-use bypass trail.

- b) Park Designation: The principal focus of the community and the park system will be Fish Creek Coulee. This park will link with the adjacent community greenway and provide access along the bottom of the coulee as well as along a higher “ridge” route on the edges of the Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan. This trail/greenway system will create multiple public access points to this primarily naturalized park space.

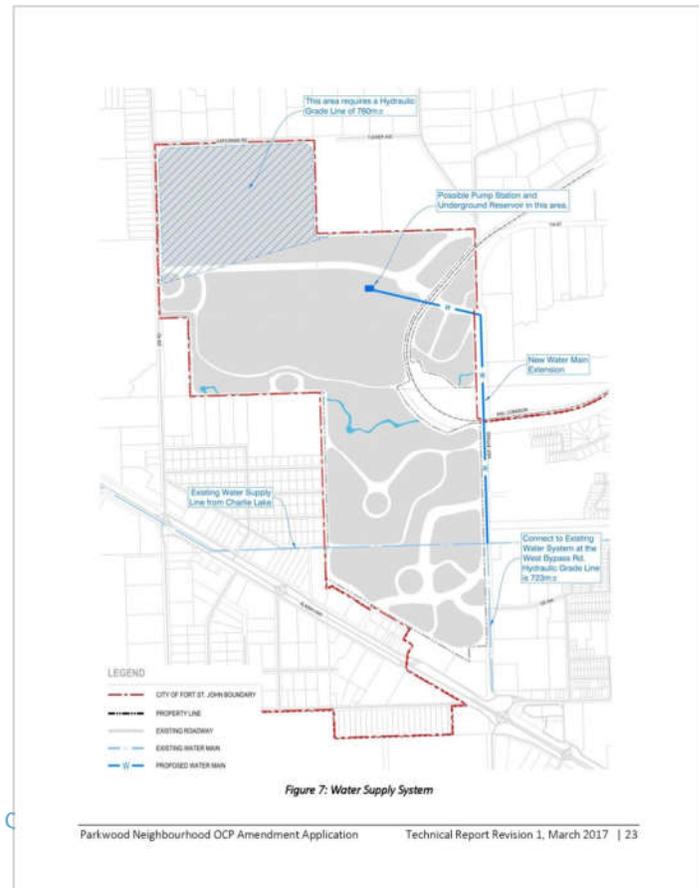
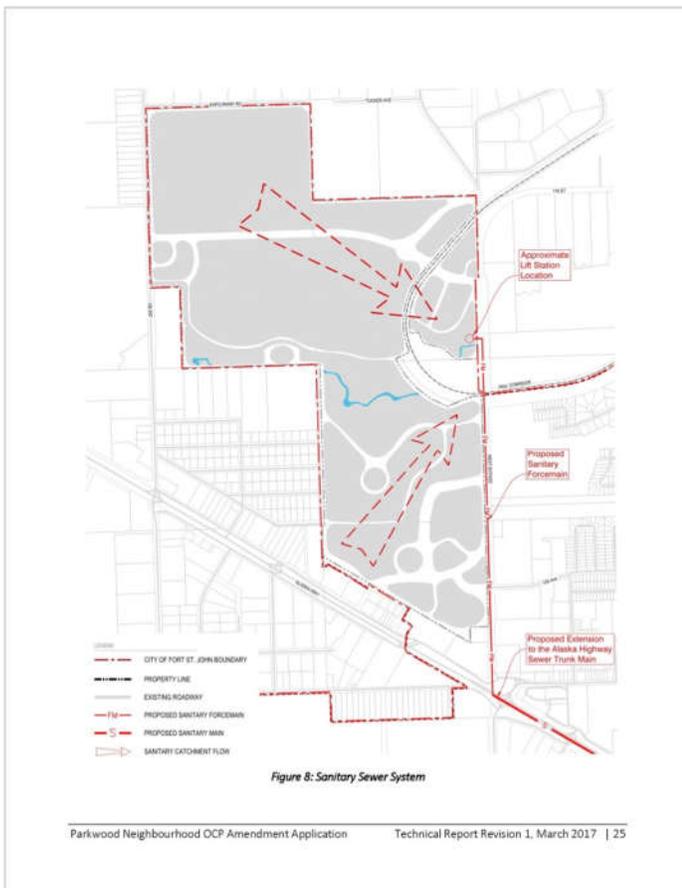
### 9. SERVICING, INFRASTRUCTURE & ROADS

The plan foresees a new connection to the Alaska Highway in order to alleviate traffic congestion from the 100 Avenue/Alaska Highway intersection.

The entire Parkwood site is naturally divided into north and south (Southlands) areas by Fish Creek. Water, sanitary and drainage services will generally be divided into north and south (Southlands) servicing areas.

Key pieces of infrastructure such as a new reservoir and pump station will need to be located in the north portion due to topography and would serve the entire site. Similarly, a sanitary lift station is for the north side of Fish Creek is needed to take advantage of the natural topography.

Storm water from both the north and south (Southlands) areas will naturally drain to the creek.





## 10. WINTER CITY DESIGN

Winter design strategies will be utilized through the design development stages of the community. These strategies will consider the following:

- a) Layout and street patterns to maximizes windbreaks and sun exposure
- b) Plant material selection that is specifically appropriate to this community and provides year round interest
- c) Providing year-round pedestrian comfort and adequate space for snow storage
- d) Encouraging a colour pallet for the community that enlivens the winter landscape
- e) Using lighting creatively to create visual interest in commercial, park and walkway areas
- f) Create outdoor spaces, especially in the commercial and mixed use area that can be weather protected
- g) Providing year round, but especially winter access to trails and the coulee to encourage cross country skiing and other winter sports and active living in the neighbourhood
- h) Providing special infrastructure needed for a winter city, including consideration of spaces to park and store vehicles and sports equipment

# 8.0 Community Development

The Community Development component of an Official Community Plan refers to a variety of dimensions that are less tangible and concrete than land use. Many community development dimensions require the encouragement and/or support of the City of Fort St. John (City), but are driven by agencies, organizations, stakeholders and both not-for-profit and for-profit groups. Community development dimensions include such elements as **affordable housing**, accessibility, economic development, arts, culture and heritage, transportation, infrastructure, **environmental stewardship**, **climate change**, **urban agriculture** and financial sustainability.

## 8.1 Affordable Housing

**Affordable housing** refers to a range of housing from non-market housing to standard market ownership housing. In Canada, housing is considered **affordable** if shelter costs account for less than 30% of before-tax household income (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation). This range of housing is shown in Figure 10 below. In Fort St. John, roughly 1 in 5 (20%) **citizens** are in need of some form of **affordable housing** (2011 Census).

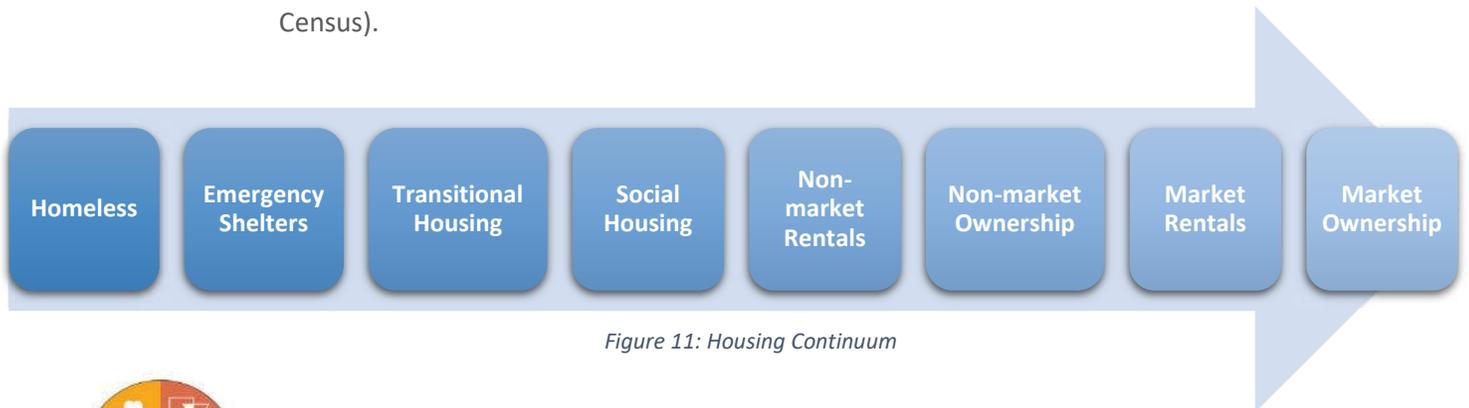


Figure 11: Housing Continuum



### Goal:

1. To have sufficient **affordable housing** opportunities for the **citizens** of Fort St. John working through partnerships with levels of government, community organizations, non-profit housing organizations and private sector developers.

This section was amended by Bylaw No. 2569, 2022

### Objectives:

1. Promote the development of affordable homeownership options in the City.
2. Ensure a balance between housing density, design and affordability.
3. Diversify housing options by encouraging a mix of housing types and tenures.

This section was  
amended by Bylaw  
No. 2569, 2022

## Strategies:

1. Continue to permit a range of housing types to ensure the inclusion of affordable and accessible housing into a planned subdivision.
2. Consider establishing incentives to developments that provide **affordable housing**, including secondary forms of housing.
3. Encourage secondary forms of housing, such as attached and detached **suites**, to be located on parcels that contain a single family dwelling to offer rental options.
4. Ensure that detached **suites**, such as garden **suites** and garage **suites**, maintain a high quality of design equal to or greater than neighbouring dwellings.
5. Consider attached and detached **suites** on residential parcels 550 m<sup>2</sup> or greater if:
  - a) It fits within the character of the neighbourhood
  - b) The primary use of the parcel is for a single-detached dwelling
  - c) There is adequate space to provide parking
  - d) There is adequate snow storage space on and around the lot
  - e) Transit is available within 400 m to allow for reduced parking requirements
6. Create 145 affordable ownership units, or 20% of all new ownership units by 2027.
7. Create 120 affordable rental units, or 33% of all new rental units by 2027.

## 8.2 Creating an Accessible and Multi-Generational Fort St. John

An accessible and multi-generational Fort St. John refers to a community that supports the specific needs of different age groups and persons who live with a disability. It is one of the pillars to creating an inclusive community in which all **citizens** are able to share a high quality of life. Creating accessible and age-friendly communities is a growing concern in Canada and throughout the world. Improving the lives of seniors and persons with disabilities by considering their needs in the development of a community improves the livelihoods of all **citizens** in a community.

### 8.2.1 Accessible Community

An accessible community means making trails, streets, businesses, public areas, buildings, sidewalks, transit and homes accessible to all **citizens**. The concept of **universal design** is integral to developing an accessible community. **Universal design** refers to broad-spectrum strategies that are used to make places that are inherently accessible to all



**citizens.** Striving to be an accessible community, the City will design and build a community that our children, parents with strollers, and elderly persons can all use safely.

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### Goal:

1. To create an increasingly accessible community.

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### Objectives:

1. Improve the overall accessibility of Fort St. John.
2. A proportion of homes in each new development will be accessible homes.
3. All trails, sidewalks and public facilities will be designed to ensure all **citizens** have access to them.
4. Each residential quadrant of the City will have a park facility which uses **universal design** and which adheres to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

This section was amended by Bylaw No. 2569, 2022

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### Strategies:

1. Advocate to the provincial government regarding the *Building Act* and the inclusion of more visitable and accessible housing units into legislation.
2. Ensure the City's bylaws and regulations reflect the direction set out in the *Building Act* and BC Building Code.
3. Require new developments to incorporate **universal design** guidelines.
4. Work towards the development of 50% of all the trails and parks in the City to be accessible with "eyes on the space" and lighted for safe night-time use.
5. Develop a plan that outlines the City's strategies to identify, remove and prevent accessibility barriers, thereby enabling all **citizens** to access what they need in the way they need it.
6. Create 55 accessible housing units in new housing stock by 2027.

## 8.2.2 Age-Friendly

Fort St. John's reputation as one of the youngest communities in the country often overshadows a large and growing seniors population, a demographic shift that is quickly emerging as a priority for many communities throughout the country. The aging of communities throughout Canada is resulting in the need for cities to adapt structures and services to be accessible and inclusive for older people with diverse needs and abilities.

The growth in the Fort St. John's seniors population is due to the aging of longtime **citizens**, relocation of seniors from across the region to Fort St. John to access local services, and other seniors who have relocated to Fort St. John with their families. To

ensure that Fort St. John adequately responds to their unique needs, it is imperative that a proactive approach to age-friendly planning is taken. Many age-friendly initiatives and interventions improve the living experiences of all age demographics. Age-friendly planning by nature is multi-generational and initiatives oriented specifically towards seniors will provide multi-generational benefits.



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### Did you know?

*Fort St. John's seniors population (65+ years old) increased by 12% from 2006 to 2011.*

#### What is age-friendly planning?

*Age-friendly planning identifies the needs of seniors in a community and responds to them through the development of policies, programs, services and environments that enable them to age actively and in place.*



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### Goal:

1. To have a community which values all age demographics and is a desirable place for all residents to age in place.

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### Objectives:

1. Continue to collaborate with agencies that identify and address the needs of seniors and those aging into the senior demographic to enable them to better age in place.
2. Recognize the need for a diverse range of housing options for all **citizens**.
3. Enhance the participation of seniors in the development and implementation of plans, policies and programs that address the needs of seniors and the community.
4. Recognize the social isolation experienced by **citizens**, especially seniors, and consider programming opportunities for arts, culture, recreation and social interaction spaces for seniors and the general public.
5. Enhance the mobility of seniors and the general public through improved transportation options.

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### Strategies:

1. Consider supporting the development of an age-friendly action plan to direct future initiatives that provides input into the following areas:
  - a) Outdoor spaces and buildings
  - b) Transportation



- c) Housing
  - d) Social participation
  - e) Respect and social inclusion
  - f) Civic participation, volunteerism and employment
  - g) Communication and information
  - h) Community support and health services
2. Partner with local seniors, social service groups and seniors organizations to develop and implement age-friendly initiatives.
  3. Consider developing a seniors housing directory that provides basic information on all seniors housing complexes in Fort St. John, such as contact details, number of units, unit sizes, level of care and amenities provided.
  4. Examine possible tools and funding mechanisms to stimulate the development of affordable seniors housing, such as permissive tax exemptions or revitalization tax exemptions.
  5. Encourage and promote secondary housing forms, such as carriage homes, with accessible designs as an alternative to developing larger seniors housing complexes.
  6. Assess the potential of **brownfield** sites, **vacant** parcels and City owned land for the development of affordable and seniors housing.
  7. Encourage the development of multi-generational **affordable housing** through the promotion of existing funding programs.
  8. Encourage new seniors housing to be located within a 400 m walking radius from services and amenities accessed by seniors.
  9. Encourage new commercial, residential and institutional developments to incorporate accessible design.
  10. Ensure all new public buildings, facilities and spaces incorporate accessible design.
  11. Work with the development community to ensure new housing stock meets the housing needs of individuals moving through different stages of their housing life cycle.

## 8.3 Economic Development

Economic development focuses on the economic prosperity and social equity of a community. The intent of economic development policies and programs are to promote an increased standard of living and economic health of an area.



The vibrancy and attractiveness of Fort St. John is an essential tool in economic development. By working with and strengthening our businesses and industry, Fort St. John will continue to be a city of innovation and opportunity.



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### Goals:

1. To strengthen partnerships with all business sectors including the forestry, agriculture and energy sector.
2. To strengthen a vibrant and diverse economy by retaining local business and grow our reputation as BC's Energetic City.
3. To develop a vibrant and active **downtown**.
4. To identify and improve key economic nodes within the City.

