



District of Vanderhoof  
BYLAW NO. 1137, 2014  
**OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN**

- WHEREAS:** Section 876 of the *Local Government Act* allows a local government to adopt an Official Community Plan;
- AND WHEREAS:** the Municipal Council wishes to replace its *Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 993, 2006*;
- AND WHEREAS:** in accordance with the *Local Government Act*, a Public Hearing has been scheduled and other consultation opportunities were provided as considered appropriate by Council;
- AND WHEREAS:** this *Bylaw* has been reviewed in conjunction with the District's capital expenditure program and waste management plan;
- NOW THEREFORE** the Municipal Council of the District of Vanderhoof, in open meeting assembled, **ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**
1. This *Bylaw* includes Schedule A which consists of the text and Maps 1, 2 and 3.
  2. The *Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 993, 2006* and all amendments thereto are repealed when this *Bylaw No. 1137, 2014* is adopted.
  3. This *Bylaw* may be cited for all purposes as the "District of Vanderhoof Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1137, 2014."

READ A FIRST TIME THIS 28<sup>th</sup> DAY OF April, 2014.

READ A SECOND TIME THIS 28<sup>th</sup> DAY OF April, 2014.

PRESENTED TO A PUBLIC HEARING THIS \_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

READ A THIRD TIME THIS \_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

ADOPTED THIS \_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

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MAYOR

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CORPORATE OFFICER



District of Vanderhoof  
Incorporated 1926  
Geographical Centre of BC

# District of Vanderhoof

Official Community Plan Bylaw 1137  
Schedule A

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. INTRODUCTION ..... 4**
- 2. CONTEXT..... 5**
- 3. COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES..... 7**
  - 3.1 General Form and Character Objectives .....8**
  - 3.2 Quality of Life Objectives.....9**
  - 3.3 Community Parks and Recreation Objectives.....9**
  - 3.4 Community Servicing Objectives .....10**
  - 3.5 Environmental Protection Objectives.....11**
  - 3.6 Environmental Sustainability Objectives .....11**
  - 3.7 Economic Objectives.....12**
- 4. POLICIES..... 13**
  - 4.1 General Form and Character of Development.....14**
  - 4.2 Residential Land Use.....14**
  - 4.3 Commercial Land Use .....19**
  - 4.4 Industrial Land Use.....22**
  - 4.5 Agricultural Land Use (ALR).....24**
  - 4.6 Community Facilities .....25**
  - 4.7 Parks and Recreational Land Use.....28**
  - 4.8 Public Utilities and Roadways .....30**
  - 4.9 Transportation .....31**
  - 4.10 Environmentally Sensitive and Potential Hazard Areas .....32**
  - 4.11 Heritage Resources.....34**
- 5. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS, DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS ..... 35**
- 6. IMPLEMENTATION ..... 38**
  - 6.1 Zoning Bylaw.....38**
  - 6.2 Subdivision Bylaw.....38**
  - 6.3 Highway 16 Corridor .....38**
  - 6.4 Coordination.....38**
  - 6.5 Participation.....38**
  - 6.6 Monitoring.....38**
  - 6.7 Amendment.....39**
  - 6.8 Update of the Official Community Plan .....39**
- 7. OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN MAPS..... 40**
  - 7.1 Land Use Plan.....40**
  - 7.2 Public Utilities and Roadways .....40**
  - 7.3 ALR and Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Development Permit Area .....40**



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The *Local Government Act* provides that the District of Vanderhoof may adopt an *Official Community Plan (OCP)* and specifies what the plan should contain. An *OCP* is a general statement of the broad objectives and policies that respect the form and character of existing and proposed land use and servicing requirements.

The objectives, policies and maps in this *OCP* are intended to provide direct guidance to municipal staff, the development industry, the general public, District Council and regulatory agencies with respect to land use, development, re-development, servicing and transportation within the District of Vanderhoof.

The *OCP* deals with development in the long-term and, as such, must be applied and interpreted with some flexibility. While providing certainty is a valid objective, *OCPs* should be periodically reviewed and updated to take into account changing circumstances and municipal preferences.

This *Plan* has been prepared, to replace the 2006 *Official Community Plan*, under the direction of District Council. The process included an initial survey, the formation of focus groups and an open house to enable the public to become involved in the review of the Plan. As such, the plan reflects the vision for the District of Vanderhoof that the community at large shares. Government agencies also reviewed the draft plan and commented during the planning process.

The policies of this *Plan* are to be implemented through the collective action of the community, primarily through the decisions of District Council and administration on matters such as zoning, development, subdivision, heritage preservation and capital expenditures.

## 2. CONTEXT

In the heart of British Columbia sits the District of Vanderhoof, 98 km west of Prince George. Situated in the Stuart Nechako Region of British Columbia, in the traditional territories of the Saik'uz First Nations, Vanderhoof serves as a service center for the entire Nechako Valley.

Vanderhoof was named for its founder, Herbert Vanderhoof of Chicago, who worked for the Grand Trunk Railroad hoping to lure settlers to the farmland rich region. Vanderhoof is strategically located with Highway 16, the Nechako River and the northern main line of the CNR running through the core of the District.

### Population Pyramid: Vanderhoof vs BC

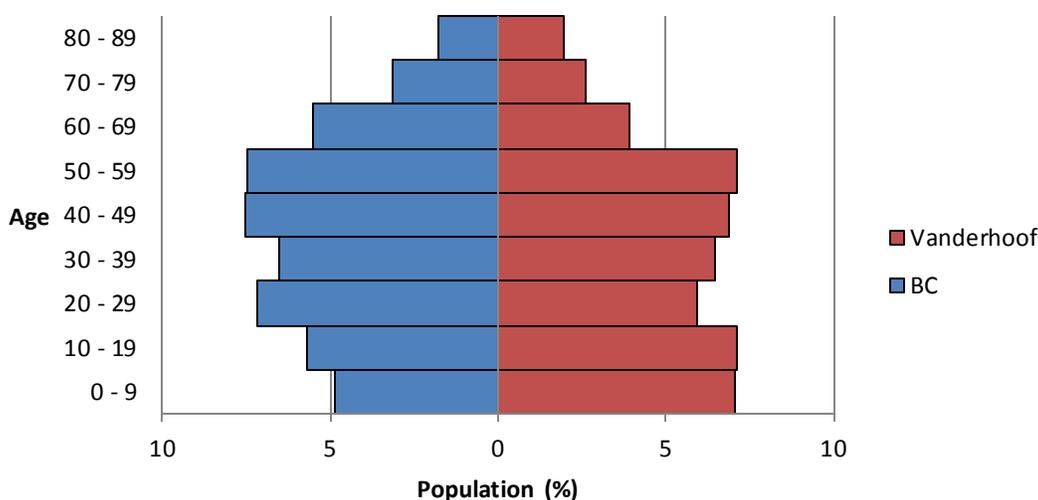
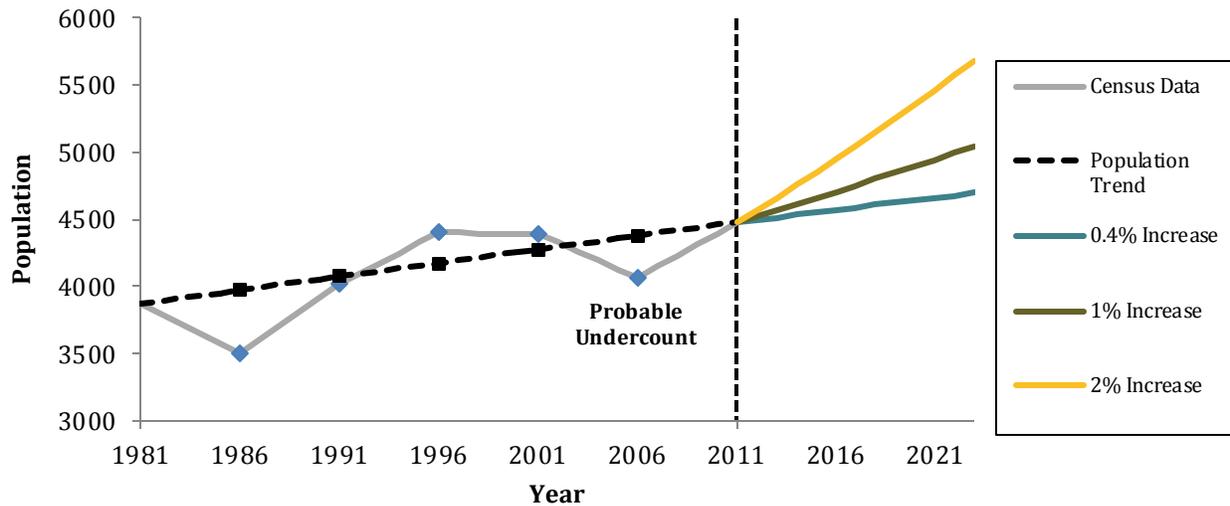


FIGURE 1 POPULATION PRYAMID FOR VANDERHOOF AND BC

Nestled in the Nechako Valley, on the banks of the Nechako River, Vanderhoof has the draw of a rural setting with the amenities and services of an established community of over 4,000 residents. The 2011 Canadian Census shows a population of 4,480 residents; 49% male, 51% female and 30.1% overall under the age of 19. With the provincial average for this age group at 23.2%, Vanderhoof is considered a young community. Figure 1 illustrates the various age groups in Vanderhoof and British Columbia.

A multitude of organizations are available to help make Vanderhoof a prosperous community; economically, culturally, environmentally and socially. As the population has grown, the economic sector has diversified from the traditional resource-based industries. However, two of the top four sectors continue to be resource based. The four main economic contributors are forestry, agriculture, manufacturing and tourism.

Vanderhoof is a gateway to outdoor recreation that includes hiking, mountain biking, camping and ATVing. Vanderhoof offers something for everyone, be it recreational opportunities or accessibility to core services, there are many draws to the community.



**FIGURE 2 VANDERHOOF POPULATION PROJECTION.**

Overall, Vanderhoof’s population has grown approximately at a 0.4% increase annually. There has been some variation to this trend and a 10.2 % increase in population is recorded from the 2006 Census to the 2011 Census. The District anticipates resource activity in the region will result in a significant increase in the population and Vanderhoof welcomes this growth and wants to be prepared. Without this significant impact by regional resource development, the District would be projected to grow from 4,480 to between 4,700 and 5,700, by 2021, at an average rate of 0.4% - 2.0% annually. Annual growth will always vary, depending on global and regional economic conditions. Due to the uncertainty of the expected population increase, Council has identified future housing demands based on population thresholds in Table 1 of Section 4.2 of this plan.



### 3. COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Council with regards to the future use, development and servicing of land within the District of Vanderhoof are set out in this section. These objectives set the basis for the policies contained in Section 4 of this document and are organized as follows:

- General Form and Character;
- Quality of Life;
- Parks and Recreation;
- Community Servicing;
- Environmental Protection;
- Environmental Sustainability; and
- Economic.

### 3.1 GENERAL FORM AND CHARACTER OBJECTIVES

Council has established the following objectives to guide the form and character of future development as a means of enhancing and building upon the positive attributes of Vanderhoof:

- Objective 3.1.1** To promote the allocation and use of land to achieve an orderly, efficiently serviced pattern of development.
- Objective 3.1.2** To ensure a sufficient supply of suitably zoned land within the District to accommodate existing and future residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and public uses in a manner that minimizes conflicts between land uses.
- Objective 3.1.3** To encourage the preservation of farm and grazing lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- Objective 3.1.4** To recognize that the surrounding rural and agricultural landscape is an important asset of the community. Efforts will be made to preserve such areas while maintaining developable areas outside of the ALR for District growth.
- Objective 3.1.5** To provide for a variety of dwelling types and densities in appropriate locations to maintain the availability of housing and lifestyle choices.
- Objective 3.1.6** To promote re-development and encourage higher density housing on parcels in the areas surrounding the downtown core in order to efficiently utilize existing servicing capacity and the community's residential land base.
- Objective 3.1.7** To maintain and enhance the downtown by encouraging commercial uses and traffic generating government/institutional uses to remain or locate in the core. While it is Council's objective to emphasize the downtown as the community's commercial focal point, Council will consider large scale highway commercial and service commercial development along the Highway 16 Corridor.
- Objective 3.1.8** To work towards the long-term beautification of the community.
- Particular attention will be paid to the commercial core and the highway corridor. It is council's objective to develop a strategy to deal with brownfield sites and the appearance of the Highway 16 Corridor.
- Objective 3.1.9** To enhance the community's heritage by encouraging the preservation and restoration of historical sites and buildings.

