

REGIONAL DISTRICT
OF BULKLEY & NECHAKO

SMITHERS TELKWA RURAL OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

BYLAW No. 1704, 2014 Schedule "A"

Consolidated to December 2023

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako PLANNING DEPARTMENT

37 – 3RD AVENUE
P.O. BOX 820
BURNS LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA
V0J 1E0

PHONE (250) 692-3195
TOLL-FREE (800) 320-3339
FAX (250) 692-1220
EMAIL: inquiries@rdbn.bc.ca

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List of Amendments

OCP Bylaw 1704, 2014

#	Type	Bylaw	Adoption	Description	Folio
1	Map	1718	March 2018	Designation changed from RR to R	754/03615.003
2	Text	1768	July 2016	Addition of Section 7 "Development Permit Areas"	754/03509.130
3	Map	1786	July 2017	Designation changed from Agriculture (AG) to Rural Residential (RR)	754/03585.010
4	Map	1907	June 2020	Designation changed from Agriculture (AG) to Civic Institutional (C/I)	754/03789.190
5	Text	2020	Nov 2023	Addition of Section 6.9 "Parkland Dedication"	N/A

Please note that this document (Schedule “A”) is one of four parts of the Official Community Plan. This Plan also includes the Land Use Designation Map (Schedule “B”), the Ecological and Wildlife Values Map (Schedule “C”) and the Recreation Values Map (Schedule “D”). The maps can be viewed at the Regional District office. If you wish to obtain a copy of a map, large format copying charges apply. The maps are also available on the Regional District’s website at: www.rdbn.bc.ca.

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Section 1 – Introduction

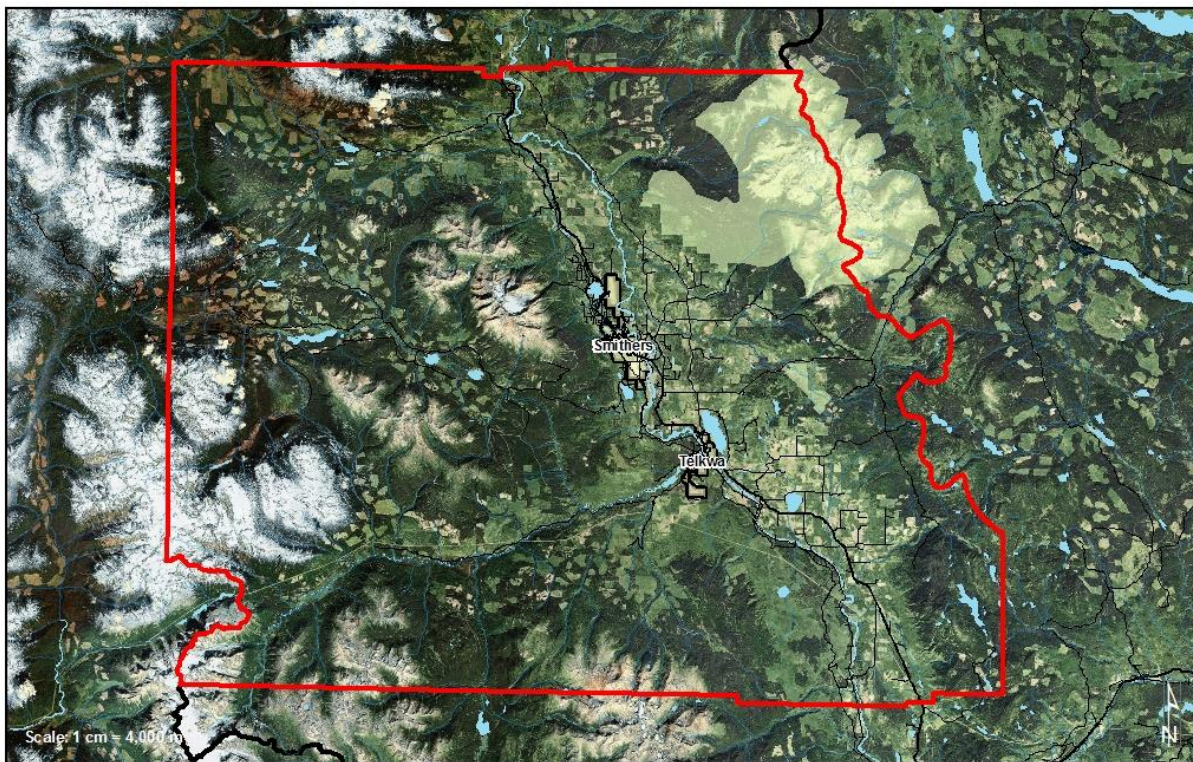
1.1. Purpose

The *Smithers Telkwa Rural Official Community Plan* (the Plan) is adopted by the Board of Directors of the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako. The Plan applies to Electoral Area “A” (Smithers / Telkwa Rural) which is shown on Map No. 1 below.

The Plan endeavours to reflect the rural community’s aspirations with respect to the future character, function, and form of the Plan area. The Plan contains goals, objectives and policies which will guide land use planning and development decisions in the Plan area. By adhering to the intent of the Plan development will take place in a manner consistent with the physical, economic and social vision for the Plan area.

The Plan is not a land use, subdivision, or development regulation. Regulations are set out in the Regional District’s zoning bylaw, and other bylaws which regulate development. The Plan is intended to be used to provide direction regarding planning and development within the Plan area by the public, the Regional District Board of Directors, Regional District staff, and other governments.

Map No. 1



1.2. The Plan Area

The rural area of Electoral Area A includes all of the lands identified in Map No. 1, excluding First Nations' reserves and incorporated areas. The area is characterized by stunning alpine vistas, low density rural residential development, pristine rivers, and a variety of world class recreation opportunities. Development in this unique area is concentrated around the municipalities of Smithers and Telkwa along the floor of the Bulkley Valley. Other small unincorporated communities exist throughout the Valley, including Quick, Round Lake, Driftwood, Walcott and Evelyn. The area is known for its natural beauty, high standard of living and relatively diverse employment opportunities. The rivers within this area are world renowned for salmon and steelhead fishing, and the surrounding mountains present numerous alpine recreation opportunities.



The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Moricetown Band, Lake Babine Nation, Skin Tye Nation, Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs and Kitselas First Nation all identify traditional territory within Electoral Area A. The first European settlement in the Bulkley Valley began in the 1860s. This settlement was facilitated by the construction of the Collins Overland Telegraph line through the area in 1866. Pioneer settlers came to the area in larger number after the construction of the railway in 1914.

The municipality of Smithers is the service, entertainment, and business centre of Electoral Area A. It originated in 1913 as a divisional point on the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, and was named after Sir Alfred Smithers, the Chairman of the railway board of directors.

The municipality of Telkwa is also an important residential and commercial centre within Electoral Area A. The original townsite of Aldermere, established in 1904, preceded the

modern community of Telkwa. It was the central stopping point for travelers and prospectors following the telegraph trail to the gold rush. The townsite shifted closer to the river after the establishment of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway.

Population Growth

From 2006 to 2011 the population of the rural area of Electoral Area A increased by 101 persons, or 20 persons per year. This is a growth rate of 0.37% per year. During that same period the Town of Smithers population increased by 187 persons, representing a growth rate of 0.72%. The Village of Telkwa population increased by 55 persons, representing a growth rate of 0.84%. Neither the Town of Smithers, nor the Electoral Area, has recovered the population lost since 1996.

Electoral Area A has the highest population of all the Electoral Areas in the region with a total population of 5,391. The population in Electoral Area A has remained relatively stable in recent years. From 2006 to 2011 the Electoral Area A population increased 1.9% while growth in Northern B.C. was only 0.1%.

Electoral Area A Population Data: 1996 – 2011

Jurisdiction	Population 2006 - 2011	% Change 2006-2011	Number of persons	% share of total growth
Electoral Area A				
Rural area	5,290 / 5,391	1.9%	101	29%
Smithers	5,217 / 5,404	3.6%	187	55%
Telkwa	1,295 / 1,350	4.2%	55	16%

Electoral Area A Population Data: 2001 - 2006

Jurisdiction	Population 2001 - 2006	% Change 2001-2006	Number of persons	% share of total decline
Electoral Area A				
Rural area	5696 / 5290	-7.1	-406	59% (decline)
Smithers	5414 / 5207	-3.6	-207	30% (decline)
Telkwa	1371 / 1295	-5.5	-79	11% (decline)

Electoral Area A Population Data: 1996 - 2001

Jurisdiction	Population 1996 - 2001	% Change 1996-2001	Number of persons
Electoral Area A			
Rural area	5573 / 5696	2.2	123
Smithers	5625 / 5414	-3.7	-211
Telkwa	1200 / 1371	14.3	171

Age Distribution

The population of Electoral Area A is older than the population in the RDBN and Northern B.C. The median age in the Electoral Area is 42 while the median in the RDBN and Northern B.C. is 39. Also, Electoral Area A has a higher older worker population (ages 45-64) and slightly lower proportion of people 65 years and older compared to the RDBN and Northern B.C.

Education

Electoral Area A has a well-educated population compared to Northern B.C as a whole. A higher portion of the population in the area have a university or college education compared to the RDBN and Northern B.C. Electoral Area A had an equivalent portion of people with an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma to the RDBN in 2011.

1.3. The Economy

The recreation opportunities, the relatively strong and diversified local economy, the quality urban experience, and the high quality of life in the rural area combine to make the region an attractive place for people to settle. The high median age, higher education level, and the high income levels in the area are likely a reflection of the area's attraction to people with high mobility.

Natural resource extraction plays a major role in the local economy. West Fraser operates the large Pacific Inland Resource sawmill within the Town of Smithers. There is significant mineral exploration in the area, and agriculture is also important. Tourism and the service sector also contribute significantly to the local economy. Tourism is becoming an increasingly important component of the local economy.

According to the Statistics Canada Census for 2011 the total experienced labour force for Electoral Area A has remained relatively consistent at 3,165 persons. Employment is broken down by occupation type as follows.

- 21.2% - trades, transport and equipment operators
- 16.0% - sales and service
- 15.6% - management
- 10.9% - business, finance, and administration
- 10.4% - education, social, community and government services
- 8.4% - natural resources and agriculture
- 7.7% - natural and applied sciences
- 5.2% - health occupations
- 3.5% - manufacturing, and utilities
- 1.1% - art, culture, recreation and sport

The major sources of employment are the primary industries such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, etc. The primary industries employed around 16.7% of the labour force, while in Northern B.C. this sector accounted for only 7% of the work force. This is followed by construction at 9.6% and public administration at 8.5%. Of the employed population, 69.2% work at a usual place, 16.6% had no fixed workplace address, and 14.2% work at home.

In 2011, Electoral Area A had the highest median household income among the Electoral Areas of the RDBN, with a median household income of \$72,741. The household income in Electoral Area A was higher than in the RDBN and Northern B.C. from 2001 to 2011. Income growth during this period in Electoral Area A has also outpaced growth in the RDBN and Northern B.C. Electoral Area A had a 13% increase in household income between 2001 and 2006, and a 16% increase from 2006 to 2011.

