

**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY**

**BYLAW NO. 3070**

**A bylaw to adopt an Official Community Plan for the City of Courtenay**

A bylaw to replace the “A Blueprint for Courtenay - Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2387”

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Courtenay wishes to adopt an Official Community Plan pursuant to Part 14 of the Local Government Act;

AND WHEREAS during development of the draft Official Community Plan, multiple opportunities for comment and input by affected persons, organizations, and authorities have been provided;

AND WHEREAS early and ongoing opportunities for consultation have been provided to the organizations and authorities specified in section 475(2)(b) of the Local Government Act;

AND WHEREAS Council may adopt an Official Community Plan by bylaw and each reading of the bylaw must receive an affirmative vote of a majority of all members of Council;

AND WHEREAS after first reading of the bylaw Council shall, in sequence, examine the official community plan in conjunction with its most recent financial plan and any waste management plan pursuant to Section 477 of the Local Government Act;

AND WHEREAS Council must submit a proposed regional context statement for acceptance by the regional district board of which it is a member pursuant to Section 448 of the Local Government Act;

AND WHEREAS Council shall, in the course of preparing its Official Community Plan, consult with the school boards for those school districts included within the Official Community Plan;

AND WHEREAS before Council gives third reading to the bylaw, Council shall hold a public hearing on the proposed Official Community Plan in accordance with Sections 464 through 470 of the Local Government Act;

AND WHEREAS Council of the City of Courtenay has complied with all requirements of the Local Government Act prior to adoption of this bylaw and Official Community Plan including all of the foregoing;

AND WHEREAS after the bylaw adopting the Official Community Plan has received final reading, the plan is an Official Community Plan of the municipality;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the City of Courtenay, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as “**Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 3070, 2022**”.
2. Schedule “A” attached hereto and made part of this bylaw is hereby adopted as the City of Courtenay Official Community Plan.

3. If any statement, section, sub-section, clause, sub-clause or phrase of this bylaw and the Official Community Plan adopted by this bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, the decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the bylaw and Official Community Plan.
4. A Blueprint for Courtenay – “Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2387”, and all amendments thereto, are hereby repealed.

Read a first time this 30<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2022

Read a second time this 30<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2022

Public Hearing held this 20<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022

Read a third time this 27<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022

Finally passed and adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_

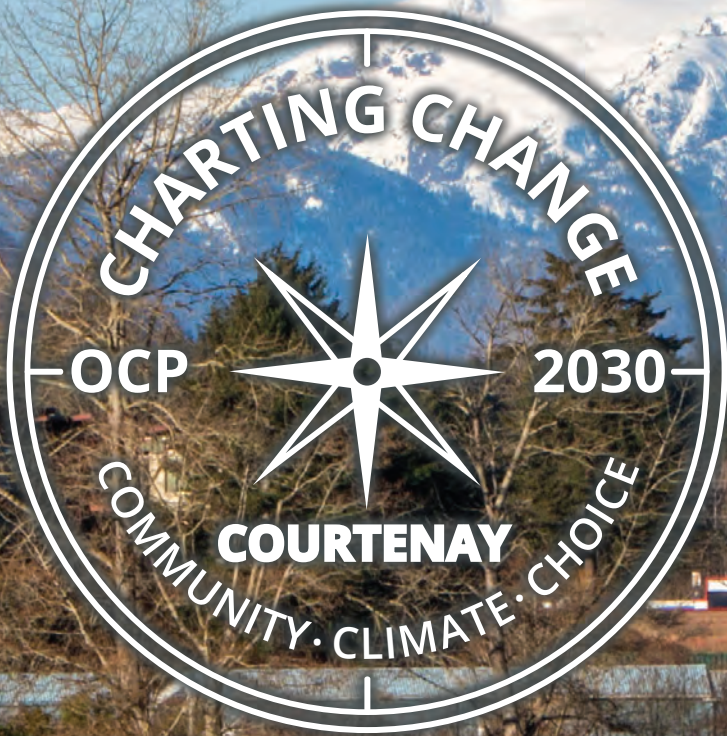
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Mayor Bob Wells

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Deputy Corporate Officer Adriana Proton



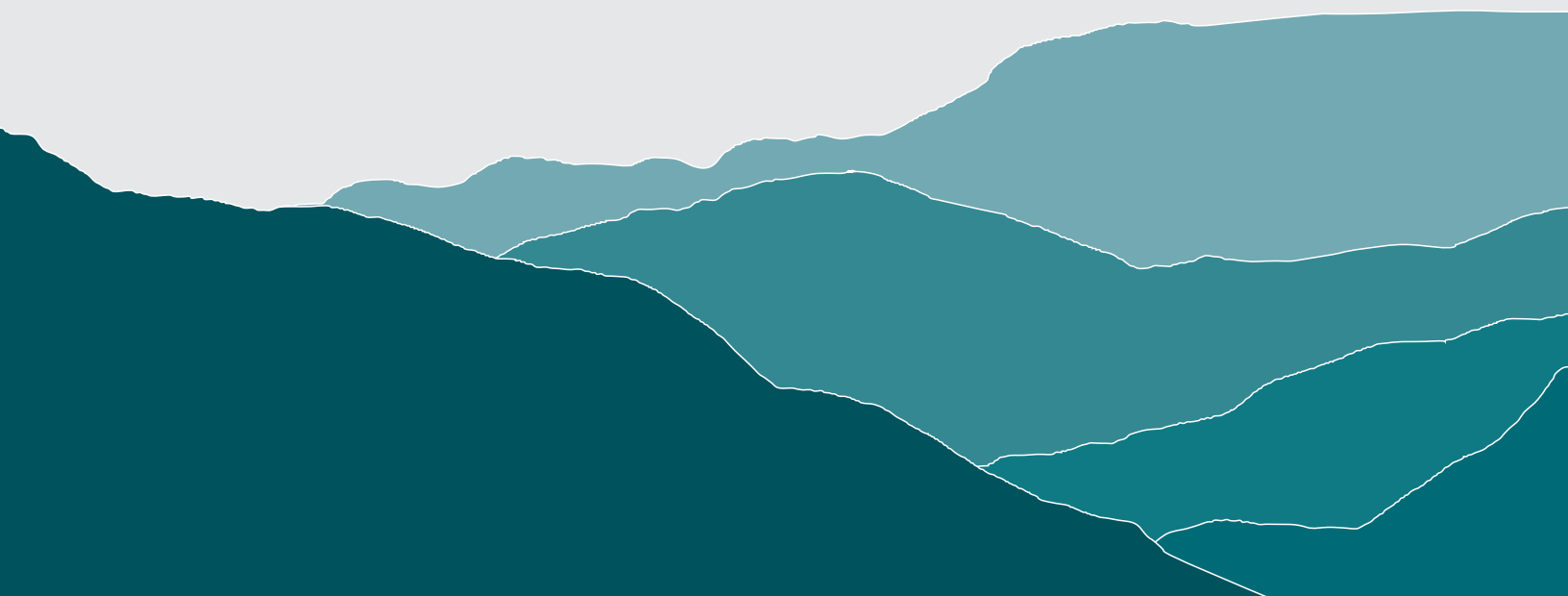


SCHEDULE A

City of Courtenay  
**OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN**

BYLAW NO. 3070, 2022

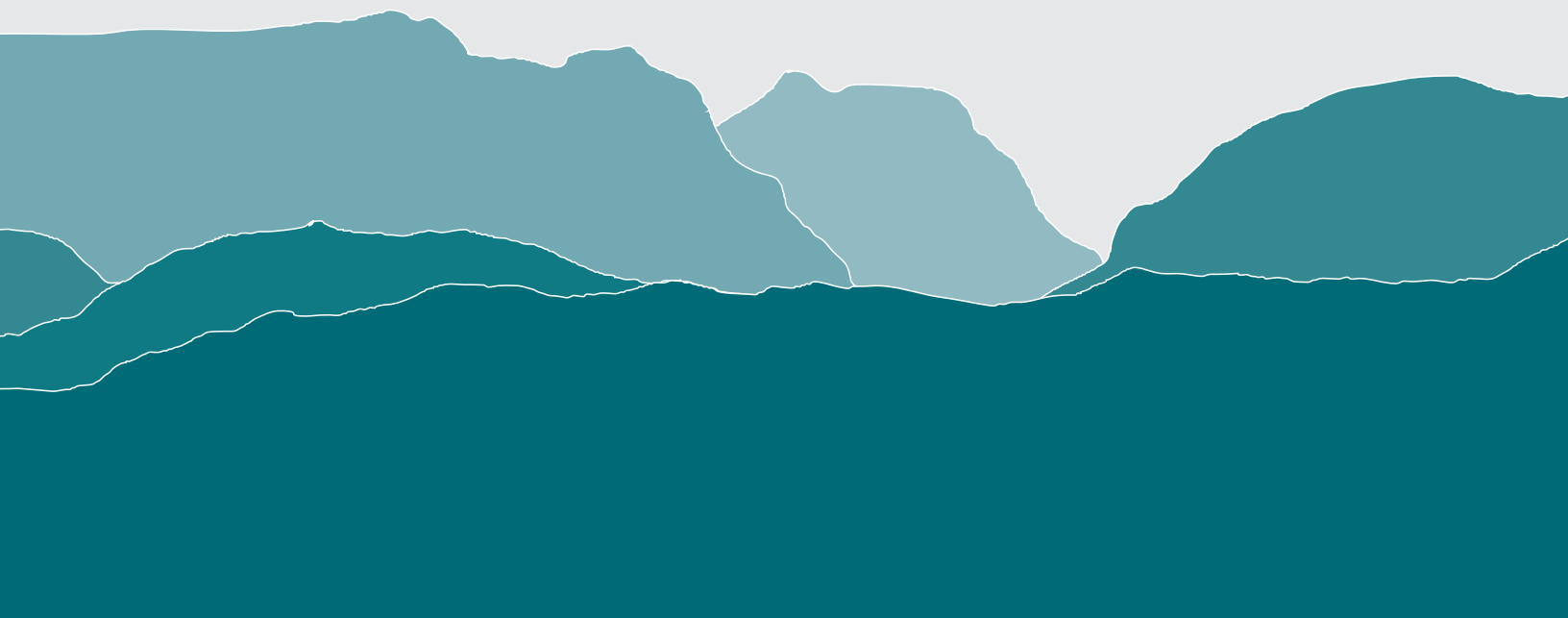
**The City of Courtenay respectfully acknowledges that the lands to which this OCP apply are on the Unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.**



## **WHY DO WE MAKE LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS?**

Acknowledging human relationships to place is an ancient Indigenous practice that continues today.

In the spirit of reconciliation, the City of Courtenay makes this land acknowledgment to raise awareness of ongoing Indigenous presence and land rights in the territory that includes and encompasses Courtenay. It invites us – a settler government – to reflect on how we might be perpetuating colonial processes that are ongoing and from which we have benefited, as well as the changes we will make to honour the Indigenous peoples and their lands that we inhabit.



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***Words contained in the Glossary are italicized throughout the OCP.***

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# PART A

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# FOUNDATIONS

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# OUR CITY PLAN

## WHAT IS AN OCP, WHO IS IT FOR, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This Official Community Plan (OCP) is the culmination of creative and inspiring visioning with community members across Courtenay of diverse ages and backgrounds. It paints a powerful picture of what Courtenay will be like within the next 10 years – and beyond – and the steps that will be taken to get there. It also sets the stage for the continued evolution of Courtenay beyond that timeframe, recognizing that significant challenges and opportunities of our time require a commitment to long-term action.

**It influences how people live, work, shop, play, access services, and move around the community.** This OCP is also a local response to significant challenges and opportunities of our time, including climate change, inequity, community well-being, and relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

The OCP is a bylaw, prepared and adopted by City Council in compliance with the Provincial Local Government Act. It is a long-range policy plan that guides the City's decision-making related to growth and development approvals as well as other community interests such as housing and infrastructure until 2031, when the city is expected to be home to approximately 4,500 more residents.

**It is the umbrella policy document for the City of Courtenay,** owned and implemented by all departments. It provides the overarching strategic direction for City Council and staff, who consider and apply OCP vision and policies to a wide range of municipal decisions such as budgeting, servicing, capital projects, and in the review of land use and development proposals. The OCP is not intended to provide highly detailed policies on topics that are already covered in the City's other Master Plans and regulations. Rather, this OCP builds upon and supersedes those plans and tools.

## WHAT IS ITS REACH?

The OCP applies to all lands within the City of Courtenay boundaries.