## 3.2 QUALITY OF LIFE OBJECTIVES

The District of Vanderhoof provides opportunities for the well being of all of its residents. The following are Council's objectives for maintaining and providing a livable community:

- Objective 3.2.1** To recognize and support the efforts of various cultural service organizations that enrich the lives of residents.
- Objective 3.2.2** To work with social support agencies and other governments to ensure services are available for all those that are in need.
- Objective 3.2.3** To support seniors organizations and programming that promotes and addresses the issues and challenges of seniors in the community such as; connectedness to the community through outreach, transportation, health, fitness, resource hub and social events.
- Objective 3.2.4** To facilitate and promote the development of seniors housing.
- Objective 3.2.5** To facilitate the development of housing options that enable seniors to "age in place" in their home or neighborhood.
- Objective 3.2.6** To build a community social, recreation and education hub, or civic centre, that would include a Community Centre, Aquatic Centre, and the College of New Caledonia.
- Objective 3.2.7** To build a healthy and sustainable community by capitalizing on opportunities that enhance the community's economic, social and environmental attributes and the quality of life.

## 3.3 COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION OBJECTIVES

The District of Vanderhoof has an extensive network of parks, trails, and facilities that provide opportunities for a variety of recreational activities and contribute to a high quality of life. amenities are to be enjoyed by all residents. Council's objectives for maintaining a high quality of life and building upon the existing recreational opportunities are:

- Objective 3.3.1** To continue to develop park land and recreational facilities to serve both residents and visitors.
- Objective 3.3.2** To increase community capacity for recreational and community programs and activities by working with School District 91, YMCA, service clubs, churches and other interested community groups.
- Objective 3.3.3** To support the efforts of recreational groups and organizations, recognizing that a healthy lifestyle is of key importance to a healthy community.
- Objective 3.3.4** To focus on building an Aquatic Centre that would be part of the community hub/civic centre.

### 3.4 COMMUNITY SERVICING OBJECTIVES

The District of Vanderhoof provides a range of municipal services to properties and residents, including community water and sewer, roads, drainage, fire protection and garbage collection. In general, much of the municipality's existing infrastructure is considered adequate to serve current and expected population growth levels. The following are Council's objectives for maintaining and providing municipal services in order to meet the needs of Vanderhoof residents, while keeping within the financial capabilities of the District:



- Objective 3.4.1** To maintain and upgrade municipal services in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with demand.
- Objective 3.4.2** To promote development in presently serviced areas and in areas which can be efficiently serviced by the extension of roads and utilities to maintain a pattern of development that will not create undue financial burdens for the municipality.
- Objective 3.4.3** To ensure municipal infrastructure (sidewalks and pathways) are developed and maintained in a manner that considers accessibility by all community members.
- Objective 3.4.5** To provide an efficient, safe and coordinated road system that will accommodate traffic volumes and ensure access to residential, commercial, industrial and outlying areas.
- Objective 3.4.6** To promote an inclusive transportation system to allow the safe mobility of all residents and to actively pursue the development of a community transit system (shuttle, use of existing buses, transit, handi-dart) that will make it easier for seniors and those with mobility issues to access services and businesses and participate in community activities.

### 3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OBJECTIVES

Vanderhoof's natural setting contributes much to the quality of life enjoyed by residents. Major natural features such as the Nechako River and the wetlands is an important environmental asset that community members value. Council's objectives for the preservation of these areas, as well as ensuring that development is safeguarded from potential natural hazards, are as follows:

- Objective 3.5.1** To ensure future development is located and carried out with sensitivity for the natural environment.
- Objective 3.5.2** To control development in areas that may be subject to slope instability or flooding and encourage the preservation of these areas for uses less susceptible to damage by hazards.
- Objective 3.5.3** To prevent the loss of life and damage to property from erosion, soil instability, and land slide and moderate or higher fire hazard.
- Objective 3.5.4** To protect lands with high environmental values such as the lands bordering the Nechako River, Stony Creek, and Murray Creek, and to promote non-intensive use of these areas for open space compatible with habitat values and for preservation as drainage channels. Because these areas have been identified as having high environmental values, it is the policy of Council to designate these areas as Development Permit Area.

### 3.6 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

The District is an environmental leader supporting climate change adaptation, reduced carbon output and encouraging waste reduction and recycling. Vanderhoof is a signatory to the BC Climate Action Charter in partnership with the Province of BC and the Union of BC Municipalities and continues to participate in initiatives in support of this.

- Objective 3.6.1** To encourage initiatives to incorporate green design into our buildings and infrastructure to ensure a healthier and more sustainable community.
- Objective 3.6.2** To encourage climate change adaptation in planning processes and support initiatives that will help reduce Green House Gas emissions (GHG) in the community and to be part of a "cleaner" energy future.
- Objective 3.6.3** To reduce carbon emissions from municipal operations.
- Objective 3.6.4** To nurture a culture that fosters environmental leadership.
- Objective 3.6.5** To encourage green technology in new development retrofits and upgrades, Council will develop a green building program for Revitalization Tax Exemptions.
- Objective 3.6.6** To promote the growth and distribution of local agricultural products by supporting the Farmer's Market and the Community Garden.
- Objective 3.6.7** To encourage a more active community by educating the community about existing walking trails and bicycle paths, and by strengthening the trail network.
- Objective 3.6.8** To continue to improve the District's water conservation strategy.

### 3.7 ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES

Vanderhoof has a healthy and diversified economy that is ready to take advantage of new and evolving market developments. Council is committed to maintaining a positive business climate that would promote the diversification of the local economy.

The District is in the process of developing a business retention and expansion toolkit and is actively involved in initiatives for the recruitment and attraction of skilled trades persons and professionals. There have been positive developments at the airport allowing for aviation related business expansion and development.

The District's economic objectives have been developed with the completion of an economic development plan that provides strategies needed for economic development and growth.

- Objective 3.7.1** To promote and encourage the expansion of existing business ventures and the development of new ones.
- Objective 3.7.2** To develop a strategy that encourages further diversification of a resilient local economy.
- Objective 3.7.3** To support the development of natural resource related industry.
- Objective 3.7.4** To increase the number of visitors to the community through promotion and marketing of local events.
- Objective 3.7.5** To increase awareness of the community's amenities and attractions.
- Objective 3.7.6** To work collaboratively to attract skilled trades persons and professionals to Vanderhoof.
- Objective 3.7.7** To support new post-secondary initiatives and to see that training is available locally for business skills and trades.
- Objective 3.7.8** To recognize the contribution that agriculture makes to the local economy supporting the future growth and development of agriculture which is a necessary and sustainable economic driver.



#### 4. POLICIES

This section contains the policies of Council, which are intended to achieve the objectives set out in Section 3.0. The *Plan* policies are intended to guide future development, transportation and land use planning for the District of Vanderhoof. These policies outline in general terms the different types of land uses and physical services the community and Council believe are appropriate for the future.

The *Plan* policies are intended to be used as criteria in evaluating new development proposals, rezoning and subdivision applications, capital works and other municipal decisions. This will ensure that change and development are compatible with long-term community objectives. The spatial implications of these Plan policies are illustrated in the Land Use Plan Maps.

## 4.1 GENERAL FORM AND CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT

**Policy 4.1.1 - Overall Land Use Pattern.** Future land development within the District of Vanderhoof shall be consistent with the overall pattern of land use as designated on **Map 1: Land Use Plan**. The various land use designations delineated on this map are intended to give direction for future development.

**Policy 4.1.2 - Land to Accommodate Development.** To ensure an adequate supply of land is available to meet development needs, Council intends to make every reasonable effort through the land use approval process to accommodate development initiatives that are consistent with municipal objectives.

## 4.2 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

An important attribute of Vanderhoof is the availability of a variety of housing types, densities and settings. The current housing stock continues to consist of predominantly single-family detached dwellings. Over the past ten years, single family (including mobile homes) and two family housing has averaged approximately 85% of the housing, while multiple housing has averaged 15%. In the 2011 census, housing consisted of 69% single family, 11% mobile dwellings, 5% semi-detached duplex, 7% row houses and 6% apartments. Average household size has decreased from 2.8 persons per household to 2.6. With the average household size decreasing and the population increasing, there is a higher demand for housing in Vanderhoof.

To estimate the amount of land required for residential purposes at various population thresholds, the number of housing units were estimated using the average of 2.6 persons per household. Housing requirement projections are based on 80% single/two-family housing and 20% multiple family housing. Row houses and apartment buildings will better accommodate some of the future housing needs and provide more affordable housing. Housing size is getting smaller and the population is aging.

It is Council's objective to aggressively seek development of 50 units of senior's housing over the next few years. This will likely be in the form of multiple family housing. These 50 units are included in the first population threshold scenario, and will bring the housing mix closer to the desired 80% single/two family and 20% multiple family.



Table 1: outlines the population increase and projected housing types required for certain projected population thresholds. The single and two family housing is equivalent to the zoning classifications of R-1, R-4, RS-1, RS-2, RS-3, RR-1 and RR-2; and multiple family is equivalent to R-2, R-3 and R-5.

**TABLE 1: PROJECTED HOUSING REQUIREMENTS BASED ON POPULATION THRESHOLD**

Projected Population	Population Increase	Housing Units Required		
		Additional units Total	Single and Two Family (80%)	Multiple Family (20%)
4,480*	-			
5,000	320	123	73	50
6,000	1,000	385	308	77
7,500	1,500	577	462	115
10,000	2500	962	770	192

\* As per 2011 Canadian Census

These projections of housing unit requirements are to be used cautiously as they are based on assumptions including household size and composition. If any factors should change, the projections would have to be modified to reflect the change.

To accommodate a population increase of 320 persons, a total of 123 housing units must be developed. With a Council strategy to see at least 50 multiple family units developed that could accommodate seniors, it is anticipated the remainder of the projected 123 units would be single or two family units.

There is vacant land zoned multiple unit (R-3) available to accommodate growth for multiple family residential. It is the intent of the District to encourage an increase in density through multi-storey residential development in the area adjacent to the downtown core. In addition, a housing strategy will help to identify appropriate lands for seniors housing.

While there is a small supply of vacant lots designated for single family residential, infill within existing neighbourhoods will be encouraged. In addition, development of new, serviced residential lots south of the core area is underway as noted below. Several areas zoned, single detached residential (R-1) lands exist. Some of these areas include:

- North of the present Vanderview subdivision;
- A small area west of Murray Creek; and
- South of the downtown, west of Highway 16 (west of Brewster and Speedway).

Larger lot Suburban and Rural parcels are very popular. Additional Suburban residential lands are available in the Reid Drive area, while rural residential lands are available elsewhere on the Northside. In the previous *Official Community Plan*, lands on the Northside were designated Urban or Suburban. However, issues regarding servicing capacities have resulted in a designation change to Rural.

It is believed that there is sufficient land for the anticipated single and two-family housing demand to reach a population of 6,000. However, additional land for future residential use will need to be allocated. One area that appears to be better suited to development of serviced residential lots in keeping with the objective, *“to promote the efficient allocation and use of land to achieve an orderly, economically serviced pattern of development”*. This area is east of Nechako Avenue at the top of the hill, adjacent to the 63-hectare property planned for development. This area is zoned RR-1 but may be costly to service.

Sufficient suburban and rural residential land (RS-1, RS-2, RS-3, RR-1 and RR-2) has either been zoned, or zoned and subdivided to meet the demand for housing outside the urban core.

**Policy 4.2.1 - Residential Land Use:** Lands designated for residential use, as indicated on **Map 1: Land Use Plan**, are considered adequate to meet housing development needs under anticipated community growth conditions. The areas designated for residential use are intended to accommodate a range of housing types including single detached and duplex dwellings, manufactured homes, row houses, apartments and special needs housing. As well, several other land uses that are considered appropriate within the residential designation are complementary public, institutional and small-scale local/convenience commercial uses that serve residential neighbourhoods.

**Policy 4.2.2 - Re-development and Infill Encouraged in Existing Residential Neighbourhoods:** It is Council’s policy to encourage the re-development and infill of housing on parcels within established neighbourhoods, particularly in the areas surrounding the downtown core – Recreation Avenue to Stoney Creek and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the Nechako River.

