

REGIONAL DISTRICT
OF BULKLEY & NECHAKO

VANDERHOOF RURAL OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

DRAFT
Schedule "A"

"A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES
WITHIN OUR REGION"

May 19, 2021

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

Contents

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Purpose	5
1.2 Plan Area Profile.....	6
1.3 First Nations Communities.....	7
1.4 Legislative Authority	8
1.5 Plan Review and Amendments	8
1.6 The Planning Process	8
SECTION 2 – PLAN VISION AND GOALS.....	10
2.1 General Plan Vision	10
2.2 General Plan Goals.....	10
2.3 Cluculz Lake.....	11
SECTION 3 – LAND USE DESIGNATIONS OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES	13
3.1 Agriculture (AG) Designation	13
3.2 Commercial (C) Designation.....	15
3.3 Industrial (I) Designation.....	16
3.4 Rural Residential (RR) Designation	17
3.5 Civic Institutional (CI) Designation.....	20
3.6 Parks and Recreation (P) Designation.....	21
3.7 Resource (RE) Designation	22
SECTION 4 – GENERAL APPLICATION OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES	23
4.1 Mineral and Aggregate Resources	23
4.2 Natural Environment.....	24
4.3 Heritage and Archeological Resources	27
4.4 Public Services & Utilities.....	28
4.5 Transportation	28
4.6 Environmental Hazards and Protection	29
4.7 Fire Smart Development.....	30
4.8 Economic Development.....	31
4.9 Greenhouse Gas Emissions	32
SECTION 5 – ASSOCIATED MAPS.....	35
5.1 Interpretation of Land Use Designation Map	35
5.2 Land Use Designation Explanations	35

5.3	Interpretation of the Ecological and Wildlife Values Map.....	35
5.4	Ecological and Wildlife Values Explanations.....	35
5.5	Important Bird Areas.....	36
SECTION 6 – IMPLEMENTATION		37
6.1	Zoning, Development and Subdivision Control	37
6.2	Parkland Dedication.....	37
6.3	Temporary Use Permits	38
6.4	Development Proposals Contrary to the Plan	38
6.5	Agricultural Land Commission	39
6.6	Building Inspection.....	39
6.7	Water and Sewer Approvals	39
6.8	Collaborative Planning	39

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

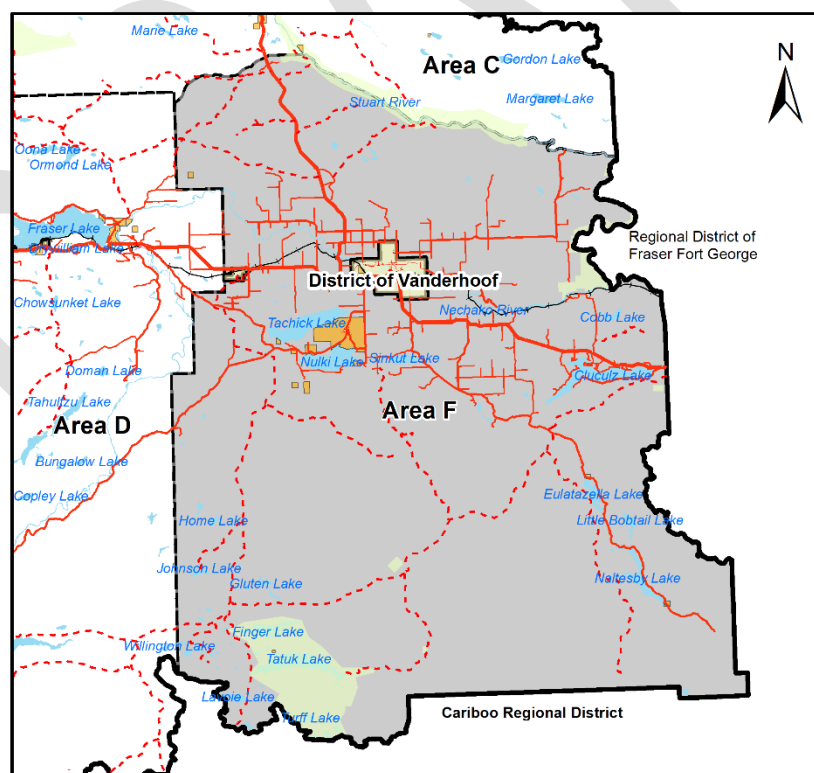
1.1 Purpose

The Vanderhoof Rural Official Community Plan is a bylaw which is adopted by the Board of Directors of the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako. The Plan applies to Electoral Area “F” (Vanderhoof Rural) which is shown on Map No. 1 below.

The Vanderhoof Rural Official Community Plan endeavours to identify the rural community’s aspirations with respect to land use and development for the next five to ten years. In doing so, the Plan contains goals, objectives and policies which describe the form and character of existing and proposed land uses in the Plan area. By considering and adhering to these statements, development will take place in a manner consistent with the physical, economic, and social vision of the Plan area.

The Plan is not a land use, subdivision, or development regulation. Regulations are set out in the zoning and other bylaws. The Plan contains the community’s vision for the future, and states how the community aims to reach that vision. The Plan is intended to be used to provide direction regarding planning and development within the Vanderhoof rural area by the public, the Board of Directors, Regional District staff, and Provincial agencies. All amendments to Regional District land use and development bylaws are to be in compliance with the intent and direction provided by the policies in the Plan.