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### Objectives:

1. Increase the economic diversity within the City.
2. Identify and implement strategic economic development opportunities for the City that diversifies the economy with market products.
3. Increase entrepreneurship opportunities, and the success and marketing of existing local business and industry.
4. Diversify uses and promote retail, restaurant and commercial developments at street level in the **downtown** with residential development above.
5. Increase investment and maintain tenancy in the **downtown**.
6. Implement **downtown** revitalization initiatives as outlined in the City of Fort St. John **Downtown** Action Plan.
7. Adopt economic mechanisms and tools that support **downtown** business improvement and investment.
8. Utilize events to increase traffic and awareness of local shopping opportunities.
9. Create a large format retail cluster to foster synergy with supporting uses on existing commercial land.
10. Strengthen Fort St. John's status as the Energy Capital of BC.
11. Ensure provision of required services and amenities to attract and retain businesses.
12. Support the development of a Business Improvement Association and work with them to continually enhance the **downtown** and make it an attractive and desirable place for **citizens** and visitors.



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## Strategies:

1. Develop an economic development plan for the City.
2. Market the City of Fort St. John and all that it has to offer through a variety of mediums and to a variety of audiences.
3. Direct festivals and events to be held in the **downtown** as a means to highlight and showcase local business.
4. Work with the Fort St. John & District Chamber of Commerce and **downtown** businesses to develop and implement a **Business Improvement Area** to enhance the **downtown** and a **Business Retention and Expansion** program.
5. Support the development and implementation of a **Downtown** Façade Improvement Program that provides matching grants to qualifying applicants for façade improvements.
6. Work collaboratively with business owners and First Nation and Indigenous communities to identify economic development opportunities within the City.
7. Work with local business owners to develop strategies for the retention and recruitment of employees.
8. Maintain high quality signage standards through the **Downtown Development Permit Area** Design Guidelines.
9. Encourage specialty retail, entertainment establishments and restaurant uses to locate in the **downtown** in ground floor commercial spaces.
10. Work with landowners and the public to identify temporary uses on **vacant** and **underutilized parcels** until they can be redeveloped.
11. Promote the community as the Energetic City: The Energy Capital of BC and provide opportunities for the use of biomass, solar, wind, and geothermal energy.
12. Recognize Fort St. John as a key transportation hub for highway, air and rail transportation, and look for opportunities to enhance Fort St. John as a transportation hub.
13. Work with the North Peace Regional Airport Society to maintain modern and attractive airport facilities so as to provide convenient and efficient services for passenger and freight users.
14. Work with industry to identify key land and infrastructure requirements to support them.

15. Support economic development activity in the City to locate in key areas by providing supports such as transit hubs, parking, sidewalks and the ability to access these nodes through a variety of means.
16. Consider developing an investment ready profile directed towards attracting First Nations and Indigenous investment, business and land acquisition in Fort St. John.
17. Diversify the economy through the implementation of initiatives that embrace the **Creative City Movement**.
18. Recognize the significance of future major commercial development sites and the effects that these developments will have on the surrounding areas.

## 8.4 Arts, Culture and Heritage

Fort St. John local artistic talents, rich and diverse culture and storied history greatly contribute to the social capital of the City and its overall quality of life. Supporting our arts community, capitalizing on our rich cultural diversity and celebrating our rich heritage will strengthen Fort St. John as a complete community and destination to live and work. This includes recognizing the traditional arts, culture and heritage of local Indigenous peoples and the original settlers of the Fort St. John area.

### 8.4.1 Arts



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#### Goal:

1. To develop Fort St. John into a hub for the arts.

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#### Objectives:

1. Increase and enhance the opportunities for local artists and **citizens** to pursue their artistic talents.
2. Improve and increase facilities that provide opportunities for artistic undertakings.

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#### Strategies:

1. Encourage the use of local art and artists for public art displays.
2. Prioritize the **downtown** for investment in buildings and other infrastructure that support the artistic community.
3. Promote programs that target and support emerging artists within the City.
4. Recognize the importance of music and the performing arts in the vibrancy of the City.

5. Develop and implement a public art policy and plan that includes the following:
  - a) Enhances educational and training opportunities for artists
  - b) Opportunities to provide to better facilities and venues for presentation and access to art products
  - c) Promotes arts activity and awareness within the community
6. Recognize the asset that the North Peace Cultural Centre is and the importance that it holds for **citizens** of Fort St. John and the surrounding area.

## 8.4.2 Culture



### Goal:

1. To have a rich and culturally diverse community.

### Objectives:

1. To recognize and celebrate Fort St. John's cultural diversity.
2. To create a safe space for cultural sharing and learning.
3. To work in partnership with local Indigenous and other ethnic groups for the betterment of our mutual community.
4. To partner with cultural groups to educate and engage with the community.

### Strategies:

1. Promote the development of festivals and events that showcase and increase awareness of Fort St. John's growing cultural diversity.
2. Work with local agencies to promote cross cultural understanding.
3. Promote cultural experiences in civic and community gathering places and celebrations.
4. Work with community partners to incorporate ethnic and Indigenous art and culturally based designs into civic and public spaces, parks and institutional buildings.
5. Incorporate signage and titling for City parks, public spaces and civic buildings that reflects the multiculturalism and Indigenous heritage found in the area.
6. Investigate potential programs to enhance the knowledge of civic employees in regards to the ethnic diversity and needs of local groups, their culture and history.
7. Develop a public display in a prominent central location that acknowledges our Indigenous people.



8. Consider opportunities to partner with agencies and community groups to celebrate and promote languages spoken by local ethnic and Indigenous peoples.
9. Create a cultural strategy that includes the following components:
  - a) Creates an inventory of existing cultural spaces
  - b) Identifies the need for new facilities
  - c) Creates a facilities lifespan projection for existing facilities
  - d) Identifies opportunities for facility additions, upgrades or replacements
  - e) Investigates funding options for new facilities

### 8.4.3 Heritage



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#### Goal:

1. To preserve, protect, enhance and celebrate Fort St. John's history and heritage.
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#### Objectives:

1. Recognize the impact and influence of Indigenous peoples on the history and heritage of Fort St. John.
  2. Protect, preserve and enhance buildings, landmarks, trees, views and places of historical significance in and around Fort St. John.
- 

#### Strategies:

1. Recognize local First Nations and Indigenous peoples as the original inhabitants of the region and ensure that is reflected in City initiatives related to heritage preservation and celebration.
2. Investigate the development of a community heritage strategy that includes the following:
  - a) Reviews and identifies partnerships with community heritage organizations, such as the North Peace Historical Society, North Peace Museum and Cemetery Seekers.
  - b) Identifies heritage sites in and adjacent to the City of both Indigenous and settler importance.
  - c) Considers the development of a heritage site designation and protection bylaw.

## 8.5 Transportation

The Official Community Plan recognizes the City's major road network and also identifies corridors for new roads. In addition, it recognizes the importance of air and rail travel to and from the region for residents, visitors and the movement of goods.

Much of the information within this section comes from the 2015 Transportation Master Plan. The Transportation Master Plan seeks to address existing challenges in addition to growth-related challenges, and shape long-term investments in transportation infrastructure and programs. The 2015 Transportation Master Plan provides the City of Fort St. John with updated and relevant guidance on priorities for development of a multi-modal transportation system, which serves Fort St. John **citizens** and businesses into the future.

The benefits of long-term transportation planning go far beyond the provision of roads, transit infrastructure, bicycle routes, trails and pedestrian amenities. Transportation can be regarded as a foundational element to achieving community goals and objectives related to health, environment, economy and social sustainability. Given the growth in the Peace Region, the City's Transportation Master Plan should be reviewed and updated approximately every five years so that it can remain current and up to date.

### 8.5.1 Transportation Master Plan

The 2015 Transportation Master Plan established the following vision and goals, which were endorsed by Council:

The City of Fort St. John will provide an efficient multi-modal transportation network that enhances our quality of life by supporting environmental, economic and social sustainability to make our community vibrant, safe and accessible.



#### Goals:

1. To provide an **effective transportation network** that connects the community and surrounding areas and allows for the efficient movement of people and goods between residential, commercial, institutional and industrial neighbourhoods.
2. To **enhance mobility options** by providing attractive, inclusive, healthy and environmentally responsible transportation choices.



3. To **give priority to the safety and health** of users when planning, designing and operating transportation systems and networks for all seasons.
4. To **integrate transportation and land use** planning to help minimize the need for new transportation infrastructure, build walkable communities and foster a vibrant **downtown**.
5. To **inform and educate** the public on transportation issues and networks.

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### Objectives:

1. Be a more safe, equitable, efficient and accessible community.
2. Promote a healthier community.
3. Provide improved mobility options for **citizens** and visitors of all ages and abilities.

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### Strategies:

#### PEDESTRIAN PLAN:

1. Enhance sidewalk coverage focusing on the **downtown**, school zones and recreation and park areas.
2. Add supportive pedestrian facilities and amenities such as wider 2.0 m sidewalks, setback sidewalks, lighting, seating and trees.
3. Improve crossings and accessibility features.

#### BICYCLE & TRAILS PLAN:

1. Develop and expand the bicycle network making use of facilities such as multi-purpose trails, dedicated bicycle routes, and shared travel lanes.
2. Use signage, pavement markings and signals to improve safety at crossings.
3. Develop and implement a bicycle parking strategy.

#### ROAD NETWORK PLAN:

1. Improve network connectivity and circulation by undertaking specific projects to support mobility and traffic flow around the community.
2. Improve intersection operation and safety for many key intersections to maintain an acceptable level of service under growing traffic conditions.



3. Update the road network classification system to better capture the different road functions and adjacent land uses, including changes in the **downtown** core.
4. Implement new projects based on a needs assessment that considers advancing technology and changes to vehicle use patterns.
5. Ensure compatibility of transportation corridors and facilities with adjacent land uses and the overall character and image of the community.

## TRANSIT STRATEGY:

1. Continue regular service reviews with BC Transit.
2. Improve the transit centre **downtown** as part of the Energize **Downtown** program.
3. Enhance pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, especially in the vicinity of transit routes, which in turn supports transit use.

## PARKING:

1. Support and promote integrated land use planning and transportation demand management measures and initiatives that result in changes to transportation modes, trip reductions, single occupancy vehicle use reductions and a shift in travel behavior.
2. Develop a transportation system and pattern of development which are amenable to alternatives to provide choices as to where people can live and their mode of travel, including automobile, public transit, cycling, and walking.
3. Implement a multi-purpose trail network, connecting the City's largest destinations over the short term, complete with bicycle parking.
4. Work with private employers and developers to encourage and create incentives for walking, cycling, rideshare, and transit commuting and reduce parking demand.
5. Support the strategic location of off-street parking facilities to promote pedestrian use, particularly within the **downtown**, the Totem Mall/Wal-Mart area and other key strategic hubs.
6. Encourage opportunities to develop shared parking (private or public).
7. Consider policies that permit cash-in-lieu payments for off-street parking provisions in order to support capital projects, in appropriate locations, that provide new centralized parking facilities and transit infrastructure.
8. Provide sufficient enforcement to ensure on-street parking regulations are meeting objectives.



9. Embrace new technologies for parking metering and ensure that funds collected goes into a separate parking fund.
10. Enhance information available on the City's website in regards to available parking areas city-wide, parking restricted areas, and parking regulations and procedures (i.e. operations and maintenance requirements).
11. Review the City's **downtown** parking study and consider performance parking prices to produce an 85% occupancy rate for curb-side parking.
12. In collaboration with BC Transit, continue to review and upgrade the City's transit system on a regular basis to ensure that all **citizens** are able to access transit in a timely and efficient manner.

## GENERAL TRANSPORTATION:

### Strategies:

1. Support the North Peace Regional Airport and air travel to and from Fort St. John and the region.
2. Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to ensure that highway access to and from Fort St. John continues to be enhanced to ensure the safety and efficient and effective movement of all types of vehicle traffic.
3. Promote the heritage and history of the Alaska Highway.
4. Ensure that development near railway corridors within the City is cognizant of recommended building setbacks as prescribed by CN Rail and wherever possible, implements the setbacks.
5. Consider commissioning a study on the railway corridor in and around Fort St. John and how to further develop this transportation resource.
6. Develop a transportation system and pattern of development which are amenable to alternatives to provide choices as to where people can live and their mode of travel, including automobile, public transit, cycling, and walking.

## 8.6 Municipal Infrastructure, Facilities and Services

The City designs, builds, maintains and is responsible for the City’s municipal infrastructure and facility assets. These assets include water treatment, storage and distribution, stormwater retention and detention facilities and outfalls, sanitary sewer collection and treatment, roads, street lights, traffic signals, sidewalks, irrigation of public spaces, trails, public amenities, vehicle fleets and solid waste collection infrastructure. These assets also include such infrastructure as the fire hall, police station and recreational infrastructure.

The City has been working towards reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the delivery of its services. Some services are shared with the Peace River Regional District and the District of Taylor to maximize efficiencies. These shared service agreements pertain to police, fire and emergency communications, as well as water in some locations. The City also provides residents with bi-weekly garbage collection alternating with bi-weekly recycling collection, while the Peace River Regional District is responsible for providing disposal sites for solid waste.

Fort St. John’s utilities play a vitally important role in supporting the community. The City maintains an inventory of and actively monitors its underground services, prepares maintenance and repair schedules, and complete annual plans and budgets for the renewal of these assets.

Like many communities in BC and nationally, a significant portion of the City’s underground infrastructure is in its latter years of service and the needs for repair and replacement exceed the available resources. In addition, the harsh winter climate also contributes to the degradation of the City’s infrastructure.



*Photo by Chris Wagner*

*Image 27: Water Tower*



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## Goal:

1. To provide infrastructure, facilities and services in a suitable and efficient manner for long-term fiscal and environmental sustainability.

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## Objectives:

1. Efficiently use existing infrastructure.
2. Renew and develop Fort St. John's infrastructure and utilities in sustainable ways to meet the community's needs.
3. Continue improving the level and quality of infrastructure and services.
4. Reduce the energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the delivery of municipal services as required by the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Plan (CARIP).
5. Encourage the investigation of shared services where this can increase efficiencies.
6. Develop a process for managing the City's assets.

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## Strategies:

1. Develop long-term integrated infrastructure and facility master plans.
2. Ensure that expansions made to municipal infrastructure are undertaken in a manner that is cost effective for all tax payers and that life-cycle costs are understood.
3. Ensure that the full costs for infrastructure renewal are incorporated into taxes and utility rates.
4. Continue to review water and sewer rate charges to ensure that they are equitable and sufficient to cover future costs for maintenance, repairs and upgrades.
5. Continue to guide new development through a process that prioritizes **infill** development on parcels that are already serviced or on lands that are adjacent to existing municipal infrastructure.
6. Continue to require all developments within the municipal boundary to connect to the community water, sanitary, storm drainage and transportation systems.
7. Continue to require new developments to pay the portion of infrastructure costs directly related to servicing new development, as well as any off-site costs that may be required.
8. Continue to follow the commitments set out in the Liquid Waste Management Plan.



### Did you know?

*Between 1995 and 2016, approximately 65.4 km of roads have been improved upon and an additional 22.3 km of roads have been constructed as a result of new developments.*

9. Repair and replace water, sewer and storm distribution and collection systems and roads on an on-going basis.
10. Continue to require improvements to the storm drainage system to be coordinated with road network improvements.
11. Continue to expand the capacity of storm drainage lines in parts of the City where lines are surcharging and install storm detention features.
12. Plan for staged stormwater detention on a neighbourhood scale.
13. Consider energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in the purchase of City vehicles, tools and equipment and in maintenance and operations.
14. Reduce water use, stormwater runoff and waste generation in municipal operations.
15. Incorporate innovative rainwater management techniques into major civic projects.
16. Consider expanding the solid waste collection program to potentially include a community compost and work towards curbside composting collection.
17. Develop and implement a long-term water plan for a secondary water source, treatment plant, pump house and reservoirs.
18. Use recycled water for the irrigation of City infrastructure, such as parks, gardens and ball diamonds.
19. Invest in infrastructure based on life-cycle costs analysis, recognizing capital, maintenance, operations, and replacement costs.
20. Implement the recommendations set out in the 50 Year Growth Study.
21. Ensure the continued high-level provision of emergency services, such as fire protection, policing and bylaw enforcement to all residents of the City as the City continues to grow, which may require new facilities.