**Policy 4.2.3 - Staging of Residential Development:** Although it is Council’s priority to encourage infill development in existing residential areas, Council will consider development proposals involving extensions to existing residential areas. To avoid a dispersed, “leap frog” pattern of development, Council will encourage contiguous expansion in the three existing residential neighbourhoods shown as Residential: Urban on **Map 1: Land Use Plan**.

**Policy 4.2.4 - Manufactured Home Dwellings:** It is Council’s policy to permit manufactured homes to be located as principal dwelling units only within manufactured home parks and manufactured home subdivisions (R-4 and R-5), certain suburban residential zones (RS-2 and RS-3), rural and agricultural zones (RR-1, RR-2 and A-1) and as caretaker dwellings in certain commercial and industrial zones (C-1, C-2, I-1 and I-2). Doublewide manufactured home units on permanent foundations shall be permitted in all residential zones.

**Policy 4.2.5 - Manufactured Home Development Location Criteria:** Council will consider proposals for manufactured home park or subdivision developments in response to the market demand for this form of housing. The following criteria are intended to guide in the location of future manufactured home park or subdivision development:

- Manufactured home park or subdivision projects are to be located with access to major roadways to minimize increased traffic volumes on local streets;
- The proposed developments are to be compatible with surrounding land uses in terms of character, scale and density of development; and
- Proposed development sites are to be either connected to municipal services or provide basic services on-site (i.e. water supply and sewage disposal).

**Policy 4.2.6 - Density of Multiple Unit Housing:** To provide for a range of dwelling types within the community, medium density rowhouse or townhouse projects and higher density apartment development will be permitted within the Urban and the Core Commercial designation. The maximum dwelling densities for these two forms of

multiple-unit housing are to be 40 units/gross ha for Medium Density Rowhouse/Townhouses and 75 units/gross ha for Higher Density Apartments.

**Policy 4.2.7 – Higher Density Close to Core:** Medium and higher density residential development is encouraged to develop in areas close to the downtown core; specifically the area between Stoney Creek and Recreation Avenue, and Third Street and the Nechako River.

**Policy 4.2.8 - Locational Criteria for Higher Density Apartment Development:** While Council specifically directs higher density residential development in areas close to the downtown core, zoning amendments will be considered on sites meeting the following criteria:

- Parcels where separation from adjacent uses can be achieved through adequate setback distances or buffering from existing or planned lower density housing;
- Near parks, retail commercial activities or public/institutional facilities;
- With convenient access to arterial roadways or direct access to major collector roads; and
- On sites offering a unique location in terms of natural setting.

**Policy 4.2.9 - Locational Criteria for Medium Density Housing:** While Council specifically directs higher density residential development into areas within and close to the downtown core, zoning amendments will be considered on sites designated urban meeting the following locational criteria:

- Located centrally to neighbourhoods that are near recreation, education and commercial facilities within the area;
- Served by collector roadways that afford direct and convenient vehicle access to avoid generating excessive traffic on local streets;
- That would allow for a transition from lower to higher density housing; and
- On sites offering a unique location in terms of natural setting.

**Policy 4.2.10 - Special Needs and Community Housing:** Council encourages the development of special needs and community housing facilities including group homes, non-profit public housing and cooperative housing to accommodate the specialized housing needs of particular residents. Community housing projects will be encouraged to locate within the general downtown area on sites providing proximity to commercial services and community and institutional facilities or on parcels outside the core that comply with the locational criteria for multiple housing set out above in Policies 4.2.8 and 4.2.9.

**Policy 4.2.11 – Housing Strategy:** The District will develop a housing strategy to identify actions necessary to ensure the provision of affordable and adequate housing in the community. The District is committed to provide housing opportunities to meet the changing needs of residents at different stages of their life by providing a balanced housing stock capable of meeting the needs of all age groups, family types, lifestyles and income groups. The need for 50 units of seniors housing has been identified as an immediate objective, and the District will consider development incentives for new housing for seniors. By encouraging new housing for seniors the single-family residential stock will be made available on the open market for young families.

**Policy 4.2.12 – District Lands:** Council is committed to ensuring the development of new affordable housing and housing appropriate for seniors. District owned lands may be made available for the development of attainable, affordable housing and seniors housing.

**Policy 4.2.13 - Suburban and Rural Residential Development:** In recognition of the demand for housing outside of the urban core and the importance of suburban and rural housing in contributing to the overall character of the

community, it is Council's policy to support suburban and rural residential development. To provide opportunities for development of these housing types, specific lands are designated on the **Map 1: Land Use Plan** for suburban residential use on parcels ranging from a minimum of 1672 m<sup>2</sup> to a maximum of 1.6 ha in size and rural residential use on parcels not less than 1.6 ha in size.

The following criteria are intended as guidelines for the review of subdivision proposals in suburban and rural residential areas:

- New suburban housing subdivisions should be located adjacent to rural arterial roadways to accommodate vehicle traffic;
- Parcels proposed for residential development shall be:
  - Outside of the ALR;
  - Capable of providing on-site water supply and septic disposal as specified by the requirements of the Northern Health Region; and
  - Suitable for residential use and not restricted by site constraints such as steep or unstable slopes and potential flood hazards.

Urban services will not be extended or provided to existing or proposed subdivisions. When local residents desire higher servicing standards, options for upgrading services will be considered.

**Policy 4.2.14 - Planning of Residential Development:** Development of new residential areas will be based on a *Neighbourhood Plan* prepared by the developer and approved by Council. The *Neighbourhood Plan*, shall describe:

- The plan area and adjacent land uses indicating the integration of the proposed land uses with the existing land uses;
- The sequence of subdivision and development for the area;
- The density of population;
- Types and location of housing, including the general lot pattern;
- Location of transportation and pedestrian routes and public services and utilities;
- The provisions for and location of public parklands, pursuant to Section 941 of the *Local Government Act*;
- Preservation of environmentally sensitive areas; and
- Contain other matters as Council considers necessary.

A *Neighbourhood Plan* will be required if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- The title area(s) will be developed in more than one phase, requiring a series of subdivision applications;
- The subdivision application(s) will create a substantial number of residential parcels or sites;
- The proposed development will create a mix of residential densities, and/or a mix of land uses;
- The proposed developed will have a mix of housing types; and
- Stormwater management and/or public utility systems are required.

**Policy 4.2.15 - Buffering Between Development and Agricultural Land:** Buffering between new residential development and the adjacent agricultural land shall conform to the conditions specified in the Agricultural Land Commission *Landscape Buffer Specifications*. Further information and direction can be found in the *Guide to Edge Planning* published by the Ministry of Agriculture.

**Policy 4.2.16 - Future Serviced Residential Development:** Additional land adjacent to existing residential development and suitable for servicing for single-family development should be allocated for future residential development.

**Policy 4.2.17 - View Lots:** Residential development that is situated such that a portion of the property has a specific amenity or view, such as those located along the Nechako River, will be permitted to consider the view lot side as the front yard for zoning bylaw siting regulations. The zoning bylaw regulations will be amended to specify this.

### 4.3 COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Two general types of commercial land use can be identified in the District: The downtown core and the highway corridor.

Vanderhoof's traditional function as the main service and retail centre for a region extending from Bednesti Lake to the east, west to Fraser Lake and north to include the Fort St. James area, the downtown has developed as a primary commercial area. The Vanderhoof retail sector serves an estimated trade area population of 19,000.

The downtown accommodates a range of retail and service businesses, professional and government offices, churches and other public facilities. The downtown core is bordered on the north by residential and park land, on the east by government service buildings and educational facilities, on the south by the railway and on the west by residential. There is little vacant land zoned Retail Commercial (C-1) remaining for commercial development. More space is needed for service and retail commercial uses in the downtown area. Because the downtown core is surrounded by established land uses and compact development is generally desirable, new development should be encouraged to build to the maximum height allowed by the *Zoning Bylaw*.

This would allow service and retail outlets to locate on the ground level while offices could locate on the upper floors. Parking standards and procedures also need to be reconsidered as commercial development occurs.



Commercial development has expanded from the traditional downtown core to include the Highway 16 corridor. Locations along the highway corridor provide greater visibility for businesses catering to highway and tourist traffic. The highway corridor commercial land caters to highway and tourist traffic, including vehicle services, restaurants, motels and other retail services. The existing motels and hotels in the community are often at capacity and there is an identified need for additional tourist and business traveler accommodation.

Vehicle oriented or service commercial development should be encouraged to locate in the highway commercial area. Site access and parking requirements must comply with the

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure regulations concerning controlled access highways.

Council has expressed a strong commitment to improve the aesthetics of the highway corridor and, in particular, to address brownfield sites. During the initial consultation process the community expressed a desire for the

community plan to address the form, character and appearance of commercial and industrial development along Highway 16 and in the downtown.

**Policy 4.3.1 - Downtown as the Community and Commercial Focal Point:** In order to strengthen the downtown and reinforce its role as the community focal point, Council will encourage future commercial development to locate within the core area designated for commercial use on **Map 1: Land Use Plan**. The commercial core can be generally defined as the area bounded by the CNR right-of-way on the south, Lampitt Avenue to the west, Douglas Street to the north and Creasy Avenue to the east.

**Policy 4.3.2 - Core Commercial Land Use:** As the centre of the community, the downtown is intended to accommodate a range of uses including retail, personal services, professional and government offices, churches, institutional and private cultural facilities. Provision is also made for shopping centre development within this designation. The specific location of various uses will be established under the District's *Zoning Bylaw*. Council will consider development proposals for parcels within the commercial core area through the re-zoning review process taking into account:

- Compatibility with adjoining uses;
- Overall impact on the structure and viability of the downtown;
- Vehicle traffic and pedestrian circulation; and
- Parking.

**Policy 4.3.3 - Commercial Re-development:** Encourage re-development and increased density in the existing downtown core.

**Policy 4.3.4 - New Commercial Development:** New commercial development in the downtown core should be encouraged to build to the maximum height allowed in the *Zoning Bylaw*.

**Policy 4.3.5 - Office and Public/Institutional Uses in the Downtown:** In support of Policy 4.3.1 above, it is Council's intention to encourage institutional uses and commercial offices that act as pedestrian traffic generators to remain or locate in the downtown core in Core Commercial.

**Policy 4.3.6 - Enhancement of the Downtown:** To encourage property owners to make the downtown core commercial area more visually appealing to visitors and residents, and to build civic pride, Council will consider incentive programs for private sector investment such as façade improvements and incentives for energy efficient retrofits and for new 'green' development.

**Policy 4.3.7 – Local business:** Council is committed to creating an environment that supports a diversified economy and recognizes that growing existing business and supporting new local start-ups is part of a healthy economy.

**Policy 4.3.8 - Local events:** Council will actively support local events and promote attractions through signage and marketing. In addition, the District will continue to attract events to this community because of the availability of the portable stage and washroom facilities.

**Policy 4.3.9 - Visitor Accommodation:** Hotel and motel use is permitted in both the highway corridor and the core commercial areas to support the increasing need for new temporary visitor accommodation. Council will investigate the possibility of tax revitalization incentives for tourist accommodation development. By encouraging new hotel development, existing operations will be permitted to provide longer-term accommodation to fill a need identified by the resource industry.

**Policy 4.3.10 – Brownfield sites:** Council is concerned about under-utilized former commercial or industrial properties (brownfield sites). These potential development sites are idle or abandoned, and require environmental cleanup. Council will work with other levels of government to encourage redevelopment of these sites. Tax incentives will be considered for development of brownfield sites.

**Policy 4.3.11 - Highway Corridor Commercial Development:** To serve the travelling customer, commercial activities with the characteristics listed below will be permitted within those areas of the highway corridor designated for commercial use on **Map 1: Land Use Plan**. Distinct from the downtown commercial core, within the highway corridor, commercial uses will be considered that:

- Are oriented to highway traffic and/or the tourist market;
- Cater to a regional customer market; and
- Require larger site areas due to parking requirements.

**Policy 4.3.12 - Highway Commercial Development Approval:** Highway commercial development requires approval by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and must comply with the *Subdivision Policy and Procedures Manual, Parking and Trip Generation Rates Manual, TAC Manual* and *Site Impact Analysis Requirements Manual*.

**Policy 4.3.13 - Truck Traffic Services/Facilities:** Council will support the development of special facilities catering to truck traffic including a truck pull-out and rest area and a truck stop facility offering meals, accommodation, fuel and related services.