In 2011, Electoral Area A had the lowest unemployment rate and highest participation rate amongst all the Electoral Areas in the RDBN. Electoral Area A had a lower unemployment rate than Northern B.C. in 2006 and 2011. The unemployment rate increase from 2006 to 2011 was similar to Northern B.C.

1.4. First Nations Communities

1.4.1. Office of the Wet'suwet'en

The Office of the Wet'suwet'en was created as a central office for the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and has been in operation since 1994. The Office offers various services to the Wet'suwet'en Nation regarding land and resource management, human and social services, and treaty negotiations. The Office of the Wet'suwet'en is governed by the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs.

1.4.2. Moricetown Band

The Moricetown Band has approximately 693 on-reserve members and 1228 off-reserve members with a total population of 1921 people. The main reserve of Moricetown is located 30km west of Smithers and lies just outside the Regional District boundary. The Moricetown Band has two reserves within the Plan area. The Jean Baptiste 28 Reserve is located at the corner of Baptiste Road and Babine Lake Road; it contains four dwellings and is 129.5 hectares in size. The Oschawwinna 3 Reserve is located on Telkwa High Road, across from Mackenzie Rd; it does not contain any dwellings and is 65 hectares in size.

1.4.3. Lake Babine Nation

The Lake Babine Nation has a membership of 2,271 people both on-reserve and off-reserve. The total population on reserve is 1,349 band members on the three main communities which are: the Woyenne Reserve in Burns Lake; the Tachet Reserve near Granisle; and the Fort Babine Reserve at the head of Babine Lake.

The Lake Babine Nation identify traditional territory within the Plan area but do not have any reserve lands within the Plan area.

1.4.4. Skin Tye Nation

The Skin Tye Nation has a membership of 147 people both on-reserve and off-reserve. The main community and band office of the Skin Tye Nation are located at Uncha Lake, which is south of Francois Lake and outside the Plan area. The Skin Tye Nation identify traditional territory within the Plan area but do not have any reserve lands within the plan area.

1.4.5. Gitxsan Hereditary Chiefs

The Gitxsan have a membership of approximately 13,000 people with approximately 70% living on the traditional territories. Most live in one of the five Gitxsan villages of Gitwangak, Gitsegukla, Gitanmaax, Glen Vowell, Kispiox or the municipalities of Hazelton and New Hazelton. The Gitxsan identify traditional territory within the Plan area but do not have any reserve lands within the plan area.

1.4.6. Kitselas First Nation

The Kitselas Nation has a membership of 591 people both on-reserve and off-reserve. The main community of the Kitselas is located on the Skeena River near its confluence with Kleanza Creek, which is outside the Regional District and the Plan area. The Kitselas Nation identify traditional territory within the Plan area but do not have any reserve lands within the plan area.



1.5. Legislative Authority and Requirements

The *Smithers Telkwa Rural Official Community Plan* has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

According to the *Local Government Act* (Section 875) an official community plan is “a statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management, within the area covered by the plan, respecting the purposes of local government”.

1.5.1. Required Content

An official community plan must (Section 877) include statements and map designations for the area covered by the plan respecting the following:

- the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 5 years;
- the approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses;
- the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction;
- restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;
- the approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer and water systems;
- the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites; and
- other matters that may, in respect of any plan, be required or authorized by the minister.

An official community plan must also include housing policies of the local government respecting affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing; and targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.

1.5.2. Policy Statements in Community Plans

An official community plan may (Section 878) include policies relating to:

- social needs, social well-being and social development;

- a regional context statement, consistent with the rest of the community plan, of how matters referred to regional growth strategy content, and other matters dealt with in the community plan, apply in a regional context (the area has no regional growth strategy);
- policies of the local government respecting the maintenance and enhancement of farming on land in a farming area or in an area designated for agricultural use in the community plan; and
- policies of the local government relating to the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

1.5.3. Statements on Matters Outside of Regional District Jurisdiction

The *Local Government Act* (Section 877(2)) states that:

“If a local government proposes to include a matter in an official community plan, the regulation of which is not within the jurisdiction of the local government, the plan may only state the broad objective of the local government with respect to that matter unless the minister has, under section 877 (1) (g), required or authorized the local government to state a policy with respect to that matter.”

1.6. The Planning Process

In September 2012 the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors directed staff to proceed with the review process for the Smithers Telkwa Rural Plan, and approved a consultation strategy. The review process began with referrals sent to local First Nations, community groups, the Town of Smithers, the Village of Telkwa, School District No. 54, and various Provincial Ministries. Planning Department Staff met with the Electoral Area “A” Advisory Planning Commission (APC) to discuss their higher level role of reviewing and commenting on the draft document prepared by the working group, and overseeing the Plan review process.

Two open houses were held to introduce the review process to the public, to obtain initial input into the process, and to solicit participation on a working group to assist in the review process and the drafting of a new Plan. At the open houses the Regional District also distributed a survey to obtain public input regarding the issues that require attention in the plan.

The Town of Smithers, Village of Telkwa, Bulkley Valley Stewardship Coalition, Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board, Community Futures Nadina, Bulkley Valley Economic Development Association, Chamber of Commerce, Bulkley Valley Research Centre, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, the Office of the Wet’suwet’en, Moricetown Band, Lake Babine Nation, Skin

Tyee Nation, Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs and Kitselas First Nation were asked to provide a representative to participate on the working group.

Members of the public and organization representatives signed up for the working group and working group meetings were held on November 21st, 2012; December 11th, 2012, March 11th, 2013; April 2nd, 2013; April 22nd, 2013; May 15th, 2013; May 29th, 2013; June 12th, 2013; November 13th, 2013; and January 13th, 2014. The focus was on reviewing the process and the mandate of the Plan, identifying and discussing key issues, helping define the community visions and goals for the plan area, and developing the policies contained in the plan.

The APC reviewed and provided comment on the draft documents and review process on December 2nd, 2013. Public open houses were held on February 4th at the Village of Telkwa office building, and on February 12th at the Town of Smithers office building. Over 65 persons attended the two open houses to ask questions and provide comments on the draft Plan. Planning Department staff made amendments to the Plan based on the comments received.

The revised draft Plan, and copies of all comments received were reviewed by the APC. The revised draft plan was also distributed to all working group members, and all persons who had previously provided comments on the plan, for further review in June 2014. The draft plan was again referred to local First Nations, community groups, the Town of Smithers, the Village of Telkwa, School District No. 54, and various Provincial Ministries.

In August and September of 2014 the public was asked for further input on the draft plan through advertising in the local newspaper, on the RDBN website, and through the distribution of fliers at businesses and public notice boards throughout the communities of Smithers and Telkwa.

The draft Plan was fine-tuned based on input received, and the process for formal approval of the Plan was initiated in the fall of 2014.



Section 2 – Plan Vision and Goals

2.1. General Plan Vision

Electoral Area A envisions its future as a safe, friendly, diverse, socially and economically vibrant, and ecologically healthy area. The residents of Electoral Area A understand that development and growth must occur in a manner that is not detrimental to the future viability of agriculture, the area's diverse natural habitat, the world class recreational opportunities, and the character of the rural communities. Residents enjoy a good quality of life that is based upon enjoyment and stewardship of the natural environment, support of and respect for neighbours, an affordable cost of living, a quiet and independent lifestyle, and a relatively stable regional economy. The vision includes communities that strive to protect, and build upon, the above noted positive aspects that contribute to quality of life and a healthy environment.

2.1.1. Vision for Agriculture

Maintaining the viability of the area's agricultural sector is critically important to the character and economy of the area. The residents of Electoral Area A support the goals and recommendations of the RDBN Agriculture Plan. The importance of the role of the Agricultural Land Reserve in preserving land for agricultural use is recognized. The consumption of local agriculture products is encouraged through promotion and support of local vendors. The intrusion of residential development into agricultural areas is recognized as a potential problem that will be guarded against.

2.1.2. Vision for Quality of Life

In addition to the aspects discussed in Section 2.1 above, rural quality of life includes a certain amount of independence from regulation and diversity of use. To this end, the individual use of rural properties will not be overly restricted and new regulations will only be considered when there is broad community support and a practical need. For sustainability, environmental, and social reasons the creation of new areas for rural residential development will be minimized, and preference will be given to opportunities for infill development which do not have an unacceptable negative impact on the character of an area. It is recognized that maintaining the positive character of existing rural residential neighbourhoods is very important. To accomplish this, the location, amount, and size of new rural residential parcels must be controlled.

The Regional District is recognized as playing an integral role in negotiating acceptable compromise where disagreement arises in development proposals between the applicant and the community. The vision is for communities that protect their positive aspects and characteristics, yet embrace and work towards necessary change for the benefit of the community.

2.1.3. Vision for the Environment

The value of the area's lakes, rivers, natural areas, and wildlife habitat are recognized as critical components of resident's quality of life and the local economy. The natural environment has significant aesthetic value and preservation of the environment, and important views are important. It is also recognized that the natural environment has inherent value that is independent of its benefits to residents. The responsible development of property and recreational use of the land is encouraged. The development approval process is expected to adequately consider and protect these values. Due to the high value of local surface water resources, those that live on or develop waterfront property are especially encouraged to protect water quality and the area's ecology.

The vision is for communities that protect the natural ecology of the area and promote responsible public access to, and enjoyment of, the area's lakes and rivers.

2.1.4. Vision for the Economy

The residents of Electoral Area A enjoy a relatively diversified economy that can be directly related to the high quality of life offered by the area's urban, rural, and natural environments. It is realized that a high quality of life and an attractive and highly functional built environment are key to facilitating further economic diversification beyond reliance on agriculture, mining, and the forest products industries. However, it is also realized that agriculture, mining, and the forest products industries are the backbone of the local economy, and the area's future relies on the health of these industries, and the acceptance of certain industrial uses in appropriate locations in the rural area. It is also noted that appropriate flexibility with regards to home occupations is important to maintaining a healthy economy and rural quality of life.

2.1.5. Vision for Sustainability and Climate Change

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako is committed to working towards sustainable development forms that result in positive social and economic impacts for the community, while protecting the environment. Land use and development patterns that work towards more complete and self-reliant communities are supported, including the facilitation of local food production and increased food security. The importance of sustainable development is recognized, especially within the context of environmental impact and climate change.

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako is committed to working with local communities in fulfilling its role to address climate change and to limit greenhouse gas emissions generated in the region. The plan achieves this by striving for limited rural sprawl, maintaining low rural residential densities,

facilitation of local food production and consumption, and encouraging land use patterns and uses that create more complete and energy efficient rural neighbourhoods and communities.

In summary, the Plan area's natural beauty, social environment, and economic opportunities attract a diversity of people, business and industry, and these attributes need to be protected and enhanced. In achieving the above the Plan strives to meet the needs of the present without compromising the area's natural, social and economic attributes and without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

2.2. General Plan Goals

The Smithers Telkwa Rural Official Community Plan pursues the following goals in an effort to achieve the vision identified in Section 2.1 above.