## 8.7 Environmental Stewardship

The City recognizes that access to nature, for the most part, is outside municipal boundaries. Therefore, there is a responsibility to work with other levels of government



to ensure the quality of the places that **citizens** hunt, fish and use for other recreational purposes. In addition, it is essential to acknowledge the importance of partnerships in the protection and conservation of the Peace River and Beatton watersheds for the future. This all serves to create a culture of **environmental stewardship**, which is our responsibility to take care of the environment and leave it in as good a condition, or better, for future generations.

**Citizens** of Fort St. John interact with the environment at regional, community and neighbourhood levels. Water and air are inherently cross-jurisdictional issues. The City's water source, the Peace River, stretches through many communities and through agricultural land that rely on this resource. Air is impacted by global, regional and local uses. The parks, open space and other environmental features of the community have a direct impact on the quality of life in Fort St. John.



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#### Did you know?

*An average 500 ml bottle of water will cost \$2.00 at the store. You can take that bottle home and refill it 2,000 times with clean fresh water for \$1.59.*

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#### Goal:

1. To work to preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment.

### 8.7.1 Water

The City receives its water from two sources: the Peace River and Charlie Lake. These two sources are outside municipal boundaries yet have a huge impact on the health and well-being of the City. In addition, how the rivers are treated and managed (the City discharges treated effluent to the Peace and the Beatton Rivers) will directly impact communities downstream. The City recognizes the value of its water resources and therefore has invested significantly in the enhancement, protection and conservation of this valuable resource.



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#### Goal:

1. To ensure continued access to water for domestic and recreational uses.

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### Objectives:

1. Protect the Peace and Beatton Rivers by maintaining appropriate levels of wastewater treatment at City-operated facilities.
2. Continue to seek ways to efficiently use water resources.
3. Continue working with partners to ensure the protection of our watersheds for domestic water use and recreational use.

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### Strategies:

1. Continue to develop and deliver water conservation programs in concert with the City's water conservation strategy.
2. Support partnerships for the stewardship of the Peace and Beatton River watersheds.
3. Encourage strategies and technologies that will reduce storm water that enters the City's storm drainage system. These strategies could include cisterns, purple pipes, rain barrels, permeable surfaces, **green roofs**, retention/detention ponds and other landscaping techniques.
4. Develop an erosion and protection plan for wastewater discharge areas.
5. Encourage the development of greywater systems for commercial and industrial land uses.
6. Continue to develop and update the Fort St. John Liquid Waste Management Plan and develop innovative approaches to managing the City's liquid waste.
7. Encourage artificial wetlands as a stormwater treatment mechanism.
8. Require sediment control measures on construction sites.

## 8.7.2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions are generated from a number of sources, including city fleet vehicles, facilities and energy used for heating. As a result of the provincial government setting greenhouse gas reduction targets, the City must consider how its activities impact greenhouse gas emissions and work towards reducing those emissions.



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### Goal:

1. To implement mitigation policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.
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## Objectives:

1. Reduce city-wide greenhouse gas emissions by achieving reduction targets as set out in the Climate Action Charter:
    - a) 21% below 2007 levels by 2017;
    - b) 33% below 2007 levels by 2020; and
    - c) 80% below 2007 levels by 2050.
  2. Ensure new and existing buildings produce low greenhouse gas emissions.
  3. Reduce overall emission levels according to provincial requirements.
- 

## Strategies:

1. Regularly review and update the Community Energy and Emissions Plan.
2. Develop an inventory of the greenhouse gas emissions and future targets and continue to monitor and report on greenhouse gas emissions.
3. Continue to work towards reducing emissions at corporate and community levels for facilities and operations.
4. Retain plants on private property, new construction and redevelopment.
5. Promote and support anti-idling initiatives in key areas.

### 8.7.3 Solid Waste Management

Solid waste is collected by the City of Fort St. John; however, the Peace River Regional District is responsible for the landfills in the region and the diversion and disposal of solid waste through the implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan. In recent years, the City has made significant strides in reducing the amount of solid waste collected through the implementation of a city-wide curbside recycling program.

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#### Goal:

1. To reduce the City's per capita waste through solid waste diversion and education.
- 

#### Objective:

1. Increase solid waste diversion to 50% through recycling and composting programs.
-

## Strategies:

1. As directed by the Solid Waste Management Plan, divert waste from landfills through reducing, reusing and recycling products that are currently identified as waste, with a focus on waste reduction and reuse.
2. Find ways to promote community organics composting in the solid waste management strategy.
3. Develop partnerships with other local governments, Indigenous communities, professionals and industry that can assist the City in achieving solid waste management objectives.

### 8.7.4 Energy



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## Goal:

1. To diversify our energy sources.

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## Objectives:

1. Reduce the rate of energy consumption in existing buildings through appropriate retrofit.
2. Increase the energy efficiency of current design and maintenance guidelines.

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## Strategies:

1. Consider opportunities for designing buildings to use alternative energy and encourage energy conservation.
2. Conserve energy in design, construction and operation of municipal facilities.
3. Work with various governments and agencies to encourage local and regional energy conservation.
4. Create transportation options to reduce emissions.
5. Promote alternative modes of transportation throughout the City.
6. Promote energy-efficient design and construction on all new development within Fort St. John.
7. Continue to set an example for the development community and other jurisdictions through the construction of municipal buildings and facilities to a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standard.



### Did you know?

*From November 2015 to August 2016, Fort St. John residents diverted more than 500,000 kilograms of comingled recycling from the curbside blue bin program.*

## 8.8 Climate Change Adaptation

**Climate change**, as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on **Climate Change**, ‘refers to a change of climate that is attributed directly to or indirectly to human activity... and is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods’. The impacts of **climate change** are being felt by the City of Fort St. John, with increased temperatures, shifts in the seasonal precipitation patterns and increased extreme weather events, such as rain events, droughts and snowstorms. Potential **climate change** impacts could include: damage to property and infrastructure from more frequent and intense storm events; loss of ecosystem functions from prolonged warm, drier summer weather and reduced winter snowpacks; and, increased productivity from new crops and varieties as the growing season extends.

The City of Fort St. John is a signatory of the BC Climate Action Charter and has committed to being carbon neutral in its operations. Adaptation planning involves both proactively and reactively responding to the projected impacts of **climate change**. Adaptation planning includes preventative measures to slow down the progression of **climate change** and adaptation measures to reduce the effects of **climate change**.



### Goal:

1. To implement adaptation policies to reduce the community’s property, infrastructure and natural environment vulnerability to the impacts of **climate change**.

### Objective:

1. Increase resiliency to impacts of **climate change**.

### Strategies:

1. Evaluate the current system for determining peak flows and storm durations and modify as required.
2. Consider **climate change** and energy resiliency in infrastructure asset management with respect to maintenance, repair and replacement over time.
3. Consider impacts of **climate change** on emergency measures operations.

4. Promote tree planting programs and community orchards in order to identify those trees that grow well in our climate, help mitigate the impacts of **climate change** and provide other ancillary benefits.
5. Continue and enhance partnerships with different levels of governments, neighbouring communities, public agencies, community organizations, businesses and individuals for the efficient and effective coordination of **climate change** and energy resiliency plans, policies and initiatives including:
  - a) Greenhouse gas reporting
  - b) Risk and vulnerability assessment of local **climate change** impacts and potential opportunities
6. Develop a climate and energy resiliency plan to provide direction for **climate change** mitigation and adaptation planning.



**Did you know?**

*Fort St. John receives approximately 300 sunny days each year!*

## 8.9 Urban Agriculture and Community Food Security

The access to and availability of nutritional food is becoming a greater concern around the world, and even more locally. Fort St. John’s geographic location provides a significant opportunity to promote greater **community food security**. This recognizes that the larger food production and distribution system is necessary but also realizes that the local community can provide significant contributions to ensure easier access to some foods. It is believed that the **community food security** policies and programs will lead to a diversified economy and increase social equity and cultural vitality. Furthermore, healthy food networks and access to affordable, healthy food are key building blocks of a healthy, active community.



**Goals:**

1. To ensure the long-term and secure access to affordable, fresh and healthy food for **citizens**.
2. To develop a sustainable, secure local food system to affordable, fresh and healthy food for **citizens**.

**Objectives:**



1. Support a multi-jurisdictional, cross departmental approach to **community food security** and **urban agriculture**.
2. Continue to evaluate and support parks and open spaces for urban agricultural opportunities such as demonstration gardens, community gardens and community orchards, and edible landscaping.
3. Consider how to use municipal yard waste compost for municipal, commercial and household use.
4. Support a resilient food and agriculture system that contributes to the local economy and overall cultural, financial, social and environmental sustainability of the City.

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### Strategies:

1. Support the development of **urban agriculture** and **local food production** throughout the City.
2. Participate with local community-based food groups to determine how best to support them.
3. Assess economic development potential in agriculture and food-related industries to identify key opportunities and challenges for expansion.
4. Build understanding among business, political and community leaders about the principles of food security that link a prosperous economy to a healthy community.
5. Encourage the private sector to use locally sourced food products wherever possible.
6. Collaborate with communities, landowners and other organizations to identify potential areas to develop temporary or permanent **urban agriculture** activities.
7. Use incentives to encourage developers to provide lands for **urban agriculture**.
8. Work with the community to advocate a food rescue operation that sees unwanted/unused food go to those who need it.
9. Encourage a range of small and medium sized manufacturing industries with a focus on food processing to locate in Fort St. John.
10. Support the creation of a food committee that includes a variety of stakeholders including farmers, developers, professionals and community organizers to advise the City on how to promote and enhance urban food production.
11. Develop an educational program to promote awareness around food production, health, and impacts on the community.
12. Support permitting bee keeping throughout the City.

13. Consider developing an **urban agriculture** strategy to guide future **urban agricultural** practices, development and sales in Fort St. John.

## 8.10 Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability is essential to the well-being of the City. The financial health of the City is depending on a number of key initiatives:

- The Peace River Agreement, which was agreed to in 2015 provides financial resources to the City on an annual basis based on the growth of the oil and gas industry in the surrounding rural areas
- Development Cost Recovery, which includes such items as Development Cost Charges, Servicing Agreements and various development fees and permits
- Tangible Capital Assets, which identifies the value of the City’s infrastructure and sets out a program to ensure that those assets are replaced in a logical manner to minimize financial hardship to the City
- Developing an approach to managing the City’s assets




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### Goal:

1. To be financially sustainable in providing municipal services to new development.
2. To ensure that the Peace River Agreement is maintained and secured as an ongoing source of funding for the City.

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### Objectives:

1. Ensure new development contributes to the cost of servicing new development.
2. Improve the understanding and awareness of development cost recovery in Fort St. John.

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### Strategies:

1. Regularly review the City’s Development Cost Charge Bylaw and related fees for development and the capital plan included in the Development Cost Charge Bylaw.
2. Develop communication materials on the purpose of Development Cost Charges, the amounts collected and capital projects that the collected fees have contributed to.
3. Develop financial goals, principles and strategies to enhance the financial sustainability of the City of Fort St. John and to guide decision-making with respect to achieving the City’s financial goals.



4. Consider developing a local community foundation which aims to assist in the funding of projects that enhance the social well-being of the community.
5. Continue to evaluate and implement the Tangible Capital Asset program to ensure that the City's assets are replaced in a timely, logical and fiscally responsible manner.

# 9.0 Development Permit Areas

**Development Permit Areas** are tools identified under Part 14, Division 7 of the *Local Government Act*. These tools provide a municipality with the jurisdiction to regulate specific aspects of development using special designations, as set out in section 488, including:

- protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity
- protection of development from hazardous conditions
- protection of farming
- revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted
- establishment of objectives for the form and character of intensive residential development
- establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development
- establishment of objectives to promote energy conservation
- establishment of objectives to promote water conservation
- establishment of objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

With this legislation to support it, the City of Fort St. John (City) has identified a number of **Development Permit Areas**. Each of these is described below. Specific guidelines for their implementation can be found in the City's Zoning Bylaw.

Property owners are required to obtain a development permit prior to the subdivision of land, the construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or structure on the land, or the alteration of land within a designated development permit area, except where exemption provisions apply.

## 9.1 Exemptions to Development Permits

1. Development permits are not required before subdivision for development within the **Downtown Development Permit Area**.
2. Development permits are not required for the following:
  - a) Any subdivisions creating less than three legal parcels; or
  - b) Any multiple family developments on parcels less than 900 m<sup>2</sup> in size.

## 9.2 Downtown Development Permit Area

### Justification:

Pursuant to subsections 488 (1)(d)(e)(f) of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of this designation is to establish objectives for the following:

- revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted
- the form and character of intensive residential development
- the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development

The **Downtown Development Permit Area** is located around 100<sup>th</sup> Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This area has recently seen the completion of a **Downtown** Action Plan, which strives to revitalize and bring a new sense of purpose and place to **downtown** Fort St. John. It is envisioned that the area will be redeveloped with a range of single and multiple-family housing, small-scale commercial and community facilities such as public plazas and spaces in an area that encourages a pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment.

The objectives of this designation are to:

- ensure that developments are compatible in scale, form and character with the existing community and consistent with the desired future direction of **downtown**
- emphasize building and open space designs that enhance pedestrian activity, amenities and safety
- contribute to the **downtown's** unique identity and sense of place
- create a vibrant, compact, walkable, accessible and mixed use **downtown** with a high quality of urban design
- ensure that, where necessary, the design of development creates a suitable transition between adjacent different land uses or residential densities
- ensure that multiple-family developments are designed to provide features and amenities for the residents expected to reside in these developments

These objectives provided the basis for a set of design guidelines to be applied to all development within the **Downtown** Commercial Mixed use and **Downtown** Residential land use designations.

The **Downtown Development Permit Area** is illustrated on the **Development Permit Area** map (Schedule H).



## 9.3 Gateway Development Permit Area

### Justification:

Pursuant to subsections 488 (1)(d) and (f) of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of this designation is to establish objectives for the following:

- revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted
- the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development

The Gateway **Development Permit Area** encompasses three locations into Fort St. John. These include the gateway to the City on 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue from the airport, and the east and west entrances to Fort St. John along the Alaska Highway.

The purpose of this **development permit area** is to establish objectives for the form and character of commercial and industrial development in these three areas. This **development permit area** applies to both the public and private realm, in order to identify the key entrances to the City of Fort St. John and ensure that they are welcoming and attractive.

The objectives of this designation are to:

- clearly identify and enhance the gateways into the community
- ensure gateways are welcoming, attractive, and landscaped appropriately for an entrance into Fort St. John

These objectives provided the basis for a set of design guidelines to be applied to all development within the Gateway **Development Permit Area** as illustrated on the **Development Permit Area** map (Schedule H).

## 9.4 General Commercial Development Permit Area

### Justification:

Pursuant to subsections 488 (1)(d) and (f) of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of this designation is to establish objectives for the following:

- revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted
- the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development

The General Commercial **Development Permit Area** is primarily located just off the Alaska Highway, although some parcels within this **development permit area** are found along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue, around 100<sup>th</sup> Street and 105<sup>th</sup> Avenue and north of 100<sup>th</sup> Street and 114A Avenue.

This **development permit area** is intended to ensure that commercial development within Fort St. John is undertaken to a high-quality, visually appealing standard that encourages local shopping and provides for a safe, accessible and attractive environment for residents and visitors.