Map No. 1



1.2 Plan Area Profile

Electoral Area F encompasses a large part of the Nechako River Valley and is recognized as among the most favorable areas for farming in the northern interior. The area is also noted for abundant outdoor recreation opportunities such as fishing, hunting, hiking and bird watching. There are a number of lakeside resorts and wilderness retreats as well as rustic campgrounds.

The area contains the District of Vanderhoof, the unincorporated communities of Engen and Cluculz Lake and the Saik'uz First Nation's main community at Stony Creek.

The Saik'uz First Nation, Nazko First Nation and Nadleh Whuten First Nation have reserve lands within the Plan area. The Lheidli Teneh First Nation, Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation, Nadleh Whuten First Nation, Nak'azdli First Nation, Nazko First Nation, Saik'uz First Nation, Skin Tyee Nation, Stellat'en First Nation and Yekooche First Nation identify traditional lands within Electoral Area F.

According to the Statistics Canada Census for 2016 the population of Electoral Area F declined by 1% from 3,702 to 3,665 persons between the years of 2011 to 2016. It is noted that there is common acceptance by Regional District residents that there was a census undercount throughout the region. It is believed that there has been a slight population increase throughout Electoral Area F since 2016 and that generally the population has been relatively stable.

POPULATION GROWTH	2001	2006	2011	2016
District of Vanderhoof	4,390	4,064	4,480	4,439
Electoral Area F	3,384	3,137	3,702	3,665
Regional District Bulkley-Nechako	40,856	38,243	39,208	37,896
Northern BC	315,217	304,173	306,220	308,822

Sources: Statistics Canada. Census Profile from 2001-2016

The municipality of Vanderhoof is the service, entertainment, and business center of Electoral Area F which was one of the first agricultural settlements in BC. According to the Statistics Canada Census, the population of Vanderhoof declined by 0.9% from 4,480 to 4,439 persons between the years 2011 to 2016.

Detailed statistics for the Plan area are provided in the document titled Vanderhoof and Surrounding Area Community Profile, prepared by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

Forestry and agricultural industries have remained the foundation of the local economy since the arrival of the first settlers. Both industries have helped open up the surrounding wilderness for outdoor recreation-based tourism, which now contributes significantly to the economy. One of the areas' major employers, Canfor's Plateau Sawmill, is one of that largest, most efficient sawmills in the world. There are also several specialty wood products plants and a large pellet plant. The agriculture sector in the Nechako Valley dates to the turn of the century and primarily consists of beef, forage and grain production.

1.3 First Nations Communities

1.3.1 Saik'uz First Nation

The main community is located on the Stoney Creek Reserve No. 1, which is located approximately 14 km south of Vanderhoof on Kenney Dam Rd, and contains the band administration office, community multiplex, health centre, volunteer fire hall, potlatch house, convenience store, church, school, daycare, adult education center, and sports field.

Approximately 400 members live on reserve and an additional 600 members live off reserve. The Saik'uz First Nation includes 10 reserves with a total of 3,235.7 hectares in the Plan area.

The main employer of Saik'uz First Nations members is the Band Administration office. Other economic activities include forest related industry, arts and crafts, a campground, a general store, trapping, seasonal trap manufacturing, seasonal fire fighting, banquet catering, and construction.

The Saik'uz First Nation is a member of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council.

1.3.2 Nadleh Whut'en First Nation

The Nadleh Whut'en First Nation has 500 members and a little less than half live on reserve. Nautley Indian Reserve No. 1 includes the main community and is located a short distance west of Fort Fraser just off Highway 16, outside the plan area. In 2016, a new 1,695 square meter administrative building was inaugurated. In addition to the Band administration, it includes a health clinic, classrooms, recreation, assembly spaces, and is supported by a community kitchen.

The Nadleh Whut'en includes 7 reserves with a total of 969 hectares between Fort Fraser and Fraser Lake. One reserve, Fondeur 9, which is 64.8 ha in size, lies within the boundaries of Electoral Area F.

The forestry products industries (logging and sawmill operations) are the primary sources of employment for the community. In addition, a backhoe and excavating business, an auto body business, and industrial leases are in operation. Revenues are also generated from the leasing of 48 lakeshore lots south of the main reserve on Fraser Lake.

The Nadleh Whut'en Band is a member of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council.

1.3.3 Nazko First Nation

The Nazko First Nation has 407 members living on and off reserve, and approximately half of which live on reserve. The health centre, recreation centre, and about 30 residential houses are located on Nazco 20, which is located approximately 100 km west of Quesnel on the Nazko River at Stump Lake. The band council and administration office for Nazko members is in the City of Quesnel.

The Nazko First Nation has two unpopulated reserves, Ulkah IR No. 3 (59.6 ha in size) and Umlisile Indian Reserve No. 4 (47.7 ha in size) within Electoral Area F.

The Nazko Indian Band is a member of the Carrier Chilcotin Tribal Council.

1.4 Legislative Authority

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

Lands within the Plan area are also subject to other Provincial and Federal legislation or regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, *Public Health Act*, *Land Act*, *Mines Act*, *Environmental Management Act*, and the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*. Certain aspects of the Plan are required to be in accordance with Provincial legislation and interests.