- (1) The Plan strives to achieve land use patterns which support a diversified economy without compromising the rural character of the Plan area.
- (2) The Plan strives to achieve land use patterns that reflect a diversity of lifestyles, and economic and recreational activities without compromising the rural character of the Plan area.
- (3) The Plan strives to limit rural development to the minimum level necessary to support the region's economic and social needs, and make the best use of areas of existing development.
- (4) The Plan strives to recognize the unique natural characteristics of the Plan area and the protection of that character from incompatible forms of development.
- (5) The Plan strives to achieve protection and stewardship of environmentally sensitive attributes (including fish, riparian and wildlife habitat; and quality and quantity of ground and surface water).
- (6) The Plan strives to protect and preserve farm land and soil having agricultural capability, and encourage and support the appropriate utilization of that land for agricultural purposes.
- (7) The Plan strives to protect and preserve the character, and quality of life, of existing rural residential development.
- (8) The Plan strives to maintain a balance between the regulation of land use to protect community values and the desire of local residents for a lifestyle with a high degree of self-expression respecting use of their property.
- (9) The Plan strives to achieve appropriate and orderly rural growth with higher density development directed to the municipalities of Smithers and Telkwa.

- (10) The Plan strives to protect areas suitable for industrial land uses where appropriate.
- (11) The Plan strives to provide opportunities for neighbourhood commercial uses throughout the Plan area where appropriate, with non-local commercial development directed to the municipalities of Smithers and Telkwa.
- (12) The plan strives to increase opportunities for outdoor recreation for all residents, including access to lakes, rivers, trails and parks.

The Regional District of Bulkley Nechako is committed to achieving the goals and objectives of this Plan through application of the policies in Section 3.



Section 3 – Objectives & Policies

3.1. Agriculture (AG) Designation

The Agriculture (AG) designation applies to those areas that are most suitable for agricultural activities. It is the intent of this designation to protect and preserve farm land and soil having agricultural capacity, and facilitate the appropriate utilization of that land for agricultural purposes. In general the Agriculture (AG) designation follows the boundaries of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

3.1.1. Objectives

- (1) To protect and preserve farm land and soil having agricultural capability.
- (2) To encourage the expansion and full utilization of land for agricultural purposes.
- (3) To support the objectives of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission.
- (4) To encourage a diversity of agricultural uses and opportunities, as well as innovative agricultural practices.

3.1.2. Policies

- (1) Agriculture and other compatible uses of land may be permitted.
- (2) The responsible Provincial Ministry should ensure that agricultural lands used for aggregate extraction are adequately restored for agricultural purposes.
- (3) A minimum parcel size of 16 hectares (39.5 acres) is supported. Applications to permit smaller parcels may be considered where the requirements of Section 3.4.2(9) are met, and the proposed subdivision will not have a net negative impact on the agricultural use of the lands being subdivided, or surrounding agricultural lands.
- (4) Home site severances may be supported provided they meet the requirements established by the ALC, and there is no significant negative impact on agriculture associated with the proposed subdivision.
- (5) New roads, utility and communication corridors should be located to minimize the negative impact on existing and potential agricultural operations.
- (6) Non-farm use of agricultural land shall be avoided. Applications for exclusions, subdivisions, and non-farm uses within the Agricultural Land Reserve may only be considered under the following circumstances.

- (a) There is limited agricultural potential within the proposed area.
 - (b) Soil conditions are not suitable for agriculture.
 - (c) Neighbouring uses will not be compromised.
 - (d) Adequate provisions for fencing are provided, where a proposed development is adjacent to an existing agricultural use.
 - (e) The application is in the best interest of the community.
 - (f) The proposed development considers and addresses potential impacts and potential improvements to recreational features and the environment, including wildlife habitat.
 - (g) And, traffic management issues will be considered and addressed appropriately.
- (7) The inclusion of arable land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is supported provided the reason for inclusion is based primarily on the arability of that land.
- (8) The voluntary consolidation of legal parcels which form part of the same farm unit will be encouraged. Boundary adjustments and consolidations which permit more efficient use of arable land for agricultural purposes will also be supported.
- (9) The subdivision of lands that form viable farm units is discouraged unless there is a clear benefit to agriculture.
- (10) The Regional District supports the implementation and enforcement of the *Farm Practices Protection Act*, the *Code of Agricultural Practice for Waste Management* and applicable environmental guidelines for agricultural producers.
- (11) Home based businesses, including bed and breakfasts and agritourism, operated in accordance with the requirements of the Agricultural Land Reserve are supported.
- (12) The planting of trees on non-arable land, riparian areas, and environmentally sensitive areas, in consultation with the Ministry of Environment, is encouraged.
- (13) In areas where agricultural land is not farmed the owners are encouraged to rent or lease the unused land to a farmer.

- (14) The conversion of small parcels created to accommodate institutional uses such as churches and community halls to residential development shall be strongly discouraged.
- (15) The Province is encouraged to implement innovative approaches to making appropriately located Crown lands available and affordable for agricultural use.
- (16) The Province is encouraged to support local agricultural operations to ensure their long-term viability.



3.2. Commercial (C) Designation

Only a limited amount of commercial development has been designated within the Plan area in an attempt to focus commercial activity within the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa. Opportunities for neighbourhood based services, tourist commercial services and bed and breakfasts shall be accommodated where appropriate within the Plan area subject to the following Commercial objectives and policies.

3.2.1. Objectives

- (1) To provide for limited and appropriate tourist, outdoor recreation, and neighbourhood commercial opportunities throughout the Plan area, where those services are necessary and do not conflict with existing uses.
- (2) To support and provide opportunities for home based business.
- (3) To recognize the Village of Telkwa and the Town of Smithers as the commercial centers of the Plan area.

3.2.2. Policies

- (1) Commercial uses in the rural area should be limited to a scale and size necessary to serve the retail and service needs of the local community, be designed specifically to provide a service to tourists, or be necessary for the provision of an outdoor recreation opportunity. All other commercial activity, other than home occupations, shall be encouraged to establish within the Town of Smithers or the Village of Telkwa.
- (2) A Commercial Designation and rezoning application to allow neighbourhood services may only be considered under the following circumstances.
 - (a) The primary target market for the service(s) to be provided or sold is the local rural area.
 - (b) The proposed commercial use will not create an amount of traffic, noise or other impact that will adversely affect the rural character of the area.
 - (c) Traffic management issues are considered and addressed appropriately.
 - (d) The proposed commercial use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on the natural environment.
 - (e) The proposed commercial use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on neighbouring land uses or property owners.

- (3) A Commercial Designation and rezoning application to allow a tourism or outdoor recreation use may only be considered under the following circumstances.
- (a) The proposed commercial use is directly associated with a distinctive or special characteristic or feature of the Plan area such as an outdoor recreation area, lake, river, or distinctive viewscape.
 - (b) The proposed commercial use must provide a service to tourists, or be necessary for the provision of an outdoor recreation opportunity.
 - (c) The proposed commercial use will not create an amount of traffic, noise or other impact that will adversely affect the rural character of the area.
 - (d) The proposed commercial use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on the natural environment.
 - (e) The proposed commercial use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on neighbouring land uses.
 - (f) And, the proposed commercial development has the support of the Agricultural Land Commission if the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).



3.3. Industrial (I) Designation

Only a limited amount of industrial development has been designated within the Plan area in an attempt to focus industrial activity within the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa. Opportunities for new industrial development may be accommodated within the Plan area subject to the following Industrial objectives and policies.

3.3.1. Objectives

- (1) To provide opportunities for heavy and light industrial uses, in suitable locations.
- (2) To minimize land use incompatibility and conflicts between industry and surrounding land uses.
- (3) To ensure industrial uses do not have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment.

3.3.2. Policies

- (1) New industrial uses will be encouraged to establish within the Boundaries of the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa.
- (2) New industrial uses will be encouraged to establish within the Industrial (I) designation in the Tatlow Road area.
- (3) A Industrial Designation and rezoning application to allow industrial uses may be only be considered under the following circumstances.
 - (a) The proposed use is:
 - (i) necessary at or near the location of harvesting or extraction of an agricultural crop, mineral, or soil including gravel;
 - (ii) a large scale industrial operation that is not appropriately located in an incorporated area; or
 - (iii) is a small scale light industrial activity.
 - (b) The proposed industrial use will not create an amount of traffic, noise or other impact that will adversely affect the rural character of the area.
 - (c) The proposed industrial use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on the environment.
 - (d) The proposed industrial use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on neighbouring land uses.

- (e) Traffic management issues will be considered and addressed appropriately.
 - (f) And, a proposed industrial use, that could lead to environmental impact in the event of flooding, is not located in a floodplain.
- (4) The establishment of permanent greenbelt buffers, or other screening method along parcel boundaries to provide a physical separation between industrial uses of land and adjacent land uses shall be considered as part of any application review process.
 - (5) Clean-up and restoration of areas negatively affected by past and existing industrial uses will be encouraged.
 - (6) Rezoning applications for industrial uses that will have an unacceptable impact on the environment, adjacent land use, or the community as a whole, shall not be supported.



3.4. Rural Residential (RR) Designation

The Rural Residential (RR) designation is intended to provide opportunities for people to live in a rural setting while protecting and preserving the rural character of the area. Properties requiring a higher level of community services, such as water and sewer systems (not including bare land strata developments) will be directed into the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa.

3.4.1. Objectives

- (1) To provide opportunities for residential lots that fit the existing rural character of the Plan area.
- (2) To support opportunities for affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing.
- (3) To ensure future development does not have a significant negative impact on the natural environment.
- (4) To protect and enhance the quality of life associated with existing and new rural residential development.
- (5) To avoid rural sprawl and allow appropriate and limited infill development.
- (6) To take advantage of opportunities for new housing forms (such as bare land stratas) that fit the character of rural areas to allow rural residents greater opportunity to age in place, take advantage of the benefits of communal living, and allow for increased protection of the natural environment.

3.4.2. Policies

- (1) Residential (fee simple and bare land strata) subdivisions, agriculture, recreational and other unobtrusive uses may be permitted in the Rural Residential designation.
- (2) Home based businesses are supported subject to restrictions which will ensure that they will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring uses and the rural character of the area.
- (3) The Regional District will not take responsibility for the operation, maintenance or funding of any water or sewer system associated with residential development.
- (4) Rezoning applications to allow a subdivision that relies on privately operated community sewer or water systems shall not be supported.