The objectives of this designation are to:

- Enhance the appearance of developments having public view from the Alaska Highway.
- Ensure that all new commercial developments meet a consistently high standard of visual quality.
- Improve the appearance of commercial properties in Fort St. John.
- Ensure that safe and efficient access is provided.

These objectives provided the basis for a set of design guidelines to be applied to all development within the General Commercial land use designations.

The General Commercial **Development Permit Area** is illustrated on the **Development Permit Area** map (Schedule H).

## 9.5 Major Corridor Development Permit Area

### Justification:

Pursuant to subsections 488 (1)(a)(d) and (f) of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of this designation is to establish objectives for the following:

- protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity
- revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted
- the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development

The Major Corridor **Development Permit areas** are quite visible from the Alaska Highway and its frontage roads and other major corridors into Fort St. John, such as 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 100<sup>th</sup> Street. These areas often form the first impression of Fort St. John for tourists, as well as a continuing impression for **citizens** who regularly drive along these routes. This **Development Permit Area** is important for the tourism and highway commercial business in Fort St. John and encompasses properties that front major corridors in the City.

The objectives of this **Development Permit Area** are to:

- protect greenspaces and natural areas along the Alaska Highway to create buffers that protect the visual corridor and viewsapes of this corridor
- Enhance the appearance of developments having public view and located along these major corridors through landscaping, prioritizing pedestrians and encouraging high quality design
- Ensure that all new development meets a consistently high standard of visual quality
- Ensure that developments along the Alaska Highway, its frontage roads and other major corridors as identified in this **development permit area**:
  - Maintain a character and feel that is consistent with the community
  - Provide safe and efficient access

These objectives provided the basis for a set of design guidelines to be applied to all development within the Major Corridor **Development Permit Area** as illustrated on the **Development Permit Area** map (Schedule H).

## 9.6 Multiple Family Residential Development Permit Area

### Justification:



Pursuant to subsections 488 (1)(e) and (f) of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of this designation is to establish objectives for the following:

- the form and character of intensive residential development
- the form and character of commercial, industrial or multiple family residential development

Multiple family residential developments can have significant positive impacts on the surrounding area, including aesthetics, traffic generation and building positive neighbourhoods. With the application of design guidelines, an area can be enhanced and friction between existing **citizens** and new multiple family developments can be reduced. Good design should take into account public safety and crime prevention.

The objectives of this **development permit area** are to:

- ensure that multiple family developments are attractive and compatible with the surrounding area through its siting, design and exterior finishing
- emphasize building and open space designs that enhances pedestrian activity, accessibility, amenities and safety
- ensure that, where necessary, the design of development creates a suitable transition between adjacent different land uses or residential densities
- ensure that multiple family developments are designed to provide the features and amenities suitable for the needs of the residents expected to reside in these developments

These objectives provided the basis for a set of design guidelines to be applied to all development within the Medium and High Density Residential land use designations.

The Multiple Family **Development Permit Area** is illustrated on the **Development Permit Area** map (Schedule H).



## 9.7 Fish Creek Development Permit Area

### Justification:

Pursuant to subsections 488 (1)(a) and (b) of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of this designation is to establish objectives for the following:

- protection of the natural environment, its ecosystem and biological diversity
- protection of development from hazardous conditions

The Fish Creek **Development Permit Area** encompasses the area of Fish Creek along the northern boundary of Fort St. John.

The purpose of this **development permit area** is to establish objectives to protect the natural environment in the Fish Creek and protect development from hazardous slope areas. This **development permit area** applies to both the public and private realm.

The objectives of this designation are to:

- protect Fish Creek by creating buffers that protect natural and sensitive features from development.
- protect development from areas of steep slope by creating buffers to ensure hazardous conditions are avoided.
- ensure that recreational development and activities in Fish Creek protect and enhance the natural environment.
- identify a riparian assessment protection area

These objectives provide the basis for a set of design guidelines to be applied to all development within the Fish Creek **Development Permit Area**, identified 200 metres from the creek centre line as illustrated on the **Development Permit Area** map (Schedule H).

## 9.8 Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area

This section was added by Bylaw No. 2440, 2018

### Justification:

Pursuant to subsections 488(e)(f)(h)(i)(j) of the *Local Government Act*, the purpose of this designation is to establish objectives for the following:

- the form and character of intensive residential development;
- the form and character of commercial or multiple family residential development;
- to promote energy conservation;
- to promote water conservation;
- to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area is located in northwest Fort St. John, bound by Fish Creek to the north, 116 Street (West Bypass Road) to the east, Alaska Highway to the south, and Blackberry Street to the west. The western limit and a portion of the southern limit share a jurisdictional boundary with the Peace River Regional District (PRRD). This was an expansion area that recently saw the completion of the Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan, which strives to create a complete and comprehensively planned neighbourhood with exceptional design standards, focused on the natural areas and open space of the Fish Creek Coulee, referred to in Section 7.9.1 – Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan.

In the Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area ‘Intensive Residential Development’ means a lot with a secondary Carriage House.

The objectives of this development permit area are intended to implement the Neighbourhood Plan vision, principles and objectives identified in Section 7.9.1 of the Plan and to:

- ensure that intensive residential, multiple family and commercial developments are attractive and compatible with the surrounding area and where necessary, the design of development creates a suitable transition between adjacent different land uses and densities;
- ensure a high standard of urban design and quality of construction for future development;
- ensure interesting, connected pedestrian-friendly streetscapes;
- Incorporate architectural features and detailing of buildings;



## 9.8 Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area (continued)

### Justification:

- provide for scale and massing of residential mixed-use buildings and commercial buildings that promote a safe and enjoyable living, pedestrian, working, shopping, and service experience;
- create an attractive and vibrant village centre;
- promote mixed-use development;
- implement winter city guidelines.

These objectives provide the basis for a set of design guidelines to be applied to all development within the Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area as illustrated on the Development Permit Area map (Schedule H).



# 10.0 Making the Plan Work

The City of Fort St. John (City) takes a planned and principled approach to ensuring that the City has the strategic policy direction and guidance required to ensure new growth, development and service provision is consistent, equitable, responsible and sustainable, and in the long-term best interests of its **citizens**.

Many of the objectives and policies are designed to provide consistent guidance over the long-term when developing, administering or prioritizing City policies, funding and bylaws. Others are specific actions that result in a tangible and physical result, whether it is a new plan, strategy, policy, bylaw or capital project. These actions range from short-term to long-term priorities and require differing levels of City effort and involvement. Many of these priorities were derived from comments and input received directly from **citizens** and stakeholders during engagement activities and events.

## 10.1 Building the Information Base

The *Local Government Act* states that all bylaws enacted and works undertaken by Council shall be consistent with the provisions set out in the Official Community Plan. This includes zoning, subdivision and development servicing and development cost charge bylaws, to name just a few. This principle also extends to other plans, strategies and programs, and the concepts, policies and operations measures in these plans must be consistent with the direction set out in the Official Community Plan.

The City of Fort St. John has many plans, strategies and programs in place that provide direction for the community. Some of these plans, strategies and programs already generally align with the Official Community Plan and may require an update from time to time, while others may require a review and adjustment in the approach and outcomes. In other instances, there are gaps in strategic direction and oversight for important geographic areas or topics within the City. Regardless of what category a plan may fall into, updates or creation of new plans or strategies must consider and align with the Official Community Plan, and work towards the successful implementation of the policy direction contained herein.

The following list identifies plans, strategies, bylaws and policies that may be amended, updated, developed and adopted in order to ensure the long-term implementation of the Official Community Plan. It is intended that these will be prioritized during the City's strategic planning processes. In addition to these plans, strategies, bylaws and policies, the City will also collect a variety of other statistics that it uses to ensure the implementation of the Official Community Plan.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDIES:

- **Brownfield** Remediation Master Plan
- City Gateway Guidelines and Concept Development
- Economic Development Strategy
- Marketing Plan
- Signage Plan

## INFRASTRUCTURE STUDIES:

- Liquid Waste Management Plan (2014)
- Water Conservation Strategy (2011)

## BUILDING COMMUNITY STUDIES:

- 50 Year Growth Study (2015)
- Accessibility Plan
- **Affordable Housing** Strategy
- Age-Friendly Plan
- Comprehensive Development Plan (2005)
- Cultural Plan
- Greenspace Master Plan
- Heritage Plan
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2017)

## TRANSPORTATION STUDIES:

- Parking Study
- Transit Optimization Study (2012)
- Transportation Master Plan (2015)

### FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY:

- Development Cost Charge Bylaw
- Asset Management

### LAND USE:

- Agricultural Strategy
- Land Use Strategy
- Zoning Bylaw (2011)

### OTHER REPORTS/STUDIES/PLANS:

- City of Fort St. John Annual Report
- Communications Plan

### SHARED JURISDICTIONAL PLANS:

- Peace River Regional District Solid Waste Management Plan
- North Peace Airport Development Plan

## 10.2 Monitoring the Plan

Monitoring the Official Community Plan will be important in order to evaluate whether the vision, goals and objectives are being achieved through the policies. This can help the City to adjust its efforts during the term of this Official Community Plan to better meet needs of the community.

Ensuring the successful implementation of this Official Community Plan will not only require updates to other plans and strategies, but will require ongoing monitoring and evaluation. This is required in order to equip Council and City staff with the information needed to respond to the evolving context of the community, and to determine whether the vision, goals and objectives set out in this Official Community Plan are being achieved through the policies. This monitoring of the Official Community Plan will help the City to adjust its efforts during the term of this Official Community Plan to better meet the needs of the community.





To monitor the Official Community Plan, a variety of criteria, checklists, indicators and units of measurement are used. Some already exist, while others may need to be developed.

## 10.3 Reviewing the Plan

An Official Community Plan should be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it continues to move the community towards its vision. Short, medium and long-term reviews provide many opportunities to ensure this alignment, and to determine if a re-alignment is required.

### 10.3.1 Short Term Reviews

Short term reviews are an annual snapshot of progress. They include elements such as Official Community Plan amendments and annual reporting primarily.

The City of Fort St. John prepares an annual report each year. This report could be modified to measure how the City is performing relative to the vision of this Official Community Plan.

### 10.3.2 Medium Term Reviews

Medium term reviews are considered with a 2-5 year time frame in mind. These reviews include elements such as emerging trends, the 5 year Official Community Plan reviews and reporting, confirming that the vision is still relevant and guiding the City in the direction it wishes to go. They may also include the incorporation of **neighbourhood plans** through an amendment to the Official Community Plan.

### 10.3.3 Long-term Reviews

Long-term reviews are considered beyond the 5 year time frame. Long-term reviews include such elements as assessing long-term trends, reviewing achievements and identifying next steps, considering the relevance of the vision and ensuring it still guides the City in the direction it wishes to go. In addition, regular reviews of the Official Community Plan in the 5-10 year time frame are also considered a long-term review.

### 10.3.4 Neighbourhood Planning Framework

A **Neighbourhood Plan** is a secondary land use plan that supplements the Official Community Plan, and once completed, is linked to the Official Community Plan through an amendment. **Neighbourhood plans** are designed to be community building blocks that provide guidance and direction on a variety of topics including land use, urban design, housing, transportation, community facilities and parks and recreation.

The completion of a **neighbourhood plan** for an urban development area will see the **neighbourhood plan** amended to the Official Community Plan. As a component of



completing a **neighbourhood plan**, the City of Fort St. John may request a variety of Development Approval Information.

### 10.3.5 Development Approval Information

Council may require Development Approval Information as set out in Division 6 of the *Local Government Act* for development proposals regarding amendments to the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw, Development Permit Areas, and Temporary Use Permits, as per the City's Development Approval Procedures Bylaw.

The following circumstances are specified, and the following areas designated, for which Development Approval Information may be required:

- Land designated as an Urban Development Area in this Official Community Plan
- Land that is one (1) hectare in size or larger
- The development proposal includes more than one (1) parcel of land

As noted throughout this plan, it is important to have Development Approval Information that considers the broader area around the proposed development, and addresses the following factors:

- Land use types, densities, locations and phasing of development
- Form and character
- Real estate market analysis
- Community facility locations, including schools, parks, emergency, health and protective services
- Utilities capacity and routing
- Transportation network, including pedestrian connectivity
- Environmentally sensitive, hazardous, historical, cultural and archaeological features
- Phasing of development
- **Winter city elements**
- Visual impacts
- Climate Action
- Other studies as deemed necessary by the City of Fort St. John

### 10.3.6 Official Community Plan Amendments

Official Community Plan amendments will be undertaken as set out in the City's Development Approval Procedures Bylaw. Such amendments may be required in order to

ensure the alignment of other plans, strategies, bylaws and policies with the Official Community Plan and to ensure the connectivity of the community's vision to the implementation of the Official Community Plan. In addition, amendments may be required to implement various goals, objectives and/or policies of the Official Community Plan. Finally, the Official Community Plan is also considered for new developments and at times, amendments to the Official Community Plan may be required.

### 10.3.7 Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Zoning Bylaw amendments will be undertaken as set out in the City's Development Approval Procedures Bylaw. Such amendments may be required in order to implement various goals, objectives and/or policies of the Official Community Plan. In addition, Zoning Bylaw amendments are considered for new developments and at times, may also require amendments to the Official Community Plan.

### 10.3.8 Temporary Use Permits

Temporary use permits are authorized in accordance with Section 492 of the *Local Government Act*. They are used to enable a use to locate on a parcel for a specified period of time because the use is short-term in duration and therefore does not require a change in the land use designation. Temporary use permits are primarily considered within commercial or industrial land use designations.



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#### Goal:

1. To provide the opportunity for temporary uses in the City of Fort St. John where appropriate.

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#### Objective:

1. Ensure that temporary uses in the City of Fort St. John are considered city-wide.

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#### Strategies:

1. Consider the compatibility of the temporary use proposal with current or future land uses on adjacent properties such that it does not warrant a change of land use designation or zoning of the property. This may include economic development and testing the compatibility of a proposed use with established nearby uses.
2. Consider the impact of the proposed temporary use on the natural environment and environmentally sensitive areas, and any proposed remedial measures to mitigate any damage to the natural environment or environmentally sensitive areas as a result of the temporary use.
3. Evaluate the compatibility of the operation, function, appearance and intensity of the proposed temporary use with the surrounding area.