1.5 Plan Review and Amendments

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

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

1.6 The Planning Process

In June 2019, the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors directed staff to proceed with the review process for the Vanderhoof Rural OCP and approved a consultation strategy.



The review process began with preliminary consultation with the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) for Electoral Area F in October 2019. This Commission is made up of community members appointed by the Electoral Area Director. Letters with information about the review process and requests for preliminary comments were sent to local First Nations, community groups, the District of Vanderhoof, School District 91, and various Provincial Ministries. An open house was held in October 2019 to introduce the review process to the public and to solicit participation on a working group to assist in the review process and the drafting of a new Plan. At the open house the Regional District introduced a survey to obtain public input regarding the issues that require attention in the plan.

The Northern Health Authority, District of Vanderhoof, Nechako Valley Dairyman's Association, Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures - Stuart Nechako, Cluculz Lake Community Association, and Saik'uz First Nation were asked to provide a representative to participate on the working group.

Staff created a preliminary draft of the OCP to provide the working group with a format for discussion of issues. Working group meetings were held on November 26, 2019, January 7, 2020 and January 21,

2020. 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.

An open house was held in Cluculz Lake on February 26, 2020 in consultation with the Cluculz Lake Community Association. The open house was held to allow the community to comment on issues specific to the community, with a focus on understanding the community's opinions on commercial development in the area.

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SECTION 2 – PLAN VISION AND GOALS

2.1 General Plan Vision

Electoral Area F envisions its future as a safe, friendly, socially and economically vibrant, and ecologically healthy area. The residents of Electoral Area F 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 rural character of the rural area. 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 positive aspects that contribute to quality of life and a healthy environment.

Maintaining the viability of the area's agricultural sector by encouraging and promoting agriculture, resisting the intrusion of residential development into agricultural areas, and discouraging the loss of land from active agricultural use, is recognized as being critically important.

Maintaining the character of existing rural neighbourhoods is also considered very important. This character includes a certain amount of independence and diversity of use and development. The vision is for communities that protect their positive aspects and characteristics yet are not wary of embracing and working towards positive change for the benefit of the community.

The value of the area's lakes and rivers are critical components of resident's quality of life and the local economy. Therefore, the benefits as well as the responsibilities of waterfront living are recognized. This recognition results in the vision of communities that protect the natural ecology of the area and promote responsible public access to, and enjoyment of, the area's lakes and rivers.

A more diversified economy is becoming increasingly important in order to ensure that the area remains vibrant and residents enjoy economic and employment stability. The communities realize that being able to offer newcomers to the area a high quality of life and an attractive and well functioning built environment will serve to increase the potential for economic diversification beyond reliance on the agricultural and forest products industries.

2.2 General Plan Goals

The area encompassed by the Vanderhoof Rural Official Community Plan includes a number of characteristics that are recognized by the community as being important to the long-term vitality of the Region. 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. 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. In this effort the Vanderhoof Rural Official Community Plan pursues the following goals.

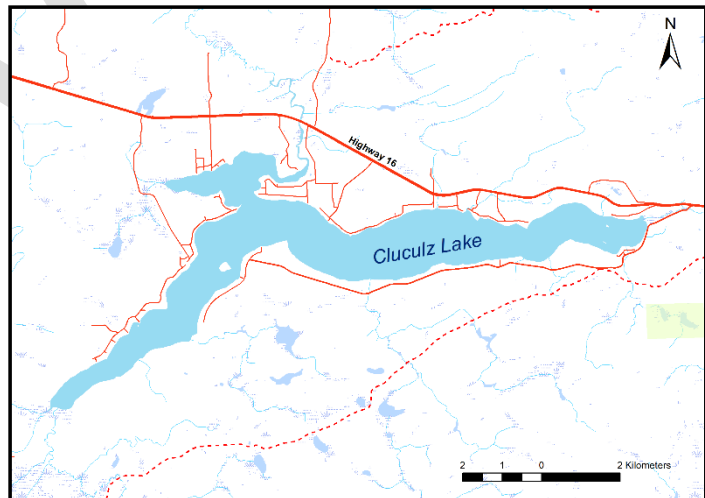
- (1) Land use patterns and economic activities which do not compromise the rural character of the Plan area.

- (2) Land use patterns that maintain the rural character of the Plan area and that reflect a diversity of lifestyles, and economic and recreational activities.
- (3) Protection and preservation of farmland and soil having agricultural capability, and the appropriate utilization of that land for agricultural purposes.
- (4) Protection and stewardship of environmentally sensitive attributes (including fish, riparian and wildlife habitat; and quality and quantity of ground and surface water).
- (5) Recognition of the unique natural characteristics of the Plan area and their protection from incompatible forms of development.
- (6) Maintenance of a balance between the regulation of land use to protect community values and the desire of residents for a lifestyle with a high degree of self expression respecting use of their property.
- (7) Appropriate and orderly rural growth with urban type development directed to the municipality of Vanderhoof.
- (8) Provision of opportunities for economic development and diversity.
- (9) Directing large scale commercial development to the municipality of Vanderhoof.
- (10) Land use patterns and development forms that reduce sprawl.
- (11) An appropriate mix of uses that increases the community's independence and results in a reduction in car dependency and energy use.

2.3 Cluculz Lake

The Cluculz Lake area is dominated by recreational and residential lot development. The area is characterized by a strong sense of community and an appreciation for the quality of life and recreational experience provided by the lake and the natural landscape.