While many voices contributed to the vision and directions contained in this document, the OCP cannot and does not represent any commitments from First Nations, other governments, or organizations to act according to community objectives.

As a living plan, the OCP is generally reviewed and updated every 10 years. Council may also authorize periodic OCP updates to proactively address or respond to changes in the community or local, regional, and global trends and opportunities. Plan amendments are subject to a formal Council review and approvals process which includes public consultation, public hearing, and required notifications.

Further, the OCP does not commit or authorize the City to proceed with any project that is specified in the OCP.

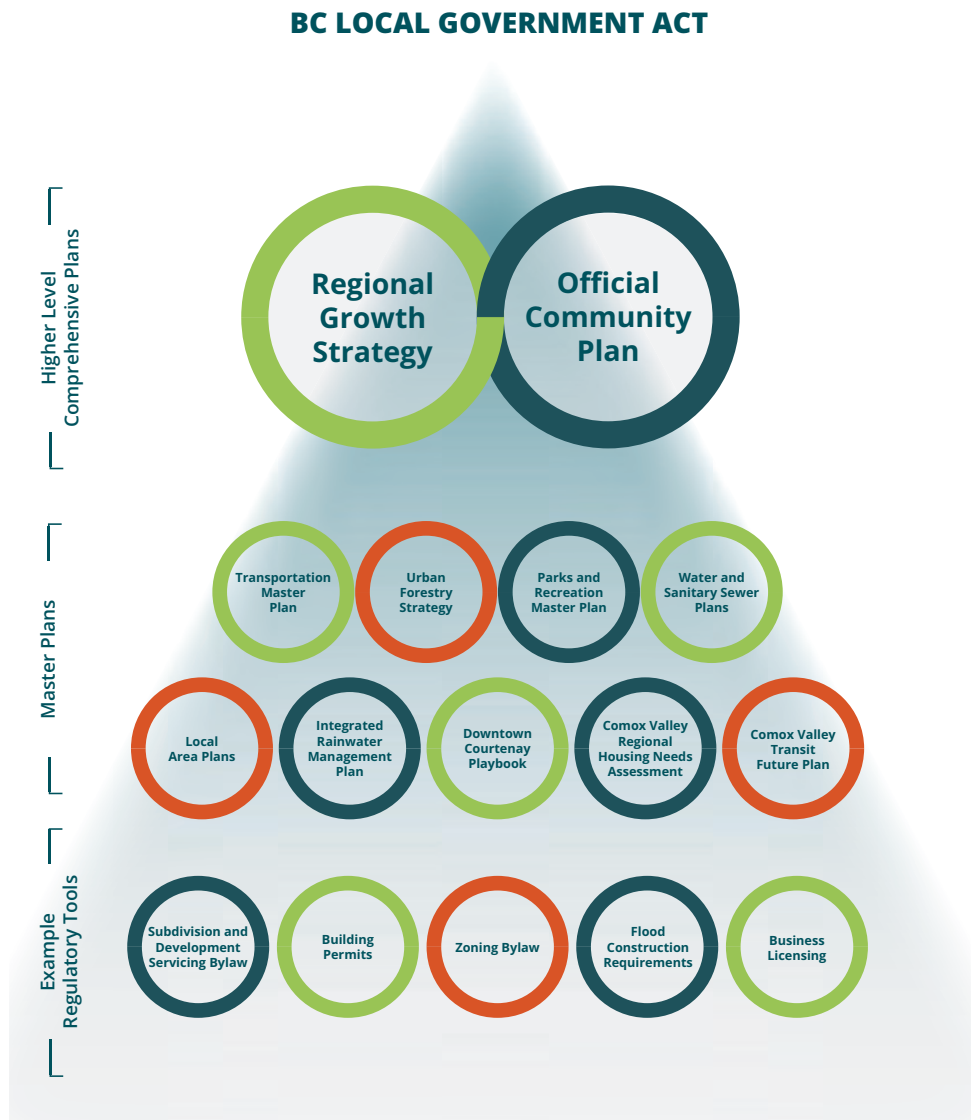


Figure A-1 OCP Planning Framework Context Diagram. List of Master Plans and Regulatory Tools is not exhaustive.



# CREATING THIS PLAN

The creation of this Plan was informed by hundreds of voices in the community, integrating aspirational visioning with robust analysis and modelling.

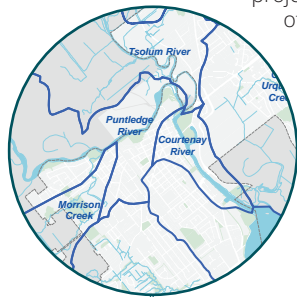


# HOW THE OCP CAME TOGETHER

The City of Courtenay thanks all participants who contributed their voices, values and ideas to the OCP process. The OCP update is truly a community effort. Regular advertising for the OCP process occurred through a dedicated e-newsletter, social media posts, advertisements in the paper for consultation opportunities, posters, through stakeholder networks, and was featured prominently on the City's website.

## Background Research

**Baseline information** for existing conditions was collected on topics within the purview of this OCP, ranging from urban form and transportation to parks and environment. It included population projections and an inventory of existing land use supply, and projections for future demand. It also included an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions by sector, and projected future emissions based on a business-as-usual approach to buildings, transportation, and waste management.



## Vision and Goals

Based on community input – and informed from the background research – **a new vision and set of goals** were created to provide the foundation of the new OCP.



## Net-Zero Target

A resolution to support the *net-zero emissions* by 2050 target was approved by City Council, to ensure that the OCP could meaningfully address the City's declaration of a climate emergency.

Throughout the project timeline the City of Courtenay engaged specifically and separately with the K'ómoks First Nation in government-to-government ideas exchanges.

★ COVID-19 global pandemic declared

Fall 2019-2020

February 2020

Spring 2020



## Advisory Committee

Throughout the process, input and insights were provided by an Advisory Committee comprised of members of the public representing a variety of topic areas including arts and culture, business, development, economic development, environmental stewardship, health and social services, housing, and matters pertaining specifically to seniors and youth.



## Community Visioning

To launch the OCP process, the City hosted an all-day **Ideas Fair** where nearly 350 residents learned about the background research and provided ideas and input into the future of their community.



## Growth Scenarios Development

Different scenarios for growth were developed, based on community vision and goals. The scenarios included: a "business as usual" pathway, which involved growing in a pattern similar to the past; and two different compact growth pathways that focused future development in different intensities in nodes and along corridors.

## Growth Scenarios Testing

The three growth scenarios were tested against community-based performance measures ranging from walkability to access to green space, and also tested for land availability.

## Growth Scenarios GHG Modelling

The three growth scenarios were also modelled using state-of-the-art greenhouse gas emissions modelling to ensure that the two compact scenarios could achieve the net-zero target by 2050. The differences between the two compact scenarios were marginal in terms of a performance, and a **hybrid scenario** was refined.



### Community Engagement

The community provided input on the draft vision, goals, and growth scenario through an **online survey** (782 participants) and eight virtual **stakeholder workshops** that engaged over 50 organizations. The input was used to revise the vision, goals, and growth scenario, and also informed the development of policies later in the process.

### Draft OCP

Extending from past engagement and research, policies and guidelines were developed for all facets of the OCP. An updated growth scenario was created to open up more land along corridors, further increasing options for land development within the city's existing footprint. This helped shape the draft land use policies.

### Community Engagement, Referrals and Legal Review

Community and stakeholder input was solicited on the full draft OCP between mid January and early March 2022. Community members were invited to share their views through an online survey (764 responses), attending one of three virtual town hall sessions, and/or communicating with City staff. Meetings were arranged for a number of community stakeholders upon request. First Nations and statutory agencies were formally referred the OCP for further input. The OCP Advisory Community prepared their final report to Council in this final phase of consultation.

#### Affordable Housing Strategy Options Study

Building on the 2020 regional Housing Needs Assessment, an Affordable Housing Strategy Options Study was drafted to create strategies for affordable, rental, and special needs housing in Courtenay. These strategies were to be incorporated into draft OCP policies later in the process.



Summer 2020

Fall 2020

Winter 2020–  
Summer 2021

New Year 2022

Summer 2022



#### Neighbourhood-Level Community Engagement "Walkshops"

Localized engagement provided residents with the opportunity to share insights and input on how to bring the OCP's draft vision, goals, and growth concepts to life within neighbourhoods, including how to guide neighbourhood "look and feel" of growth. Eleven in-person neighbourhood "walkshops" were held across the city (which were held in accordance with Phase 3 of BC's COVID Response Plan, when distanced outdoor gatherings were permitted). The walkshops were supplemented by nine virtual neighbourhood workshops. 134 residents participated across the events.

#### Stakeholder Engagement

Between winter 2020 and summer 2021 a series of focused virtual stakeholder sessions were held on a variety of topics to refine policy concepts. 130 individuals participated across all 10 sessions.

#### Final OCP

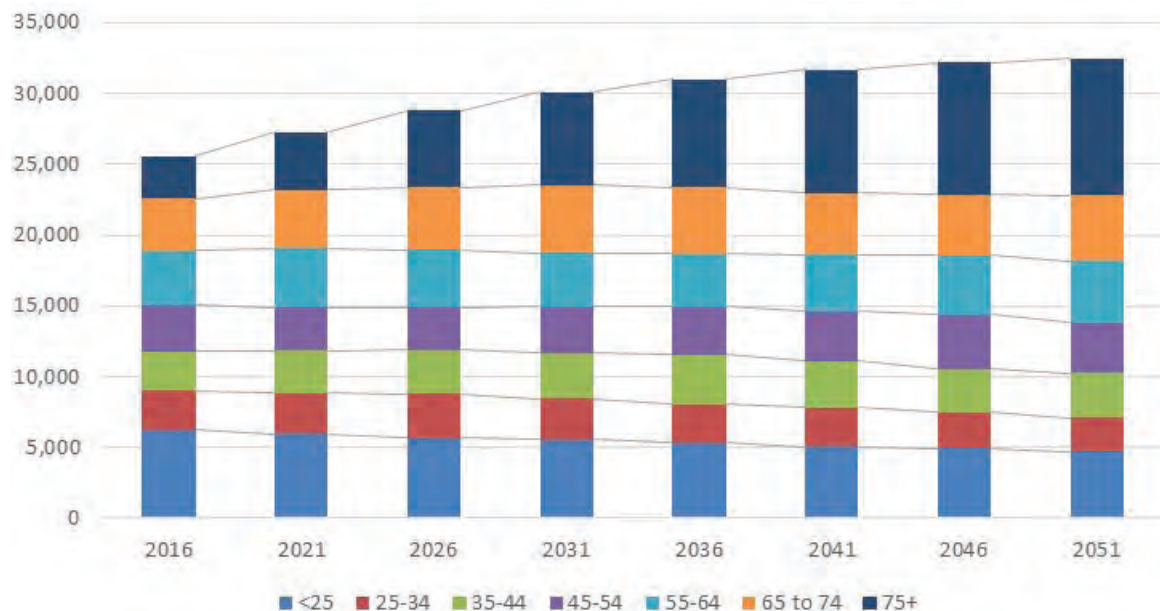
OCP Bylaw is adopted and used as an umbrella policy document to guide Courtenay's growth and development for years to come.

#### Age-Friendly Research and Engagement

To supplement the learnings from the background research and broader community engagement, detailed investigation into age-friendly considerations was undertaken. This was important in an older community that is projected to continue to age, as well as factoring the considerations of residents at the other end of the age spectrum. The work involved research into best practices and engagement with older adults and youth.

# COURTENAY AT A GLANCE: PEOPLE, EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, AND LAND

## Population and Demographics



**Figure A-2** Courtenay Population Projections (2016 – 2051).  
(Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016; Colliers International Consulting, 2020; Drake Turner & Partners Ltd., 2020)

Population forecasting was conducted in 2020 to estimate Courtenay's 2021 population and generate population forecasts, based on 2016 census data. The population forecasting conducted at that time estimated the 2021 population to be 27,290 and indicated that Courtenay is expected to grow by 4,500 more residents, and 2,900 more dwelling units, over 2016 census population figures, by 2031. The subsequent land use research and modelling used to inform the OCP's growth strategy was calibrated to accommodate those stated population and dwelling count estimates.

At the time of the final drafting of this plan, Statistics Canada released the first of seven schedules of 2021 census data (basic population and dwelling information). With a 2021 census population of 28,420, the 2021 census indicates Courtenay is growing more rapidly than projected which generated considerable interest during the OCP consultation.