- (5) Rezoning applications to allow a strata subdivision that relies on sewer or water systems that are located within the strata development and are owned and operated by the strata corporation may be considered.
- (6) Rezoning applications to allow a strata subdivision with parcels smaller than 1.6 hectares (4 acres) may only be considered under the following circumstances.
 - (a) The subdivision includes no more than 15 strata parcels.
 - (b) The size of the parent parcel is a minimum of 1.2 hectares (3 acres) of Rural Residential designated land for each strata parcel proposed (for example a proposal for 5 strata parcels would require a parent parcel of 6 hectares (15 acres)).
 - (c) Common property is appropriately protected from further subdivision, unnecessary tree removal, and disturbance of environmentally sensitive areas.
 - (d) And, the applicant submits an acceptable fire prevention plan for the development and consideration is given to securing the major aspects of the plan.
- (7) Rezoning applications to allow a 2nd single family dwelling on a parcel may only be considered under the following circumstances.
 - (a) The subject property is a minimum of 2 hectares (5 acres) in size or larger, or a 2nd single family dwelling exists and is legal but non-conforming to zoning.
 - (b) It has been demonstrated that the parcel can accommodate an on-site sewage disposal system for two dwellings.
 - (c) The development is compatible with adjacent land uses and maintains the rural character of the area.
 - (d) The parcel is not located within a floodplain or on other hazard lands.
 - (e) The development addresses wildlife and ecological values.
 - (f) And, the future subdivision of the land into a parcel smaller than 2 hectares (5 acres) is prohibited.
- (8) Rezoning applications to permit parcels to a minimum parcel size of 1.6 hectares (4 acres) may only be considered under the following circumstances.

- (a) There is no known barrier to the development of an on-site water supply and sewage disposal system.
 - (b) The development is compatible with adjacent land uses and maintains the rural character of the area.
 - (c) Parcels are not located within a floodplain or on other hazard lands.
 - (d) The development adequately addresses wildlife and ecological values.
 - (e) And, the development will not create an unacceptable conflict between farm and non-farm use.
- (9) Rezoning applications to permit parcels smaller than 1.6 hectares (4 acres) to a minimum parcel size of 0.4 hectares (1 acre) may only be considered under the following circumstances.
- (a) An area of an existing parcel proposed as a smaller parcel is truncated by an existing road or natural water feature.
 - (b) The average size of all parcels created is not smaller than 1.6 hectares (4 acres).
 - (c) And, the criteria outlined in Section 3.4.2 (8) are achieved.
- (10) Rezoning applications to permit parcels smaller than 1.6 hectares (4 acres) to a minimum parcel size of 0.8 hectares (2 acres) may only be considered under the following circumstances.
- (a) The reduced parcel size for certain parcels will result in a parcel layout that provides improved protection of an environmentally unique or sensitive area.
 - (b) The average size of all parcels created is not smaller than 1.6 hectares (4 acres).
 - (c) And, the criteria outlined in Section 3.4.2 (8) are achieved.
- (11) The provision and maintenance of public access to crown lands, and trail development, should be considered as part of any rezoning application to allow subdivision.

3.5. Hudson Bay Recreational Area (HBRA) Designation

The Hudson Bay Recreational Area is intended to preserve recreational and other resource-based land use opportunities on Hudson Bay Mountain. It is, however, recognized that this area may be subject to ski hill development that will be considered through appropriate Plan and/or Zoning Bylaw amendments.

3.5.1. Objectives

- (1) To preserve existing recreational and other natural resource-based features of Hudson Bay Mountain, including the provision of public access to these areas.
- (2) To provide opportunities for land uses associated with the resort development of Hudson Bay Mountain.

3.5.2. Policies

- (1) Land uses typically associated with recreation or other resource activities will be permitted within the Hudson Bay Recreational Area.
- (2) Amendments to this Plan may be required within the Hudson Bay Mountain area in order to facilitate and guide resort development.
- (3) Public access to recreation areas within the Hudson Bay Recreational Area should be preserved.

3.6. Ski Smithers Development Area (SSDA) Designation

The existing Controlled Recreational Area, including the ski area and cabin colony, on Hudson Bay Mountain has been designated as the Ski Smithers Development Area (SSDA). The purpose of this designation is to provide for the expansion, and possible redevelopment, of the ski hill including new recreation and accommodation facilities.

3.6.1. Objectives

- (1) To support socially, economically and environmentally responsible development of the Ski Smithers Development Area.
- (2) To encourage development of a safe, functional and attractive alpine community.
- (3) To maintain current opportunities for public access to outdoor recreation on Hudson Bay Mountain and facilitate increased access in the future.
- (4) To ensure that commercial development within the Ski Smithers Development Area supports, and does not compete with, the commercial activity within the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa.

3.6.2. Policies

- (1) The Regional Board may support development within the Ski Smithers Development Area (SSDA) that:
 - (a) Includes a diversity of housing types and densities;
 - (b) Incorporates alpine building styles that integrate the natural environment and the varied topography of the area;
 - (c) Includes dwelling units that are used for tourist accommodation on a daily, weekly or monthly basis;
 - (d) Respects environmental constraints and implements mitigation measures to protect the environment during construction;
 - (e) Reclaims the natural environment if it is disturbed during construction;
 - (f) Encourages the control of drainage in a manner which does not increase discharge off the land, or alter the drainage pattern in a manner that negatively impacts other land;
 - (g) Incorporates public open spaces and public trails that are open access into the design so that they form an integral part of the resort;
 - (h) Maintains and provides open and free public access to existing trail networks for recreational purposes, including provisions for parking facilities for the public;
 - (i) Incorporates design and other mitigative strategies to adequately address the risk of wildfire;
 - (j) Does not have an unacceptable negative impact on significant views; and,
 - (k) Includes only commercial activity accessory to, and necessary to support, the Ski Smithers activities on the mountain.
- (2) The expansion of recreation related facilities (such as ski lifts and trails) is supported, provided that:
 - (a) A mountain master plan has been completed to the satisfaction of the Regional Board; and,
 - (b) Relevant provincial approvals have been granted.

- (3) The replacement of non-compliant sewage systems at the Cabin Colony with systems meeting current standards is encouraged.



3.7. Civic Institutional (C/I) Designation

The Civic Institutional designation is intended to provide a range of public, government and community related uses within the Plan area. Such uses may include schools, fire halls, community halls and churches.



3.7.1. Objective

- (1) To provide for the establishment of public facilities when necessary.

3.7.2. Policies

- (1) Rural fire halls are acceptable in any designation, without the requirement for an OCP amendment, subject to zoning.
- (2) The Regional District will cooperate with the local school district in planning for educational facilities. This will include:
 - (a) assessing the demand for new facilities by considering residential development activities and proposals; and,
 - (b) selecting appropriate sites for schools.
- (2) Rezoning applications to allow Civic Institutional uses may be considered in any designation without the requirement for an OCP amendment, under the following circumstances.
 - (a) There is a demonstrated need for the proposed service.
 - (b) The proposed civic institutional use will not create an amount of traffic that will have an unacceptable negative impact on the rural character of the area.

- (c) The proposed civic institutional development will minimize negative impacts on the environment.
- (d) The proposed civic institutional use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on the neighbouring land uses or property owners.
- (e) And, traffic management issues will be considered and addressed appropriately.

3.8. Parks and Recreation (P) Designation

The economic and social benefits of outdoor recreation and public access to natural amenities are recognized. Lands throughout the Plan area have been designated Parks and Recreation in an effort to protect areas having significant recreational, cultural, heritage, archaeological or environmental attributes. While parks and recreation uses are permitted throughout the Plan area this designation may be used in the future to designate additional areas for parks and recreation purposes.

3.8.1. Objectives

- (1) To protect lands having significant recreational, cultural, heritage, or archaeological and/or environmental value.
- (2) To improve and protect outdoor recreational opportunities that enhance the liveability and tourism potential of the area.
- (3) To support and encourage the appropriate use of recreational amenities within the Regional District in order to enhance the economy of the area.
- (4) To protect or secure public access to natural amenities and important landscape features.
- (5) To support appropriate outdoor public recreation opportunities on Crown Lands, in a manner that does not unnecessarily conflict with or restrict the resource capacity of those lands, or have an unacceptable negative impact on the natural environment.

3.8.2. Policies

- (1) Provincial parks are recognized as very important attributes of the Plan area and are designated as Parks and Recreation (P) on the Land Use Designation Map (Schedule "B").
- (2) The application of the Parks and Recreation Designation on Crown Land is an indication to the Province that the land has an important wildlife habitat, environmental, recreational, cultural, heritage, or archeological value that should be given consideration.

- (3) Parcels to be created for parks and recreation purposes will not be subject to a minimum parcel size.
- (4) The preservation of existing, and identification of new, recreation sites and access points along the Bulkley River and area lakes and rivers, where appropriate is supported.
- (5) The rezoning of lands to allow a park for passive recreation, a playground, the protection of wildlife habitat or environmentally sensitive areas, or the protection of cultural or archeological values, may be considered throughout the plan area in any designation.



3.9. Resource (RE) Designation

The Resource Designation is characterized by a lack of settlement and by extensive resource management potential. It is the intent of this designation to protect the

resource values of the designated area and to minimize resource conflicts among recreation, grazing, mining and wildlife with other uses by discouraging settlement on Resource designated lands. These lands are also valued for their environmental attributes and as wildlife habitat.

3.9.1. Objectives

- (1) To preserve lands within the Plan area for research and education purposes, forestry, agriculture, mineral or aggregate extraction, fish and wildlife management, trapping, wilderness oriented recreation and necessary institutional, public, utility or transportation services.
- (2) To support the Province in their role to ensure sound sustainable resource management within the Resource (RE) designation.
- (3) To minimize land use incompatibility and conflicts between industry and surrounding land uses.
- (4) To protect and preserve the rural character and quality of life associated with existing and new Rural Residential development.
- (5) To protect and preserve the natural environment and outdoor recreation values in the rural area.

3.9.2. Policies

- (1) Residential uses, and uses directly associated with forestry, agriculture and grazing, mineral or aggregate extraction, fish and wildlife management, wilderness oriented recreation, and necessary institutional, public, utility or transportation services may be supported in the Resource (RE) designation.
- (2) A very limited amount of low density residential use may be permitted within this designation, where appropriate.
- (3) Rezoning applications to allow tourist commercial land uses may only be considered where the policies contained within Section 3.2.2 (3) are met.
- (4) Rezoning applications to permit parcels smaller than 8 hectares (19.77 acres) shall not be supported.
- (5) Rezoning applications to allow subdivision, subject to the 8 hectare (19.77 acres) minimum parcel size, may only considered under the following circumstances.
 - (a) The proposed subdivision will not lead to a conflict with, or otherwise negatively impact forestry, agriculture and grazing,

- mineral or aggregate extraction, fish and wildlife management, trapping or wilderness oriented recreation.
- (b) The proposed subdivision will not unnecessarily increase community greenhouse gas emissions.
 - (c) The proposed subdivision will not increase demand for provision of Regional District services into a new or remote area.
 - (d) The proposed subdivision will not result in an unacceptable loss of public access to an area of Crown Land.
 - (e) The proposed subdivision will not have an unacceptable negative impact on the environment.
 - (f) The proposed subdivision will not have an unacceptable negative impact on neighbouring land uses.
- (6) Wildlife corridors; recreation lands; and valuable or unique fish and wildlife habitats will be protected from incompatible land uses.
 - (7) Access to timber and recreation lands will be preserved wherever possible.
 - (8) Rezoning applications to allow large wind turbines intended to generate power for sale may be considered where it can be demonstrated that the turbines will not have an unacceptable negative impact on a residential area or the natural environment.
 - (9) Rezoning applications to allow outdoor and community recreation activities such as firing ranges, fairgrounds, race tracks, and golf courses, may be approved where it can be demonstrated that the uses will not have an unacceptable negative impact on a residential area or the natural environment.