**Policy 4.3.14 - Truck Facility Location Criteria:** Council will encourage the development of truck service facilities in concentrated nodes on sites that offer:

- Adequate space for the maneuvering and parking of tractor-trailer vehicles;
- Convenient and safe access to and from Highway 16; and
- Sufficient area to provide landscape buffers from surrounding uses where appropriate.

**Policy 4.3.15 - Highway Corridor Site Development Guidelines:** Given the importance of the Highway 16 corridor in projecting an image of the community to passing traffic, Council will pursue the possibility of developing a Plan for the beautification of the highway from Derksen Road to Campbell Road. The District encourages future highway development to incorporate design elements that will:

- Minimize Highway access points and use joint entry ways whenever possible;
- Where practical, develop service roads that will provide direct access to individual businesses;
- Provide low level landscaping along parcel frontages that will enhance the visual image of the Highway corridor and protect sight lines;
- Install screening and landscaping along parcel boundaries adjoining residential uses;
- Minimize the visual clutter created by an array of signage along the highway by combining individual business signs on joint sign boards where appropriate and developing a general theme or style for signage; and
- Develop highway commercial sites to a high standard including the provision of curbs, paved road shoulders and parking areas. Note that no parking is permitted on the highway right of way.

To complement these on-site, private sector development improvements, Council will encourage the integration of approved landscaping features whenever Highway upgrading projects are undertaken.

**Policy 4.3.16 – Neighbourhood Convenience Commercial:** To encourage convenience commercial development within residential neighbourhoods, Council may consider proposals for smaller scale local convenience commercial uses in other areas, taking into account:

- The suitability of the site for the use proposed and its location relative to the neighbourhood market area;
- The probable impact of the proposed development on surrounding land uses; and
- Concerns regarding vehicle access, parking, loading and the overall volume of traffic anticipated to be generated by the proposed use.

**Policy 4.3.17 - Home Based Business:** Small scale and incubator business opportunities will be permitted in urban residential areas, provided the owner is living on the property, it is a minor use of the dwelling, is completely indoors, does not vary the residential character and appearance of the area and does not adversely affect the privacy, enjoyment and amenities of the area.

**Policy 4.3.18 – Rural Home Based Business:** Small scale and incubator business opportunities will be permitted in rural residential areas, provided the owner is living on the property, it is a minor use of the home and/or contained within an accessory building, is completely indoors, does not vary the residential character and appearance of the area and does not adversely affect the privacy, enjoyment and amenities of the area. The District supports the ‘incubator philosophy’ and will encourage businesses to relocate to an appropriate location once they have grown beyond that, which would be considered in character with a residential area.

#### 4.4 INDUSTRIAL LAND USE



Given Vanderhoof’s commitment to a diversified economy, Council is ready to take advantage of new and evolving market opportunities. The forest industry has played a very important role in the local industrial base and this will continue along with a growing interest in serving the resource industry in the region.

As a location for industry, the community offers convenient access to major highway routes and developable land. Heavy industry is concentrated in the west sector between the CNR line and Highway 16 and at Engen. Varied light industrial uses are located along the Highway corridor, in the west half of Section 3 and north of Highway 27 in Section 17. If we exclude the Canfor-Plateau Division sawmill at Engen, there is approximately 37 ha of industrial land currently utilized in the District.

There is adequate designated industrial land for anticipated growth with the airport lands and the land designated west of the town centre along the south side of Highway 16. This land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve. However, as the land is

required for industrial development, Council will strongly support a request to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for exclusion. Council’s policies for supporting the existing industrial base and providing for the development of future industry areas follows:

**Policy 4.4.1 - Land for Industrial Development:** To provide an adequate supply of land to accommodate future industrial development, Council has designated areas for industrial use as indicated on **Map 1: Land Use Plan**.

**Policy 4.4.2 - Locational Guidelines for Industrial Development:** While reviewing industrial development proposals, Council will evaluate the proposed project based on the following criteria:

- Proposed development sites should be:
  - Suitable for industrial use and not subject to potential hazardous conditions;
  - In close proximity to local highways and/or the CNR line; and
  - Physically separated from established residential, commercial and institutional areas.
- That the proposed industrial activity and the vehicle traffic it generates will not have a detrimental impact on surrounding uses; and
- That the intended use will not create undesirable environmental impacts.

**Policy 4.4.3 - Industrial Districts:** To accommodate a range of industrial operations, the District's *Zoning Bylaw* distinguishes between light and heavy industry. Areas zoned for heavy industry are intended for larger scale industrial uses requiring sizable sites, direct rail and/or highway access and those that may entail extensive outdoor storage or create negative visual or environmental impacts. It is Council's intention to designate areas for this form of industry and prevent the encroachment of non-compatible land uses. The light industry zone is intended for smaller scale industrial operations that may locate along the Highway 16 corridor outside of the core without creating negative visual impacts.

**Policy 4.4.4 - Municipal Servicing Flexibility of Industrial Sites:** To allow flexibility for locating and servicing future industrial activities and ensure reasonable development costs, Council's policy is to permit different levels of site servicing. Council may consider urban standard municipal servicing requirements for light industrial uses located adjacent to arterial roadways. Rural or partial servicing standards may be allowed for industrial operations in the fringe area or located at a distance from existing water and sewer trunk mains.

**Policy 4.4.5 - Airport-Related Industrial Development:** To facilitate airport related economic development opportunities, Council has worked with the ALC to successfully exclude a portion of the airport lands for aviation related uses. It is Council's policy to undertake appropriate development and marketing of airport property for aviation related use.

**Policy 4.4.6 - Airport Future Potential:** Council is considering airport runway expansion efforts to enable the landing of larger aircraft such as the Boeing 737. Also, there is potential for this airport to be an alternate to the Prince George airport.

**Policy 4.4.7 – Sustainable Development:** To consider creating incentives for responsible development practices by developing a green building incentives program.

## 4.5 AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

Agriculture has traditionally played an important role in the development of Vanderhoof and is an integral part of both the local economy and the community's character. Based on the agricultural capability of the lands in and around Vanderhoof, extensive areas have been designated as Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Community expansion, however, has sometimes resulted in development pressures and land use conflicts at the interface between agricultural and other rural land uses. Land not specifically subdivided or in reserve for future expansion and which is suitable for agricultural is designated Agricultural on the **Map 1: Land Use Plan**.



A portion of land along the south side of Highway 16 and along the CNR has been identified as Industrial. While this land remains within the ALR, it is required for future industrial development. As the land is needed for industrial purposes, the District will support the request for exclusion from the Reserve.

Council's policies for preserving the municipality's agricultural land base, while also providing for various rural land uses, are set out below:

**Policy 4.5.1 - Agricultural Land Use Designations:** The areas designated as agricultural are intended primarily for farming and ranching activities.

**Policy 4.5.2 - Preservation of the Agricultural Land Base:** It is the policy of Council to support the preservation and continued use of high quality agricultural land for crop production, livestock grazing and other farming activities. Council is supportive of the ALR as a means of preserving farmland and will permit only land uses within the ALR that conform to the policies of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

**Policy 4.5.3 – Diversity in Agriculture:** Council supports and encourages diversity in agricultural business development.

**Policy 4.5.4 - Transportation and Utility Routing:** It is Council's policy to ensure that, whenever possible, the routing of future rural roadways and utility lines avoid fragmenting agricultural lands by following alignments along section, boundary or property lines, road allowances or existing utility corridors. Utility and road rights-of-way across ALR lands will not proceed without the approval of the ALC.

## 4.6 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

There is a wide-range of community facilities located throughout the District that serve the needs of the community. It is the objective of Council to work collaboratively with other levels of government and private partners to fulfill the vision of a livable community.

**Policy 4.6.1 - Map Designation:** Existing and proposed community facilities are identified on **Map 1: Land Use Plan**. The designation is intended for a variety of public and private institutional uses as educational facilities, religious assemblies, clubs, cemeteries, health services, emergency services, airport and municipal facilities and building. Pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, the location of public facilities including public schools, parks, the recreation centre and hospital are identified on the map as well.

**Policy 4.6.2 – Education:** School District No. 91 is responsible for the administration of elementary schools and a high school in the Vanderhoof area. In addition there are French immersion, special education, continuing education and career preparation programs. Also the EBUS Academy program provides electronic access to education for students from outside of the region. The College of New Caledonia offers a variety of academic, general interest and trades training options to the community. To ensure the continued delivery of necessary and desired educational services in the community, Council's policies are:

- Encourage the establishment of community school facilities with School District No. 91, for such programs as after school care, recreation, youth/family activities and continuing adult education;
- A key priority for the community is a new facility for CNC. Council will work with the college to locate an appropriate location and supports the expansion of post secondary training programs to meet the needs of residents in the District; Council will:
  - Work with industry to ensure there is a supply of qualified employees to meet their needs;
  - Consider how the need for student housing can be met; and
  - Work with local First Nations to enhance educational opportunities.

**Policy 4.6.3 – Churches:** Places of religious assembly are an important component in the provision of community facilities for daycare, senior and youth programs, and other community needs. It is recognized that churches have available space that can fill an important need for community meetings and for business conferences. The District will encourage churches to participate in this expanded role and investigate mutually beneficial partnerships.

**Policy 4.6.4 - Health Care:** The District has extensive health care services available in the community including the St. John Hospital with its acute care beds, emergency room, surgical, oncology and maternity services. The health services provided enhance Vanderhoof's role as the regional hub and are an asset that attracts doctors and new residents. The District is committed to working with Northern Health to ensure necessary upgrading and maintenance of the facilities.

**Policy 4.6.5 – Health Care:** Council will continue to fulfill obligations in the Northern Medical Trust program and supports medical interns.

**Policy 4.6.6 – Community Hub or Civic Centre:** It is Council's objective to build a community social, recreational and educational hub or civic centre that would include a Community Centre, Aquatic Centre, and the College of New Caledonia in the area near the arena. Council's policy is to work with the community to ensure a new Community Hall site is selected and to ensure the facility will support the needs of the community.

**Policy 4.6.7 – Social Welfare:** Council advocates for the health and welfare of all residents in the community and supports initiatives to address social and health related issues such as substance abuse, addictions and homelessness. Council is committed to be at the table for the biannual interagency meetings.

**Policy 4.6.8 – Protective Services:** The District provides fire protection services with a full time Fire Chief and dedicated volunteers. Police services are provided to the District through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Assessment of community needs in terms of policing is done with ongoing consultation with the RCMP. Council’s protective service policies include:

- Advocating for adequate police coverage;
- Supporting volunteer efforts of the community in fire protection services, Search and Rescue and community based policing and crime prevention programs;
- Continuing to develop policy for fire inspection requirements and keep up to date with inspections; and
- Supporting RCMP community-based policing and crime prevention programs Council will meet on a monthly basis with the RCMP detachment commander and annually with the superintendent. Council will also facilitate a discussion with other jurisdictions in the region to ensure the detachment size is adequate.



**Policy 4.6.9 - Arts and Culture:** It is Council’s objective to recognize and support the efforts of community arts and cultural organizations and that this enriches the life of resident. It is an important component for tourism and local business development. Council’s policies are to:

- Encourage community arts and cultural facilities to locate in the downtown core or adjacent to commercial and higher density residential uses;
- Promote local arts and cultural activities through appropriate means such as the District newsletter and electronic media;
- Continue to provide access to municipal facilities such as the portable stage, stands and washrooms; and
- Promote local artisans through use of local art in municipal facilities where possible.

**Policy 4.6.10 - Food Security:** Council is committed to a more environmentally sustainable future and recognizes that initiatives to increase the access to locally grown food products is critical to this future. Policies include:

- Supporting the development of the community garden;
- Promoting a local farmers market; and
- Supporting the McLeod Farm to School program.

**Policy 4.6.11 – Nechako White Sturgeon Conservation Centre:** Council supports the ongoing operation of the conservation centre and development of the interpretative centre on the Nechako River, south of Burrard Avenue Bridge. This facility is for the protection, enhancement and renewal of the Nechako sturgeon and other fish species. The Nechako white sturgeon has been designated to endangered status and the population is in a critical state of decline. The District of Vanderhoof is the site of the only recorded spawning congregation of white sturgeon recorded in recent history.

- Council will actively seek development of an interpretive centre as an educational centre and an attraction for tourists.
- Council will continue to support other government agencies in the operation of the conservation centre.