The community contains a fire hall, a resort containing a gas station/restaurant/convenience/liquor store, a community hall, and a restaurant/general store on the lake, as well as over 820 homes. The population of Cluculz Lake peaks during the summer months due to the number of seasonal homes in the area. Over half of Cluculz Lake property owners reside in the Prince George area. It is estimated that 20% of the homes in the area are primary residences.



The community understands that there is very limited opportunity for additional waterfront development and that there are challenges with the historic small lots and many of the older sewage systems affecting the lake.

The community has mixed views regarding commercial development in the area. A segment of the community believes that adequate retail and other commercial services exist, and that new commercial activity is not necessary or desired. Another segment of the community supports the facilitation of increased opportunity for commercial development that serves the community. The goals established for Cluculz Lake represent an effort to balance these views.

2.3.1 Cluculz Lake Goals

The Vanderhoof Rural Official Community Plan pursues the following goals for Cluculz Lake, in addition to the general plan goals.

- (1) The provision of opportunity for a range of commercial activity which provides services to the local community, provided that commercial development does not have a negative impact on the character of existing residential areas.
- (2) The improvement of public access to the Cluculz Lake lakeshore, including waterfront public parks and a public boat launch.
- (3) The provision of opportunities for non-waterfront residential development in a manner that is responsible to the area's unique and valued natural attributes.
- (4) To promote stewardship of Cluculz Lake by promoting development and activities that encourage sustainable use of the lake and protects and restores the water quality.

SECTION 3 – LAND USE DESIGNATIONS OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The Regional District of Bulkley Nechako is committed to achievement of the goals in this Plan through application of the policies in this Section.

3.1 Agriculture (AG) Designation

The Agriculture (AG) designation applies to those areas that are most suitable to agricultural activities. It is the intent of this designation to preserve these lands for the purposes of farming and other related activities. In general, the Agriculture (AG) designation follows the boundaries of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).



3.1.1 Objectives

- (1) To protect and preserve farmland 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 allow a diversity of uses and opportunities that allow farmers to supplement their farming income without negatively impacting the agricultural capability of the land.

3.1.2 Policies

- (1) Agriculture, grazing, and other compatible uses of land provided within the *Agricultural Land Commission Act and Regulation* will be permitted.
- (2) The responsible Provincial Ministry should ensure that agricultural lands used for aggregate extraction and silviculture practices 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(10) are adequately met.
- (4) New roads and utility and communication corridors required in the Plan area should minimize the negative impact on existing and potential agricultural operations.
- (5) Wherever possible contiguous areas of agricultural land will be preserved to ensure that agriculture and associated activities are protected from potentially incompatible land uses.
- (6) Severances for small lot residential (other than home site severances approved by the Agricultural Land Commission), institutional, commercial or industrial development shall be avoided. However, applications for subdivisions, non-farm uses and non-adhering residential uses within the Agricultural Land Reserve may be supported if the proposed subdivision or use will not have a net negative impact on the agricultural use of the subject lands or surrounding agricultural lands.]
- (7) The inclusion of land in the ALR is supported provided the reason for inclusion is based solely on the agricultural capability and suitability of that land.
- (8) Applications for exclusion of land from the ALR shall only be made by the RDBN where the exclusion has been accepted as necessary by the Board after considering a comprehensive evaluation of the land use planning issues.
- (9) The voluntary consolidation of legal parcels which form part of the same farm unit will be encouraged. Subdivisions and consolidations which permit more efficient use of land for agricultural purposes will also be supported.
- (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, operated in accordance with the requirements of the Agricultural Land Reserve are supported.
- (12) The Province is encouraged to implement innovative approaches to making appropriately located Crown lands available and affordable for agricultural use.
- (13) The Regional District encourages the Agricultural Land Commission to take steps to prohibit the use of productive agricultural land for the planting of trees for purposes of creating a carbon sink or carbon offset.
- (14) The Regional District encourages the planting of native tree species that enhance biodiversity on non-arable land within the Agriculture Designation.
- (15) The Province is encouraged to support local agricultural operations to ensure their long-term viability.

- (16) The conversion of small parcels created to accommodate institutional uses such as churches and community halls to residential development shall be discouraged.

3.2 Commercial (C) Designation

Only a limited amount of commercial development has been designated within the Plan area. Opportunities for neighbourhood-based services, outdoor recreation and tourist commercial services, and bed and breakfasts may be permitted within the rural areas surrounding these communities subject to the following objectives and policies.

3.2.1 Objectives

- (1) To provide for limited and appropriate opportunities for outdoor recreation, tourist and neighbourhood commercial development 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 District of Vanderhoof as the commercial centre of the Plan area.

3.2.2 Policies

- (1) Significant commercial uses will be encouraged to establish within the District of Vanderhoof.
- (2) Commercial areas for neighbourhood services may be designated subject to the following criteria.
 - (a) The primary target market for the service(s) to be provided or sold is the local rural area, and that area is not already adequately serviced.
 - (b) Sufficient on-site parking is provided.
 - (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) Traffic management issues will be considered and addressed appropriately.
 - (e) The proposed commercial development will minimize negative impacts on the natural environment.
 - (f) The proposed commercial use will minimize negative impacts on neighbouring land uses or property owners.
 - (g) The proposed commercial use has the support of the Agricultural Land Commission if the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- (3) Tourist Commercial uses may be designated subject to the following criteria.
 - (a) The use is directly associated with a distinctive or special characteristic or feature of the Plan 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 will be considered and addressed appropriately.