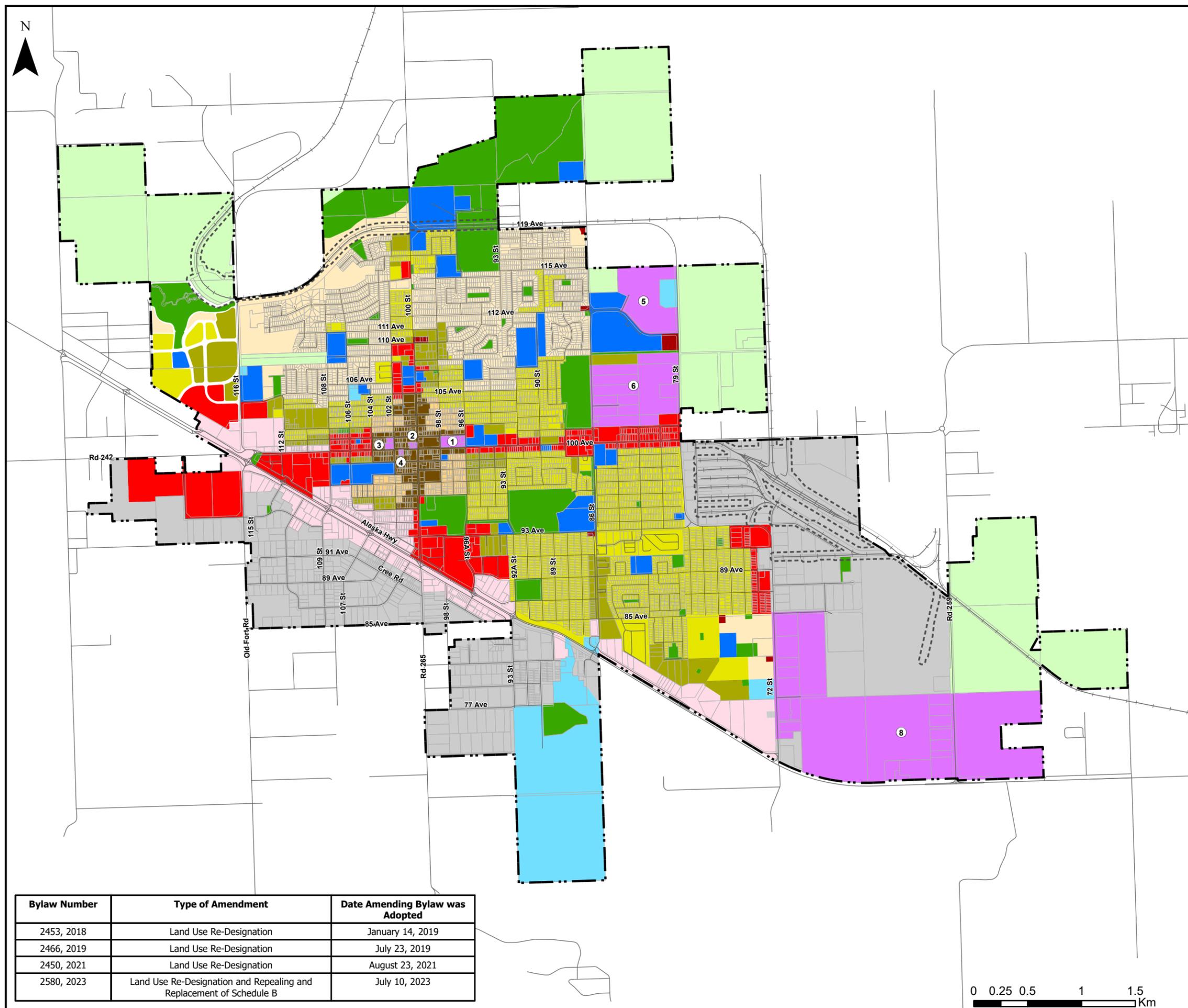
4. Consider whether the proposed temporary use could be conducted on land elsewhere in the community.
5. The temporary use permit application must be referred to and approved by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure with respect to access to and effect on provincial highways.
6. As a condition of issuing a Temporary Use Permit, Council may identify specific conditions including, but not limited to:
  - a) The demolition of a building or structure associated with the permit, or the restoration of the property as described in the permit by the date specified in the permit;
  - b) Posting a letter of credit as security to guarantee the performance of the terms of the permit;
  - c) The hours of the proposed use;
  - d) The area of the proposed use; and
  - e) Environmental and groundwater protection measures.
7. A Temporary Use Permit may not exceed three years and is limited to one renewal only, which may only be granted by a resolution of Council.

## 10.4 Citizen Participation

The development of this Official Community Plan involved significant public participation in Fort St. John. Throughout the engagement, many **citizens** expressed a desire to maintain the practice of community engagement in helping inform direct decision-making. The following identifies a number of activities that could be implemented to enable **citizens**, committees and local interest groups to contribute to the development of City affairs and decision-making in a fair and equitable manner.

- Increased engagement could be achieved through a number of avenues including community surveys, social media platforms and community events.
- Committees of Council are considered on an on-going basis and could be struck to provide opportunities for **citizens** to contribute through membership on existing and new committees of Council.
- Participatory budgeting could be used to provide **citizens** with the opportunity to learn about the City's budgeting process and participate in a transparent and informative process that provides for **citizen** input.

City of Fort St. John  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. 2388, 2017  
**Land Use**



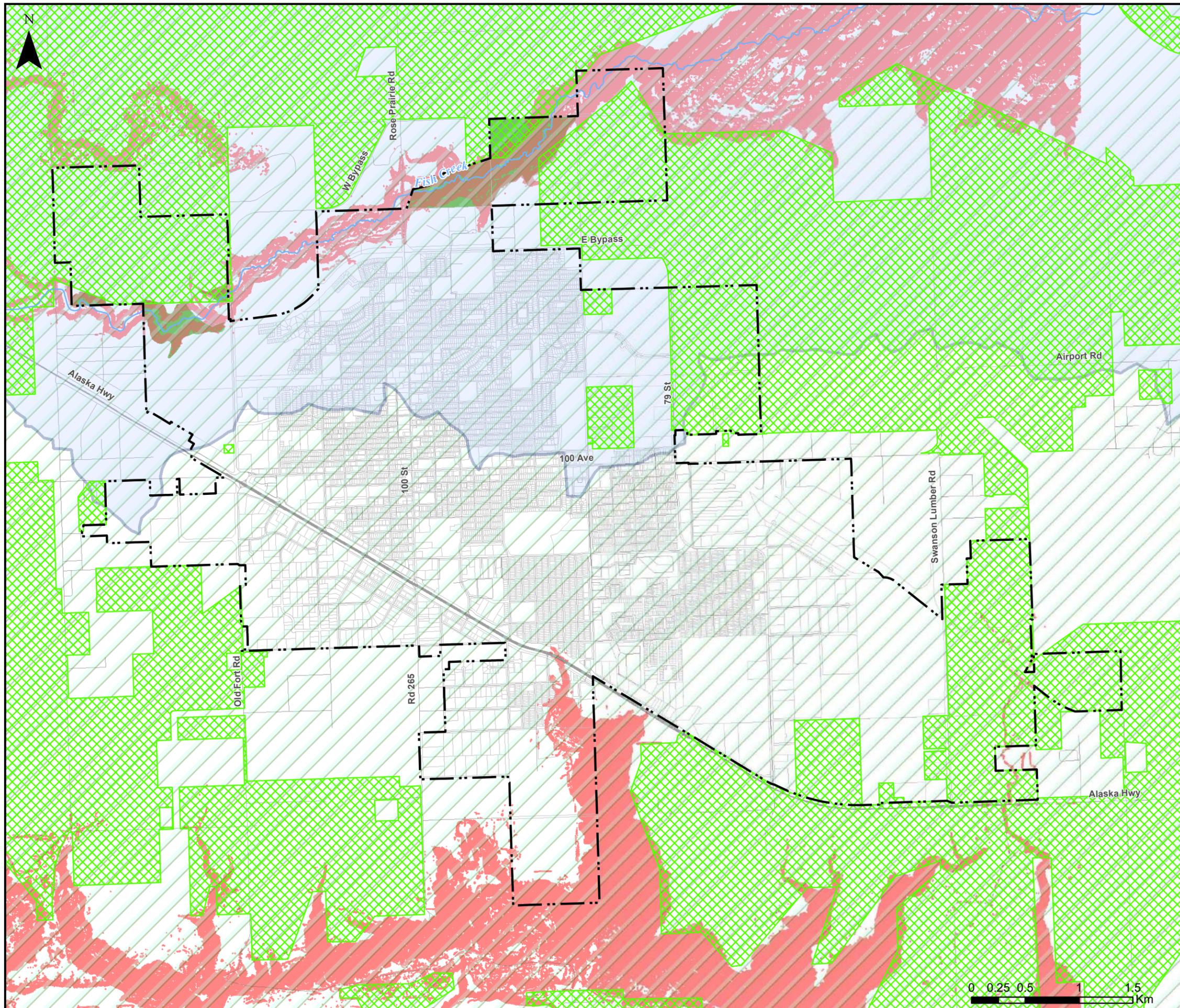
- Legend**
-  Municipal Boundary
  -  Railway Buffer (Recommended Building Setback in Proximity to Railway Operations)
  -  Railway
- Land Use Designation**
-  Agriculture
  -  Low Density Residential
  -  Medium Density Residential
  -  High Density Residential
  -  Downtown Residential
  -  Neighbourhood Commercial
  -  General Commercial
  -  Highway Commercial
  -  Downtown Commercial and Mixed Use
  -  Industrial
  -  Institutional
  -  Public Utility
  -  Parks, Natural Areas and Trails
  -  Urban Development Areas

| Bylaw Number | Type of Amendment   | Date Amending Bylaw was Adopted |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2453, 2018   | Land Use Re-Designation   | January 14, 2019                |
| 2466, 2019   | Land Use Re-Designation   | July 23, 2019                   |
| 2450, 2021   | Land Use Re-Designation   | August 23, 2021                 |
| 2580, 2023   | Land Use Re-Designation and Repealing and Replacement of Schedule B | July 10, 2023                   |



**SCHEDULE B**

City of Fort St. John  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. 2388, 2017  
**Development Constraints**



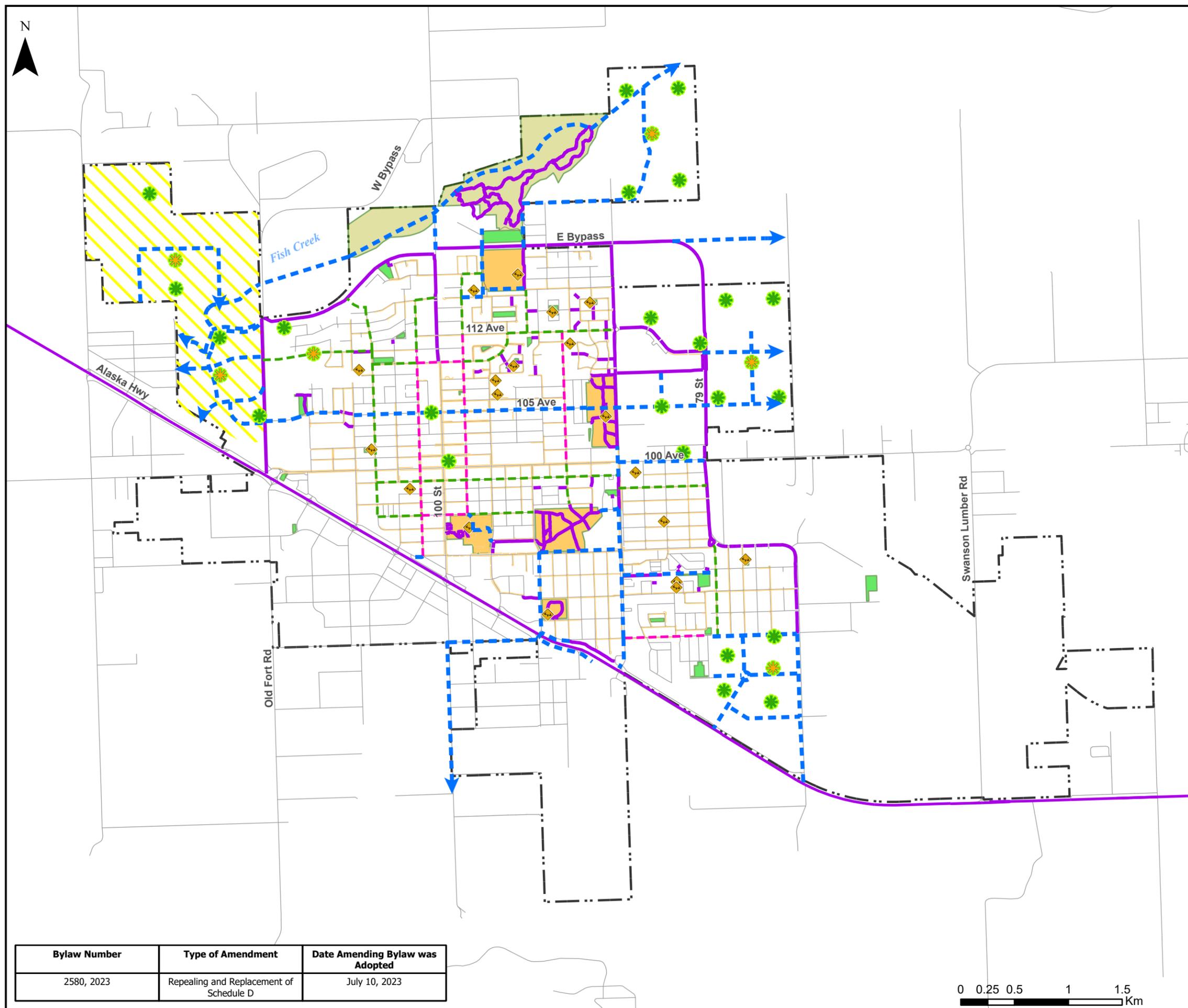
**Legend**

-  Municipal Boundary
-  Fish Creek Corridor
-  Areas of Steep Slopes (>25%)
-  Beatton River Watershed
-  Peace River Watershed
-  Agricultural Land Reserve

**SCHEDULE C**



City of Fort St. John  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. 2388, 2017  
**Parks, Natural Areas  
and Trails Network**



**Legend**

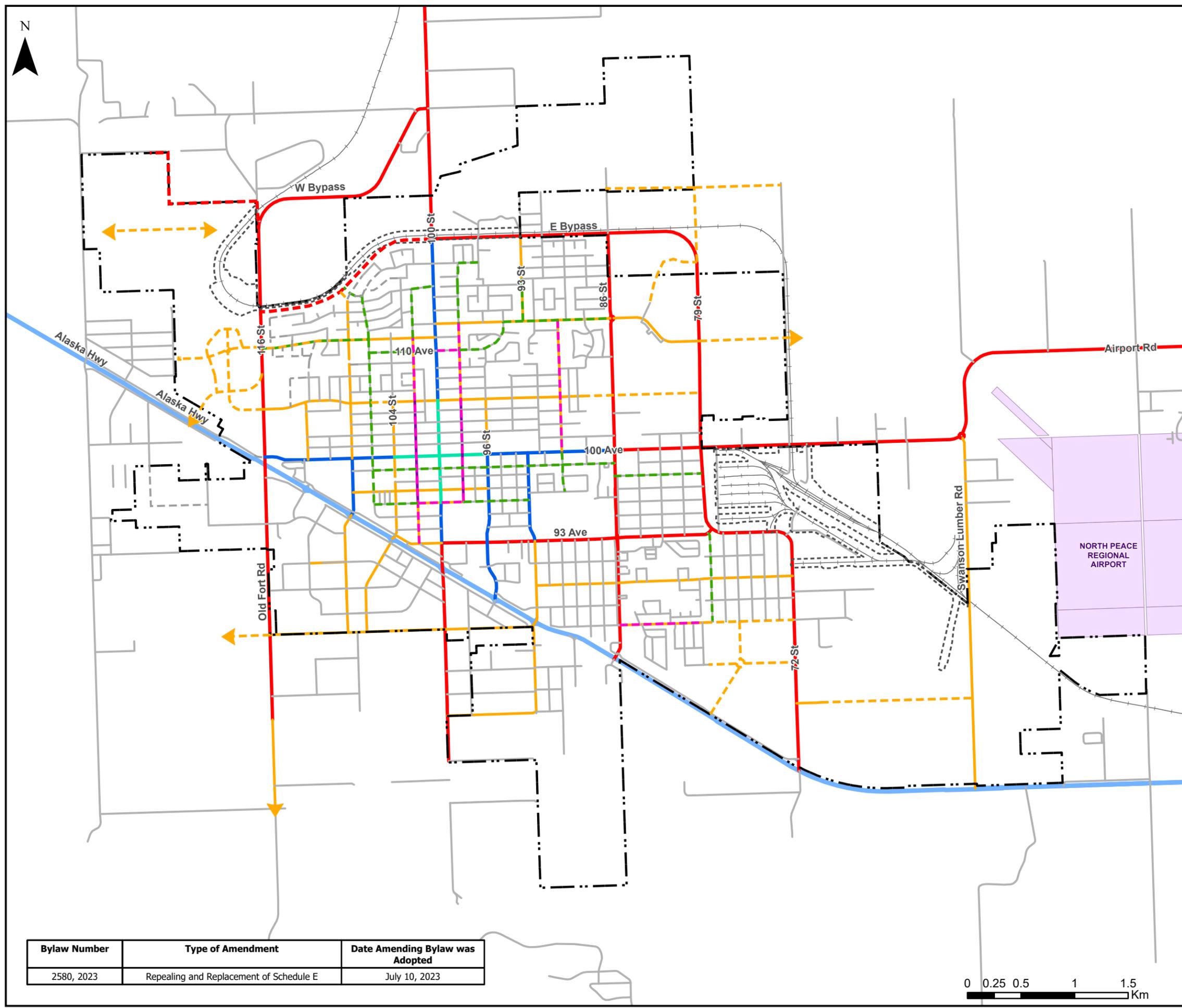
- Municipal Boundary
- Future Parks, Natural Areas and Trails**
- Proposed Community Park
- Proposed Neighbourhood Park
- Parks Needed If Residential
- Proposed Trail
- Future Dedicated Bicycle Route
- Future Shared Travel Lane
- Existing Parks, Natural Areas and Trails**
- Playgrounds
- Trail
- Sidewalks
- Community Parks
- Neighbourhood Parks
- Natural Areas

| Bylaw Number | Type of Amendment                       | Date Amending Bylaw was Adopted |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2580, 2023   | Repealing and Replacement of Schedule D | July 10, 2023                   |