**Policy 4.6.12 - Locational Guidelines for Cultural and Institutional Facilities:** Existing clubs, lodges, meeting halls, churches and similar cultural and social facilities within the District add an important cultural element, and contribute to the character of the community. While it is preferred that new facilities are located within or near the downtown core, to serve residential growth in outlying neighbourhoods, new facilities should be located:

- Adjacent to major arterial or collector roadways to ensure convenient access and minimize traffic disruptions for surrounding residential areas;
- On sites of a sufficient size to accommodate adequate off-street parking as required by activities; and
- Where possible, adjacent to commercial land uses or school sites where combined off-street parking can be arranged with these facilities.



#### 4.7 PARKS AND RECREATIONAL LAND USE

The District of Vanderhoof has a full range of recreation, sports and leisure facilities including neighbourhood and district parks, open space, hiking trails and a bird sanctuary. Council recognizes that the health of our community depends on a range of recreational activities. The District is committed to a parks and recreation framework that establishes a well-integrated and linked system of parks, trails and associated recreational facilities that serve a range of purposes, from active recreation, to passive enjoyment, conservation and tourism development.

The floodplain of the Nechako River covers an extensive portion of the District. As these lands are subject to hazardous conditions, it is appropriate that those lands designated for agricultural, recreation and open space uses be continued in those designations.

**Policy 4.7.1 - Monitoring the Use of Parkland and Recreational Facilities:** The use of existing parks and recreational facilities will be monitored, Council will take steps to provide additional parkland and facilities in relation to future community needs.

**Policy 4.7.2 - Joint Use of Recreational Facilities:** Council will work closely with the School District and community groups to arrange for the joint use and programming of facilities to meet the recreational needs of residents in a cost effective manner.

**Policy 4.7.3 - Park and Recreation Facility Hierarchy:** To meet the full range of recreation, sports and leisure needs of community residents, Council will continue to work towards establishing a recreation facility and park system hierarchy consisting of the following elements:

*Community Parks and School Grounds:* Located in combination with public schools whenever possible, to serve both passive recreational needs and provide active sports facilities at the community and neighbourhood levels;

*District Park Facilities:* Presently located in the central core and in the area south of the airport. These larger scale parks and facilities are intended for open space for the benefit of the entire District and surrounding area;

*Greenbelt:* Intended to protect environmentally sensitive lands or areas unsuitable for development such as wetlands, steep slopes or lands adjacent to watercourses for passive recreational use. Areas designated as being within the Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area will require approval; and

*Trail Linkage System:* Intended to connect parklands, recreation facilities and open space areas with a pedestrian trail network that may also be used for jogging, cycling and cross-country skiing. Wherever possible, this trail system should utilize shoreline park dedications, utility easements, crown lands and public rights-of-way.

**Policy 4.7.4 - Northside Recreation Area:** It is Council's policy to retain the existing golf course and fairgrounds at the Northside recreation area.

**Policy 4.7.5 - Greenbelt and Open Space Preservation:** Council will work towards protecting environmentally sensitive areas, such as creek and river banks, ravines, escarpments and the floodplain (as currently defined by the Ministry of Environment) wherever possible, and to retain these areas for greenbelts. Where site conditions permit, and subject to Development Permit review, if required, Council will consider nature trails; wildlife viewpoints; pedestrian, cycling and cross-country ski trails; picnic areas and natural or historic signage for these environmentally sensitive lands.

**Policy 4.7.6 - Provision of Parkland at Time of Subdivision:** Pursuant to Section 941 of the *Local Government Act*, in the case of residential subdivisions where three or more lots are created and the smallest lot created is less than 2.0 ha in size, the owner of land being subdivided must provide parkland not to exceed 5% of the land being subdivided or pay an amount equal to the market value of the land. The policies of Council with respect to the provision of public parkland are as follows:

Where the proposed subdivision is not in close proximity to existing parks and a suitable site for public park has been identified, Council will require the dedication of land in areas where the dedication of scattered public parks may be impractical or where a suitable site is not available within the proposed subdivision, Council will require payment of an amount not exceeding 5% of the market value of the property proposed for subdivision for the purpose of acquiring parkland.

Parkland dedications that are subject to hazardous conditions or steep slopes will not be accepted as part of the 5% parkland dedication, although these may be pursued separately by the District for greenbelt acquisition.

## 4.8 PUBLIC UTILITIES AND ROADWAYS

Municipal services continue to be monitored, maintained and/or upgraded as required, subject to available funding.

**Policy 4.8.1 - Municipal Infrastructure Systems:** It is the policy of Council to maintain and monitor the capacity and condition of municipal infrastructure and carry out upgrades to these systems in accordance with future demand, as municipal finances permit. Pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, the general location of major existing and anticipated infrastructure services, including roads, community water and sanitary sewer systems, are identified on **Map 2: Public Utilities and Roadways.**

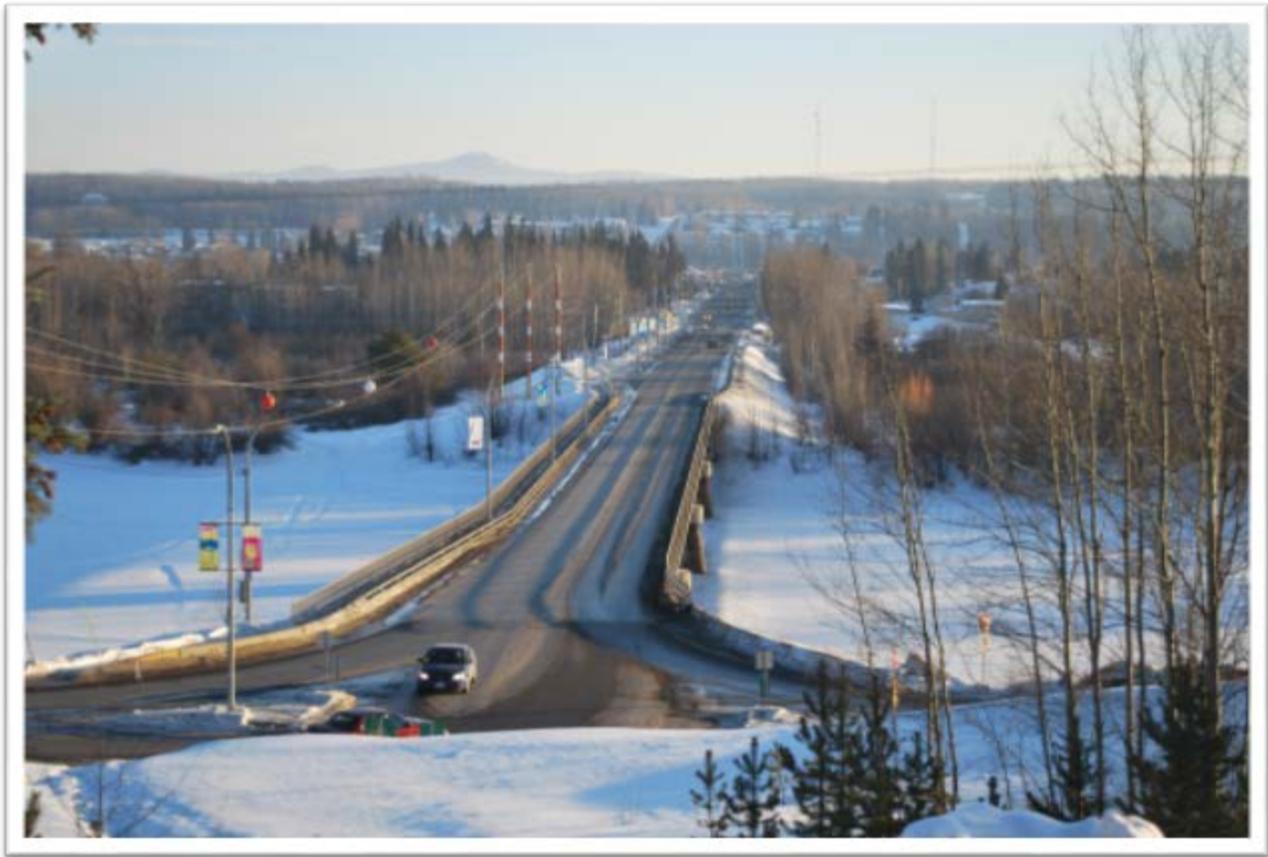
**Policy 4.8.2 - Road Network:** The District shall maintain a hierarchical roadway system to service users and to provide a high degree of safe mobility. The proposed network plan as reflected on **Map 2: Public Utilities and Roadways** has been discussed with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. It is agreed that an updated Major Street Network Plan is needed as there has not been a thorough review since 1992. Highway 16 is primarily intended to promote through traffic, with highway access encouraged via the internal road network and major street intersections. Depending on traffic volumes, safety considerations and design limitations, direct access to Highway 16 may be restricted.

**Policy 4.8.3 - Municipal Roadway Upgrading:** Council intends to continue the District's program of upgrading roads to ensure an efficient, safe and convenient roadway system.

**Policy 4.8.4 - Arterial Road Upgrading:** It is Council's policy to develop Arterial Roads in accordance with **Map 2: Public Utilities and Roadways.**

**Policy 4.8.5 - Provision and Financing of Municipal Servicing Extensions:** Where development outside of serviced areas are proposed that would require an extension or upgrade to municipal infrastructure, Council may enter into discussions around equitably sharing the costs of upgrading or extending municipal services. Where municipal funding is not available for those service upgrades or extensions, subject to provisions of the *Local Government Act*, the developer may be able to recover those costs through a latecomer agreement.

**Policy 4.8.6 - Solid Waste Disposal:** It is the policy of Council to work in association with the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako in the implementation of its Solid Waste Management Plan. This Plan lays out a strategy to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost the Region's waste.



## 4.9 TRANSPORTATION

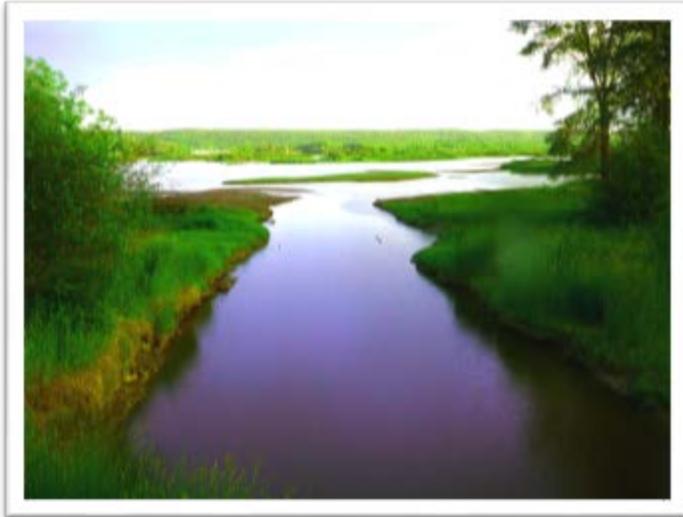
Council's objective is to increase efficiency in a transportation system, which will improve the mobility of all residents of Vanderhoof while reducing the dependency on automobiles. This includes the need to ensure availability of some form of transportation for residents to get around the District, and to travel to larger centres such as, Prince George.

**Policy 4.9.1 – Community Transit:** Council supports the need for a community transportation system (shuttle, existing buses, handi-dart) and will work with community groups and other levels of government to develop transportation options. This is particularly critical as a local taxi service is not currently in operation.

**Policy 4.9.2 – Encourage Active Living:** Continue to expand and encourage development of trails, bicycle paths, sidewalks and bike racks.

**Policy 4.9.3 - Maintain Existing Service:** Council is committed to working with agencies that provide regional transportation bus services as they provide a critical service to the community.

## 4.10 ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AND POTENTIAL HAZARD AREAS



The location of the District on the floodplain of the Nechako River is a major issue affecting the District. The 1:200 year floodplain, as defined by the Ministry of Environment, affects the downtown area and restricts the expansion of residential development. The *Provincial Flood Hazard Area Land Use Management Guidelines* is intended to protect against the loss of life and minimize property damage, injury and trauma and therefore should be supported.

In addition, the Nechako River watershed supports fish species such as chinook salmon, sockeye salmon and white sturgeon. The

fisheries resource contained within the District of Vanderhoof is sensitive and should be protected.

A second issue is the delineation of steep slopes that are areas of potentially unstable soil conditions and pose a hazard to human life and a barrier to development. Slopes greater than 30% are considered undevelopable for most British Columbia municipalities. However, other northern municipalities consider slopes greater than 20% to be unsuitable for building development unless a suitable building site can be established by a geotechnical engineering report.