Therefore, the OCP time horizon will depend on how quickly Courtenay's population grows by the additional 4,500 more residents (over 2016 population estimates). When the population target of 4,500 more residents has been achieved, additional population forecasting and additional growth planning will be conducted in order to determine how best to accommodate Courtenay's changing population. These population forecasts will be conducted in coordination with future Housing Needs Assessments.

Because the original OCP plan horizon was to 2030, a number of projections below are provided to 2030. Others are provided to 2040 and 2050 in order to forecast and align with the net-zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2050.

- Courtenay population is projected to grow by 27% to reach a total of 32,502 by 2051 from 2016 (25,595).
- The interim populations: 30,085 in 2031; and 31,696 in 2041.
- An approximate 1.0% growth rate is estimated over the next 10 years, with a slower estimated growth rate of 0.5% between 2031-2041 and 0.25% between 2041-2051.
- The city has a current average age of 45.8, which is slightly higher than the provincial average of 42.3.
- The population is expected to continue aging, with substantial growth among the 75+ age group. Conversely, the population of residents aged 25 and under is expected to decrease during this period. The aging population is also correlated with an average household size of 2.1, lower than the provincial average of 2.4.
- The proportion of Courtenay's population that is comprised of certain *equity-priority groups*, including: women (47%), Black (1%), Indigenous (7%), and persons of colour (5%).
- Immigrants comprise 12.6% of the total population. 7.4% are from Europe, 2.7% are from Asia, 1.7% are from the Americas, and 0.5% are from Africa.
- Single-parent households comprise 16% of the total number of households, which is proportionally higher than BC overall.

## Income

- The average household income in Courtenay is currently \$69,468 (\$39,728 – average income of one-person households, \$84,204 – average income of two-or-more person households).
- These figures are lower than respective provincial averages.
- Approximately 13% of households have incomes less than \$20,000.
- Over 20% have incomes between \$20,000 and \$40,000.
- Low-income residents comprise 15% of the overall population. In recent decades, income inequality increased considerably across Canada.

(Sources: CMHC, Statistics Canada, 2016 Census)

## Employment

- Courtenay is expected to continue to be the primary employment centre within the Comox Valley.
- The total working age population of the Comox Valley is expected to grow from 50,270 (2016) to 55,430 by 2041.
- The participation rate and unemployment rate are expected to remain steady over the projection period. This is expected to result in approximately 2,630 new jobs among all employment sectors in the Comox Valley.

## Housing

- The Census 2016 data reported 11,705 dwellings within the city.
- The majority of dwellings (67.8%) were constructed after 1981.
- Approximately 70% of the total dwellings are owner-occupied, while 30% of the total dwellings are rented.
- Single-detached dwellings are a main form of housing type currently provided in Courtenay. Of the total housing approximately:
  - 51% are single-detached dwellings,
  - 16% are row houses,
  - 10% are semi-detached and duplex dwellings, and
  - 20% are multi-residential dwellings.
- 2,900 more housing units have been estimated to be required to accommodate the projected increase in population of 4,500 more residents over 2016 population estimates. The growth modelling work (described in Part B) accounts for new housing of the following types:
  - 28% in single-detached dwellings (approximately 800),
  - 18% in townhouses and rowhouses (approximately 500),
  - 15% in semi-detached and duplex dwellings (approximately 450),
  - 31% in apartments 1-4 stories (approximately 900), and
  - 8% in apartments 5 stories or taller (approximately 250).
- These figures do not include secondary suites within single-detached dwellings or secondary detached dwellings such as carriage homes. Approximately 200 secondary units were modelled and, if built, will provide additional dwelling units dispersed throughout Courtenay.

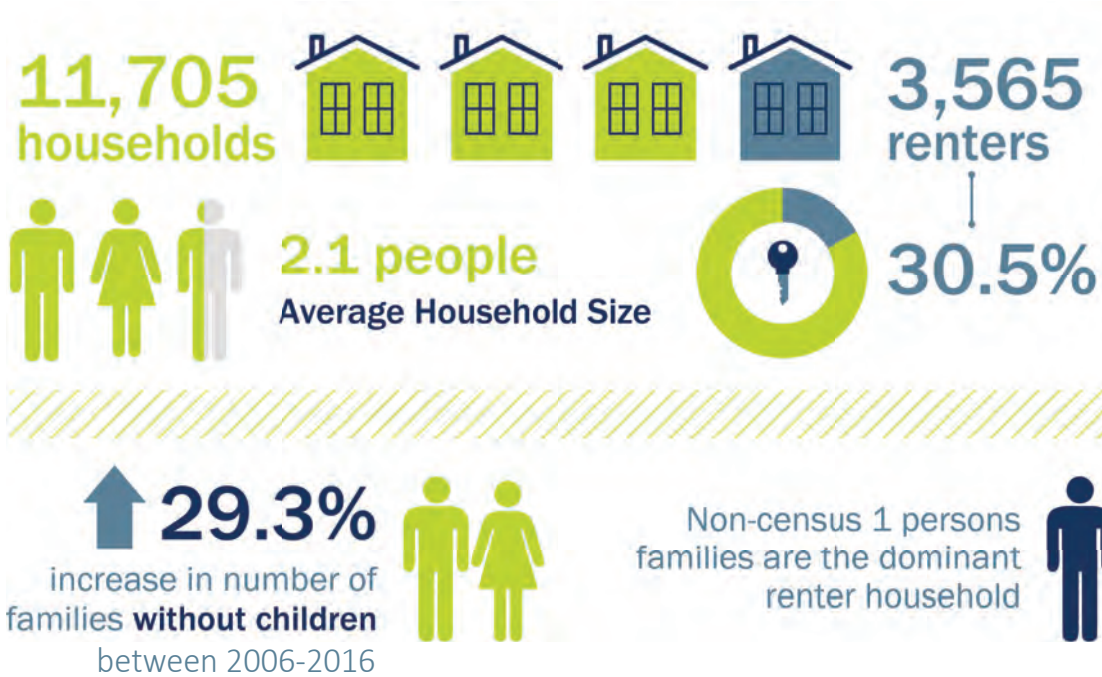
## Housing Needs

At the time of the development of the OCP, the City of Courtenay participated in the 2020 Comox Valley Regional Housing Needs Assessment which identified the housing needs for each Comox Valley community for the next five years. These five year Housing Needs Reports are a recent requirement of local governments in BC. Therefore, in addition to the OCP population and dwelling count information presented above, additional housing information, including shorter term housing needs, for Courtenay are included here.

- Projected housing needs by 2025:
  - 30 bachelor units,
  - 65 1-bedroom units,
  - 345 2-bedroom units,
  - 570 3+ bedroom units.
- Different types of dwelling units (with different numbers of bedrooms) are needed as the family-oriented rental population grows. The demand for family-oriented rental dwellings with 3+ bedrooms is particularly high.
- The median sale prices across all dwelling types in Courtenay were generally stable for most of the past ten years, then began to rise more rapidly in 2017. Prices for all dwelling types in 2019 were 50% higher than the average for 2010-2016; they continued to rise dramatically throughout 2020 and 2021.
- The private market is not able to provide housing for a significant proportion of the Comox Valley, and more residents than ever are at risk of homelessness or already in an unsustainable housing situation. The Needs Assessment found that there is a need for more subsidized, supportive, and emergency housing.



## COURTENAY HOUSEHOLDS



**Figure A-3** Key Demographic Information Snapshot  
Source: The 2020 Comox Valley Housing Needs Assessment, based on 2016 Statistics Canada Census data.

### Employment Lands Supply and Demand Projections

**Table A-1** Commercial, Office, and Industrial Land Availability and Projections.

Land use type		2019 (base year)	Additional demand over 2019 levels by 2031	Additional demand over 2019 levels by 2041
Commercial*	Square feet	2,752,215	169,964	291,742
Office	Square feet	573,052	134,712	148,640
Industrial	Acre	123	13	16

\*Includes professional services such as doctors, dentists, lawyers, and accountants, full- and limited-service restaurants, a wide range of store retailers, convenience and grocery stores, building material and garden equipment stores, furniture and home furnishing stores, and motor vehicle and parts dealers.

- Additional demands for employment lands, particularly commercial and office space, are expected to increase as the community grows.

### Information Sources

Statistics Canada, 2016 Census; Colliers International Consulting, 2020; Drake Turner & Partners Ltd., 2020; Comox Valley Housing Needs Assessment, 2020.

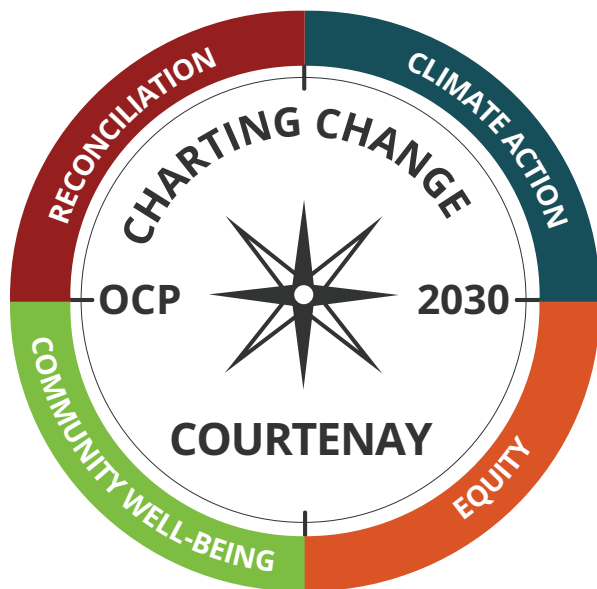


# WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO US: DIRECTIONS, VISION, GOALS



# FOUR CARDINAL DIRECTIONS

## NAVIGATING THE GREAT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF OUR TIME



The world is changing, and the OCP has been created to respond to great challenges and opportunities of our time. A compass has been used as the visual identity for the OCP development process, with the understanding that this Plan serves as a tool to navigate through change. It helps to orient us to where we stand today, and provides direction to where we want to be moving.

The four cardinal directions for this OCP are climate action, reconciliation, equity, and community well-being. They have been applied as filters through the OCP creation process – helping give shape to the vision and goals – and they permeate all facets of this Plan. They are a navigational tool to guide decision-making as Courtenay moves toward its vision.



## RECONCILIATION

*“Indigenous people need to experience truth and reconciliation, not have to constantly fight for it.”*

– Ginger Gosnell-Myers, Nisga’a-Kwakwaka’wakw Indigenous Fellow with SFU Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue

The City of Courtenay's commitment to reconciliation begins with a recognition of the City's responsibility to examine the ways in which its policies, processes, and structures uphold and perpetuate colonialism and its associated harms. From there, the City recognizes that it must move beyond positive intent and take action in a way that enables positive impact.

The City adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation. It will seek to build and sustain a relationship of respect and understanding with the K’ómoks First Nation whose territories encompass Courtenay, as well as other Indigenous peoples who live on these unceded territories.

**The City commits to incorporating Indigenous perspectives into its work and decision-making process, and to providing equitable and inclusive services that benefit Indigenous peoples. The City will seek guidance from Indigenous partners in how to make this commitment a reality.**



## CLIMATE ACTION

Our city – along with the rest of the world – is in the midst of a climate crisis. Courtenay acknowledges the global scientific consensus that human activity that uses fossil fuels is causing climate change and global heating, which poses significant risks to humanity and biodiversity on Earth.

Global climate functions are changing, creating local effects like increases in storm frequency and severity, increased summer drought risk, heat domes, less snow, wetter winters, and increased spring flood risk. Courtenay will continue to see higher tides, increased shoreline erosion, and saltwater ingress onto private and agricultural properties as sea level rises. These changes are having negative impacts on our infrastructure, buildings, crops, and ecosystems. They are increasingly affecting our community's stability.

The *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (IPCC) estimates that human activities have caused approximately 1.0°C of global heating above pre-industrial levels, which is likely to reach 1.5°C sometime between 2030 and 2052. Limiting warming to 1.5°C requires reaching net-zero global carbon dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>) emissions by 2050 at the latest, with deep reductions in other emissions as well, particularly methane (CH<sub>4</sub>).

**Courtenay is responding to this call to action. The City has committed to achieving a 45% reduction in community-wide GHG emissions (from 2016 level) by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050. This OCP includes strategies, actions, and measures to reduce emissions to target levels while saving on energy costs and improving quality of life for Courtenay residents.**



## 3 EQUITY

Cities are home to people from all walks of life. Yet the ways that cities have been traditionally planned have not considered the needs and experiences of all people.