- (d) The proposed commercial development will not have a negative impact on the natural environment.
 - (e) Negative impacts on neighbouring land uses or property owners are minimized.
 - (f) The proposed commercial use has the support of the Agricultural Land Commission if the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- (4) Home based businesses are supported subject to restrictions on size, outdoor storage, employees and signs.
 - (5) Bed and breakfasts are encouraged throughout the Plan area subject to restrictions in the implementing Zoning Bylaw.
 - (6) A mix of uses compatible with a community commercial centre may be permitted in the Cluculz Lake area without amendment to the Official Community Plan. Compatible uses may include convenience stores, offices, restaurants, personal service uses, recreation facilities, retail stores, produce markets, neighbourhood pubs, public assembly, personal care, and schools where those uses are intended to satisfy the commercial, recreational, educational, institutional and public use needs of residents and tourists.

3.3 Industrial (I) Designation

Opportunity for light industrial development has been limited within rural areas. New light and heavy industrial development may be accommodated within the Plan area subject to the following objectives and policies.



3.3.1 Objectives

- (1) To provide opportunities for limited light industrial uses in suitable locations.
- (2) To accommodate primary resource processing and value-added industry in proximity to areas of primary resource extraction.
- (3) To support industrial uses that will not have any significant negative impact on the natural environment.

3.3.2 Policies

- (1) New light industrial uses will be encouraged to establish within the boundaries of the District of Vanderhoof and may be acceptable near existing concentrations of population such as, but not limited to, Engen and Cluculz Lake.
- (2) The Regional District Board may consider designating additional areas for industrial uses subject to the following criteria:
 - (a) the proposed industrial development will not create an amount of traffic, noise, or other impact that will adversely affect the rural character of the area;
 - (b) the proposed industrial development will be developed in a manner that has minimal negative impacts on the environment;
 - (c) negative impacts on neighbouring land uses or property owners will be minimized
 - (d) the proposed industrial use has the support of the Agricultural Land Commission if the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR); and,
 - (e) the proposed industrial development is near an available workforce.
- (3) To support agricultural industry in appropriate locations throughout the Plan area.

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. Development requiring a higher level of community services, such as water and sewer, will be directed into the District of Vanderhoof. The majority of rural residential development is anticipated to occur in the Cluculz Lake area. The lands available are limited to allow in-fill development at a scale that will not impact the character of an existing community.

In areas close to lakes, the density and scale of future development is limited to ensure that the environmental integrity of lakes is not negatively impacted, and to avoid the need to establish development permit areas to further control lakeshore development.

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 take advantage of opportunities for new housing forms that fit the character of rural areas to allow rural residents greater opportunity to age in place.

3.4.2 Policies

- (1) Low to moderate density residential (fee simple and bare land strata) subdivisions, recreational and other unobtrusive uses will be permitted in the Rural Residential designation.
- (2) Home based business and cottage industries 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 new water or sewer system associated with Rural Residential development.
- (4) The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is encouraged to consider appropriate setbacks and buffering between residential and ALR lands for rural residential subdivision applications adjacent to lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- (5) Rezoning applications to allow a strata subdivision that relies on privately operated sewer or water systems may be considered by the Board of Directors if it can be demonstrated that the system can be adequately designed and maintained, with an appropriate capital reserve for replacements in place.
- (6) Rezoning applications to allow a freehold subdivision that relies on privately operated sewer or water systems shall not be supported.
- (7) Rezoning applications to allow a strata subdivision with parcels smaller than 2 hectares (4.94 acres) may be considered where appropriate, provided that:
 - (a) the subdivision includes less than 9 strata parcels;
 - (b) the size of the parent parcel is a minimum of 2 hectares (4.94 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 10 hectares (24.7 acres);
 - (c) a covenant restricting further subdivision must be registered on the remainder of the parent parcel; and
 - (d) the applicant submits an acceptable fire prevention plan for the development and secures the major aspects of the plan by covenant, unless the land is in a Rural Fire Protection Service Area.

- (8) Rezoning applications to permit 5 or more parcels smaller than 2.0 hectares (4.94 acres), where groundwater is to be the source of supply, shall not be supported unless the application is accompanied by a report prepared by a qualified Professional Engineer discussing:
 - (a) water quality and quantity, and the possibility of influence or contamination by groundwater or other sources; and
 - (b) the recommended siting of any on site septic system in relation to the groundwater wells.
- (9) 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 (4.94 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; and,
 - (f) the future subdivision of the land into a parcel smaller than 2 hectares (5 acres) is prohibited.
- (10) Applications to permit parcels as small as 2 hectares (4.94 acres) may be considered where:
 - (a) it has been demonstrated that the proposed lots can accommodate 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; and,
 - (d) the development adequately addresses wildlife and ecological values.
- (11) Applications to permit parcels smaller than 2 hectares (4.94 acres) to a minimum parcel size of 0.4 hectares (1 acre) may be considered where:
 - (a) an existing parcel is truncated by an existing road or natural water feature; and,
 - (b) the criteria outlined in Section 3.4.2 (9) are addressed.
- (12) Applications to permit parcels smaller than 2 hectares (4.94 acres) to a minimum parcel size of 0.8 hectares (2 acres) may be considered where:
 - (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; and
 - (b) the average size of all parcels created is not smaller than 2 hectares (4.94 acres).
- (13) The development of new Manufactured Home Parks is discouraged throughout the Plan area and are directed to locate within the District of Vanderhoof.