**SCHEDULE D**

# City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017 Transportation



- Legend**
-  Municipal Boundary
  -  Railway Buffer (Recommended Building Setback in Proximity to Railway Operations)
  -  Railway
  -  Future Dedicated Bicycle Route
  -  Future Shared Travel Lane
- Future Road**
-  Future Arterial
  -  Future Major Collector
  -  Future Minor Collector
  -  Future Local
- Existing Road**
-  Highway
  -  Highway Ramp
  -  Arterial
  -  Major Collector
  -  Minor Collector
  -  Downtown Major Collector
  -  Downtown Minor Collector
  -  Local

| Bylaw Number | Type of Amendment                       | Date Amending Bylaw was Adopted |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2580, 2023   | Repealing and Replacement of Schedule E | July 10, 2023                   |

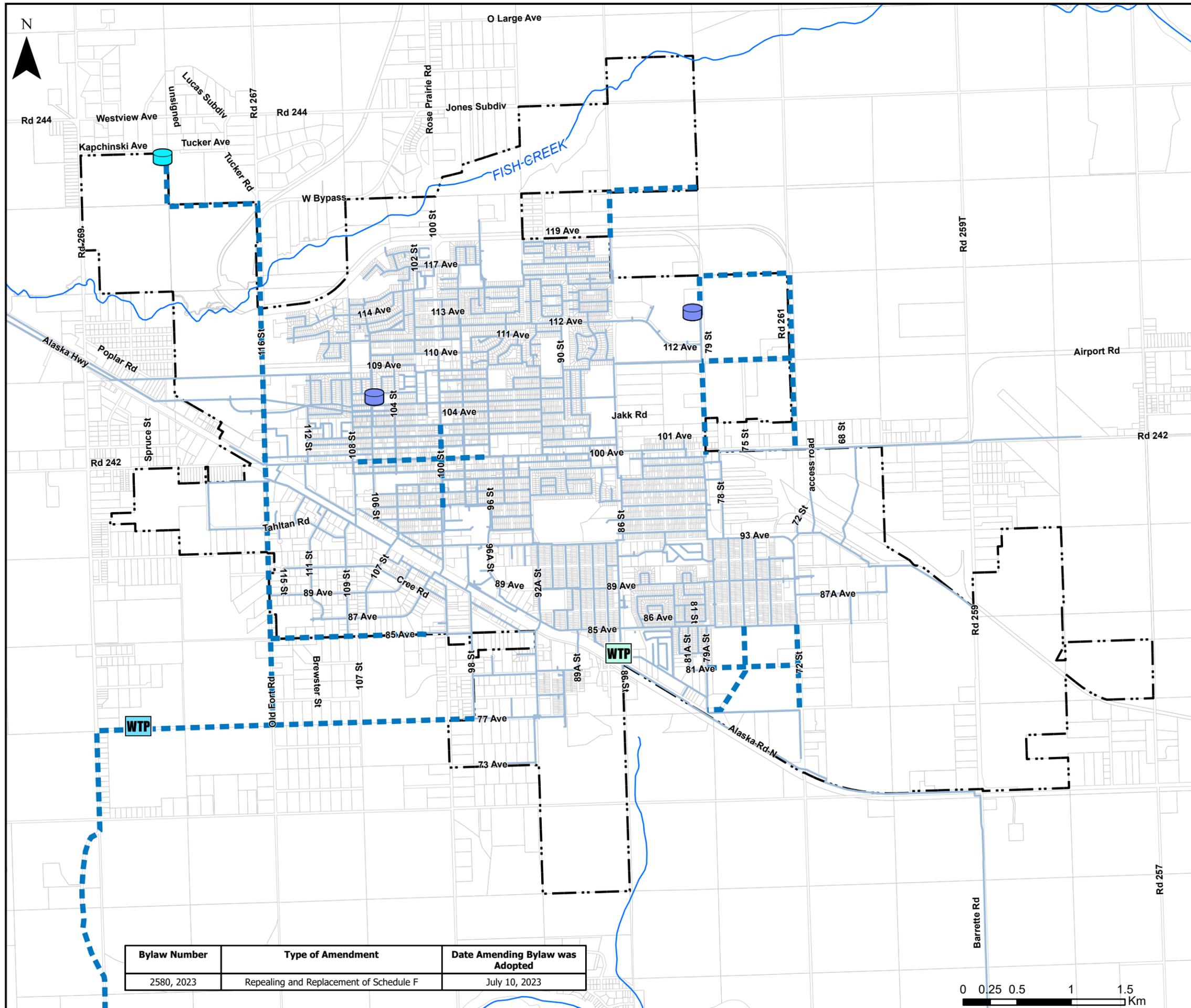


## SCHEDULE E

# City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017 Water Servicing

## Legend

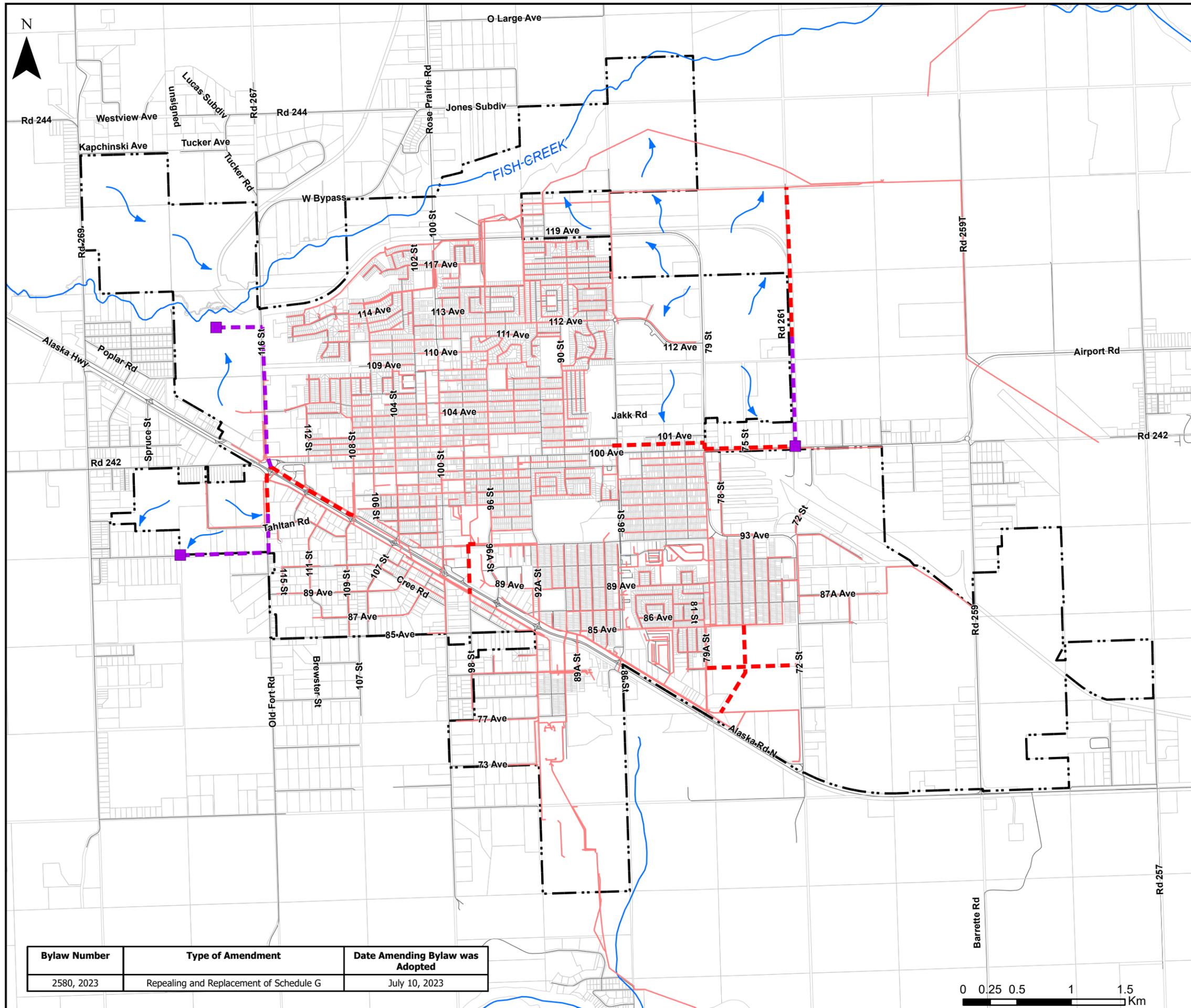
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Parcel Lot
-  Road
-  Watercourse
- Future Water System Infrastructure**
-  Future Water Main
-  Future Reservoir
-  Future Water Treatment Plant
-  Existing Water Treatment Plant  
(Upgrades will be required)
- Existing Water System Infrastructure**
-  Existing Water Main Lines
-  Existing Reservoir



| Bylaw Number | Type of Amendment                       | Date Amending Bylaw was Adopted |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2580, 2023   | Repealing and Replacement of Schedule F | July 10, 2023                   |

# SCHEDULE F

City of Fort St. John  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. 2388, 2017  
**Sanitary Sewer Servicing**



**Legend**

-  Municipal Boundary
-  Parcel Lot
-  Road
-  Watercourse
- Future Sanitary Sewer System Infrastructure**
-  Future Gravity Main
-  Future Pressure Main
-  Future Lift Station
-  Gravity\_Flow\_Direction
-  Future Gravity Flow Direction (Existing Topography)
- Existing Sanitary Sewer System Infrastructure**
-  Existing Sanitary Main

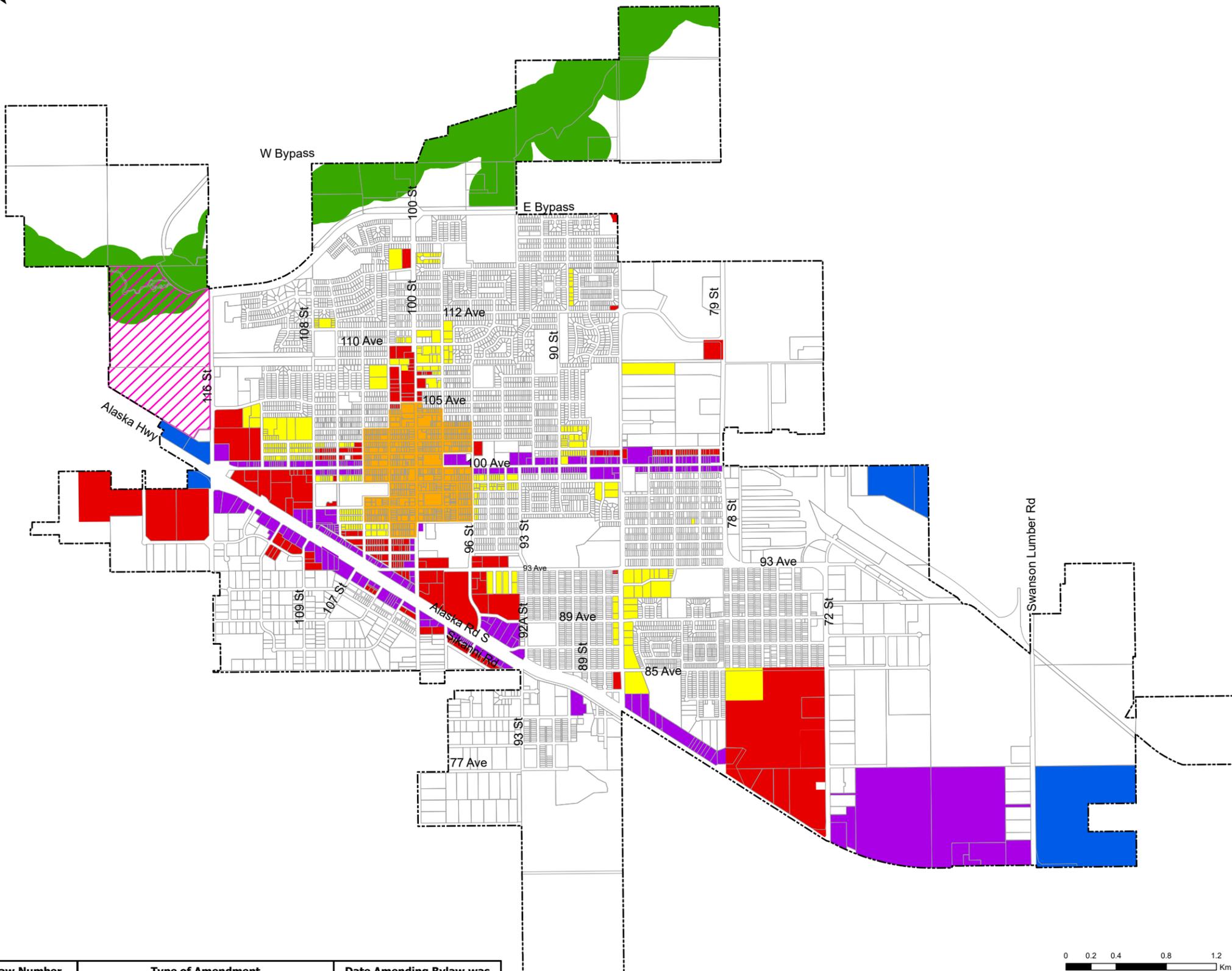
| Bylaw Number | Type of Amendment                       | Date Amending Bylaw was Adopted |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2580, 2023   | Repealing and Replacement of Schedule G | July 10, 2023                   |



**SCHEDULE G**



City of Fort St. John  
 Official Community Plan  
 Bylaw No. 2388, 2017  
**Development Permit Areas**



**Legend**

- Municipal Boundary
- Development Permit Areas**
- Downtown Development Permit Area
- Gateway Development Permit Area
- General Commercial Development Permit Area
- Major Corridor Development Permit Area
- Multiple Family General Development Permit Area
- Fish Creek Development Permit Area
- Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area
- Parcel Lots

| Bylaw Number | Type of Amendment                       | Date Amending Bylaw was Adopted |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2440, 2018   | Parkwood Southlands                     | October 9, 2018                 |
| 2580, 2023   | Repealing and Replacement of Schedule H | July 10, 2023                   |



**SCHEDULE H**

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

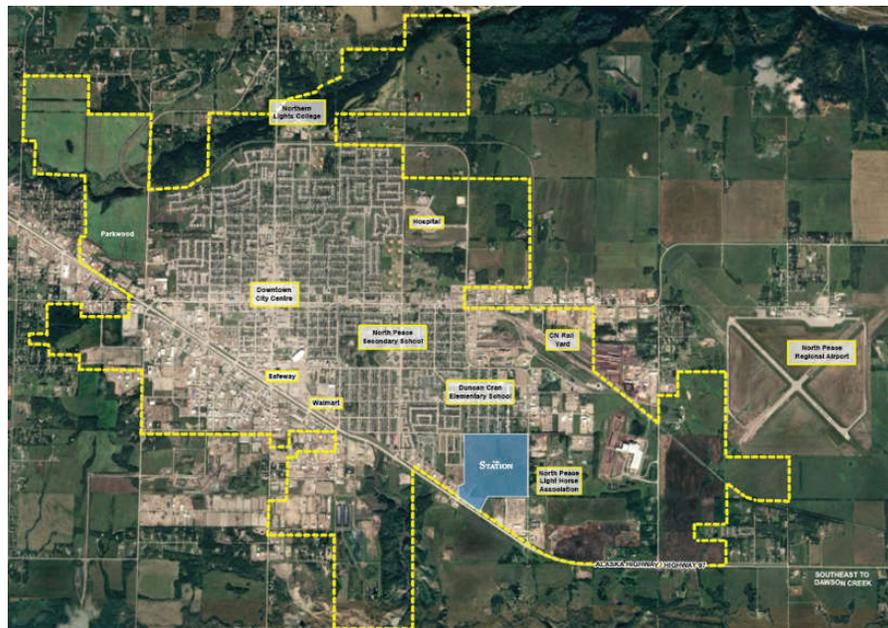
This schedule was added by Bylaw No. 2580, 2023

### 1. APPLICATION AREA & SITE CONTEXT

The Station is a mixed-use community to be developed in the southeastern portion of the City of Fort St. John, British Columbia. The proposed development concept aligns with the vision and goals for efficient growth management in the City and provides policy framework requirements to facilitate the proposed development. It includes details on land uses, parks, transportation and mobility, infrastructure and servicing, and implementation considerations.