Equitable cities are those in which all people can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential (PolicyLink, 2018). There is growing awareness about how cities can disproportionately benefit or harm entire groups of people due to their income, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, religion, and/or (dis)abilities (American Planning Association, retrieved from *planning.org* in 2021). Issues such as gentrification and lack of inclusivity in community engagement are the outcomes of inequitable city building, sometimes due to systemic practices and processes that are unknowingly upheld by decision makers.

Considering the needs of future generations is another equity consideration with important ecological, social, and economic implications. Considering the needs of people not yet born is referred to as intergenerational equity.

**This OCP challenges some traditional planning practices that can result in policies, programs, and regulations that disproportionately impact and stymie the progress of some *equity-priority groups*. Through policies on topics ranging from *affordable housing* to public participation, this OCP applies an equity lens and seeks to honour the lived experiences of all of Courtenay's peoples.**

*"Equity-priority groups" are people who often face discrimination or other forms of systemic disadvantage. They include but are not necessarily limited to persons of colour, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQIAP individuals & women.*



## 4 COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Cities have always had a large influence on the health of the people who live there. Research shows that our built environment has as much influence on our health, quality of life, and well-being as our genetic code. Indeed, where we live, work, play, learn, and access our services significantly affects how long and well we live. For example, in walkable neighbourhoods, residents are less likely to be obese and suffer from illnesses that can be related to lifestyle, such as Type 2 diabetes. Likewise, in neighbourhoods that have a mix of shops and services, residents are more likely to trust their neighbours and feel they belong. A growing body of research has shown that our sense of belonging and connectedness to others – as well as our access to green space – has a tremendous impact on our physical and mental health.

**This OCP accounts for the diverse and complex ways in which the urban environment impacts well-being. It takes a systems-based approach to well-being, considering the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of individuals and communities, and the natural ecosystems of which we are all a part.**

# VISION

## **COURTENAY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FUTURE, SUPPORTING HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE, WITH A LOW-CARBON FOOTPRINT FOR ALL.**

The following vision describes what we want Courtenay to be in the future. It embodies the values, priorities, and aspirations of the community. It charts the course for development of policies, guidelines, and actions in this OCP, and is strengthened by the “cardinal directions” and goals described elsewhere in Part A of this Plan.

**WE PROTECT THE NATURAL SPACES** we love and upon which our lives depend.

**WE ARE A CITY FOR ALL PEOPLE**, created for and by residents with diverse identities, experiences, and aspirations. We are a city for being together in community.

**WE ARE ALSO A CITY OF CHOICE**, in which residents have options across the city for homes, amenities, destinations, jobs and business, transportation, and spaces for gathering with friends, families, neighbours, and people not yet known to us.

**WE WILL REACH NET-ZERO EMISSIONS BY 2050**, doing our part to address the climate crisis head-on, while also preparing for its impacts. Our commitment to a safe climate is not just an environmental one; by taking action on and preparing for climate change we achieve many co-benefits that make Courtenay a great community to call home.

**COURTENAY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FUTURE** by being more thoughtful, strategic, and efficient in all resources that we use whether it be land, energy, or public infrastructure, to ensure that actions deliver on multiple goals of fiscal responsibility, economic resilience, social equity, and ecological health.

Being responsible means recognizing that uncertainties are part of our future, and that our best strategy is to invest in individual, neighbourhood, and community-wide resilience. For Courtenay, this means we safeguard the unique qualities of our city that we cherish, we work in partnership, and we remain open to new ways of being and doing in order to respond creatively to our changing world.





# GOALS

Guided by the four cardinal directions, Courtenay's OCP goals provide markers as the community moves towards its vision. Most of these goals have been established for Courtenay for many years. For instance, the previous Courtenay OCP (2005) identified the importance of focusing growth, creating more housing and transportation options throughout the City, and creating walkable neighbourhood centres of high-quality urban design. Increased access to nature, parks and recreational opportunities throughout the city, environmental protection, support for local economy, arts and culture, and working with the community have also been long-standing goals for Courtenay. The following goals continue the legacy of a number of goals Courtenay has been working towards for some time, add more specific areas of focus on some topics, and add new prominence to other goals.

The nine goals are:

1. **Land Is Valued as a Precious Resource**
2. **Housing Choices for All**
3. **Strong Neighbourhoods**
4. **Functional Transportation Choices**
5. **More Space for and Time in Nature**
6. **Love for Local Culture and Places**
7. **A City for Everyone**
8. **Economic Success Emerges from Community Values and Place**
9. **Investing in Relationships**

# GOALS

## 1. Land is Valued as a Precious Resource

Land in Courtenay will be treated as the precious resource that it is, with future growth being focused within the city, and where residents can go about much of their daily lives with a reduced carbon footprint.

*"Protect outlying areas and green areas for generations to come!"*

*- Courtenay Resident*



## 3. Strong Neighbourhoods

The City of Courtenay will work with residents to identify and invest in the desired qualities and amenities to protect and strengthen so that community life at the neighbourhood scale is functional, delightful, and meaningful.

*"Strong neighbourhoods are important [and] require some serious investment in the development of neighbourhood identities, hubs, and shared spaces."*

*- Courtenay Resident*



## 2. Housing Choices for All

The City of Courtenay will enable housing choices in all neighbourhoods of the city in which all residents have access to homes that are affordable, healthy, green, and appropriate for diverse needs, life stages, and aspirations.

*"Please more low income housing and support for our homeless population. These people have a right to safe and stable housing. We need to support our vulnerable community members."*

*- Courtenay Resident*



## 4. Functional Transportation Choices

The City of Courtenay will rebalance Courtenay's transportation system to provide a more functional spectrum of options that prioritizes walking, cycling, and transit. This in turn will support street life, active living, neighbourliness, economic vitality, affordable household transportation, and low carbon footprints.

*"Today's cities are defined by the transportation networks that run through them. A busy street can destroy a neighbourhood. A gentle bike lane can enhance a neighbourhood. I believe that safe, secure, affordable transportation... is the best way to have strong, diverse communities."*

*- Courtenay Resident*





### 5. More Space for and Time in Nature

Natural assets will be recognized as powerful allies in climate action and essential to citizen quality of life and will therefore be protected, reclaimed, and expanded throughout Courtenay. Nature will be invited into our neighbourhoods by making space for it, increasing opportunity for residents to recharge and connect.

"If we want to stay a vibrant community with nature at our back door, [protection of nature] is imperative."

- Courtenay Resident



### 6. Love for Local Culture and Places

Spaces that spark public life in the downtown, in town and neighbourhood centres, and throughout the city will be strengthened and expanded. Courtenay's renowned natural backdrop will form the basis of place making, ripe with opportunity to layer in cultural expressions of art, heritage, and distinct Courtenay identity including of and with Indigenous peoples.

"They say a small corner lot with a tree will create a lot of buzz in a densely built-up area. Diversity is key in nature, so why not follow that same powerful rule?"

- Courtenay Resident



### 7. A City for Everyone

Courtenay will ensure equity is integrated into planning and design considerations, so that everyone - including racialized people, newcomers, 2SLGBTQIAP, women, persons with disabilities, children, youth, and elders - are equal participants in the city and in city building.

"Everyone should be welcome to thrive in our community."

- Courtenay Resident



### 8. Economic Success Emerges from Community Values and Place

Economic success will be viewed holistically through the intersecting dimensions of environmental, social and economic systems. Courtenay will invest in the foundational conditions for high quality of life including unique and delightful public places, streets, housing choices for all, parks and recreational opportunities, a clean and protected environment, and inclusive municipal government services.

"Affordable living means people have money to live & spend in their local communities."

- Courtenay Resident

### 9. Investing in Relationships

The City of Courtenay will value the contributions of all its citizens, nurturing and practicing a culture of proactive involvement in local government reconciliation and all community decisions by creating new avenues for community participation and action.

"I would like to see partnerships with First Nations, BIPOC [black, Indigenous, people of colour] communities, the homeless, rural constituents, [and] our food providers/farmers." Courtenay Resident





# VISION

Courtenay is responsible for the future,  
supporting high quality of life with a  
low-carbon footprint for all.

*Full OCP Vision stated on page 22*

# GOALS

*Land is valued as a precious resource*

*Housing choices for all*

*Strong neighbourhoods*

*Functional transportation choices*

*More space for and time in nature*

*Love for local culture & places*

*A City for everyone*

*Economic success emerges from  
community values & place*

*Investing in relationships*







# HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

The OCP is a collective vision and it is a collective action. Its implementation is a collective journey. The success of the OCP will depend on collective commitment to upholding the vision, directions, goals, and specific policies and actions identified in this Plan. When seen in this light, the process of inclusive city building is as important as the OCP itself. The following section identifies key relationships that will require investment and nurturing to turn Courtenay's vision into reality.

## CITY OF COURTENAY AND K'ÓMOKS FIRST NATION RELATIONSHIP

The City of Courtenay acknowledges the KFN community vision as articulated in the KFN Comprehensive Community Plan 2014–2024, and as a neighbour supports the vision of moving forward together:

***“K’ómoks First Nation is a prosperous and healthy community where each member has the right to self-sufficiency. K’ómoks members move forward with our neighbors, exercising our rights and title while respecting our historical connections to our lands and resources, and to one another.” – KFN Comprehensive Community Plan 2014-2024.***

The City of Courtenay and K’ómoks First Nation have experience working together and are committed to building on successes of the past while supporting the conditions to continue a strong and productive respectful relationship.

Recent examples include a servicing agreement between the City and KFN on the Puntledge Lands (IR#2), Regional Community to Community Forums to share perspectives, and the Kus-kus-sum habitat restoration project. These accomplishments have positively affected our collective communities and made the relationship stronger.

To create this OCP, KFN Chief, Council, and staff provided perspective, priorities, and guidance on numerous policy topics. Together with Courtenay City Mayor and Council, a list of important topics to acknowledge, work towards, and prioritize was identified:

- Action on Reconciliation and implementing UNDRIP as the framework for reconciliation
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Land use plan and subdivision law
- Stormwater, flooding, water diversion
- Development around archeological sites
- Land disposition consultation
- Housing affordability
- Community safety, homelessness, and the toxic drug supply
- Infrastructure and shared services
- Emergency planning

The policies to support these mutual priorities are included in the OCP wherever possible. Some topics will require more detailed attention in order to be implemented. Cooperation on these topics and others as both our communities' needs evolve will be vital to fostering a resilient and inclusive community as well as building and maintaining a strong relationship.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS: LOCAL, PROVINCIAL, AND FEDERAL**

The City of Courtenay as a local government exists within a larger democratically determined federal and provincial governance system. The ability of the City to achieve the OCP vision and follow the four directions of reconciliation, climate action, equity, and community well-being will be influenced by then federal and provincial policies and programs of the day as well as the authority to undertake actions as granted by provincial legislation. Therefore, it is important to understand what the City of Courtenay's roles and responsibilities are and consider how the City of Courtenay fits within this multi-jurisdictional context in delivering on the OCP vision and goals.

Within Canada, a federal state, legislative constitutional powers are assigned to both federal and provincial governments. Federal powers include matters of national interest such as banking, citizenship, and defense. Provincial powers include matters of more regional interest such as education, health care, and the management of natural resources. In BC, the Local Government Act and the Community Charter are the principal pieces of legislation that define the core authority of local governments and guide the decision-making process. The provincial legislatures delegate some of their powers to local governments. Examples of the delegated authorities are the ability to hold municipal elections, collect property taxes, make bylaws, and establish regulations, all of which must comply with the legislative authority provided by their province. Accordingly,

the City of Courtenay exercises these delegated powers in regulating land uses and businesses and providing and maintaining community assets and services such as parks and recreation facilities, sidewalks, roads and cycling facilities, and underground sewer and water infrastructure within municipal boundaries.

At the time of the writing of the OCP, the provincial government has provided two focused directions directly connected with the OCP's cardinal directions: Climate Action and Reconciliation.

In 2007 the provincial government established the Climate Action Charter, a voluntary agreement in which local governments commit to taking climate actions including becoming carbon neutral in their corporate operations, measuring community-wide emissions, and creating complete, compact, energy-efficient communities.

The City of Courtenay became a signatory to the Climate Action Charter in 2007.

In 2019 the provincial government passed the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) which forms the foundation for the Province's work to advance reconciliation. The Province's work is expected to include the provision of directions and powers to local governments to fulfill this important mandate.

The City of Courtenay continues to work with all levels of government including First Nations in the fulfillment of these two important mandates, as well as many others.