For the purposes of this official community plan the Nechako River, and the creek corridors of Stony Creek and Murray Creek have been identified as environmentally sensitive areas. Environmentally sensitive areas, and steep slopes, are illustrated on **Map 3: Environmentally Sensitive and Development Permit Areas**.

**Policy 4.10.1 - Use of Environmentally Sensitive and Potential Hazard Areas:** Council shall discourage development of lands, which may be environmentally sensitive or subject to potential natural hazards. As set out in Policy 4.7.5, the preferred use of these lands will include activities where damage to property or threat to human life would be minimized, such as parks, open space and resource enhancement.

**Policy 4.10.2 – Protection of Aquatic and Riparian Habitat:** It is the policy of Council to conserve and protect productive fish and wildlife habitats from human disturbance. The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has designated the Nechako White Sturgeon ‘Endangered’ and the BC Conservation Data Centre has designated the white sturgeon ‘critically imperiled’. The Nechako Migratory Bird Sanctuary contains the only recorded spawning congregation of the white sturgeon in recent history. When any development is proposed that would impact watercourses and/or riparian habitat in the District, the following guidelines should be referred to:

- *Land Development Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Habitat* co-published by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ministry of Environment.

- Provincial Ministry of Environment Best Management Practices documents such as the *Standards and Best Practices for Instream Works* and the *Environmental Best Management Practices for Urban and Rural Development*.

**Policy 4.10.3 - Sand and Gravel Resources:** Without precluding the future development of other potential sand and gravel resources, known sand and gravel deposits that are presently developed or may be suitable for future sand and gravel extraction are delineated as “Sand and Gravel Resource” on **Map 3: ALR and Environmentally Sensitive Areas**. Gravel extractions on parcels within the ALR shall require approval of the ALC.

**Policy 4.10.4 - Floodplain Management:** To protect against the loss of life and to minimize property damage associated with flooding events, Council will encourage agricultural, park and outdoor recreation uses on flood prone lands. In particular, the designation of additional residential land uses, beyond those already established, will be discouraged from the floodplain. Council supports the objectives of the *Provincial Flood Hazard Area Land Use Management Guidelines*.

**Policy 4.10.5 - Development on Floodplain:** The District has in place a Floodplain Management Bylaw which establishes procedures and regulations for buildings and structures in flood prone areas. The floodplain is generally outlined on **Map 3: ALR and Environmentally Sensitive Areas**. However, all flood prone lands may not be identified on this map due to the scale limitations.

**Policy 4.10.6 – Development Permits:** Protect environmentally sensitive areas identified in the *OCP* through the use of development permits.

**Policy 4.10.7 – New Development:** Ensure all new development and infrastructure occurs with minimal impact or disturbance to Nechako River, Stony Creek, and Murray Creek, and other identified watercourses. Leave strips and other impacted areas shall be rehabilitated using indigenous plants and trees.

**Policy 4.10.8 – Steep Slopes:** Require all areas with slopes greater than 30% to be investigated as hazardous, environmentally and visually sensitive lands and a no-build/no-disturb covenant considered as part of the zoning, subdivision or building approval process.

**Policy 4.10.9 – Hazardous Lands:** Direct development away from those lands, which may have a potential natural hazard, soil instability, or have been identified as hazardous by the District, or other agencies having jurisdiction.

**Policy 4.10.10 – Cluster development:** Support density averaging, or bonusing, for the promotion of clustering development away from environmentally sensitive areas.

**Policy 4.10.11 – Fire Hazard:** Where a property contains forested land or borders forest land the developer will be required to undertake a fire hazard risk assessment at the time of submitting a rezoning application or subdivision application. The assessment will provide a recommended mitigation strategy, which will be submitted to the District and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

## 4.11 HERITAGE RESOURCES

The Vanderhoof Heritage Museum has been established on the west side of the urban area along Highway 16 to celebrate and preserve local heritage. Several period buildings that have been relocated to this Museum site, with restoration an ongoing project. Three buildings have been officially designated as heritage buildings (Old Royal Bank Building, Murray House and the Board of Trade building).

**Policy 4.11.1 - Heritage Resources:** The District may continue to use its powers under the *Heritage Act* and the *Local Government Act* to protect the District's heritage. This may include acquiring, conserving and developing heritage sites; gaining knowledge about the community's history and heritage; increasing public awareness, understanding and appreciation of heritage and other activities to conserve the historical, cultural, aesthetic, scientific and educational value of its heritage.

## 5. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS, DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

**Category:** The Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Development Permit Area is designated under Section 919.1 (1) (a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment.

**Area:** The designated area is identified on **Map 3: Environmentally Sensitive and Development Permit Areas**.

**Justification:** The justification for this development permit area designation is to minimize the impact of development on environmentally sensitive riparian areas. Areas identified for protection include the Nechako River, Stony Creek and Murray Creek. The environmentally sensitive riparian area associated with the river and creeks is designated as the area, which provides essential habitat and corridors for fish, birds and other wildlife. The riparian areas also serve a role in natural drainage, storage and purification. Their existence in a relatively undisturbed state maintains a healthy sustainable waterway. Disturbance can lead to land erosion, slope instability and flood risk. The Development Permit Area aims to restrict activities within the riparian areas for the long-term health of the waterway.

### **Determining whether a development is within a designated hazard or watercourse area:**

To determine whether a proposed development is close to a designated hazard or watercourse area, the following is required:

- Locating the hazard area or watercourse relative to the property lines;
- Locating the top of bank (for creeks and lakes) or natural boundary (for lakes); and
- Measuring the applicable leave strip or distance from that top of bank or natural boundary.

Unless all development activities will be clearly outside the development permit area, the proposed location of development relative to development permit area boundaries is required to be determined by a BC Land Surveyor (BCLS) and incorporated into the BCLS certified site plan.

### **Conditions where the Protection of the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Development Permit is Not Required**

A development permit is not required within the Protection of the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Development Permit Area for:

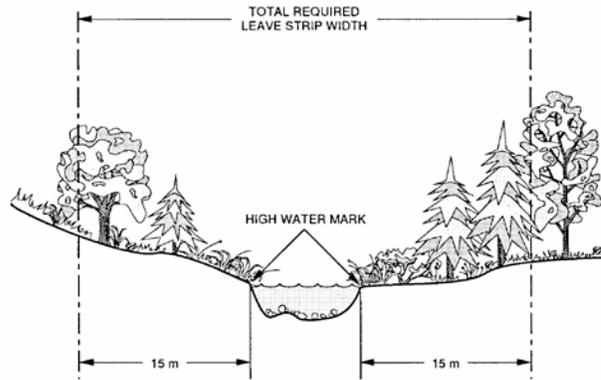
- The alteration, addition, repair, demolition and maintenance of one single detached dwelling unit and accessory building and structure;
- The construction, alteration, addition, repair, demolition and maintenance of farm buildings;
- The construction and repair of fences;
- The construction of a driveway;
- The construction of utilities serving one single detached dwelling unit or farm building;
- A subdivision, if the smallest parcel resulting from subdivision is 10 hectares or greater;
- A subdivision, if the subdivision will create only two rural residential, suburban residential, or urban residential, or institution/public use parcels (regardless of size); and

- An area where a development permit has already been issued in the past and the conditions in the development permit have all been met and the conditions addressed in the previous development permit will not be affected.

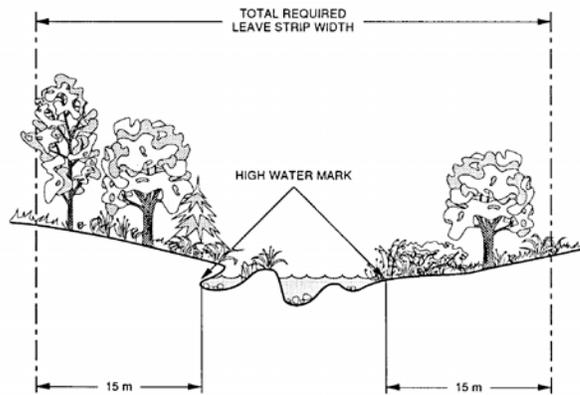
### **Guidelines**

Development permits issued in this section will be in accordance with the following guidelines:

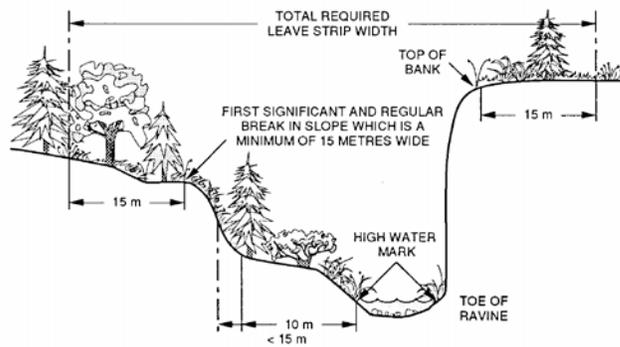
- Areas that may be subject to flooding, mudflows, torrents of debris, erosion, land slip, rock falls, or avalanches, will remain free of development and in their natural state;
- Leave strips will be provided on Stony Creek, Murray Creek and the Nechako River. Leave strips will be maintained free of development and in their natural state within the natural boundary of the watercourse (the corresponding Diagrams A, B and C provide a determination of the leave strip measurements);
- The leave strip will be permanently protected under one of the following: dedication as park by return of land to the Crown, in the name of the District; rezoned as a protected area or reserve status, secured with conservation covenants; or identified as a building setback area;
- All new developments in ESA's in the District must conform to the Ministry of Environment's *Land Development Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Habitat*. These guidelines were developed jointly by the Ministry of Environment and the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans to protect fish and fish habitat; and
- Where development is considered on land containing ESA's, the District may use the following methods to restrict development away from the hazardous or environmentally sensitive area:
  - Dedication of the ESA;
  - Covenants;
  - Bare land strata to allow flexibility in conserving the feature or area;
  - Bonus density transfer to the developable portion of the site;
  - A development variance permit to vary conditions other than use or density; and/or
  - Voluntary stewardship such as contracts, leases or trust to protect the feature or area.



**DIAGRAM A: MINIMUM LEAVE STRIP FOR A WELL-DEFINED HIGH WATER MARK**



**DIAGRAM B: MINIMUM LEAVE STRIP WIDTH FOR A POORLY-DEFINED HIGH WATER MARK**



**DIAGRAM C: MINIMUM LEAVE STRIP FOR A RAVINE OR STEEP-SLOPED BANKS**

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION**

Council's adoption of this *Official Community Plan* is one step in an ongoing process leading to the realization of the District of Vanderhoof's planning objectives. Summarized briefly in this section are several of the implementation tools available to Council to carry out the policies of the *OCP*.

### **6.1 ZONING BYLAW**

Council intends to review the District's existing *Zoning Bylaw* to ensure that it is consistent with the direction and policies of this *Plan*, that the regulations and provisions of the *Zoning Bylaw* are consistent with the *Local Government Act*, the *Community Charter* and all other provincial legislation.

### **6.2 SUBDIVISION BYLAW**

Council will undertake a review of the District's *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 659, 1992* to maintain consistency with the new *OCP* and the *Local Government Act*, as well as to ensure that development and servicing standards contained in the *Bylaw* are appropriate for the community.

### **6.3 HIGHWAY 16 CORRIDOR BEAUTIFICATION**

Given the importance of the Highway 16 corridor in projecting an image of the community to passing traffic and council's objective to develop a strategy to deal with brownfield sites and the look of the corridor, Council will initiate a Highway 16 corridor planning process.

### **6.4 COORDINATION**

Effective implementation of this *OCP* will require meaningful cooperation between all affected governments and agencies on matters such as servicing, land use and transportation for the overall betterment of the area.

### **6.5 PARTICIPATION**

The District will provide formal and informal opportunities in the planning and approval processes relating to the physical development and the provision of services.

### **6.6 MONITORING**

The District shall monitor the *Plan* to ensure that its policies and designations stay relevant to changing circumstances.

## 6.7 AMENDMENT

Changing and unforeseen circumstances may necessitate amendments to either the policies or maps in this *Official Community Plan* following the procedures outlined in the *Local Government Act*, including public consultation. Amendments may be made to advance the overall community interest.

Before considering an amendment to this *Plan*, the Council shall require an analysis of the desirability and impact of the proposed amendment. This analysis should include:

- The relationship to other plans and plan policies;
- The compatibility with surrounding development in terms of land use function and scale of development;
- The impact on traffic and pedestrians;
- The relationship to and impacts on services such as water and sewage systems, public transit and other utilities and public facilities such as recreation, parks and schools;
- The effect on the stability, retention and rehabilitation of desirable existing uses and buildings;
- The retention or provision of affordable housing;
- The necessity and appropriateness of the proposed use in view of the stated intentions of the applicant; and
- The documented concerns and opinions of area residents and owners regarding the application.