The Station is located in the southeast portion of the City as shown in *Figure 1: Amendment Area Location – The Station*. The development parcel is bound by:

- The future extension of 85 Avenue to the north;
- Northern Lights Drive to the east;
- Existing Highway Commercial uses to the south;
- The Alaska Highway (Highway 97) to the south-west; and
- Existing residential uses to the west.



*Figure 1: Amendment Area Location – The Station*

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 2. NEIGHBOURHOOD VISION

The purpose of The Station Neighbourhood Plan is to create a mix of uses and amenities that will benefit the community of Fort St. John both in the short- and long-term. The variety of proposed uses include a mix of residential housing types with supporting commercial uses. The land use design proposes increasing density approaching the highway commercial area to the southwest and creates connectivity and access to services. A detailed concept is provided in *Figure 1: Concept Plan* with a detailed breakdown of the land uses, densities, and projected population in *Table 1: Land Use Breakdown*.

| Type                           | Typography                                    | Density | Area           |              | Estimated    |              |       |         |
|--------------------------------|---|---------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------|---------|
|                                |   | per ha  | Sq.M.          | Ha           | Dwellings    | Population*  |       |         |
| Highway Commercial             |   | n/a     | 59,723         | 5.97         |              |              |       | Phase 1 |
| Medium Density Residential     | Apartment, duplex, 3plex, 4plex, and townhome | 55      | 54,591         | 5.46         | 300          | 721          | 4,632 | Phase 2 |
| High Density Residential       | Townhomes, apartments                         | 155     | 105,134        | 10.51        | 1630         | 3,911        |       |         |
| Medium Density Residential     | Apartment, duplex, 3plex, 4plex, and townhome | 55      | 103,405        | 10.34        | 569          | 1,365        |       |         |
| Low Density Residential        | Single family, duplexes                       | 38      | 136,492        | 13.65        | 519          | 1,245        |       |         |
| Neighbourhood Commercial       |   | n/a     | 5,942          | 0.59         |              |              |       |         |
| Institutional (2.43 ha)        |   |         | 24,281         | 2.43         |              |              |       |         |
| Park (5% of NCP Area: 3.02 ha) |   |         | 30,171         | 3.02         |              |              |       |         |
| Public Utility (Storm Pond)    |   |         | 47,836         | 4.78         |              |              |       |         |
| Roads (est. %)                 |   |         | 35,843         | 3.58         |              |              |       |         |
| <b>Totals:</b>                 |   |         | <b>603,418</b> | <b>60.34</b> | <b>3,017</b> | <b>7,241</b> |       |         |

| Summary by Typography          | Ha           | Percent     | Dwellings    | Population   |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Highway Commercial             | 5.97         | 9.9%        |              |              |
| Neighbourhood Commercial       | 0.59         | 1.0%        |              |              |
| High Density Residential       | 10.51        | 17.4%       | 1,630        | 3,911        |
| Medium Density Residential     | 15.80        | 26.2%       | 869          | 2,086        |
| Low Density Residential        | 13.65        | 22.6%       | 519          | 1,245        |
| Institutional (2.43 ha)        | 2.43         | 4.0%        |              |              |
| Park (5% of NCP Area: 3.02 ha) | 3.02         | 5.0%        |              |              |
| Public Utility (Storm Pond)    | 4.78         | 7.9%        |              |              |
| Roads (est. %)                 | 3.58         | 5.9%        |              |              |
| <b>Totals</b>                  | <b>60.34</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>3,017</b> | <b>7,241</b> |

| Summary by Use | Ha    | Percent |
|----------------|-------|---------|
| Commercial     | 6.57  | 9.9%    |
| Residential    | 42.98 | 71.2%   |
| Other          | 10.80 | 17.9%   |

| Residential Density | Est. Units | Units/Ha |
|---------------------|------------|----------|
| Est. Dwellings      | 3,000      | 70       |

\* Population estimates are based on 2.4 residents per dwelling average per 2021 Census

Table 1: Land Use Breakdown

The proposed land use mix will improve the City's housing variety by providing a mix of residential housing types. These include:

- Traditional single detached and semi-detached housing adjacent to similar density existing neighbourhoods to the north; and
- Townhouses/row-houses; and
- Multi-family developments.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 2. NEIGHBOURHOOD VISION (continued)

A five-to-six acre (2.02-2.43 ha) area of Institutional use is proposed centrally within The Station and adjacent to a park area to provide an Elementary School for approximately 400 students.

Further, a variety of commercial uses are anticipated including:

- A Highway Commercial area, located in the southwest portion of the Neighbourhood Plan, adjacent to the Alaska Highway providing ease of access and synergistic proximity to higher density residential areas; and
- Neighbourhood Commercial areas located within lower density residential areas to service both the existing residential area to the north and the new residential areas within The Station. These commercial areas are located on Collector Roads to facilitate multi-modal access through the mobility-network

Supporting infrastructure for roads, water, sewer and stormwater will extend existing City services at the cost of the developer, in a phased approach.

The completion of a new Alaska Highway intersection is required, connecting the southwest commercial area to the remainder of the development, to provide access from the Highway to the residential areas to the north.



Figure 1: Concept Plan

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 2. NEIGHBOURHOOD VISION (continued)

This range of land uses creates a balanced community, a variety of housing options, and additional flexibility to develop the site to meet the needs of a growing city

- Site specific planning considerations such as building typology, percentage of parcel, density, average lot dimensions, lot and block layout will be in line with this Neighbourhood Plan and will be consistent with Zoning Bylaw No. 2470, 2019. Future design stages will detail necessary considerations including landscaping, parking, garbage collection, and utility requirements.

### 3. ALIGNMENT WITH HOUSING NEEDS AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The potential population provided by The Station is estimated by applying the 2.4 average occupancy rate from the 2021 Census to the estimated units for each residential land use area in the proposed development based on maximum densities per hectare for each proposed area.

#### Summary of Population by Residential Land Use Area

*(Summarized from Table 1: Land Use Breakdown)*

| Proposed Zoning                                | Area in Ha | Density per Ha | Est. Units   | Est. Pop. @ 2.4 occupancy |
|--|------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| <b>High Density</b>                            | 10.51      | 155            | 1,630        | 3,911                     |
| <b>Medium Density</b>                          | 15.80      | 55             | 869          | 2,086                     |
| <b>Low Density</b>                             | 13.65      | 38             | 519          | 1,245                     |
| <b>Total Estimated units &amp; population:</b> |            |                | <b>3,017</b> | <b>7,241</b>              |

The proposed residential land-use designations within The Station will host a higher total average density than the 23 units per hectare noted as the average for the City as noted in the Fort St. John 50 Year Growth Study (December 2015).

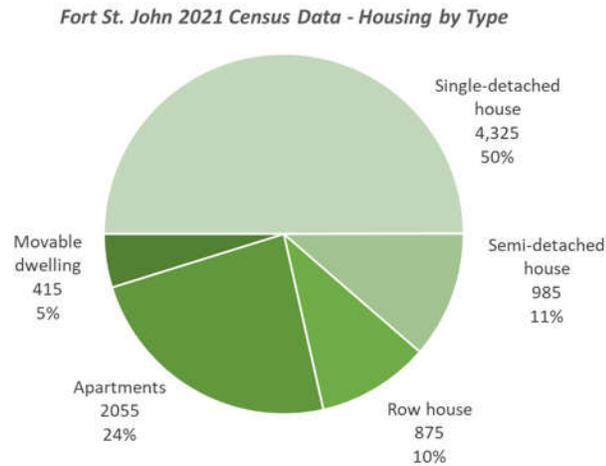
In the 2021 Fort St. John Statistics Canada Census (summarized in the below noted chart, the majority of the housing in Fort St. John was noted to be single detached and semi-detached dwellings representing 61% of total housing stock.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 3. ALIGNMENT WITH HOUSING NEEDS AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS (continued)

The Station Neighbourhood Plan will improve housing variety in the market by providing a significant amount of high density housing stock with a broad range of housing variety.



*Data source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021*

### 4. GENERAL NEIGHBOURHOOD OBJECTIVES

It is proposed that The Station Neighbourhood Plan allows for the creation of a new neighbourhood that supports the values and growth needs of the City. This neighbourhood plan was created with the following objectives in mind:

- Create a comprehensively planned neighbourhood, focused on walkability and access to surrounding residential and commercial areas and the new intersection on the southwest corner of the parcel.
- Develop a neighbourhood with strong design standards, offering a range of housing opportunities, facilities and services that will foster a high quality of life, in keeping with the residential, commercial, environmental and sustainability policies of the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 4. GENERAL NEIGHBOURHOOD OBJECTIVES (continued)

- Develop a Neighbourhood with a mix of residential densities and unit types that will serve a broad spectrum of Fort St. John's projected housing needs including increasing housing variety for the City.
- Provide a range of neighbourhood commercial and service uses to support the day to day needs of local residents and create local employment opportunities.

#### **Policies:**

- Development within The Station development will generally align with the uses areas and boundaries shown in Figure 2: Concept Plan.
- All development will integrate winter design, solar orientation, pedestrian-scale elements, and snow storage in future design considerations.
- Buildings, site furnishings and pedestrian connections will be accessible and accommodating to a variety of demographics including seniors.

### 4. RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

#### **General Residential**

The Station Neighbourhood Plan includes a variety of residential land uses to offer diversity of housing choices and foster inclusive communities to provide the broadest mix of housing options.

The Residential areas will: be flexible to accommodate both short- and longer-term needs of the City; respond to changing demographic needs over time; and accommodate changing market conditions.

Residential areas will be comprehensively planned with an integrated mobility network of roads and path connections to existing networks. Building orientation and parking will consider winter design and solar orientation to maximize sun exposure and natural snow melt.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 4. RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (continued)

The Station seeks to meet many of the goals and objectives set out in the Housing Strategy report, including: to maintain a mix of tenures, price points and housing types to foster development while providing attainable and inclusive housing options for citizens; to diversify the housing stock in Fort St. John; and to foster densification within the existing boundary while diversifying the housing stock.

Objective: Encourage and support more diverse housing options that respond to needs as they change over time, including accessibility and inclusive housing.

#### **Policies:**

- Minimum lot sizes, setbacks, parking and landscaping will align with Zoning Bylaw, Bylaw No. 2470, 2019.
- Number of overall units will generally align with Table 1: Land Use Breakdown.
- Residential areas will seek to integrate multi-modal trails into the design to accommodate pedestrian and green space access for residents.

#### **Low Density Residential**

Low density residential development includes single detached housing and duplexes. This form of development will be in the northern and eastern area of The Station development to meet the Housing Strategy policy ‘the development of new housing that integrates with the character of existing neighbourhoods’, and to place low density residential development in proximity to the existing Low Density Residential land uses to the north.

# SCHEDULE I

Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

## 4. RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (continued)



### Policies:

- Density will not exceed 38 units per hectare.

### Medium Density Residential

Medium density residential areas will include common amenity areas and greenspace to enhance livability, and pedestrian connections linking to the broader mobility network identified in Figure 4: Mobility, Trails & Park Network.



### Policies:

- Areas for snow storage will be located in areas with maximum sun exposure identified and will be integrated with stormwater management.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 4. RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (continued)

- Medium density areas will incorporate Multiple-Family Development Permit Area requirements.
- Density will not exceed 55 units per hectare.

#### High Density Residential

High Density Residential areas will include a mix of multi-family apartments and seniors housing where individual dwelling units within these buildings will vary in size. These sites will be larger, and each will be comprehensively designed to incorporate a variety of living needs and demographics.

The High Density Residential areas as indicated on Figure 2: Concept Plan are located in proximity to the Highway Commercial area to facilitate a supporting population for the commercial businesses and employment opportunities for residents of the area. The High Density Residential area creates a built-form transition for the Highway Commercial area transition to Medium Density Residential areas to the north and to Low Density Residential area to the east.



#### Policies:

- Number of overall units will generally align with *Table 1: Land Use Breakdown*.
- High-Density Residential development sites will provide common amenity space in the form of greenspace or parks. This common amenity space will be part of the strata development.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 4. RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (continued)

- Areas for snow storage will be located in areas with maximum sun exposure identified and will be integrated with stormwater management.
- High-density residential areas will incorporate Multiple-Family Development Permit Area requirements.
- Underground parking will be considered to facilitate a more efficient use of the land.
- Density will not exceed 155 units per hectare.

### 5. COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

*Figure 2: Concept Plan* identifies two types of commercial areas to be used in the development: Highway Commercial located adjacent to the T-intersection with the Alaska Highway and Neighbourhood Commercial to be included in the residential areas. The exact size and number of commercial uses within these areas will be based on market studies completed in concert with future subdivision.

#### **Highway Commercial**

Highway commercial uses will be moderate-to-large scale, ground-oriented and connected to the community with a strong pedestrian network. Parking areas will be shared for the whole site with landscaping and other measures to break up the parking and maintain a pedestrian-scale focus to the site.

The commercial uses in this plan area will be oriented to the extension of 76<sup>th</sup> Street with sufficient parking to accommodate the travelling public. This area will include land use and transportation linkages and transitioning to adjacent High Density Residential areas to enhance connectivity for daily needs of local residents. Multi-modal linkages will be accommodated to encourage both local and broader community usability.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 5. COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (continued)

#### **Policies:**

- Commercial uses will be moderate to large in scale and connected by a strong pedestrian mobility network augmented with a mix of hard and soft landscaping.
- Highway Commercial areas will incorporate requirements for Commercial Development Permit Area and Major Corridor Development Permit Area.
- Elements that enhance the winter experience will be incorporated in the design of commercial areas.
- Public seating and pedestrian-scale lighting will be incorporated in the future design of commercial areas.
- Design and layout of the commercial area integrate the principles of the Winter City Design Guidelines to facilitate snow removal and storage, pedestrian lighting and street crossings, landmark features, and parking lot design.

#### **Neighbourhood Commercial**

Neighbourhood Commercial areas will be small-scale, ground oriented and connected to the community pedestrian network. Parking areas will be shared for the whole site with landscaping and other measures to break up the parking and maintain a pedestrian-scale focus to the site.