# RECONCILIATION

*“Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. For that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for causes, and action to change behaviour.”*

– Canada’s residential schools: Reconciliation. The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 6. 2015.

Following the federal government’s first announcement on its commitment to adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2016, and the provincial government’s adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act in 2019, the City of Courtenay Council passed a resolution in 2020 that the UNDRIP be its framework for Indigenous reconciliation. Subsequently, the Federal UNDRIP Act received royal assent on June 21, 2021.

The UNDRIP (2007) is a comprehensive international instrument on the basic human rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. It sets out a broad range of collective and individual rights that constitute the minimum standards to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples and to contribute to their survival, dignity, and well-being. It also affirms that Indigenous peoples are free from discrimination of any kind and recognizes the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples.

Adoption of UNDRIP as the framework for reconciliation across all levels and sectors of Canadian society is the first principle of reconciliation as identified in the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (2015). Other principles are included here to provide a foundation of understanding to all further actions that the City will undertake in support of reconciliation:

- *First Nation, Inuit, Metis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.*
- *Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.*
- *Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.*
- *Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.*
- *All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.*
- *The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.*
- *Supporting Aboriginal people's cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.*
- *Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as substantial investment in resources.*
- *Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal Peoples to Canadian society.*

### **The City's Reconciliation Guiding Principles**

- Local Indigenous traditions, knowledge, and wisdom and self-governance are recognized and honoured within First Nations' territories.
- A locally developed Reconciliation Framework is used to identify specific local reconciliation actions and to guide decision-making.
- The City's Reconciliation Framework is implemented in all policy areas.
- Reconciliation takes time and commitment and hinges on the ability to deepen trust between all involved.

## **Policies**

- R 1** The City of Courtenay will create, promote, and implement a Reconciliation Framework in which concrete actions are identified in partnership and consultation with the wider community with guidance from K'ómoks First Nation and other Indigenous peoples who live within the region. The Reconciliation Framework will be guided by UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.
- R 2** The City of Courtenay supports the federal and provincial governments' intergovernmental initiatives and Canada's reconciliation process.
- R 3** The City of Courtenay will seek opportunities to establish engagement processes and implementation of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action*.
- R 4** The City of Courtenay will incorporate Indigenous perspectives into its work and decision-making process.
- R 5** The City of Courtenay commits to ongoing respectful government-to-government relationships with K'ómoks First Nation that nurtures trust and resiliency.
- R 6** The City of Courtenay commits to deepening relationships and partnerships with organizations that represent Métis and off-Nation Indigenous residents.
- R 7** The City of Courtenay will collaborate with all regional partners and sectors of society wherever opportunities exist and will strive for regionally consistent approaches to reconciliation.
- R 8** The City of Courtenay will invest in ongoing learning opportunities between the City and all Indigenous partners.
- R 9** The City of Courtenay will provide learning and capacity building opportunities for City employees to build better awareness, understanding, and accountability by following the principles of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Official Mandate as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- R 10** The City of Courtenay will collaborate with and support Indigenous partners and service providers in the community in providing educational opportunities for the general public.
- R 11** The City of Courtenay will seek to support K'ómoks First Nation economic development aspirations in accordance with the policies in this OCP.





# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

## ***An Equity Lens for Community Participation***

Placing an equity lens on community participation ensures that the needs and experiences of all people are included in public engagement, public consultation, and democratic decision-making processes.

The City routinely engages with community members on diverse topics. In addition to the formal and routine public hearing process, the City invites community participation through more creative means such as open houses, online surveys, virtual dialogue sessions and unique events like neighbourhood 'walkshops'. At the same time, it is common for many voices to be under-represented in municipal engagement processes, and Courtenay is no different. As evidenced by the demographic data collected

in online surveys for this OCP process, some groups are underrepresented during certain types of engagement activities. These groups include youth, single parents, people of colour, Indigenous peoples, low-income residents, 2SLGBTQIAP people, persons with disabilities, children, youth, elders, and renters.

A foundational part of Courtenay's vision is to be a city for all people, created for and by residents with diverse identities, experiences and aspirations. In order to ensure that all perspectives are reflected in decision-making, additional efforts must be made to engage everyone. This involves engaging organizations and residents in all stages of the decision-making process. This also requires meaningfully reaching, including, and honouring voices of *equity-priority groups*.

## **The City's Community Participation Guiding Principles<sup>1</sup>**

- Those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process;
- The public's input will influence the decision;
- Recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers, promotes sustainable decisions;
- Those potentially affected by or interested in a decision are identified and provided opportunity to be involved;
- Input is sought by participants on how they participate;
- Participants are provided with the information necessary to participate in a meaningful way; and
- Participants are informed of how their input affected a decision.

## **Policies**

- CP 1** The City will take a proactive community participatory approach for the purpose of encouraging open dialogue and co-creating inclusive decision-making processes.
- CP 2** The City will follow the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) best management practices to inform public engagement efforts.

**CP 3** The City will apply appropriate engagement tools and techniques to provide a consistent approach to public engagement efforts across a range of community decisions based on the impact of the decision or change.

**CP 4** The City will seek input from equity-priority and under-represented groups on how they would like to safely and comfortably participate in engagement processes, and then create an engagement strategy accordingly.

**CP 5** The City will consider the use of a range of formal and informal citizen and stakeholder advisory bodies such as, but not limited to, standing and select committees of Council, task forces, citizen assemblies, review panels, and advisory councils.

**CP 6** The City will require that advisory committees be proportionally representative of the community, including *equity-priority groups*.

**CP 7** The City will explore opportunities for supporting community development approaches to strengthen the participation and resilience of neighbourhoods.

**CP 8** The City will explore partnerships as strategies to achieve OCP vision, goals and policies. Partnerships will employ innovative and structured approaches to ensure all parties are involved and mutually supported to maximize individual and collective efforts.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Core Values.

<sup>2</sup> An example of an innovative and structured partnership approach is the Collective Impact model. [www.collectiveimpactforum.org](http://www.collectiveimpactforum.org)





# OUR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

***Creating the plan for Courtenay's future will be the easiest part in the achievement of our collective vision.***

Creating the plan is just the beginning. To implement the plan is quite a different matter.

***An OCP is a tool to navigate great challenges, opportunities, and changes before us:*** climate action, reconciliation, equity, and community well-being. The community process to create the OCP has identified where we want and need to go – our vision. As Courtenay's compass, the OCP tells us what we need to do get there – our policies and actions. But a compass is only as good as how well it's used. How far we get in achieving Courtenay's vision will depend on how fully we use this Plan as a tool to navigate and manage change.

***Collective commitment will fuel the implementation of the OCP.*** Commitment will be needed as time passes, as people move to and from Courtenay, as our elected leaders pass the torch, as one generation welcomes the next. Commitment will be needed when decisions are hard, especially when decisions are hard. In those moments, the OCP can be used to refocus our efforts and bring clarity to what at the core of Courtenay really matters: climate action, reconciliation, equity and community well-being.

The OCP is a facilitative policy instrument. It provides both direction for the City of Courtenay as well as identifies where collaboration and support by other sectors are needed to achieve stated objectives. Mayor, Council and City staff, developers, community organizations, businesses, and already-engaged residents are expected to use the OCP the most. However, ***there is a role and a need for literally everyone to engage with this Plan.*** The success of this Plan will hinge on residents and friends of Courtenay everywhere lending their hearts, minds, and efforts to climate action, reconciliation, equity, and our community's well-being, even if it is for their first time. Especially if it is their first time.

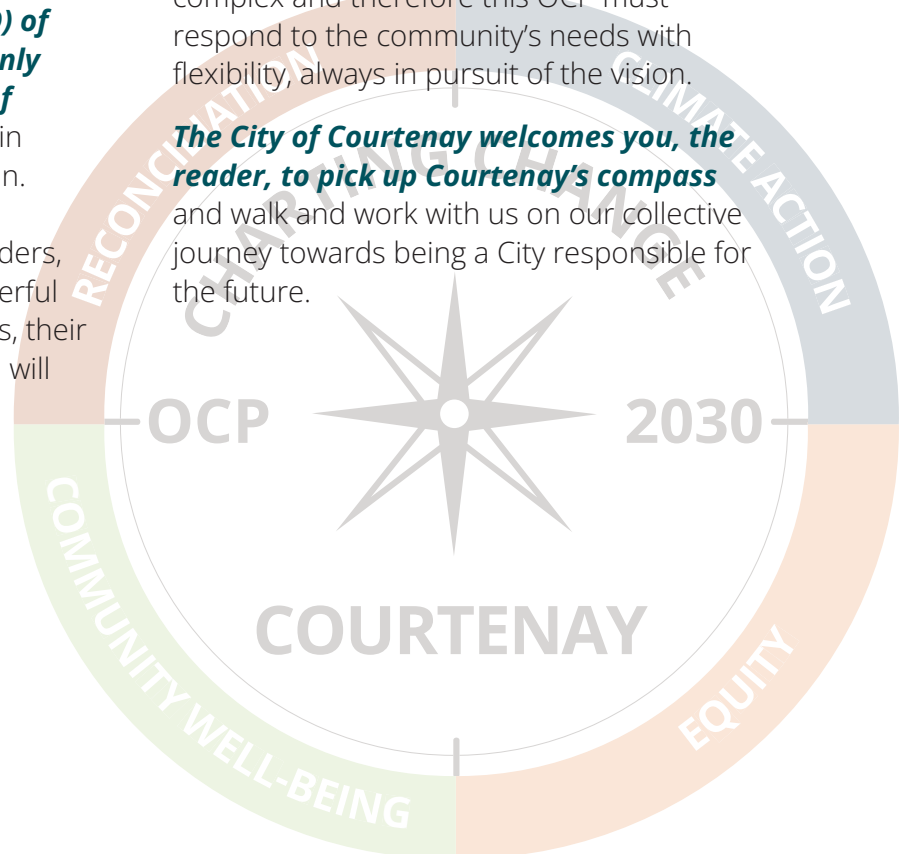


**The OCP is a living document. However, there is always a risk of a plan simply sitting on a shelf, gathering dust.** This danger is even greater when a plan calls for that significant change. This OCP identifies significant change is needed within a variety of services, developments, and partnerships to ensure they work towards our established vision. Fortunately, changes to support climate action, reconciliation, equity and community well-being are taking place in wider society and the work undertaken to achieve Courtenay's vision will be in good company. This OCP is expected to be met with many partnership opportunities with others who share Courtenay's vision. However, how quickly identified actions are implemented, in what order, and how significantly will depend on the ability of all of us who actively share and work towards Courtenay's vision to steward this OCP to its fullest potential.

**The Implementation section (Part D) of the OCP identifies the most commonly applied tools available to the City of Courtenay** to play its leadership role in stewarding and implementing this Plan. When applied together, and with the support of engaged citizens, stakeholders, and partners, these tools can be powerful in implementing the Plan. Like all tools, their ability to deliver on Courtenay's vision will depend on how fully they are used.

**With or without implementation of this OCP, Courtenay will change.** A combination of demographic, technological, political, ecological, cultural, and economic changes are the constant – but shifting – backdrop of this OCP; unforeseen challenges and opportunities will present themselves in Courtenay's future. The OCP clarifies Courtenay's choices in how we as a community intend to manage change for those topics that could be explored through the creation of this Plan. The four cardinal directions provide focus for when encountering new challenges to ensure Courtenay's values guide actions whatever the opportunity may be. Therefore, paramount to all these implementation tools is the ability to evaluate our implementation efforts and adapt and recalibrate policies and actions as new information and opportunities come available. The core directions of the OCP are dynamic and complex and therefore this OCP must respond to the community's needs with flexibility, always in pursuit of the vision.

**The City of Courtenay welcomes you, the reader, to pick up Courtenay's compass** and walk and work with us on our collective journey towards being a City responsible for the future.







## PART B

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# MANAGING GROWTH

1. Time Immemorial . . . . .	38
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3. Three Key Land Use Concepts . . . . .	43
4. How Courtenay Will Grow . . . . .	48
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Part B begins with recognition of K'ómoks First Nation's time immemorial stewardship of Courtenay's lands and waters, situates Courtenay within the region's growth strategy, and provides direction on land uses across Courtenay, as well as some further detailed policies for specific neighbourhoods and areas.