- (14) Applications to permit new parcels shall not be supported if a lot is serviced by a septic field that is within 100 metres from any lake, unless that septic field is designed by an appropriately qualified engineer or geoscientist to confirm that the proposed septic field will not have any long-term detrimental impacts on the adjacent water body. In no case should the setback be less than 30 metres.
- (15) The Provincial Subdivision Approving Officer is encouraged to consider options to amalgamate required water access points to create the opportunity for the potential use and development of those lands for public access and recreational purposes. The numerous access points spread out along the waterfront as part of a typical subdivision are not practical for use or development. It is noted that the Province does not create these access points with the intent to develop them for any public use.
- (16) Rezoning applications to permit new waterfront subdivisions that would typically contain a number of waterfront access points shall consider amalgamating the required water access points onto a single area which is practical for development and use as public access.

3.5 Civic Institutional (CI) 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.

3.5.1 Objective

- (1) To provide for the establishment of public facilities when necessary. It is noted that rural fire halls are acceptable in any designation.

3.5.2 Policies

- (1) 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) The Regional Board will permit additional Civic Institutional uses by way of rezoning, without the requirement for an OCP amendment subject to the following criteria:
 - (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 adversely affect 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 minimize negative impacts on neighbouring land uses or property owners; and,

- (e) the proposed civic institutional use has the support of the Agricultural Land Commission if the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

3.6 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 to protect areas having significant recreational 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.



3.6.1 Objectives

- (1) To protect lands having significant recreational and/or environmental value.
- (2) To improve 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 provincial lands, in a manner that does not unnecessarily conflict with or restrict the resource capacity of those lands.

3.6.2 Policies

- (1) Provincial parks are recognized as important attributes of the Plan area and are designated as Parks and Recreation (P) on the Land Use Designation Map (Schedule “B”).

- (2) Lands designated as Parks and Recreation (P) on the Land Use Designation Map (Schedule “B”) that are not Provincial parks, are recognized as having potential for development as Regional District Parks and Trails.
- (3) Additional park and recreational uses will be permitted throughout the Plan area where appropriate.
- (4) Parcels used for parks and recreation purposes will not be subject to a minimum parcel size.
- (5) The Regional Board supports the preservation of existing, and identification of new public recreation sites and access points along area lakes and rivers.

3.7 Resource (RE) Designation

The Resource area 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 by discouraging settlement on Resource designated lands. These lands are also valued for their environmental attributes and as wildlife habitats.

3.7.1 Objectives

- (1) To preserve lands within the Plan area for agriculture and grazing, mineral or aggregate extraction, fish and wildlife management, trapping, wilderness oriented recreation and necessary institutional, public, utility or transportation services.
- (2) To support sound sustainable resource management within the Resource (RE) designation.

3.7.2 Policies

- (1) Only uses directly associated with agriculture and grazing, mineral or aggregate extraction, fish and wildlife management, wilderness oriented recreation, and necessary institutional, public, utility or transportation services use will be permitted in the Resource (RE) designation. A very limited amount of low density residential use may be permitted within this designation, where appropriate.
- (2) The minimum parcel size that may be considered within the Resource (RE) designation shall be 8 hectares (19.77 acres).
- (3) Wherever possible established routes used by cattle or wildlife; recreation lands; and rare or unique fish and wildlife habitats will be protected from incompatible land uses.
- (4) Access to timber and recreation lands will be preserved wherever possible.
- (5) Rezoning applications to allow wind turbines intended to generate power for sale shall be considered on Resource designated lands where it can be demonstrated that the turbines will not have an unacceptable negative impact on a residential area and will not have an unacceptable environmental impact.

SECTION 4 – GENERAL APPLICATION OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

4.1 Mineral and Aggregate Resources

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*. While the agencies responsible for managing this legislation have review processes that address the public interest in these matters 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. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Initiative

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, industrial 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 of the Province's mineral and aggregate resources under various pieces of legislation.
- (2) All sand and gravel deposits are recognized by the Regional District Board as being within the provincial management jurisdiction. These deposits are too numerous to show on the map in Schedule "B".
- (3) Soil removal and deposit within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is recognized as being subject to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
- (4) The Regional District encourages the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Initiative to give due consideration to the impact of extraction and processing activities on surrounding land uses and developments.
- (5) The Regional District encourages the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Initiative not to issue new surface permits for sand and gravel/quarry processing near residential areas unless the applicant demonstrates how mitigation measures will minimize or nullify the effects of the proposed activity.

- (6) The Regional District encourages the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Initiative to require appropriate reclamation of gravel pits and mine sites and to ensure that adequate bonding is secured, and that the reclamation is undertaken in a timely manner.

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 provincial efforts to manage the natural environment appropriately.

Cluculz Lake, Tachick Lake, Nulki Lake, Sinkut Lake, the Nechako River and their watersheds 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 overstated. These features play a role in many aspects of community life. They are the source of drinking water, an economic generator, and a recreational playground. Not only are the area's lakes and rivers an important amenity for the community and visitors, they are also the natural habitat for a wide variety of fish and aquatic life, waterfowl, and plant species.