Council shall not reconsider an application for plan amendment that has been refused for a period of one year unless the circumstances pertaining to the proposed amendment have changed significantly since the previous decision.

## 6.8 UPDATE OF THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

Under anticipated growth conditions, the new *OCP* should be effective in guiding growth and development in Vanderhoof for a five-year period. Not later than 2019, the *OCP* should be comprehensively reviewed and updated to take account of current issues and reflect conditions at that time.

## 7. OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN MAPS

The *Local Government Act* provides that, in addition to written policies, the *Official Community Plan* may contain maps showing the proposed land use and servicing requirements and indicate the areas where the special development requirements apply.

This *Official Community Plan* contains maps, which illustrate the overall land use concept, public utilities and roadways, the ALR and environmentally sensitive areas. These maps should be interpreted only in the context of the written policies of the *Official Community Plan*. The *Zoning Bylaw* and its mapping are approved separately by Council and designate land use and regulations in a more detailed manner.

### 7.1 LAND USE PLAN

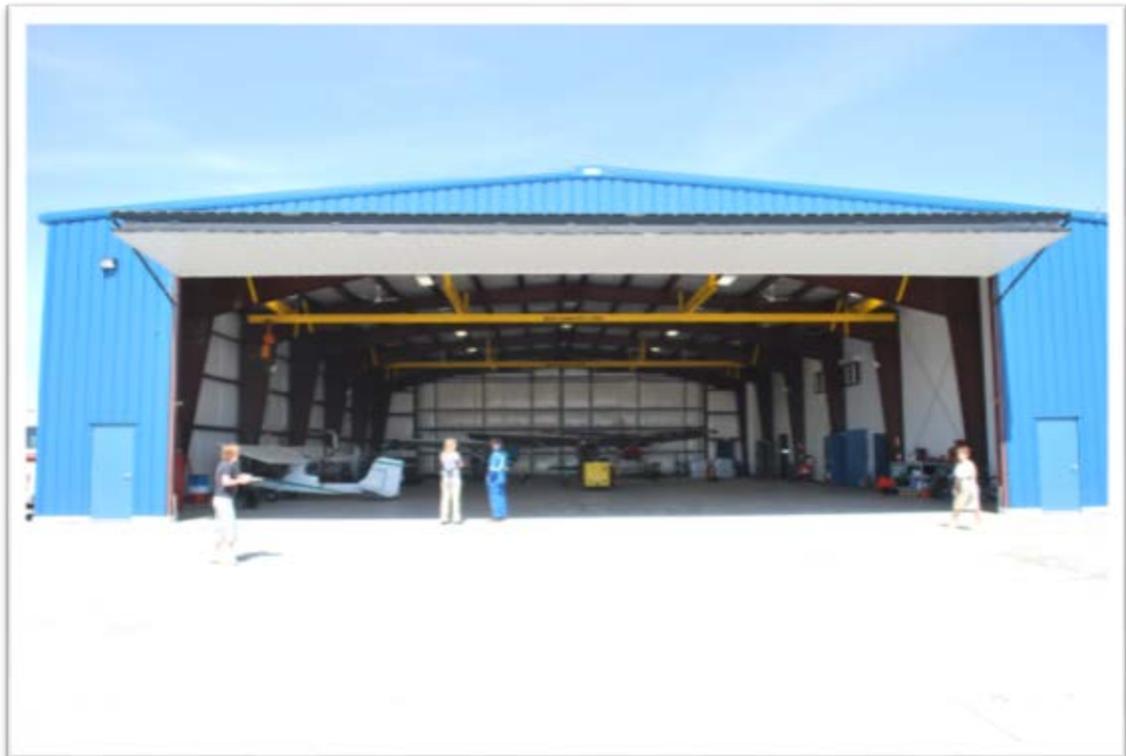
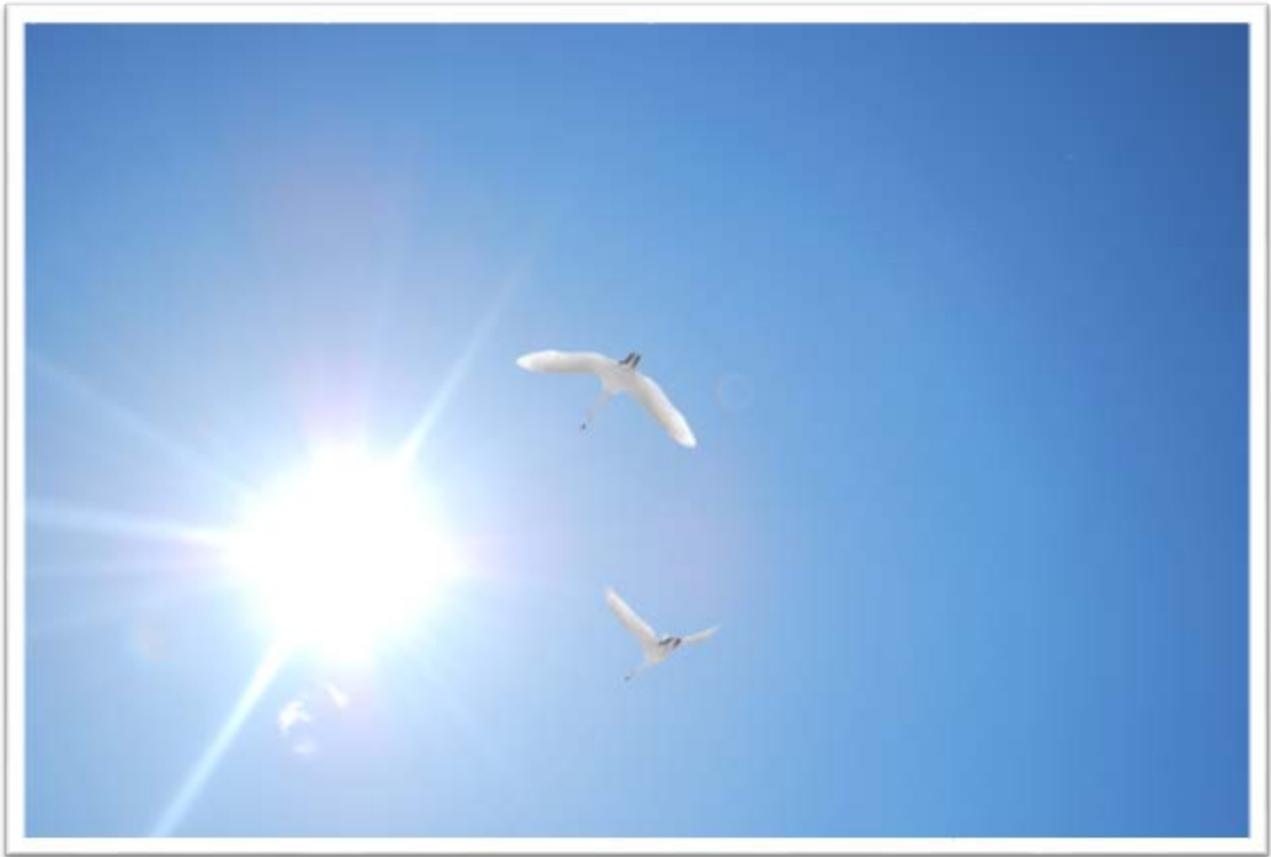
**Map 1: Land Use Plan** shows the general area which is considered, in the long term, as being appropriate for those single detached housing, multiple housing, various kinds of commercial uses, institutional and parks and recreation. The *Zoning Bylaw* provides additional and more detailed designation of land uses that may be permitted within the broad areas outlined on Map 1: Land Use Plan.

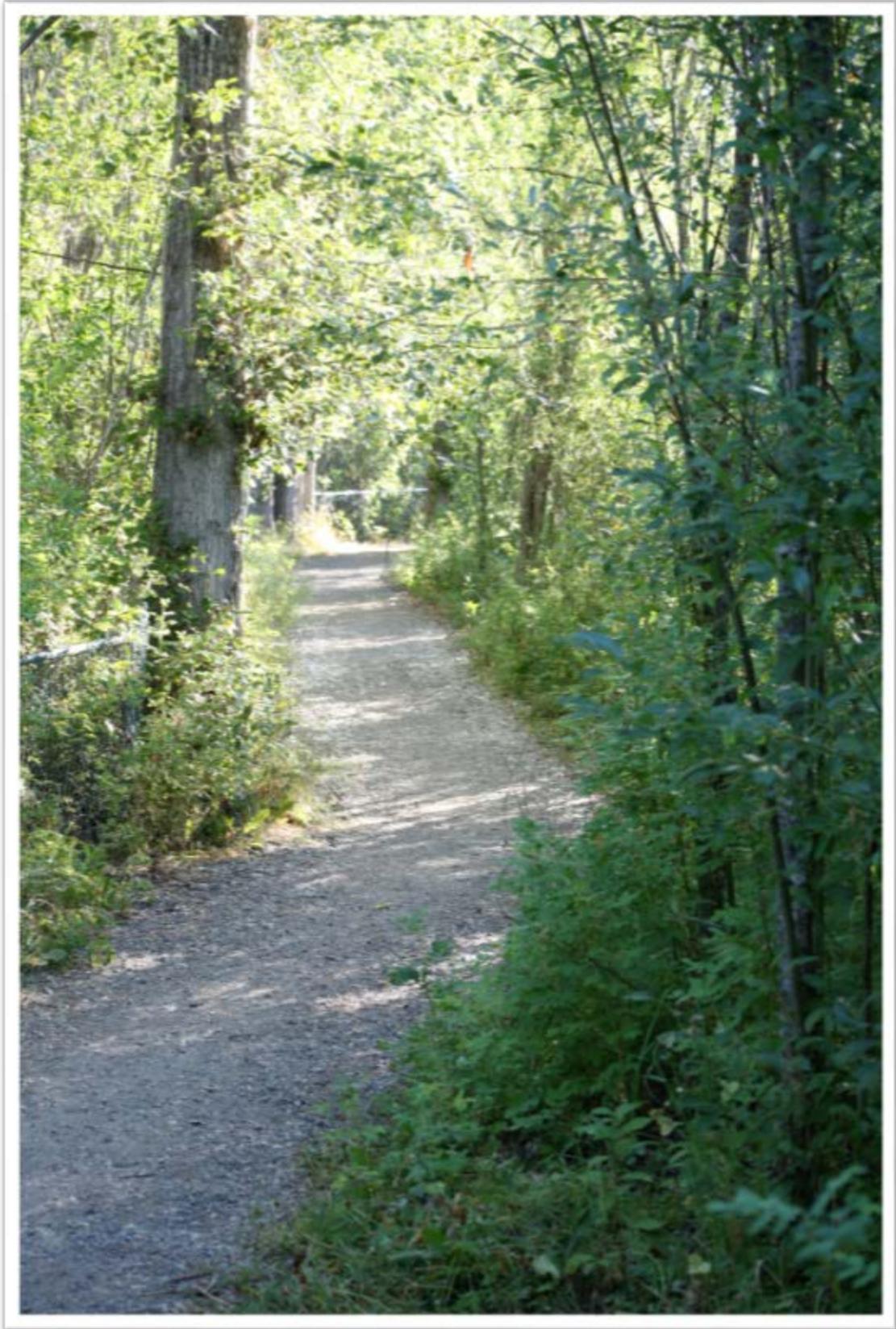
### 7.2 PUBLIC UTILITIES AND ROADWAYS

The hierarchy of roads for the District of Vanderhoof is shown on **Map 2**. It designates highways and major network roadways as well as other major municipal roads. Other roadways are considered local roads. Municipal utilities are also shown on this map.

### 7.3 ALR AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS, DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA

The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), slopes exceeding 20% grade, the 1:200 year floodplain, sensitive water bodies and sand and gravel resources are shown on **Map 3**. Also indicated on **Map 3** is the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Development Permit Area.