Section 4 – General Application Objectives and Policies

4.1. Mineral and Aggregate Resources (*new section*)

A number of provincial and federal acts pertaining to resource extraction activities supersede the Regional District's land use authority on crown and private land. These acts include, but are not limited to the *Mines Act*, the *Mineral Tenure Act* and the *Forest and Range Practices Act*. The agencies responsible for managing this legislation are encouraged to implement review processes that address the public interest in these matters, and the final decisions regarding land use rest with the Province. The *Local Government Act* only permits a Regional District to express broad objectives with respect to mineral and aggregate resources within an Official Community Plan.

4.1.1. Objectives

- (1) To support the conservative use of mineral and aggregate resource deposits and to protect these from development that would irreversibly prohibit its future utilization.
- (2) To provide opportunities for the exploration and development of metallic, mineral, and sand and gravel resources.
- (3) To encourage the Province to require the appropriate rehabilitation of gravel pits.

4.1.2. Policies

- (1) The Provincial government is recognized as being responsible for the administration and management of the Province's mineral and aggregate resources.
- (2) Soil removal within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is recognized as being subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
- (3) The Provincial Ministry responsible for the management of the Province's mineral and aggregate resources is encouraged to give due consideration to the impact of extraction and processing activities on surrounding land uses and developments.
- (4) The Provincial Ministry responsible for the management of the Province's mineral and aggregate resources is encouraged to not issue permits for mineral and aggregate extraction and processing near residential areas unless the applicant demonstrates how mitigation measures will minimize or nullify the effects of the proposed activity.
- (5) The Provincial Ministry responsible for the management of the Province's mineral and aggregate resources is encouraged to require appropriate

reclamation of gravel pits and mine sites in a timely manner, and to ensure that adequate security is obtained to cover the cost of reclamation.

- (6) The Provincial Ministry responsible for the management of the Province's mineral and aggregate resources is encouraged to not issue permits that include mineral or aggregate processing activities unless it is made very clear in the permit, that the processing is conditional upon compliance with Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako bylaws.
- (7) The Regional District encourages the Province to consider not allowing work camps at new mines within a reasonable driving distance of a community in order to promote local residency.
- (8) Rezoning applications to allow aggregate crushing may be approved in any designation where the gravel crushed originates from a properly permitted gravel pit located on the same property, and the gravel crushing will not have an unacceptable adverse effect on neighbouring land uses or property owners.

4.2. Natural Environment

The natural environment is the foundation of the economic, ecological, and social viability of the Plan area. As such, careful management at local, regional and provincial levels is necessary. The Regional District recognizes the Provincial government as having the primary responsibility in managing this resource and supports its efforts to

manage the natural environment appropriately.



The Bulkley River, the Babine Range, the Telkwa Range, and the Hudson Bay Range mountains are the predominant natural features of the area. Their importance, along with other lakes and watercourses to the local communities, the entire region, and areas beyond cannot be over emphasized. These features play a role in many aspects of community life. The lakes and rivers are the source of drinking water, an economic generator, and a recreational playground. Not only are they an important amenity for the community and visitors, they are also the natural habitat for a wide variety of fish and aquatic life,

waterfowl, mammals and plant species.

The importance of lakes and rivers must also be looked at from a regional perspective. The water drains into the Bulkley River and makes up part of the Skeena Drainage Basin, which flows into the Pacific Ocean. Communities within the Skeena Drainage Basin also rely on the health of this surface water.

4.2.1. Objectives

- (1) To protect environmentally unique, rare, or sensitive areas or features; including, but not limited to wildlife corridors, limited wildlife habitats, seasonal and year-round watercourses, lakes, ponds, wetlands, and riparian habitats.
- (2) To protect air quality, and surface and ground water resources for the benefit of the environment and human health and safety.
- (3) To protect the water quality of all area lakes, rivers, and aquifers.
- (4) To enhance environmental awareness and promote activities that protect and restore the natural environment.

4.2.2. Policies

- (1) The Regional District encourages the protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitats throughout the Plan area through the following means:
 - (a) alternative development practices such as lot averaging, where appropriate;
 - (b) conservation covenants; and,
 - (c) the dedication of lands to a private land trust, non-government organization, or the Province.
- (2) The “Ecological and Wildlife Values” map (Schedule “C”), shows a number of important wildlife and ecological areas. The Regional District supports and encourages development proponents to incorporate protection and enhancement of these areas and associated values in the design of development within the Plan area.
- (3) The Regional District supports efforts by the Provincial government to identify wildlife and ecological values with the input of residents, through various planning processes.
- (4) The Regional District will support and encourage the retention of a greenbelt of natural vegetation along lakes and watercourses.

- (5) Provincial and federal governments and non-governmental organizations will be supported in their efforts to enhance the fish and wildlife resources in the Plan area.
- (6) The Regional District recognizes the importance of healthy air quality, and surface and ground water resources on a local, regional and provincial scale and supports efforts to protect the quantity and quality of these resources for future generations.
- (7) The Regional District encourages environmentally sound farm practices that protect surface and ground water and soil quality.
- (8) The Regional District encourages the Provincial government to undertake an inventory and study of groundwater sources to determine the best means of protecting these water supplies.
- (9) Efforts to work with the community, landowners and developers to protect environmentally unique or sensitive areas through the provision of information and education are supported.
- (10) Rezoning applications to allow subdivision or development on land adjacent to or containing environmentally unique, rare, or sensitive areas may only be supported if it can be reasonably demonstrated that the proposed development will not negatively or adversely impact surface or groundwater resources, or an environmentally unique or sensitive area.
- (11) The Regional District recognizes the importance of the Hudson Bay Mountain viewscape and supports its protection and maintenance.
- (12) The Regional District supports and encourages the dissemination of educational information about the importance of responsible stewardship of the environment.
- (13) The Regional District encourages the replacement of older, on-site sewage systems with newer systems that meet current standards to prevent potential contamination of the natural environment.
- (14) The Regional District discourages the removal of vegetation along the shoreline, as this can lead to erosion, loss of food and nutrients for fish, and loss of shade for young fish. Landowners are encouraged to refer to the Ministry of Environment's Best Management Practices for Hazard Tree and Non Hazard Tree Limbing, Topping, or Removal.
- (15) The Ministry of Natural Resource Operations, in carrying out reviews of foreshore tenure applications, is encouraged to take the following factors into consideration, with emphasis on the environmental sensitivity of the foreshore areas, as well as ensuring an appropriate relationship with upland areas.

- (a) Private moorage should not impede pedestrian access along the beach portion of the foreshore.
 - (b) The siting of new private moorage shall be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the orientation of neighbouring private moorage, is sensitive to views and other impacts on neighbours, and avoids impacts on access to existing private moorage and adjacent properties.
 - (c) Non-moorage uses are not appropriate on foreshore areas. These include facilities such as beach houses, storage sheds, patios, sun decks, and hot tubs. These types of development should occur only on privately owned upland areas.
 - (d) Private moorage owners and builders are encouraged to refer to the Ministry of Environment's Best Management Practices for Small Boat Moorage on Lakes, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' Pacific Region Operational Statement for Dock Construction, when constructing a dock.
- (16) Government agencies that have mandates for protecting the environmental integrity of the area's lakes are encouraged to continue to carry out scientific research and water quality testing to monitor the quality of lake water, identify the causes of the reduced water quality, and take steps toward correcting the situation.
- (17) The protection of the environmentally unique or sensitive areas through the purchase or dedication of lands to a private land trust, non-government organization, or the Province is encouraged.
- (18) The Subdivision Approving Officer is encouraged to follow Provincial guidelines for development near aquatic areas and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- (19) The Regional District shall evaluate the net benefits of establishing a natural environment development permit area around Lake Kathlyn, in close consultation with impacted property owners.
- (20) Lake Kathlyn, Tyhee Lake, Seymour Lake, and Round Lake are at, or have exceeded, their capacity to accommodate development. Rezoning applications that allow the creation of additional lakefront parcels shall not be supported.

4.3. Heritage Resources

Heritage resources are recognized by the Regional District as being important attributes of the Plan area. As such, the Regional District encourages the identification, protection and conservation of archaeological, historical and paleontological sites throughout the Plan area.

4.3.1. Objectives

- (1) To encourage and facilitate the identification, protection and conservation of archaeological, historical and paleontological sites.
- (2) To implement the applicable Provincial legislation regarding archaeological, historical and paleontological sites as required.

4.3.2. Policies

- (1) In accordance with Provincial legislation, development proponents are required to consider archaeological, historical and paleontological resources during all phases of project planning, design and implementation.
- (2) The Regional Board recognizes and supports the application and enforcement of the *Heritage Conservation Act* by the Provincial government. Specifically, Sections 12 and 14 of the Act, requiring that archaeological sites not be altered or changed in any manner without a permit, is supported by the Regional District.



4.4. Public Services & Utilities

The Plan area is characterized by a low density settlement pattern and a level of services and utilities that are common for rural communities. Additional services that are to be supported by the local tax base need to reflect the intent of the Plan to not provide for significant rural population growth, or higher densities that will impact the rural character of the Plan area.

4.4.1. Objectives

- (1) To support the planning and development of public services and utilities which are economically feasible, appropriate for low density rural development, and that have an adequate degree of public support.

4.4.2. Policies

- (1) Urban or higher density scale development requiring community water and sewer services, except as appropriate for a bare land strata development, will be directed into municipalities where such services can be provided.
- (2) The Regional District will continue to assist rural residents in assessing the feasibility of appropriate new services in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.
- (3) The location of services and utility corridors which minimize the disruption of the natural environment and the impact on existing and potential resource activities or land uses (such as forestry, agriculture, mineral and aggregate extraction, recreation, fish and wildlife management) may be supported.
- (4) The Regional District will consider the efficient and economic extension of services where there is a demonstrated need and public support.

4.5. Transportation

Cost efficient and safe transportation networks that are well developed and maintained are important within the Plan area. The Provincial government is recognized as having responsibility over transportation planning and development with regard to public roads within the Plan area.

4.5.1. Objectives

- (1) To ensure the establishment of a safe and efficient transportation network and to take into account vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic matters and the functional integrity of the transportation system in land use decisions.

- (2) To ensure that development is not approved without the necessary infrastructure improvements to accommodate the traffic generated by that development.
- (3) To support the development by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure of a safe, efficient and economic transportation system servicing both local and provincial needs.

4.5.2. Policies

- (1) The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure shall be encouraged to consult with the Regional District, and the community, in the planning of new roads or upgrades within the Plan area in an effort to effectively manage impacts to existing and future land uses.
- (2) The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure shall, wherever possible, be encouraged to direct future roads away from existing and potential agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and important viewscapes.
- (3) The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure shall, wherever possible, be encouraged to accommodate safe pedestrian and bicycle use of public roads.
- (4) Off-street parking regulations in the zoning bylaw shall ensure a free-flow of traffic on public roads.



4.6. Environmental Hazards and Protection

There are a number of natural hazards (including flooding, bank erosion, landslides and wildfire) that have the potential to cause damage, or loss of life or property. In some instances areas may not be appropriate for development or may require special considerations in their development.