The importance of these lakes and rivers and their watersheds must also be looked at from a regional perspective. The water drains into the Nechako River and makes up part of the Fraser Drainage Basin, which flows into the Pacific Ocean. Communities within the Fraser 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 establish a high priority to protect air quality, and surface and ground water resources on a watershed level for the benefit of the environment and human health and safety.

- (3) To establish a high priority to protect the water quality of Cluculz Lake, Tachick Lake, Nulki Lake, and Sinkut Lake.
- (4) To enhance environmental awareness and promote activities that protects and restores 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 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 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, with consideration being given to the impacts of wildlife on agriculture production.
- (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 which 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 shall 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 supports and encourages the dissemination of educational information about the importance of responsible stewardship of the environment.
- (12) The Regional District encourages the replacement of older, on-site sewage systems with newer systems using improved technology to prevent potential contamination of the shoreline and water.
- (13) 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.
- (14) The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, 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.
 - (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.
- (15) Government agencies that have mandates for protecting the environmental integrity of the area's lakes, especially Cluculz Lake, Tachick Lake, Nulki Lake and Sinkut Lake, are encouraged 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.

- (16) The protection of the environmentally unique or sensitive areas through the purchase or dedication of lands to a private land trust, nongovernment organization, or the Province is encouraged.
- (17) The Subdivision Approving Officer is encouraged to follow Provincial guidelines for development near aquatic areas and other environmentally sensitive areas.
- (18) The Province is encouraged to prohibit the dumping of sewage and other waste from boats into any waterbodies.

4.3 Heritage and Archeological Resources

Heritage resources are recognized by the Regional District as being an integral part of the 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 dispersed settlement pattern and a level of services and utilities that is 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 population growth, higher densities or a change to the rural character of the area.

4.4.1 Objectives

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

4.4.2 Policies

- (1) Urban scale development requiring community water and sewer services will be directed into municipalities where such services can be provided as an extension to existing systems.
- (2) The Regional District will continue to assist rural residents in assessing the feasibility of new utilities and services in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.
- (3) The location of utility services and communication 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) will be supported.
- (4) The Regional District will encourage 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 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 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 views.
- (3) The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure shall be encouraged to recognize that Kenney Dam Road has seen increased industrial traffic and that it should be maintained accordingly.
- (4) During the development approval process the Regional District will facilitate opportunities to obtain alternate routes of egress for emergency evacuation purposes.
- (5) 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, landslides, and wildfire) that have the potential to cause damage, or loss, of life or property. In some instances, areas within the jurisdiction of this Plan may not be conducive to development or may require special considerations in their development.

4.6.1 Objectives

- (1) To manage development in a manner that reduces risk to life and damage to property in natural hazard areas.
- (2) To encourage Provincial agencies, property owners, and developers to implement development strategies that reduces the risk of flood and other hazards.
- (3) To ensure that human activities do not contribute to flooding, increased water run-off, soil erosion, environmental pollution, 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) 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.
- (3) The Regional District encourages the Ministry of Forests and other Provincial agencies having jurisdiction to implement land use patterns that reduce the risk of wildfire and floods within the Plan area.

- (4) When rezoning to allow subdivision and/or development in areas that are known to have potential hazards, it is important that the proper scientific assessments are undertaken to ensure the area is appropriate for development and to mitigate potential damage to persons or property.
- (5) Rezoning to allow subdivision and/or development in a hazardous area or down slope from a hazardous area, will not be supported unless it can 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.

4.7 Fire Smart Development

Residential and other development in proximity to forested areas are at risk from wildfires. 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 limit development that increases the potential for interface between wildfire and residential areas and 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 reduces 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) set back buildings away from the top of sloped lands.
- (2) Applications for rezoning to allow subdivision shall be evaluated based on the consideration of increased potential for interface between wildfires and residential

areas. Applicants shall be required to 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, thus ensuring compatibility between future economic activity and the rural character of the Plan area. As noted in the Plan, industrial and commercial activity is supported in select areas and within the District of Vanderhoof. However, the Plan 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 light industrial development in existing centres of activity, and to direct most of that activity within the District of Vanderhoof.
- (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 shall be supported.
- (2) The Regional District especially encourages consulting, technology and information based home based business to locate in the Plan area.
- (3) 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 nonexistent.
- (4) 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.
- And, creating complete, compact, more energy efficient rural and urban communities.

Section 473 (3) of the *Local Government Act* states that Official Community Plans 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 the Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI) in 2007 and 2012. 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 473 (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 473 (3) of the *Local Government Act* and to meet 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 2030, the Province will reduce its GHG emissions by 40 per cent, compared to 2007 levels.
- By 2040, the Province will reduce its GHG emissions by 60 per cent, compared to 2007 levels.
- By 2050, the Province will reduce its GHG emissions by 80 per cent, compared to 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 Board of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

4.9.2 Objectives

- (1) The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako will work towards reducing Electoral Area F 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 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.
- (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 policies:
 - (a) Within the Agricultural Designation, the Policies in Section 3.1 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 District of Vanderhoof.
 - (d) Within the Commercial Designation, Policy 3.2.2(2) supports commercial areas for neighbourhood services subject to certain criteria.
 - (e) Home based businesses are supported throughout the plan with Policy 3.2.2(4), Policy 3.4.2(2) and Policy 4.8.2(1).
 - (f) Within the Industrial Designation, Policy 3.3.2(1) encourages new light industrial uses to establish within the boundaries of the District of Vanderhoof.
 - (g) Within the Rural Resource Designation, Policy 3.7.2(1) allows only a limited amount of low density residential use.
 - (h) Within the Rural Resource Designation, Policy 3.7.2(5) supports the development of wind farms intended to generate power for sale.
 - (i) Policies 3.4.2(7), 3.4.2(12) 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.