# TIME IMMEMORIAL

***Since Time Immemorial the K'ómoks First Nation have stewarded and cared for the lands and waters that make up Courtenay today.***

K'ómoks Unceded territory stretches across the Salish Sea from the lands currently known as Vancouver Island, extending north of Salmon River to south of the Englishman River watershed. K'ómoks First Nation members are Kwakwaka'wakw and North Coast Salish people who assert their shared heritage, history, and culture. Their language and spiritual practices are tied to the lands, waters, and resources that are found in the K'ómoks area.

"Comox" is an anglicization of K'ómoks, which is derived from the Kwakw'ala term, kw'umalha, meaning "plentiful, rich or wealthy." Oral history and archaeology describes a rich and bountiful relationship between the K'ómoks people and the land of plenty. The families which make up the present day First Nation share a rich history and traditions traced back to Pentlatch, Kwakwaka'wakw, Coast Salish,

and Nuu-cha-Nulth groups. Current archaeological research confirms the occupation of the K'ómoks First Nation territory by First Peoples thousands of years before first contact with Europeans.

The technologies that were applied in harvest, preparation, and cultivation of local resources were appropriate to the environment, resource, and spiritual beliefs. Fish weirs, duck nets, berry picking techniques, and clothing design met the needs of the K'ómoks people and for generations provided variety, utility, and sense of cultural uniqueness. Mask dances and songs filled the winter nights and season. Property was distributed to guests in potlatches, and naming ceremonies honoured the youth, leaders, and elders of the communities.

Text adapted from the K'ómoks Comprehensive Community Plan (page 26), with permissions.



The K'ómoks Marine Use Plan identifies fundamental values and teachings that are continuously passed on and practiced in order to maintain a strong connection to KFN homelands and culture. A number of these **values and teachings** are included here and are relevant context to the OCP, a land use and stewardship document.

**Honouring the Creator** as the source of all gifts within the KFN homelands. Celebrating the return of species such as salmon, and allowing the first migration returning to pass without harvest.

**Protocol** as a foundational cultural tool to manage resources throughout KFN territories. Protocol includes acknowledging which Nation's territory one is in, asking permission to utilize resources, and sharing in benefits.

**Respect** for homeland by refraining from violating the abundance and diversity of life within KFN territory. Providing an offering to the Creator and a strong connection to homeland are the basis of respect.

**Balance** is the healthy functioning of the natural cycles, seasonal changes, and natural flow of life. Too much harvesting or protection of a species or habitat can disrupt the balance. KFN elders are concerned this balance has been broken and needs to be re-established.

**Working together** to accomplish large tasks which also provides a benefit of teaching and passing on ancient knowledge. During marine harvesting cycles, the elders say, "We gather together to gather" in order to learn by doing.

**Sharing** the bounty of resources from KFN territory through customs such as the potlatch which is not about how much can be accumulated but how much can be given away. Today, resources from KFN territory are not being shared with the Nation which is not how it is supposed to be.

**Stewardship** incorporates all these values and teachings into the practical management of the resources in KFN territory. An image of proper stewardship is the fish weirs that KFN ancestors utilized in the Estuary to catch salmon.

Values and Teachings text adapted from K'ómoks Marine Use Plan (page 10), with permissions.





# REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

## *Justification*

As required by the Local Government Act, if a *regional growth strategy* applies to all or part of the same area of a municipality, the Official Community Plan of that municipality must include a regional context statement. This statement shall identify specifically the relationship between the OCP and the *Regional Growth Strategy* (RGS) with respect to the future growth management of the region, including population projections, land use, social, economic and environmental objectives, local economy, parks and natural areas, *affordable housing*, transportation, regional services, agricultural lands, and the target to achieve the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

## *Courtenay in the Comox Valley*

The City of Courtenay resides entirely within the territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, and in what is today the Comox Valley. Located in the northern half of Vancouver Island, overlooking the Strait of Georgia subregion of the Salish Sea, the Comox Valley is home to one of the most significant estuaries in British Columbia, including tidal mud flats,

lagoons, salt marshes, low-lying forest habitats, and the numerous watersheds that flow into them. According to the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) *Regional Growth Strategy* (RGS), the K'ómoks First Nation's core territory extends from the south side of the Englishman River drainage, north along the height of land on the Vancouver Island Range, east along the height of land on the north side of the Salmon River Valley, across the Johnstone Strait to Call Inlet, and southeast down the centre of the Strait of Georgia back to the south side of the Englishman River, including islands and portions of the mainland. There is regional overlap of shared territory with Sliammon, Homalco, Snaw-Naw-As, Cape Mudge, Campbell River, Qualicum, and Kwiahah First Nations. The City of Courtenay is located within the core territory of K'ómoks First Nation, and also within the overlapping territories of Wei Wai Kum First Nation, Wei Wai Kai First Nation, Kwiahah First Nation, and Homalco First Nation.

The 2021 census indicates that the Comox Valley is home to more than 72,000 residents and encompasses the Village of Cumberland, the Town of Comox, and the CVRD's electoral areas of Baynes Sound (Electoral Area A), Lazo North (Electoral Area B), and Puntledge-Black Creek (Electoral Area C) – as well as the City of Courtenay (population approximately 28,400). Its neighbours include the K'ómoks First Nation. A number of significant provincial parks and lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve are located within the region. The Comox Valley is connected to the broader Vancouver Island and Mainland through a network of highways, ferry lines, and flights from the Comox Valley Airport.

### **Alignment with the Regional Growth Strategy**

The CVRD adopted the current RGS in 2010. It provides a framework for future land use, and sets basic direction for planning, policies, and action for all member municipalities, including Courtenay. The vision for the region is as follows:

*The Comox Valley will continue to evolve as a region of distinct, well-connected and well-designed urban and rural communities. As stewards of the environment, local governments, the K'ómoks First Nation, public agencies, residents, business, and community and non-governmental organizations will work collaboratively to conserve and enhance land, water, and energy resources, and ensure a vibrant local economy and productive working landscape.*

Within the RGS, Courtenay is identified as the major urban centre that should provide for a wide diversity of housing and employment opportunities, and the highest regional densities, now and in the future. **A number of the region's growth management principles are directly relevant to Courtenay's OCP and are stated here as OCP principles of growth management as well:**

- Protect key natural and ecological features throughout the Comox Valley.
- Take actions to address public health and environmental issues as they are identified and, where possible, before they arise.
- Recognize the distinctiveness of existing communities and ensure the needs of both urban and rural areas are met.
- Recognize that the K'ómoks First Nation is in the process of land settlement negotiations and that there should be ongoing collaboration and cooperation between the local governments and the K'ómoks First Nation.
- Promote the efficient use of land, provide greater transportation choices, reduce public servicing costs, and achieve environmental benefits through compact growth.
- Ensure the efficient use and financial viability of existing and planned investment in public infrastructure.



- Promote *intensification*, compact growth and supportive public transit services throughout designated Municipal Areas as the primary means of accommodating population and employment growth.
- Promote and support the overall economic viability of the designated Municipal Areas so that they can continue to provide primary base for residential, commercial, and institutional activities.

The regional principles complement the interrelated OCP growth management related goals of valuing land as precious, functional transportation choices, housing choices for all, strong neighbourhoods, and a city for everyone.

This OCP aligns with the RGS vision and growth management policies. Courtenay's strategy for managing future growth is to strengthen several existing neighbourhood nodes and corridors across the city through *intensification* of a variety of land uses, increasing investment in active and transit modes of transportation and creation of vibrant urban spaces. This in turn will reduce development pressure outside of Courtenay's boundary or the need to annex lands from the electoral areas into Courtenay jurisdiction.

Appendix 3 – Regional Context Statement, contains more detailed comparison of the relevant policies in these documents. More detailed thematic policies to achieve all OCP goals are provided in Part C of this Plan.

Part 5 of the RGS addresses implementation measures, monitoring, and amendment procedures. The OCP establishes principles and policies to be followed by Courtenay City Council in the implementation of both the OCP and the RGS to ensure all subsequent local government bylaws, works, and services undertaken by both the CVRD and the City are consistent with both the OCP and RGS. Review and amendment of the OCP will occur on an as-required basis according to the relevant sections of the Local Government Act.



# THREE KEY LAND USE CONCEPTS

Land use policy is about more than the land use itself, because land use decisions influence numerous other aspects of our daily lives as well as other components of cities. These include, but are not limited to, the transportation network, open spaces, buildings, municipal services, the economy, and the natural environment. Land use policies also influence the ability to achieve the OCP's core directions of reconciliation, climate action, equity, and community well-being. This is because how a community is structured informs future opportunities, and constraints, in the pursuit of community goals and ultimate vision.

Key interdependent land use and urban form strategies lay the physical foundation for a city that is responsible for the future, each of which are described in turn:

- 1. Mixing land uses**
- 2. Increasing densities**
- 3. Supporting high-quality urban form & design**

## **1. *Mixing land uses***

Land use mix refers to the diversity of land uses (e.g., residential, commercial, institutional, etc.) within a given area. Higher degrees of land use mixes are associated with “complete communities,” wherein residents have easy access to a variety of amenities and services within their neighbourhood. These include shops and restaurants, cultural and civic facilities (e.g., museums, libraries, galleries), employment opportunities, recreational destinations (e.g., parks, community centres), and more. This mix allows residents to live, work, shop, play, and learn close to home ideally within a 10-minute walk, resulting in the concept of “10-minute neighbourhoods” as a policy objective described further in this plan. Some mixes of uses, such as heavy industrial and residential, on the other hand, are not suitable.

Land use mix is important for creating distinct, vibrant neighbourhoods that support businesses and offer housing and transportation choice. For example, with other variables such as residential density held as constants, the odds of a person walking are twice as high in areas with a high degree of

suitable mixed uses than in areas with a low degree of mixed uses. Residents living near multiple and diverse retail destinations also generally make more frequent and shorter shopping trips, and more by walking and cycling. A higher degree of land use mix can also translate into a stronger sense of community, allowing residents to interact with their neighbours more often, trust others, form community networks, and be socially engaged.

Within Courtenay there are a number of areas that already display the land use mix qualities of *10-minute neighbourhoods*, such as the downtown, lower Ryan Road commercial area and upper Ryan Road commercial and institutional area, each surrounded by residences.

## **2. Increasing densities**

Density refers to the number of people, homes, or jobs within a certain area. Higher residential density, often in the form of multi-unit housing, can result in: energy savings; lower per capita municipal infrastructure and service costs (e.g., roadways, water and sewer infrastructure, transit, fire stations, recreation centres, etc.); greater housing choices and affordability; more vibrant street life and public realm; a larger proportion of trips by foot, bike, and transit; and, as a result, reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Many areas in Courtenay do not have the residential densities to be considered walkable or supportive of frequent

transit service<sup>1</sup>, which partly explains why 85% of all trips within Courtenay are by private vehicle. Many of the residential densities are also insufficient to create the amount of customers needed to support neighbourhood-serving businesses like grocers and local coffee shops, which in turn influences access to services, street life, and overall neighbourhood vitality. At the same time, pockets of existing residential density offer promising local precedents for *10-minute neighbourhoods* such as the downtown, near Lake Trail Community School, lower Ryan Road, and near the Air Park.

Employment density is also important to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as the concentration of jobs in a particular area can affect transit ridership even more strongly than the concentration of residents. For growth centres and corridors, employment densities should be considered in tandem with residential densities, as they both contribute to transit viability and improve residents' access to jobs by foot, bicycle, or transit. In Courtenay, there are pockets of high job density at important employment anchors, including the downtown area, lower Ryan Road, North Island College, and North Island Hospital Comox Valley, and retail areas along the Cliffe Avenue corridor.

In Courtenay, areas with higher employment densities tend not to directly overlap or integrate with areas of higher population density; however, a number of these areas are near one another – thus providing a foundation for the reality of *10-minute neighbourhoods* throughout Courtenay.

<sup>1</sup> Minimum densities to support frequent transit are approximately 30 residential units per hectare, or 50 jobs per hectare, or a combination of residential units and jobs reflecting these respective land use densities.



### ***3. Supporting high-quality urban form & design***

Urban form refers to the physical structure and appearance of a community. It determines how open spaces, transportation networks, ecological systems, buildings, and humans relate to each other in physical space. Urban form and design should also communicate a community's values, reflect its heritage and character, and make a space a place people want to be. Urban form considerations are key to ensuring that mixed use, higher density centres throughout Courtenay are thoughtfully designed to complement and enhance the neighbourhoods in which new development will occur.

Connectivity, as an outcome of urban form, is one of the most significant factors in the frequency and quantity of walking trips, which in turn also supports transit. Connected streets provide multiple route options throughout the community while 'dead-end and loop streets' serve adjacent properties only. The downtown area reflects a traditional small block grid pattern that was common to this era: well-connected with many options for travel by foot, bicycle, and vehicle.