4.6.1. Objectives

- (1) To manage development in a manner that avoids, or adequately reduces, risk to life and damage to property in areas known to have natural hazards.
- (2) To encourage Provincial agencies, property owners and developers to implement development strategies that reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and flood.
- (3) To avoid human activities that contribute to flooding, increased water run-off, soil erosion, or slope instability.

4.6.2. Policies

- (1) The Regional District will continue to manage building construction in floodplains by way of a floodplain management bylaw with measures such as minimum elevations and setbacks for new construction.
- (2) Flooding and debris torrent hazards along Simpson, Beggs and McKinnon creeks have been identified and discussed in the Klohn Leonoff Alluvial Fan Study. The hazards associated with the alluvial fan are required to be addressed at the Building Permit stage. It is the policy of Regional Board to recognize these hazards and manage the flooding risks through the floodplain management bylaw.
- (3) Slope stability and landslide hazards in the Lower Viewmount Road area have been identified. The hazards associated with the sloped lands in the area are required to be addressed during the Building Permit approval process prior to further development within the study area.
- (4) To protect against loss of life and property damage associated with flooding the Regional District will encourage non-polluting agricultural, park and recreational uses in designated floodplain areas or on flood susceptible lands.
- (5) The Regional District encourages the Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations and other Provincial agencies having jurisdiction to implement land use patterns that reduce the risk of wildfire and floods within the Plan area.

- (6) When rezoning to allow subdivision and/or development in areas that are known to have potential hazards, the proper scientific assessments are to be required at the rezoning or subdivision stage to ensure the area is appropriate for development and to mitigate safety concerns and the potential for damage to property.
- (7) Rezoning to allow subdivision and/or development in a known hazard area or down slope from a hazard area, will not be supported if it cannot be demonstrated by a qualified person that measures will be taken to remediate the hazard, make the development capable of withstanding the effects of the hazard in a manner that requires minimal maintenance, and to protect adjacent properties from possible impacts.
- (8) The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako encourages the Province to update the floodplain mapping for the region given the potential changes in flood frequency and intensity as a result of climate change and the pine beetle epidemic.

4.7. Fire Smart Development

Residential and other development in proximity to forested areas are at risk from wild fires. Wildfires are recognized and accepted as a significant hazard in the Plan area given the importance of the community to maintain a close connection to the natural environment. This threat has increased due to the dead timber associated with the pine beetle infestation and historic fire suppression practices. The OCP supports efforts to reduce the risk associated with wildfire.

4.7.1. Objectives

- (1) To manage new development in a manner that reduces risk to life and damage to property due to wildfire.
- (2) To encourage Provincial agencies, property owners, and developers to implement development strategies that reduce the risk of wildfire.
- (3) To reduce the wildfire hazard for existing development.

4.7.2. Policies

- (1) Property owners and developers are encouraged to implement development strategies that reduce the risk of wildfire. For example property owners are encouraged to:
 - a) use non-combustible roofing and siding materials,
 - b) keep roofs clean from combustible debris,

- c) keep combustible materials such as firewood and sheds at least 10 metres away from a principle building, and
 - d) locate buildings away from the top of sloped lands.
- (2) Applicants for rezoning to allow subdivision shall consider “fire proofing” and “fire smart” principles in their subdivision design. For example new development should be designed to provide adequate emergency vehicle access and alternate escape routes.
 - (3) Provincial agencies are encouraged to implement strategies to assess and reduce the risk of wildfire on their lands.
 - (4) The Regional District encourages the Provincial Approving Officer to implement “fire proofing” and “fire smart” standards for subdivisions.

4.8. Economic Development

It is recognized that in order to achieve the goals contained in the Plan the region must provide opportunities for the creation of a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable economy. To do so requires maintenance and enhancement of the region’s quality of life, as well as its natural, cultural, and built amenities. Future economic development is closely tied to the maintenance of a well-planned rural area.

Industrial activity in the Plan area is supported in select areas and circumstances, and local commercial and tourist commercial uses are also supported where appropriate. The Plan also recognizes the importance of a healthy home based business sector to the regional economy. The Plan supports the maintenance of existing, and the increased establishment of new, home based businesses that are compatible with the rural residential and agricultural character of the area, and do not negatively impact the quality of life of area residents.

4.8.1. Objectives

- (1) To concentrate commercial and industrial development in existing centres of activity, and to direct most of that activity within the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa, with the understanding that certain commercial and industrial activities are necessary in the rural area and must be accommodated in accordance with the policy contained in this Plan.
- (2) To increase the attractiveness of the Plan area to new residents, entrepreneurs, and business by protecting and enhancing the aspects of the social, cultural, natural, and built environment that contribute to the quality of life of residents.
- (3) To support home based business activity that fits within the rural character of the area and does not negatively impact resident quality of life.

4.8.2. Policies

- (1) Home based business activity that is compatible with the rural residential character of the Plan area may be supported. The Regional District especially encourages consulting, technology and information based home based business to locate in the Plan area.
- (2) The Regional District encourages service providers to improve cell phone service and high speed internet service in the areas where this service is limited or non-existent.
- (3) The opportunity to establish home based business with a personal service, retail, or industrial character shall be limited in order to protect rural residential areas from impacts associated with noise and traffic, and to help protect the integrity of existing commercial and industrial areas.

4.9. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako recognizes that increasing emissions of human caused greenhouse gases (GHG) such as carbon dioxide and methane are affecting the Earth's climate, and the effects of climate change are evident across British Columbia.

In 2009 the Regional District of Bulkley signed the Climate Action Charter (CAC), which is an agreement between signatory local governments and the Province which outlines the commitments and responsibilities of the Province and local governments as they work together towards reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Through the CAC the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako has agreed to develop strategies and take actions to achieve the following goals.

- Being carbon neutral in respect of operations by 2012, recognizing that solid waste facilities regulated under *the Environmental Management Act* are not included in operations for the purposes of the CAC.
- Measuring and reporting on our community's GHG emissions profile with the understanding that the Province would maintain a Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI).
- And, creating complete, compact, more energy efficient rural and urban communities.

In 2007 the Province established the following goals.

- By 2020, B.C. will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent, compared to 2007 levels.

- By 2050, GHG emissions in the Province will be reduced by at least 80 per cent below 2007 levels.
- By 2010, the B.C. public sector will be carbon neutral.

Section 877(3) of the *Local Government Act* states that Official Community Plans adopted after May 31, 2010 must include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.

The Province of British Columbia completed a CEEI in 2007. The data provided by the CEEI initiative does not provide the information necessary for the establishment of a baseline, or future measure, of the community wide GHG emissions generated in each Electoral Area. Therefore, the data is not appropriate for the establishment of bottom up or pragmatic targets. Area specific, accurate, and measurable data regarding emission sources and quantity, especially with regards to transportation, are necessary to identify GHG reduction targets that have any meaning with respect to measurement and achievability. However, the CEEI data can potentially be used to quantify current and future patterns of energy used by building type and on road transportation, provided that future CEEI data is comparable in future years. This would serve as an indicator of the intensity of energy used and GHG emitted in the region.

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako does not have the financial capacity to undertake community energy emissions inventories that are an improvement over the provincial CEEI initiative. Therefore, the remaining option to satisfy the Province with regards to Section 877 (3) of the *Local Government Act*, and to ensure the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako remains eligible for Provincial grant funding, is to establish visionary or top down targets which are not based upon any analysis regarding achievability, and are not intended to be tracked or achieved locally. However, these targets reflect a commitment to action, and they are backed up by concrete community goals and objectives regarding the reduction of GHG emissions.

4.9.1. OCP Visionary Targets and Action

For the purpose of complying with Section 877 (3) of the *Local Government Act* and meeting the commitments under the CAC the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako accepts the following provincial GHG reduction targets as the Regional District's visionary target.

- By 2020, B.C. will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent, compared to 2007 levels.
- By 2050, GHG emissions in the Province will be reduced by at least 80 per cent below 2007 levels.

The Plan seeks to reduce GHG emissions in a manner that promotes and secures the region's long term economic prosperity, protects the environment, and ensures that the negative effects of climate change are minimized for the benefit of the residents of the region, and British Columbia.

In the rural areas of the Regional District the primary manner in which the Regional District can influence community wide GHG emissions is through the establishment of objectives and policy for development and land use patterns that are more energy efficient, result in more self-sustaining communities, and limit unnecessary rural residential sprawl. This involves policy relating to increased public awareness of issues and options regarding energy use. These objectives and policies are identified in Sections 4.9.2 and 4.9.3 below.

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako is committed to doing its part to achieve reductions in GHG emissions. However, it is recognized that success in reducing community wide GHG emissions is largely dependent upon technology change and the actions of senior levels of government, and their agencies and corporations. The majority of the GHG emissions that are generated in the rural areas of the Regional District are subject to limited influence by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

The Regional District recognizes that personal choice relating to the use and development of land, transportation modes, recreation, and consumption have an impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

4.9.2. Objectives

- (1) The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako will work towards reducing Electoral Area A community greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging, facilitating, and supporting development and land use patterns that are more energy efficient, result in more self-sustaining communities, and limit future unnecessary rural residential and industrial sprawl.
- (2) The Regional District will promote energy efficiency, energy security and reduced energy costs.
- (3) The Regional District will work cooperatively with senior levels of government on their initiatives to reduce GHG emissions where meaningful consultation is initiated.

4.9.3. Policies

- (1) Incentives offered by utilities and senior government to reduce residential energy use will be promoted.
- (2) The use of building permit rebates where certain sustainable development practices are used shall be considered.

- (3) Residents and local businesses shall be encouraged to investigate and adopt new technologies and best practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including the use of locally manufactured and sustainable building materials.
- (4) The use of sustainability checklists shall be considered for use as part of building permit, rezoning, development variance permit, and temporary use permit applications in order to raise awareness of options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the impact of development on the environment.
- (5) Renewable energy generation such as biomass, geothermal heating, solar power, and wind turbines are encouraged.
- (6) The objectives identified in Section 4.9.2 of this bylaw are achieved through the implementation of the following land use and development goals and policies:
 - (a) Within the Agricultural Designation, the Policies in 3.1.2. support the local production of food, and other agricultural products.
 - (b) Within the Commercial Designation, Objective 3.2.1 (1) supports the establishment of neighbourhood commercial services.
 - (c) Within the Commercial Designation, Policy 3.2.2(1) encourages significant commercial uses to establish within the Town of Smithers and Village of Telkwa.
 - (d) Within the Commercial Designation, Policy 3.2.2(2) supports commercial areas for neighbourhood services.
 - (e) Home based businesses are supported throughout the Plan with Goals and Policies 3.2.1(2), 3.4.2(2) and 4.8.
 - (f) Within the Industrial Designation, Policy 3.3.2(1) encourages new industrial uses to establish within the boundaries of the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa.
 - (g) Section 3.4 limits the scale of Rural Residential development and directs that rural sprawl is to be avoided.
 - (h) Within the Resource Designation, Policy 3.9.2 allows only a very limited amount of new low density residential use.
 - (i) Policies 3.4.2(6) and 4.2.2(1)(a) promote the use of alternative development practices such as lot averaging and bare land strata development.