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 and convey the relationship between principal uses. These boundaries will be defined in detail in the implementing bylaws.

5.2 Land Use Designation Explanations

Unless otherwise restricted 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, RR1, and M3 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. Permitted uses shall vary according to the policies of this Plan and the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

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.

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 Vanderhoof LRMP process. The following explanations are summarized from this document:

Multi-Value Emphasis Zone: Management in these areas is generally through Subzones, which integrate a wide array of resource values and permissible uses. Resource development will be integrated with

requirements of other resource values. Investments in resource development and enhancement are encouraged and will be integrated with other management objectives.

Protected Zone: These areas are protected for their natural or cultural heritage and/or recreational values as defined by the Protected Areas Strategy in the Vanderhoof LRMP. Logging, mining and energy exploration and development are prohibited.

Resource Development Emphasis Zone: Management in these areas is for development of resources such as timber and mineral while minimizing impact and/or enhancing other resource values (ex. moose habitat). Resource development is subject to all applicable provincial regulations (e.g. the Forest Practices Code). Investments in resource development and enhancement are encouraged.

Settlement/Agriculture Zone: An area consistent with the patterns of agricultural development and settlement in the Nechako Valley. The zone closely follows the boundaries of the Vanderhoof Crown Land Plan developed in 1984 by B.C. Lands with public and resource agency consultation. Resource development is permitted and encouraged so long as Vanderhoof LRMP zone objectives are achieved.

Special Resource Zone: In these areas, conservation of one or more non-consumptive resource values such as habitat, recreation, scenery and community watersheds is a priority. Resource development activities are encouraged. Management follows provincial regulations and guidelines and may also be subject to more comprehensive resource conservation strategies identified in the Vanderhoof LRMP.

5.5 Important Bird Areas

Two areas in Electoral Area F have been identified as Important Bird Areas (IBAs) by the IBA Program. IBAs are sites that support specific groups of birds: threatened birds, large groups of birds, and birds restricted by range or by habitat.

Tachick and Nulki Lakes provide important habitat for migrating waterfowl, such as ducks, swans and geese in the fall between September and November.

Nulki and Tachick Lakes also host a substantial population of the American White Pelican.

Stuart River is part of an area of connected rivers that supports globally significant numbers of wintering Trumpeter Swans.



Source: - The BC Ministry of Environment and the IBA Program. The IBA Program is an international conservation initiative and the Canadian co-partners are Birds Canada and Nature Canada.

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. The document also 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.
- (2) The final approval of subdivisions remains with the Provincial Approving Officer who shall 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.
- (4) The Provincial Subdivision Approving Officer is encouraged to consider options to combine required water access points to create the opportunity for the potential use and development of those lands for public access and recreational purposes. The numerous access points spread out along the waterfront as part of a typical subdivision are not practical for use or development. It is noted that the Province does not create these access points with the intent to develop them for any public use.

6.2 Parkland Dedication

- (1) Where proposed subdivisions trigger 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 recreation value the Regional District may require cash in lieu of land to contribute towards the purchase of land 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 improves 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 RDBN 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 Section 6.2(3).

6.3 Temporary Use Permits

- (1) Temporary permits may be issued, pursuant to Section 493 of the *Local Government Act*, throughout the plan area, where:
- (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 affects on neighbouring land uses or property owners;
 - (d) the need for security in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit with an automatic extension clause has been considered to ensure that the required decommissioning and reclamation is completed;
 - (e) the proposed temporary use does not require a significant amount of capital investment in a particular location; and,
 - (f) the proposed temporary use has the support of the Agricultural Land Commission through the approval of an application if the land is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

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*, and subject to any required Provincial approvals.

6.5 Agricultural Land Commission

- (1) The Regional Board recognizes the Agricultural Land Commission's mandate for the preservation and enhancement of agricultural land. 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, non-adhering residential use, 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 will 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.

6.6 Building Inspection

- (1) Building inspection is a requirement in parts of the Plan area. Building permits cannot be issued for developments that are contrary to the implementing 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 *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 District of Vanderhoof 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 District of Vanderhoof, the Regional District shall consult with the municipality as appropriate.
- (3) Where the Regional District is addressing a land use issue that is within, adjacent to, or potentially impacting, an established neighbourhood, the Regional District shall consult with those established neighbourhood groups, as appropriate.
- (4) Where the District of Vanderhoof is addressing a land use issue that is adjacent to, or potentially impacting, the Regional District, the municipality is encouraged to consult with the Regional District, as appropriate.

- (5) Where the Regional District is addressing a land use issue that is adjacent to, or potentially impacting, First Nations communities, the Regional District shall consult with those First Nations, as appropriate.
- (6) Where a First Nation is addressing a land use issue that is adjacent to, or potentially impacting, the Regional District, the First Nation is encouraged to consult with the Regional District, 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.