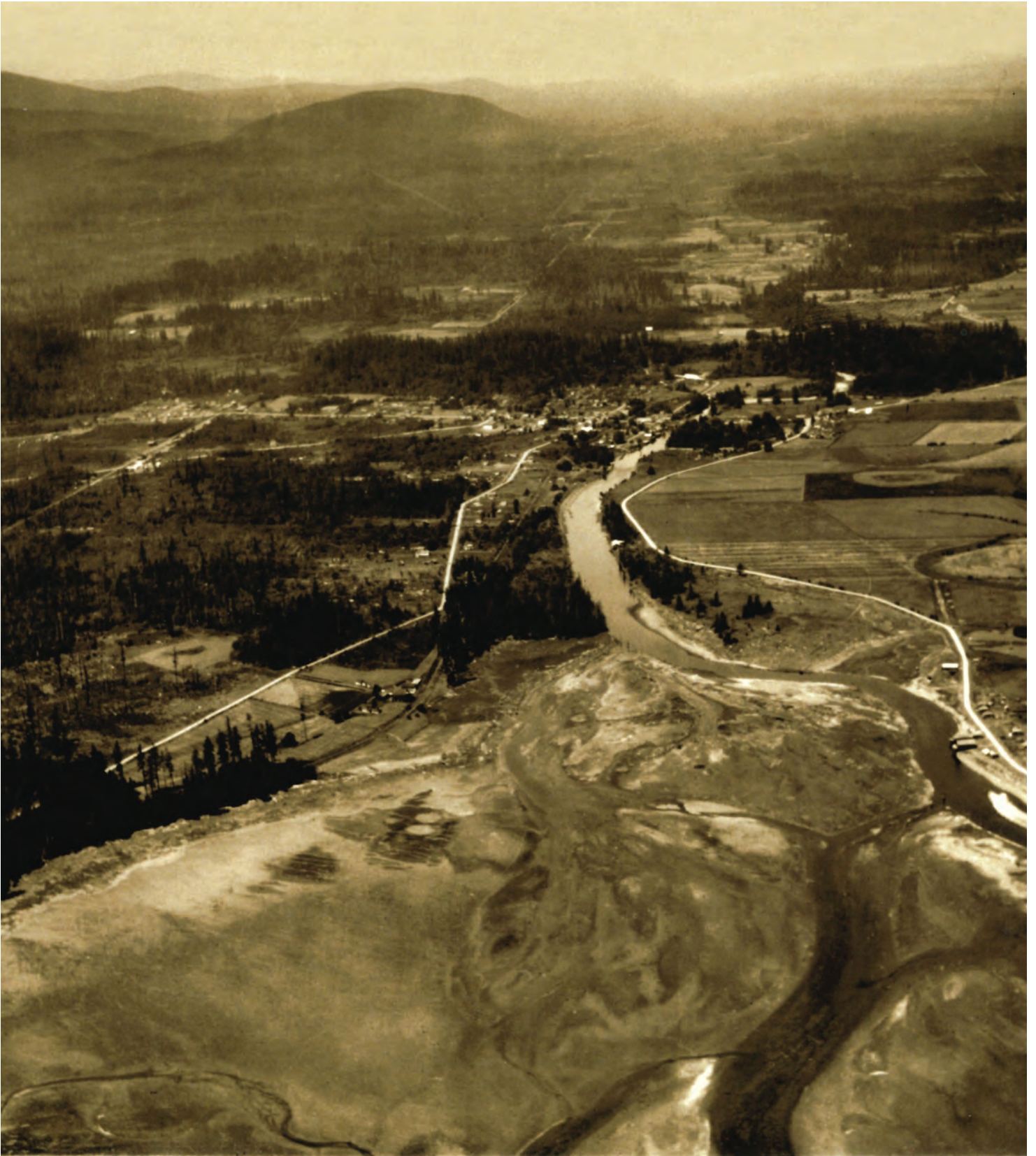
Streetscape quality and composition also have significant influence on the transportation experience and therefore desirability of walking and cycling in a city. Streetscapes that accommodate more public activities such as socializing, shopping, playing, sitting, and lingering are important conduits of the social fabric of the community and help establish a sense of place and identity. Features within the streetscape to accommodate these activities include attention to the human scale of developments to ensure architecture and landscapes feel comfortable, sufficiently wide sidewalks, cycling infrastructure, frequent seating, street trees, and landscaping.

Access to parks, natural areas, and other open spaces is another important measure of how well urban form is meeting the needs of residents. Fortunately, within Courtenay 98% of residents are within a 10-minute walk of a public park.

## CO-BENEFITS OF THOUGHTFUL LAND USE PLANNING

Mixing uses, strategically focusing increased densities and attention to high-quality urban form are important land use ingredients that together deliver on a number of benefits to a community's success:

- **Community Character** – This refers to the “look and feel” and overall attractiveness of a city. The height and type of buildings, and the uses within them, influence street life and help shape a distinguishable visual identity that creates a unique sense of place.
- **Housing Choices** – Different building types offer different housing choices (e.g., single residential house, townhouse, apartment) available for individuals and families. Land use policies that enable housing diversity to reflect a community's diversity contribute to a community's housing affordability.
- **Transportation Choices** – The intensity and distribution of buildings, along with land use and transportation infrastructure, greatly impacts how people choose to move around. Some forms of development make it convenient, safe, and desirable to move around on foot, by bike, or by transit, while other forms of development effectively limit transportation choices to travel by car. Transportation choice in turn influences an individual's level of physical activity, and thus their health and safety. Owning a car is also the second-greatest expense in many households after housing, therefore more transportation choices contribute to a household's affordability.
- **Protection of Agricultural Land and Natural Environment** – The physical footprint of a city and the degree to which growth is managed within existing built-up areas greatly influence a community's ability to protect its surrounding natural areas and agricultural lands from encroaching development.
- **Sustainable Servicing** – This includes municipal infrastructure, ranging from roads to sewers to parks. The efficiency and sustainability of providing these services to citizens across the city is influenced by the distribution and intensity of development.
- **Municipal Finances and Taxes** – Municipal servicing efficiency in turn impacts the cost of providing services, which affects the City's financial bottom line and ultimately the taxes paid by residents and businesses.



*View from K'ómoks Estuary looking up the Courtenay River in the 1920s. Photo from Courtenay Heritage Commission.*



# HOW COURTENAY WILL GROW

## *Defining the Urban Physical Framework*

Figure B-1 illustrates the urban framework concept for Courtenay. This urban framework concept will direct growth over approximately the next 10 years, after which new growth centres will have to be identified to plan for and manage growth. Map B-1 illustrates the corresponding land use plan which provides parcel level detail of the land use designations within the urban framework concept. Land use designations and area specific policies are described further in Part B.

The strategy for managing Courtenay's growth is to build upon and strengthen existing successful nodes and corridors within existing neighbourhoods across the city by guiding the majority of future growth toward a series of identified distinct and connected mixed use areas. Focusing growth within existing urban areas is established best community planning and municipal Asset Management practice and is assessed to be the optimum growth pattern to meet the ambitious vision and interrelated goals that direct this Plan.

## *Identifying Growth Locations*

Seven growth centres and connecting corridors were identified as most suitable for community growth. A series of geospatial variables were modelled together to identify the best locations for growth to achieve a number of community goals. For example:

- Floodplain hazard lands. Growth is located away from the floodplain because new residences are not appropriate in these areas.
- *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. Growth is focused away from these areas in order to not place development and ecological protection in conflict. Wherever growth is planned or proposed near *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, biologist studies and site specific mitigation proposals will be required to prioritize protection and *restoration* of sensitive ecosystems to the fullest extent possible.
- Distance to common destinations such as stores, schools, commercial and employment centres, parks, and community service facility locations. Growth is targeted around a number of existing community destinations in order to form the basis of successful *10-minute neighbourhoods*.
- Proximity to the frequent transit corridor. Growth is targeted near and along the Frequent Transit Network to improve transit service frequency, and provide convenient transit for more people.

- Redevelopment opportunities, recent development trends, and viability of development. Growth is located in areas where undeveloped or older properties are located to accommodate new development or redevelopment into something modified or new.
- Future GHG emission reduction scenario modelling. Growth is located to maximize the ability for people to walk, wheel, cycle, and take transit, as well as increase the number of multi-residential buildings to maximize building energy efficiency and housing affordability.

### **Primary Growth Locations: Town Centres and Urban Corridor**

These areas are activity centres in the city and will continue to attract the highest densities in Courtenay in the form of new multi-residential buildings and a wide variety of commercial uses such as offices, retail stores, and large-format shopping (in centres outside the downtown). The primary growth locations are reflected in the Downtown, Town Centre, and Urban Corridor land use designations described in the following section. Primary growth centres are designated based on their central and connected locations throughout Courtenay, their existing densities and mix of uses, potential to accommodate more frequent transit, and focus public infrastructure investments.

### **Secondary Growth Locations: Neighbourhood Centres and Multi-Residential**

These areas include or are in close proximity to existing community and commercial services within established neighbourhoods. The development opportunity within these areas will largely be *redevelopment* opportunities from lower density to higher density or from a single use today to a mixed use in the future. These areas will accommodate

medium-density residential development up to four storeys with small-scale neighbourhood commercial uses and community services within the Neighbourhood Centres, and up to six storeys of residences in the Multi-Residential designation.

### **Outside of Growth Locations: *Infill* Areas**

These areas include all lower-density residential zones throughout the city, often referred to as single residential. Today some neighbourhoods of Courtenay within these areas are permitted a secondary residence, while others are not. In support of the growth strategy, *infill* development will be permitted throughout Courtenay in the form secondary suites and duplexes and detached secondary residences. Multi-residential will be supported along the Frequent Transit Network.

The modelling result indicates that in order to maximize the potential for transit and walking supportive densities, and thus lower locally generated transportation-related GHGs, that in the order of 70% of new growth should be directed to the primary and secondary growth centres in the form of a variety of multi-residential buildings of varying sizes and characters. Outside of these centres, 30% should be directed to existing neighbourhoods in the forms and land uses described for the *infill* areas.

### ***Determining Land Use Designations***

Land use objectives, policies, and designations are described further in this section and provide more detail on how future growth will be guided for specific areas. They were developed based on the urban framework concept described here and presented in Figure B-1.