The commercial uses in these smaller areas will be oriented to the Collector Roads with sufficient parking to accommodate the travelling public. The sites will include land use and transportation linkages and transitioning to adjacent residential areas to promote walkability and services access. Multi-modal linkages will be accommodated to encourage both local and broader community usability.

#### **Policies:**

- Commercial uses will be small and local in scale and connected by a strong pedestrian mobility network augmented with a mix of hard and soft landscaping.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 5. COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (continued)

- Public seating and pedestrian-scale lighting will be incorporated in the design of commercial areas.
- Neighbourhood commercial areas will incorporate General Commercial Development Permit Area requirements.
- Design and layout of the Neighbourhood Commercial areas will integrate the principles of the Winter City Design Guidelines to facilitate snow removal and storage, pedestrian lighting and street crossings, landmark features, and parking lot design.

### 6. PARKS AND TRAILS

The Station development will incorporate a multi-modal trail system and in-community park spaces to meet location and objective criteria of the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017 including location of parks within 400m radius or 5-minute walk of all dwelling units per radius indication lines shown on *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails & Park Network*. These spaces will act as gathering spaces and as a pedestrian connector enhancing the overall mobility structure.

The Station development proposes the required 5% of parkland dedication to be connected with multi-modal trails and located throughout the community (3.02 ha). The central park area is large enough for a variety of recreational pursuits and smaller neighbourhood parks are to be provided per the Zoning Bylaw No. 2470, 2019 (minimum neighbourhood park size of 0.8 ha). Central locations make these parks easily accessible by the whole community and pathway connections facilitate access by existing residents outside as well as new residents within this Neighbourhood Plan.

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 6. PARKS AND TRAILS (continued)

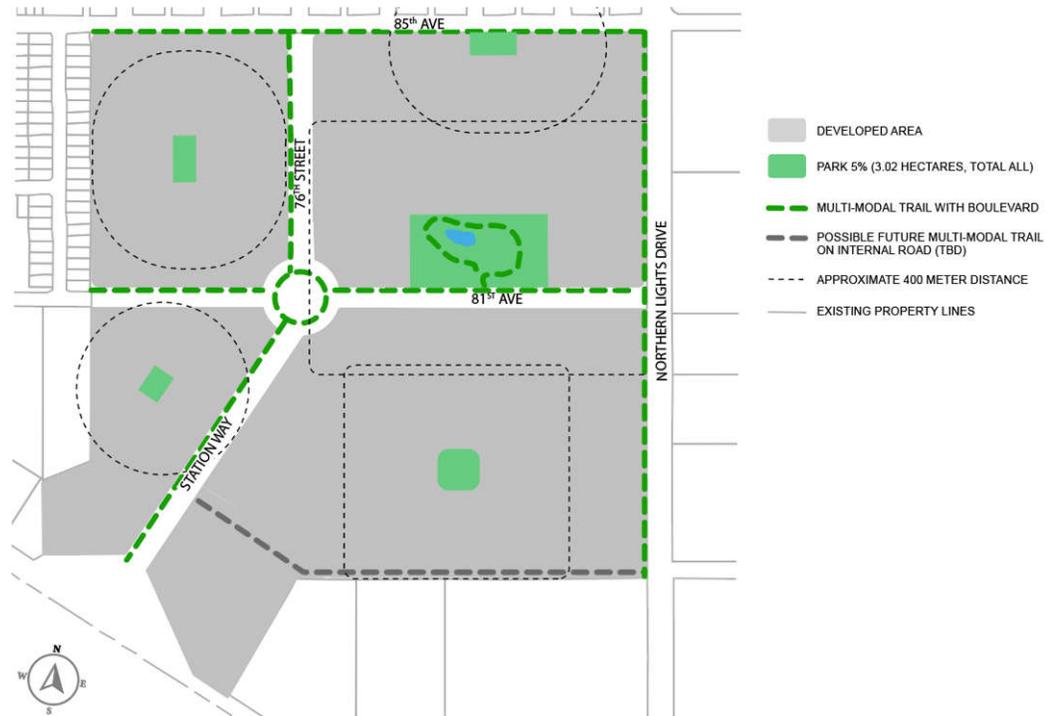


Figure 3: Mobility, Trails and Park

#### Policies:

- Design and layout of parks and trails will integrate the principles of the Winter City Design Guidelines to facilitate pedestrian lighting, wind shelter, solar access, and vegetation selections.
- Public seating and pedestrian-scale lighting will be incorporated in the design of parks and open spaces.
- Parks and greenspace will be integrated with the overall mobility network.

### 7. ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

The mixed-use community of The Station will be connected by a variety of mobility options including roadways, pathways, and sidewalks, as shown on *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails & Park Network*. This network is a modified grid which

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 7. ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION (continued)

balances access and movement for a variety of transportation modes such as vehicular, cycling, and walking.

The Station proposes the extension of two existing roads as Collector Roads being 76<sup>th</sup> Street via Station Way and 81<sup>st</sup> Avenue to provide a variety of access points to the existing road network thereby integrating The Station development with the surrounding areas and City at large as shown on *Figure 4: Collector Roads & Connections*.

The location of proposed sidewalks and multi-modal pathways along roads are identified in green on *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails & Park Network*. The cross-sections of these roads are to be designed to meet Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw (SDSB) requirements.

Hard and soft landscaping will be integrated with road design based on stormwater needs, safety and sightlines, as well as walkability principles.

For larger sites, the internal road network will extend and enhance the multi-modal mobility network.

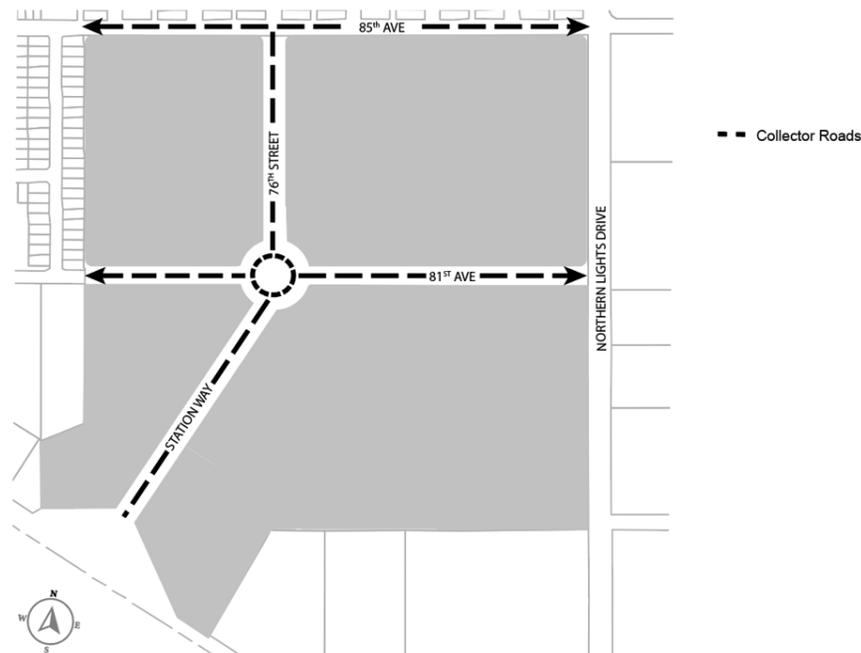


Figure 4: Collector Roads & Connections

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 7. ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION (continued)

#### Policies:

- Roads, sidewalks and pathways will generally follow the location and alignment with the mobility network in *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails & Park Network* and *Figure 4: Collector Roads & Connections*
- Collector Roads will be designed as per Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw (SDSB) requirements.

### 8. INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

Infrastructure to support The Station community will be achieved by extending existing services in the City that are located at several locations adjacent to the site. New infrastructure will connect to existing services as follows:

Water - Connecting to existing services to the north on 85th Avenue, 79th Street to the west, and Stampede Avenue to the south and implementing closed loops throughout as noted on *Figure 5: Water Servicing Map*.

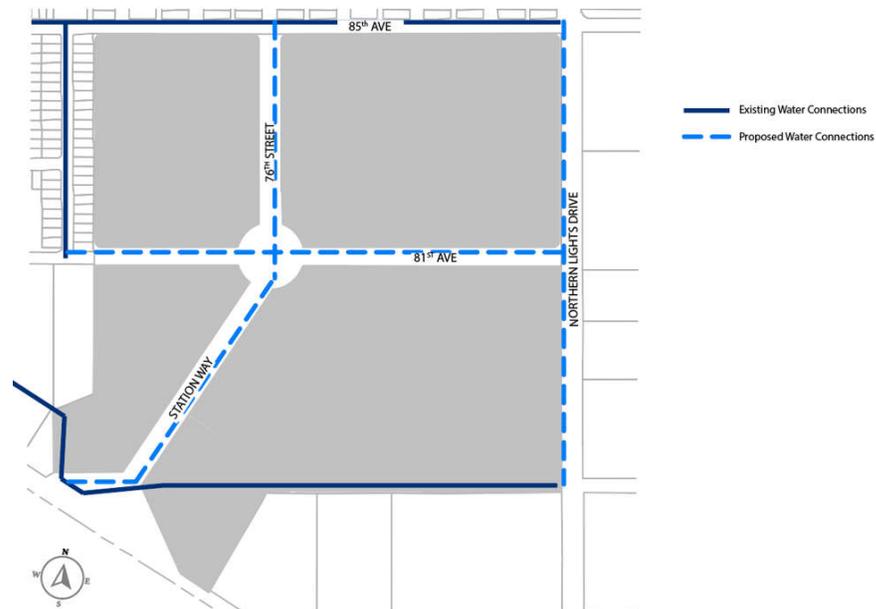


Figure 5: Water Servicing Map

# SCHEDULE I

Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

## 9. INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES (continued)

Sanitary - Connecting to existing services to the north on 85th Avenue, and to 79th Street to the west. Proposed collection mains are shown below on *Figure 6: Sanitary Servicing Map*.

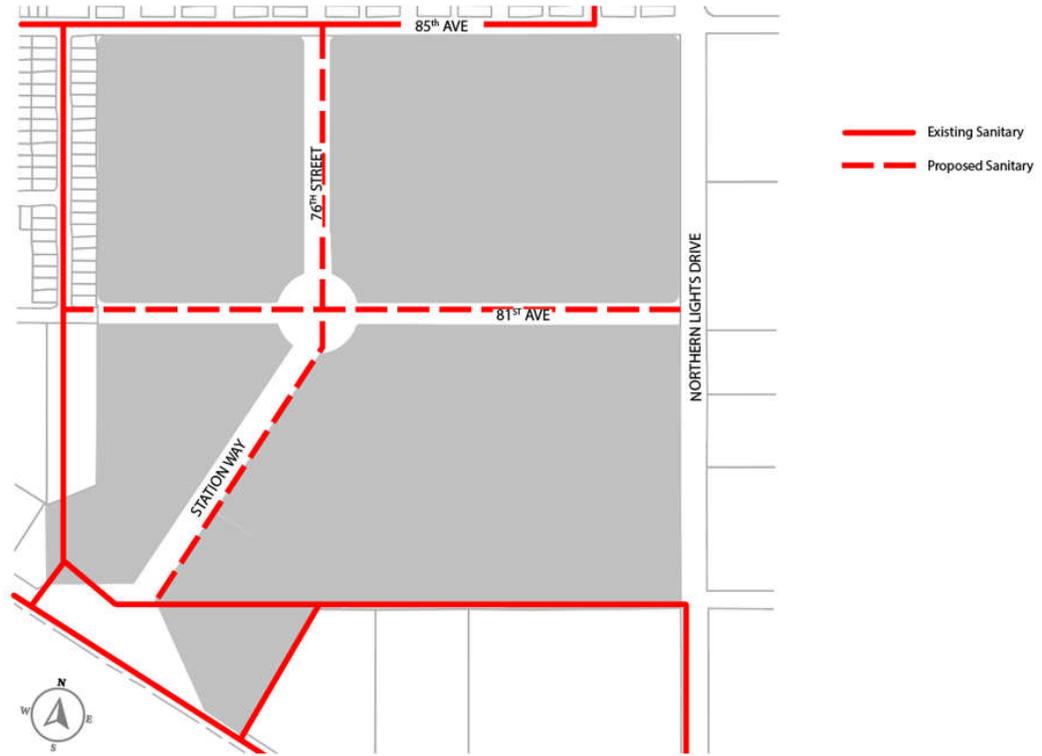


Figure 6: Sanitary Servicing Map

# SCHEDULE I

## Neighbourhood Plan – The Station

### 9. INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES (continued)

Storm Water - Connecting to existing services on 79th Street to the west, 85th Avenue to the north, providing a storm management facility, and storm water pond as noted on *Figure 7: Storm Sewer Servicing Map*. The site generally slopes from the northwest to the southeast and the proposed storm water management system is designed to utilize the topography.

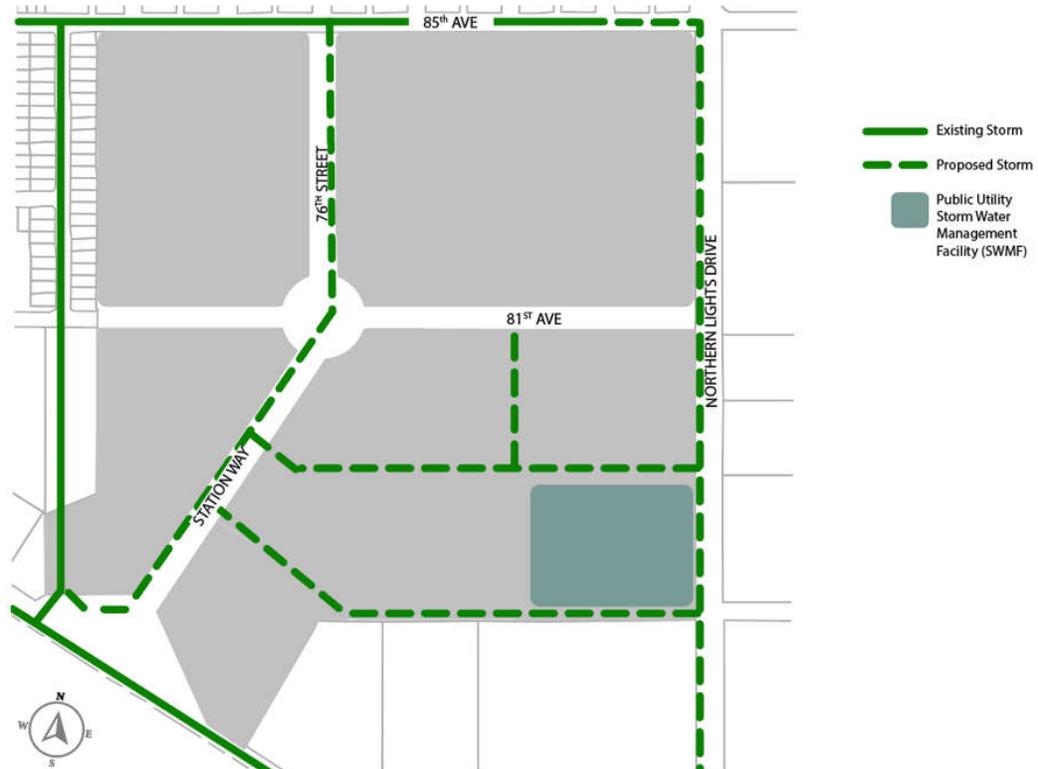


Figure 7: Storm Sewer Servicing Map

The exact alignment, size, and location of services will be determined at future subdivision stages to be completed as per Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw requirements.

Other services, such as garbage collection, emergency services, utility vehicle access and snow removal will be considered at appropriate future subdivision and / or design stages.