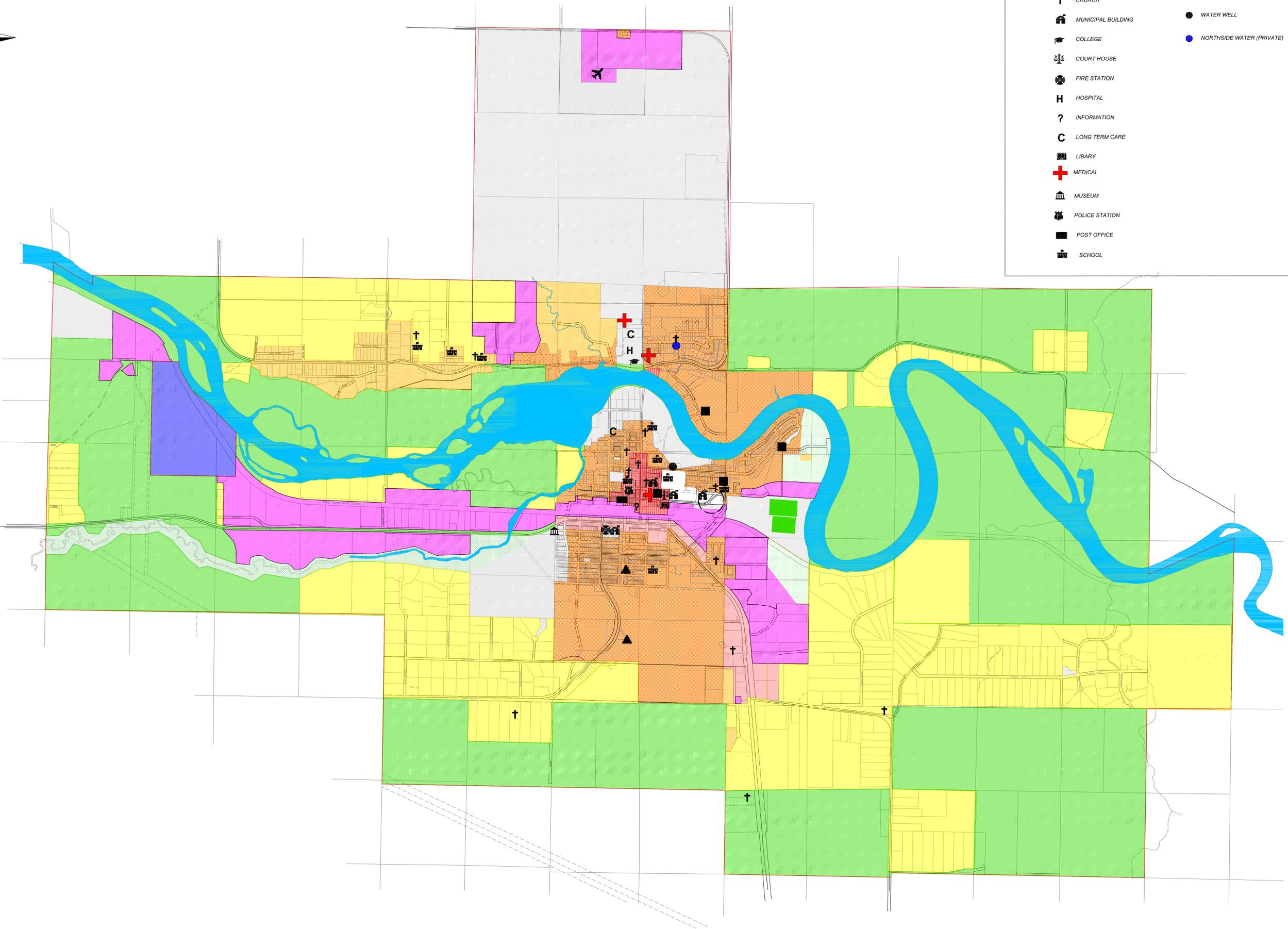


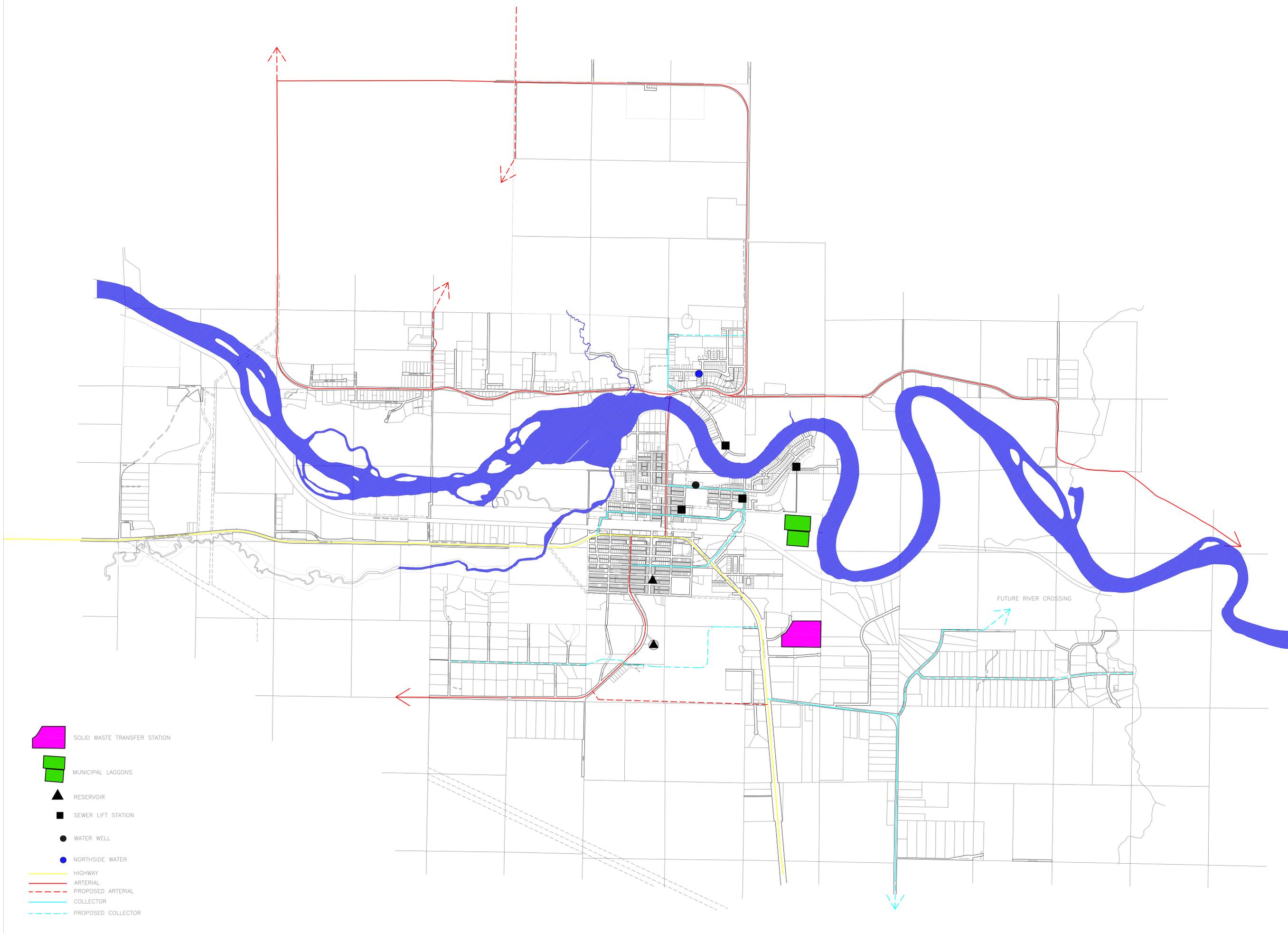




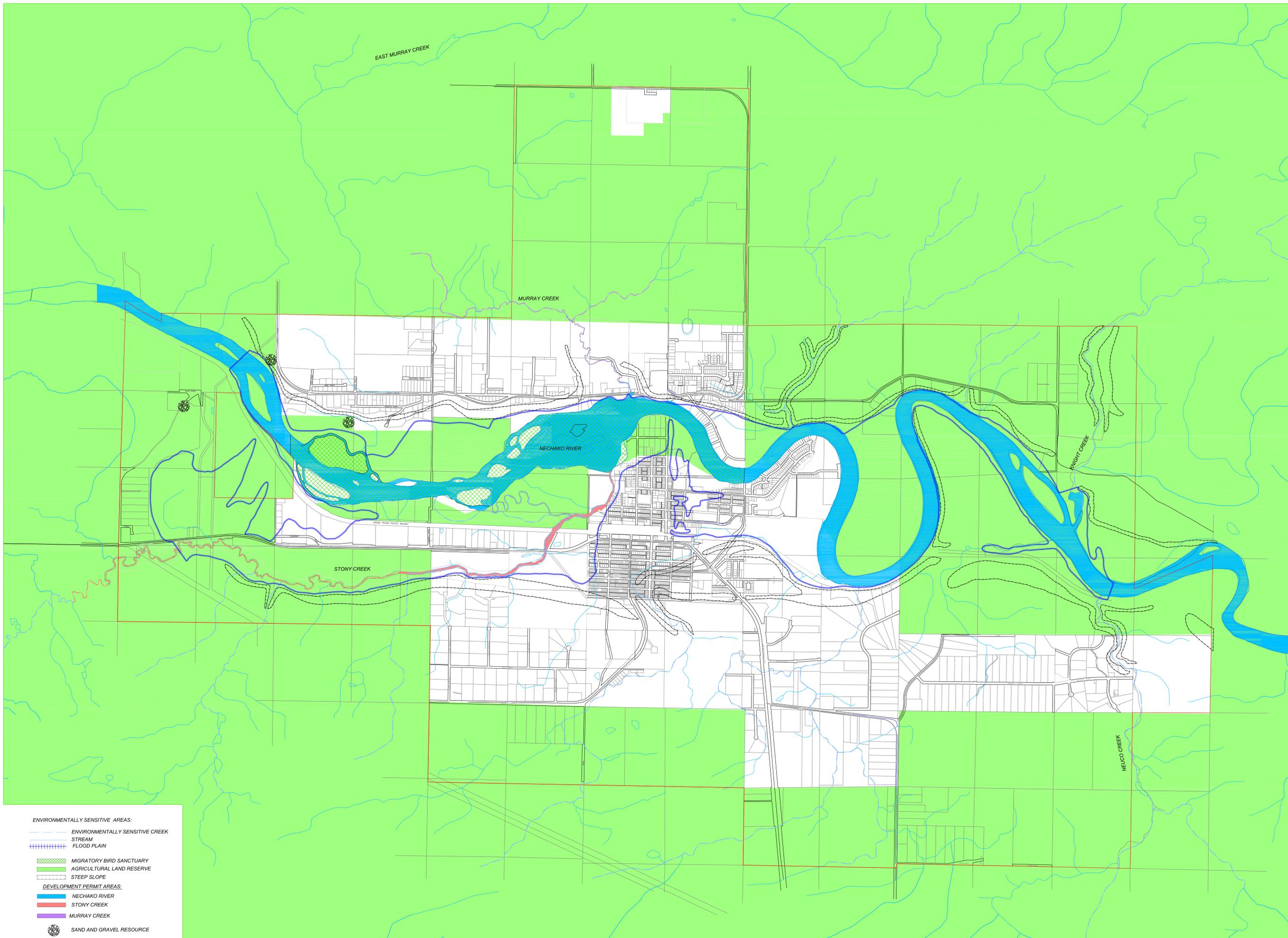


PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS		UTILITES	
	AIRPORT		RESERVOIR
	CEMETERY		SEWER LIFT STATION
	CHURCH		WATER WELL
	MUNICIPAL BUILDING		NORTHSIDE WATER (PRIVATE)
	COLLEGE		
	COURT HOUSE		
	FIRE STATION		
	HOSPITAL		
	INFORMATION		
	LONG TERM CARE		
	LIBRARY		
	MEDICAL		
	MUSEUM		
	POLICE STATION		
	POST OFFICE		
	SCHOOL		





-  SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION
-  MUNICIPAL LAGGONS
-  RESERVOIR
-  SEWER LIFT STATION
-  WATER WELL
-  NORTHSIDE WATER
-  HIGHWAY
-  ARTERIAL
-  PROPOSED ARTERIAL
-  COLLECTOR
-  PROPOSED COLLECTOR



- ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS:**
- ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE CREEK
  - STREAM
  - FLOOD PLAIN
  - MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY
  - AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE
  - STEEP SLOPE
- DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS:**
- NECHAKO RIVER
  - STONY CREEK
  - MURRAY CREEK
  - SAND AND GRAVEL RESOURCE