- (j) Policy 4.4.2(1) directs urban scale development requiring community water and sewer services into municipalities where such services can be provided as an extension to existing systems.

4.10. Affordable, Rental, and Special Needs Housing

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako recognizes that the ability to address affordable, rental, and special needs housing in the rural area is limited. Any increase in the rural residential density sufficient to adequately address these housing issues would be in direct conflict with many of the quality of life, environmental, and sustainability goals and objectives of the Plan. Also, many of the social, service and transportation needs associated with increased density, and this type of housing cannot practically be provided in the rural area. Therefore, the issue is one that must be primarily addressed at the municipal level.

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako recognizes that it must play a role in promoting and accommodating the provision of affordable, rental, and special needs housing, and increased housing choice, as much as possible, in the rural area.

4.10.1. Objectives

- (1) To promote and accommodate the provision of affordable, rental, and special needs housing and increased housing choice in a manner appropriate for a low density rural area.
- (2) To encourage Provincial agencies, the Town of Smithers, and the Village of Telkwa to implement development strategies that provide the necessary affordable, rental, and special needs housing necessary in the Plan area.

4.10.2. Policies

- (1) Regional District regulations that allow secondary suites in single family dwellings in the rural area shall be maintained.
- (2) Regional District regulations that allow two single family dwellings or a two family dwelling on parcels larger than 8 hectares (19.77 acres), shall be maintained.
- (3) Bare land strata developments shall be considered in areas suitable for such Rural Residential development.

Section 5 – Associated Maps

5.1. Interpretation of Land Use Designation Map

The Land Use Designation Map attached hereto as Schedule “B” indicates the general location and distribution of major land use designations in the Plan area. The boundaries of the designations are approximate. These boundaries will be defined in detail in the implementing bylaws.

5.2. Land Use Designation Explanations

Unless otherwise restricted or permitted in this Plan, lands with the following land use designations may be considered for rezoning to allow the following types of uses:

Agriculture (AG): In areas so designated, the H1, H2, Ag1, and RR1 zones, or new zones with similar uses, may be considered.

Commercial (C): In areas so designated, any of the Commercial zones may be considered.

Industrial (I): In areas so designated, any of the Industrial zones may be considered.

Rural Residential (RR): In areas so designated, the Residential zones, the H1 and H2 zones, the Ag1 zone, or new zones with similar uses, may be considered.

Hudson Bay Recreation Area (HBRA): In areas so designated, the H2, RR1, P2 and P4 zones, or new zones with similar uses, may be considered.

Ski Smithers Development Area (SSDA): In areas so designated, the R8, R9, R10, H1, RR1, C3, C5, C4, P1, P2, and P4 zones, may be considered.

Civic Institutional (C/I): In areas so designated, the P1, P2, and A1 zones, or new zones with similar uses, may be considered.

Parks and Recreation (P): In areas so designated, the RR1, P1, and P2, zones, or new zones with similar uses, may be considered.

Resource (RE): In areas so designated, the RR1, H2, Ag1, P zones, or new zones with similar uses, may be considered.

5.3. Interpretation of the Ecological and Wildlife Values Map

The Ecological and Wildlife Values Map attached hereto as Schedule “C” indicates the general location and distribution of major ecological and wildlife habitat features in the Plan area. The intention of this map is to identify areas where specific ecological and wildlife habitat values will be considered during development review processes.

5.4. Ecological and Wildlife Values Explanations

The features represented in the Ecological and Wildlife Values Map were identified through the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and subsequent studies. The Plan area also includes the Kispiox LRMP and the West Babine SRMP, however they were not included because of the lack of development in those areas. A small portion of the plan area includes the Morice LRMP; data for deer winter range has been included for this area. The following explanations are summarized from their source documents:

Critical Fish-Stream and Fish-Lake Reach Inventory (Ranking)

(Source document: Triton Environmental Consultants Ltd. (May 2007) "Bulkley TSA Critical Stream Reach Inventory" Prepared for the Ministry of Forests and Range)

A critical fish-stream/fish-lake reach inventory was completed by Triton Environmental Consultants Ltd. at the request of the Ministry of Forests and Range. The goal of the inventory was to provide a known resource feature intended to clarify what specific reaches require special management.

Critical Habitat: The interpretation of "critical" habitat used in this project, was habitat that if lost or degraded, could result in a noticeable decrease in the productive capacity for a target fish species within the study area. This angle to the definition of "critical" focuses on habitat for species with a limited distribution and/or with habitat requirements for specific life history stages that are limited within the study area.

High Value Habitat: The definition of high value habitat used for this study was: "Preferred or ideal habitat for a fish species that is used for rearing, overwintering or spawning, but is not deemed to be critical. High value habitats can also include less than ideal or non-preferred habitats with confirmed use by indicator species."

Potentially Critical/High Value Habitat: The identification of fish-stream reaches that could potentially have high value or critical habitats was completed through examination of background literature as well as the professional opinion of local fisheries experts.

Likely not Critical or High Value Habitat: The identification of specific fish-stream reaches that are likely not critical/high value habitats was completed by evaluating existing data and GIS analysis of physical parameters based on known habitat preferences of fish species in general.

Seymour Unique Riparian Zone *(Source: Ministry of FLNRO)*

Seymour and Bigalow Lakes themselves are habitat for fish, amphibians, migrating waterfowl, breeding waterfowl and marsh birds and beaver. At the east end of Seymour Lake is extensive, rare class I (very best) moose winter range. It is also a source of drinking water. The catchment area that supplies this water contains either short, intermittent streams or ground water from the larger watershed. Recent testing of

Seymour Lake found it nearing a threshold indicated by algae blooms. This is a red flag for development capacity, and an area where careful consideration of amount and type of development, and standards need to be considered if water quality and quantity are to be maintained at current levels. This means not only residences on the lakeshore, but in the zone identified, and possibly in the larger geological area where development might affect ground water and aquifers from a distance.

Order in Council Reserve & Notation of Interest (*Source: Bulkley LRMP*)

An *Order in Council* (O.I.C.) reserve is established by authority of the Lieutenant Governor in Council in order to withdraw Crown land from disposition in recognition of a specific value or attribute. An O.I.C. reserve is established for a specific term, with a minimum term of 5 years. It is an absolute reservation during its term, and can only be cancelled or amended by a further Order in Council.

A *notation of interest* is established in recognition of an interest in Crown land by a provincial ministry or agency. The notation is recorded on provincial reference maps, and does not preclude the acceptance and adjudication of Crown land applications in the subject area. A notation of interest may be used to record such long term interests in Crown land as the location of trails, timber sale areas, grazing licences and woodlot licences.

Fisheries Sensitive Watershed (*Source: Ministry of Environment*)

Under Schedule A of Order – Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds – Skeena Region, five watersheds within the Skeena Region have been identified as Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds. The special management of watersheds established by this order is required to protect the habitat of bull trout, and anadromous salmonids, including steelhead.

Elk Habitat Range (*Source: Morice LRMP*)

Elk range in the Morice TSA, May 2006. This range was digitized to surround the majority of points (ie. collared elk locations) from two datasets.

Deer Winter Range (Lower/Moderate/High) - Morice TSA only

This data was developed by Keystone Wildlife Research in Mar 2006, then modified May 2006 by Ryan Holmes (ILMB Smithers) with direction from Rick Keim (MOE Smithers). R. Keim delineated several new zones of high value, modified the extent of moderate value, and added a lower value category for a few areas. This was then digitized by R. Holmes.

Wildlife Habitat Management Area

These are designated areas of Crown Land in the Bulkley Valley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) under the Land Act. They each have a Ministry of Environment management plan that manages the habitat for wildlife, and can consider other uses that are compatible.

Wildlife Habitat (high value) (Source: Ministry of FLNRO)

- Caribou
- Mountain Goat
- Grizzly Bear
- Moose
- Mule Deer
- Moose and Mule Deer

Sensitive Ecosystems (Source: Ministry of Environment)

- Black cottonwood - red osier dogwood - prickly rose on high, medium or low bench floodplains SBS dk/08 (TEM code: CD)
- Dry southwest-facing slopes with Saskatoon-Slender wheatgrass scrub/steppe SBSdk/81, or ICHmc2/81 (TEM code: SW)
- Dry, mesic or moist grassland or meadows on inactive fluvial deposits. All zones, currently unclassified (TEM code: CA, AM, BWx)
- Mesic to moist south-west facing meadows and grasslands SBSdk/01 & /06 seral associations, SBSdk/82 (TEM code: CA or BW)
- Miscellaneous Noteworthy Plant Populations and Communities
- White spruce - horsetail forest on high or medium bench floodplains or adjacent to wetlands SBSdk/07a or b (TEM code: SH)
- primarily Black cottonwood - red osier dogwood middle fluvial bench CWHws2/08 (TEM code: CD)
- primarily Sitka spruce - salmonberry high fluvial bench CWHws2/07 (TEM code:SS), also includes low and medium bench floodplains

Bulkley Valley LRMP Ecosystem Network

Core Ecosystem: The purpose of core ecosystems is to protect values by providing representation of a cross-section of ecosystems, by retaining representative samples of old growth forests, and by providing forest-interior conditions.

Enhanced Timber Zone: The objectives of enhanced timber development areas are to enhance the available timber supply and improve timber quality, thereby increasing revenue and employment opportunities. Intensive silviculture management funds will be invested into these areas.

Landscape Corridor: Landscape corridors are designed to maintain connectivity within the landscape, reduce habitat fragmentation, permit movement and dispersal of plant and animal species, and maintain, within a managed forest

setting, forests dominated by mature tree cover and containing most of the structure, function, micro-climatic conditions and biota associated with old growth forests.

5.5. Interpretation of the Recreational Values Map

The Recreational Values Map attached hereto as Schedule “D” indicates the general location and distribution of major recreational features in the Plan area. The intention of this map is to identify areas where specific recreational values will be considered during development review processes.

5.6. Recreational Values Explanations (*new section*)

The features represented in the Recreational Values Map include those identified by the Bulkley Valley RAMP process, the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, and the RDBN recreation inventory. Data sources for the RDBN inventory included the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MoTCA), the Land and Data Resource Warehouse (LRDW), Regional District staff, and local community groups.



Section 6 – Implementation

Following the formal adoption of this Plan a number of options are available to ensure that the Board's goals and objectives are achieved. Implementation shall be the ongoing responsibility of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors and its actions must be consistent with the Plan.

Section 884 of the *Local Government Act* states the following:

- An official community plan does not commit or authorize a municipality, regional district or improvement district to proceed with any project that is specified in the plan.
- All bylaws enacted or works undertaken by a council, board or greater board, or by the trustees of an improvement district, after the adoption of an official community plan..... must be consistent with the relevant plan.

The document serves as a guide and resource for Regional District of Bulkley – Nechako staff and other levels of government in their planning and decision making processes. This Section identifies some of these mechanisms for implementation and considers their application in the Plan area.



6.1. Zoning, Development and Subdivision Control

- (1) Development proposals that require rezoning or other discretionary approval by the Regional District shall be evaluated in accordance with the intent and direction provided by the policies in this Plan as a whole.
- (2) The final approval of subdivisions remains with the Provincial Approving Officer who should have regard for the policies of this Plan in considering applications.
- (3) Generally, the Regional District shall, as the need and opportunity arise, provide input to and liaise with other agencies to ensure that development proposals reflect the land use designations, policies and objectives of this plan.

6.2. Temporary Use Permits

- (1) Temporary use permits may be issued for temporary uses, pursuant to Section 921 of the *Local Government Act*, under the following circumstances.
 - (a) The proposed temporary use will not create an amount of traffic that will adversely affect the natural environment, or rural character of the area;
 - (b) The environment would not be negatively affected by the proposed temporary use.
 - (c) The proposed temporary use will not have adverse effects on neighbouring land uses or property owners.
 - (d) The applicant has provided, for consideration as part of the application process, a decommissioning and reclamation plan, if the temporary use requires a significant amount of capital investment in a particular location, or otherwise results in the need for site reclamation.
 - (e) The need for security in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit with an automatic extension clause has been considered to ensure that required decommissioning and reclamation is completed.
 - (f) The proposed temporary use has the support of the Agricultural Land Commission if the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

6.3. Official Community Plan Review and Amendments

The Plan is intended to provide a degree of certainty and direction to local residents, land owners, developers, and industry regarding land use and development in the plan area. The Plan represents the community's vision at the time it was created and the Plan is intended to remain relatively consistent between updates. The community expects that significant Plan amendments will be undertaken as part of a plan review process that involves multiple opportunities for public input. However, it is recognized that location specific amendments to the Plan and other amendments may be

necessary on an ongoing basis to respond to changing conditions, errors and omissions, or unforeseen situations.

Revisions to the Plan must be made in accordance with the *Local Government Act* and are subject to a formal approval process. Those requesting revisions or amendments to the Plan must submit an application, with supporting material, to the Board of Directors for consideration. The Board may choose to refuse an application and deal with the broad land use issue as part of the next planned comprehensive review.

New information and changing circumstances must be continually monitored in order to ensure that the application of the Plan continues to be current, and that the goals and policies are relevant. A comprehensive review of the Plan shall be undertaken every five to seven years depending on the actual conditions which occur to influence land use.

6.4. Development Proposals Contrary to the Plan

- (1) Development proposals that require rezoning or other discretionary approval by the Regional District and are contrary to the objectives, policies or land use designations of this Plan shall not be approved.
- (2) Proposals to amend the Plan must be approved by the Regional District Board of Directors pursuant to the requirements of the *Local Government Act*.

6.5. Agricultural Land Commission

- (1) The Regional Board recognizes the Agricultural Land Commission's mandate for the preservation and enhancement of agricultural land and the encouragement of agriculture. It is also recognized that all lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) are subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, its orders and regulations.
- (2) Proposals for non-farm use, subdivision, exclusion or inclusion of lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) require approval from the Agricultural Land Commission. In commenting to the Agricultural Land Commission the Regional District should have regard for the provisions of this Plan, the potential impact on the agricultural viability of the subject property and surrounding area, and the suitability of the land for agriculture.
- (3) Proposals for non-farm use, subdivision or exclusion from the ALR that are approved by the Agricultural Land Commission remain subject to the policies and regulations of the Regional District.

6.6. Building Inspection

- (1) Building permits should not be issued for developments that are contrary to the Zoning Bylaw.

- (2) The consideration of expansion of Building Inspection services shall occur for areas where notable development is occurring.

6.7. Water and Sewer Approvals

- (1) The Provincial government regulates water and sewer systems through such legislation as the *Drinking Water Protection Act*, the *Public Health Act* and the *Waste Management Act* and regulations thereto.
- (2) The Regional District supports these enactments and expects that all water and sewer systems within the Plan area will comply with applicable regulations.



6.8. Collaborative Planning

- (1) In order to facilitate orderly urban growth the Regional District will work with the Town of Smithers and the Village of Telkwa as necessary to develop land use strategies for lands identified for future incorporation into the municipalities.

- (2) Where the Regional District is addressing a land use issue that is adjacent to, or potentially impacting, the Town of Smithers or the Village of Telkwa, the Regional District shall engage with those municipalities, as appropriate.
- (3) Where the Town of Smithers or the Village of Telkwa are addressing a land use issue that is adjacent to, or potentially impacting, the Regional District, the municipalities are encouraged to engage with the Regional District, as appropriate.
- (4) Where the Regional District is addressing a land use issue that is adjacent to, or potentially impacting, First Nations communities, the Regional District shall engage with those First Nations in an effort to obtain appropriate input.
- (5) Where a First Nation is addressing a land use issue that is potentially impacting the Regional District the First Nation is encouraged to engage with the Regional District, as appropriate.
- (6) Where the Regional District is addressing a land use issue that is within, adjacent to, or potentially impacting, an established neighbourhood, the Regional District should engage with those established neighbourhood groups, as appropriate.
- (7) The Regional District encourages opportunities to undertake collaborative planning and consultation processes with other local governments, First Nations, Provincial Ministries, and other agencies and groups to better achieve the goals of this Plan.

6.9 Parkland Dedication

- (1) Where a proposed subdivision triggers a requirement to provide up to 5% dedication of parkland or cash in lieu pursuant to Section 510 of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District shall evaluate whether to accept parkland or cash in lieu of parkland or a combination of both.
- (2) Land to be accepted as parkland dedication must be of adequate size and must have adequately high recreation value to provide a benefit to the community. Where this community benefit does not exist because of limited size or limited recreation value of the land, the Regional District may require cash in lieu of parkland dedication to contribute towards the future purchase of parkland in the Electoral Area.
- (3) One or more of the following criteria must be met for land to be considered having a high recreation value:
 - (a) the land is adjacent to a lake or a watercourse and its dedication would improve public access to the water;
 - (b) the land improves access to a park or trail, a school, or public amenity;

- (c) the land includes viewpoints and opportunities for nature appreciation;
 - (d) the land contains a locally or regionally significant natural feature or ecosystem that if preserved or managed would result in a net benefit to the community;
 - (e) the land is identified for a park or trail use in this plan or any other Regional District parks and trails plan.
- (4) Environmentally sensitive lands to be retained in a natural undisturbed state or archaeological features to be protected may be accepted as parkland dedication, however, these lands should be in addition to the minimum parkland dedication requirements pursuant to the *Local Government Act*.
- (5) The RDBN shall, when considering a rezoning application, consider accepting the dedication of land for the purpose of parkland, green space, and/or natural areas. Parkland acceptance should be evaluated in accordance with the criterion identified in this section.

Section 7 – Development Permit Areas

7.1 Highway Corridor Development Permit Area

The lands highlighted in the maps in Section 7.1.5 are designated as a Highway Corridor Development Permit Area, under the authority of sections 488(1)(a)(d) and (f) of the *Local Government Act*:

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

Without limiting section 489 of the *Local Government Act*, a development permit is required for the alteration of land, removal of vegetation, disturbance of soils (including grubbing, scraping, and removal of top soils), and the construction or erection of buildings and structures where the development is associated with the use of the land for commercial or industrial, or related, activities.

7.1.1 Objectives

- (1) To provide for the appropriate form and character of commercial and industrial development given the high visibility of these areas and their exposure to Highway 16.
- (2) To facilitate the compatibility of site design and site function with the rural setting and adjacent land uses.
- (3) To identify and implement the appropriate degree of landscaping and screening with special attention to the impacts on adjacent residential development and Highway 16.
- (4) To accomplish the above in a manner that protects the natural environment, and retains land in its natural state as much as possible, and otherwise enhancing and facilitating natural processes and habitat where possible.

7.1.2 Exemptions

A development permit is not required for the following development.

- (1) Subdivision.
- (2) Temporary buildings and structures such as construction trailers, temporary hoarding or scaffolding, temporary structures associated with a sidewalk/parking lot sale, and buildings and structures permitted by a Temporary Use Permit.
- (3) Construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building or structure involving only interior renovation, repair or maintenance, façade improvement to an area less than 20% of the existing façade, construction of an accessory building, or an addition of less than 100 m² to a principal building.

- (4) Replacement of a building that has been destroyed by natural causes, in cases where the replacement building is substantially identical to the original in both form and location.
- (5) Development activities that are not related to the commercial or industrial use of the land, including stand-alone residential buildings (for greater certainty, a DP is required for the entirety of mixed-use buildings that contain a commercial or industrial use).

7.1.3 Guidelines

General

- (1) Safety and security of residents should be considered in design and layout. Design should respond positively to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.
- (2) The form and character of new development should respect the form and character of existing development in the area around the development site.
- (3) Natural environmental features on the site, such as watercourses, shall be protected. Emphasis will be placed on retaining mature trees.

Parking

- (4) Vehicle lanes and parking should be designed to minimize queuing that will interfere with traffic or pedestrian movement.
- (5) Parking should be focused to the rear or side of buildings away from Highway 16.
- (6) The surface of public parking areas and vehicle maneuvering aisles should be paved or otherwise surfaced to ensure dust is not generated.
- (7) Snow must be cleared and stockpiled in a manner that minimizes impact on surrounding residential uses and the natural environment and otherwise promotes the objectives. A snow management plan should be provided for any site larger than 2,500 m².

Lighting

- (8) Lighting should generally be located at pedestrian level (between 3 m and 4 m high to prevent vandalism and provide illumination over a reasonable area.
- (9) Lighting should be positioned in such a manner that undesirable light falling onto abutting properties and highways is minimized.

Landscaping

- (10) A landscape buffer at least 6.0 m wide should screen building and parking areas from Highway 16.
 - (11) Landscaped areas should contain trees and shrubs, and other features adequate to create interest and not appear barren or empty, and otherwise enhance the natural environment.

- (12) All areas of a property should be developed with landscaping, parking areas, or building and should not appear to be unfinished. The exception is that treed areas in their natural state may be retained, and areas reserved for future phases of development may be left un-landscaped provided that they are not in an unsightly state.

Screening

- (13) Loading, storage, or product assembly functions should not be located between a building and Highway 16 and these areas should be effectively screened from a highway and adjacent properties.
- (14) Containers for garbage and recyclables should be effectively screened behind an opaque fence on a minimum of two sides.

Signage

- (15) Signs should be integrated with the building facade through colour and graphic style.
- (16) Signs should not be obtrusive, should fit the scale of the development, and not result in light or undesirable glare falling onto abutting properties and highways.

7.1.4 Security and Application Information

- (1) A development permit application shall include plans illustrating cross sections of the proposed development and a site plan, adequate to evaluate compliance to applicable guidelines.
- (2) Without limiting the authority under section 502 of the *Local Government Act*, where the introduction of vegetation and landscaping is required the Regional District may require the applicant to submit a landscaping and security deposit equal to the total estimated costs of all materials and labour as determined by a landscape architect or other qualified person to the satisfaction of the Regional District.

7.1.5 Highway Corridor Development Permit Area Lands”

(1)