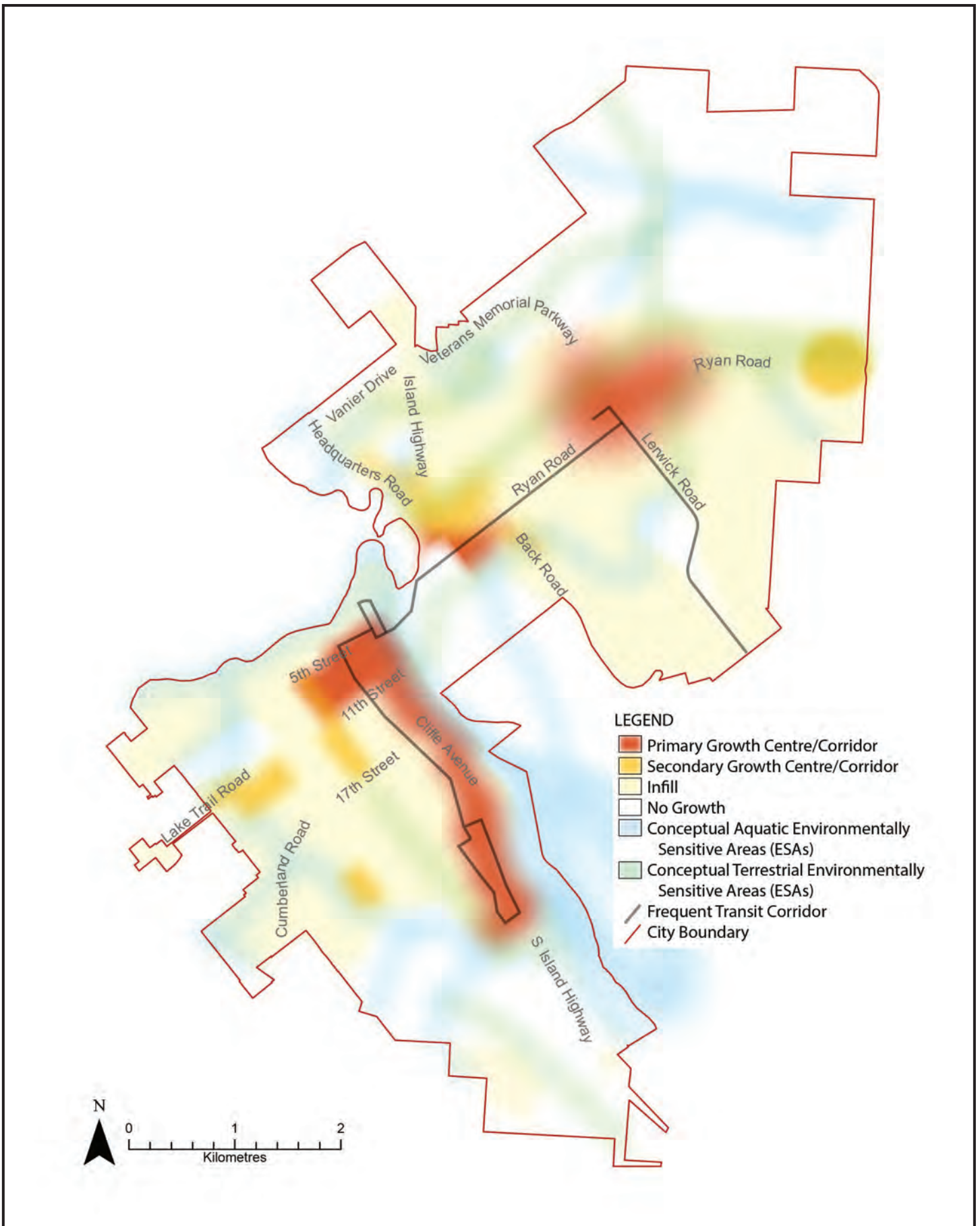
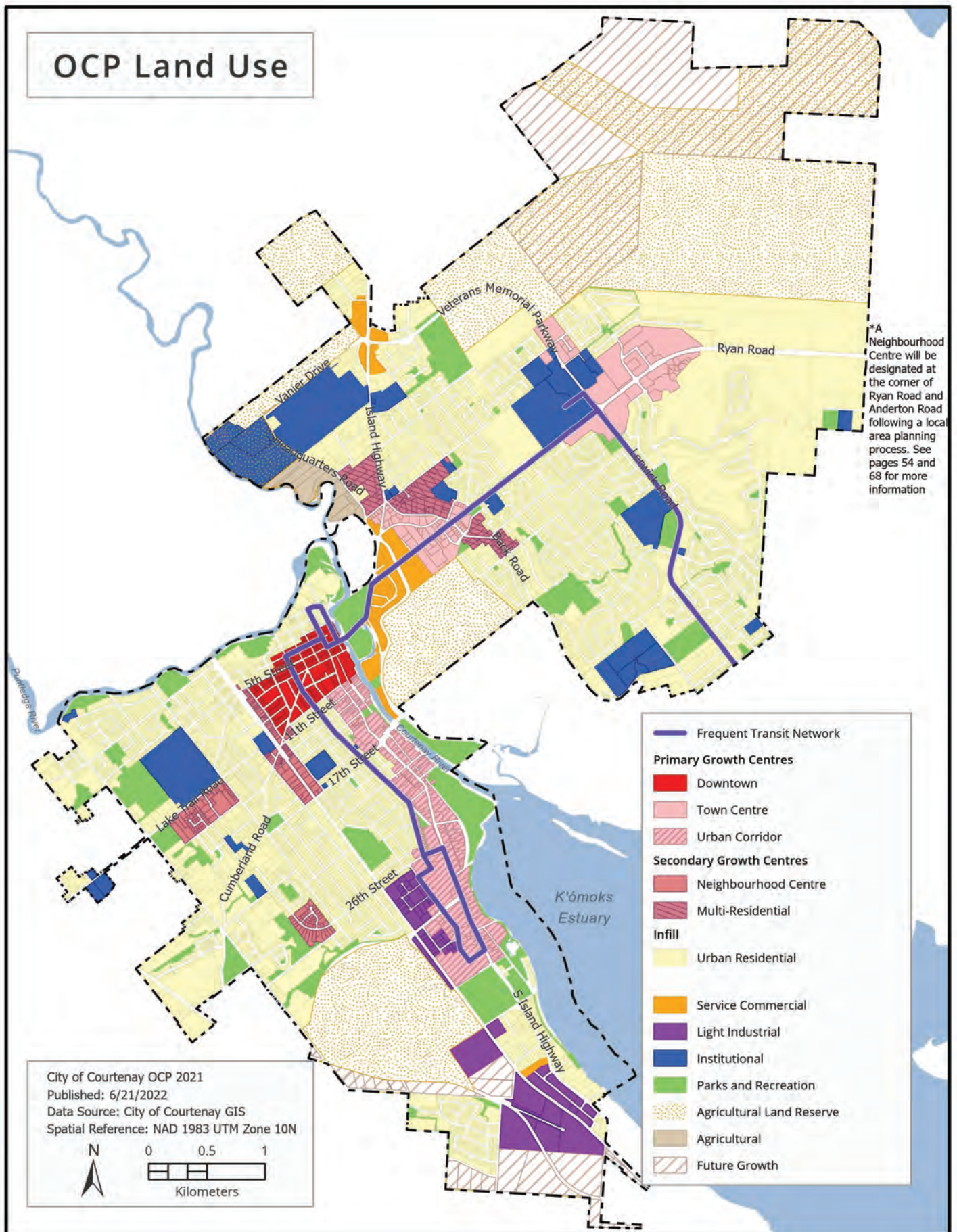


Figure B-1 Urban Framework Growth Concept





Map B-1 Land Use Designations.





## LAND USE OBJECTIVES

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1. Community growth is located away from hazardous lands, agricultural lands, and *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*
2. The majority of community growth is strategically guided into growth centres to create more *10-minute neighbourhoods*
3. Moderate *infill* development occurs across the entire city outside of growth centres
4. Sub-area planning provides more direction on growth
5. Municipal infrastructure planning and investments align with the urban framework concept
6. New growth takes place within the existing city boundary

- Objective 1** Community growth is located away from hazardous lands, agricultural lands, and *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*
- Objective 2** The majority of community growth is strategically guided into growth centres to create more *10-minute neighbourhoods*
- Objective 3** Moderate *infill* development occurs across the entire city outside of growth centres

## Policies

- LU 1** Allocate all growth in a manner generally consistent with Map B-1: Land Use Designation Map, to meet Courtenay's 2050 net-zero greenhouse gas emissions target and support a compact urban form that:
- Encourages higher density and mixed uses in growth centres;
  - Meets or exceeds the Comox Valley *Regional Growth Strategy* minimum density targets of 100-150 residents and jobs per hectare in the Town Centres and Urban Corridors;
  - Integrates land use and transportation planning;
  - Supports greater transportation choices and prioritizes active modes and transit use;
  - Supports housing affordability and diversity;
  - Reduces pressure on agricultural and natural areas;
  - Avoids risks and impacts of natural hazards such as flooding;
  - Optimizes efficient use of existing infrastructure and municipal assets;
  - Includes adequate public open and green spaces and access to nature; and
  - Supports distinct neighbourhoods.
- LU 2** Direct residential *intensification* to the primary and secondary growth centres as shown as Downtown, Town Centre, Urban Corridor, and Neighbourhood Centre on Map B-1: Land Use Designation Map and in accordance with the land use designations contained within this Plan.



- LU 3** Support and encourage *infill* housing choices across the city through distribution of new residential growth in existing neighbourhoods outside of – and in support of – primary and secondary growth centres and in accordance with the land use designations contained within this Plan.
- LU 4** Outside of primary and secondary growth centres, prioritize higher density proposals in the vicinity to transit corridors and within the Multi-Residential land use designation.
- LU 5** Strongly discourage new growth outside of the primary and secondary growth centres and *infill* areas, except where existing zoning permits.
- LU 6** Co-locate residential, commercial, institutional, and suitable employment-generating land uses in the Downtown, Town Centres & Urban Corridor, and Neighbourhood Centres.
- LU 7** Support small-scale neighbourhood-serving commercial uses such as local cafés, corner stores, and grocers in every neighbourhood outside of growth centres subject to rezoning application.
- LU 8** Wherever growth is planned or proposed near *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, biologist studies and site specific mitigation proposals will be required to prioritize protection and *restoration* of sensitive ecosystems to the fullest extent possible.

## Objective 4 Sub-area planning provides more direction on growth

### Policies

- LU 9** Complete local area plans in the following neighbourhoods through the annual budget process and by a resolution of Council:
  - a.** Harmston Avenue Civic Precinct
  - b.** Courtenay Airpark Civic Precinct
  - c.** Lake Trail Neighbourhood Centre
  - d.** McPhee Neighbourhood Centre
  - e.** Lands within the Courtenay River Floodplain as shown on Map B-8, following completion of the Flood Management Plan.
- LU 10** Require a local area plan, adopted by Council, before any new development approvals are issued for the Ryan Road and Anderton Road Neighbourhood Centre. Establish a Terms of Reference with land owners to ensure a shared understanding of local area plan objectives, process, and content.
- LU 11** Consider watershed health objectives at the outset of all sub-area land use planning processes to ensure land use and infrastructure policies support improved watershed health.

- LU 12** Protect significant views of historical landscapes and/or buildings, or significant features, including Comox Glacier, Courtenay, Puntledge, and Tsolum Rivers, K'ómoks Estuary, and Salish Sea.
- LU 13** Complete a view corridor study to explore the impact of building heights on views of community importance.
- LU 14** Buildings greater than 8 storeys are subject to a detailed view corridor, solar and shading analysis as part of rezoning applications.

## Objective 5 Municipal Infrastructure planning and investments align with the urban framework concept

### Policies

- LU 15** Coordinate infrastructure upgrades and system extensions with the growth management principles and policies established in the OCP.
- LU 16** Prioritize infrastructure investment using a multiple bottom line decision-making approach based generally on the following parameters and priorities:
  - a.** High-growth areas;
  - b.** Public health and safety;
  - c.** Environmental responsibility;
  - d.** Regulatory need;
  - e.** Asset management principles;
  - f.** Economic efficiencies and impact, such as partnerships, project coordination, and economic spinoffs.
- LU 17** The phasing and development of municipal water and sanitary sewer trunk lines and infrastructure shall generally follow the extent and locations as shown in Map APX-11 Water and Map APX-12 Sanitary Sewer and in accordance with the latest servicing master plans.
- LU 18** Limit community sewer service expansion into Future Growth and Agricultural designated lands, except where infrastructure is already planned or needed to address public or environmental health issues and protection of *natural assets* as identified by the City or other levels of government.
- LU 19** Review servicing master plans, including associated asset management plans, periodically to align with the land use policies. Identify existing servicing capacities to determine upgrade requirements for capital planning and assess the long-term viability of these infrastructure systems.

**LU 20** Municipal servicing is not supported outside of City boundaries. Notwithstanding this and the above policies, the City will work with K'ómoks First Nation where needed to extend municipal services to K'ómoks First Nation Indian Reserve lands through servicing agreements consistent with the OCP and *Regional Growth Strategy*.

## Objective 6 New growth takes place within the existing city boundary

### Policies

**LU 21** Boundary extensions will not generally be supported over the life of this Plan. However, for the purpose of creating commercial or industrial employment opportunities, boundary extension may be considered following analysis consistent with the OCP and *Regional Growth Strategy*.





## GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES

1. Parks, pathways, community gardens, and other recreation uses are permitted in all land use designations.
2. Community services facilities including childcare facilities are supported in all land use designations except Agricultural, Light Industrial, and Future Growth.
3. Home occupations of a limited scale are permitted in all residential uses.
4. Rezoning applications for long-term care, supportive, and transitional housing will be supported in all land use designations except Future Growth, Agricultural, Service Commercial, Light Industrial, and Parks and Recreation.
5. Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) exclusion applications will not be supported.
6. Development of lands adjacent to the Agricultural Land Reserve must take best land use practice into account to promote compatibility along agricultural-urban edges.
7. Industrial uses adjacent to residential lands must take best land use practice into account to promote compatibility between residential and industrial uses and minimize negative impacts.
8. Community centres are encouraged within each Neighbourhood and Town Centre in order to provide better access to community services and amenities at the neighbourhood scale.
9. Panhandle lots are permitted to support *intensification* subject to zoning regulations and other technical requirements such as fire prevention and access agreements.
10. New commercial land uses involving drive-through facilities are not permitted.
11. No sand or gravel extraction areas are identified in this Plan.

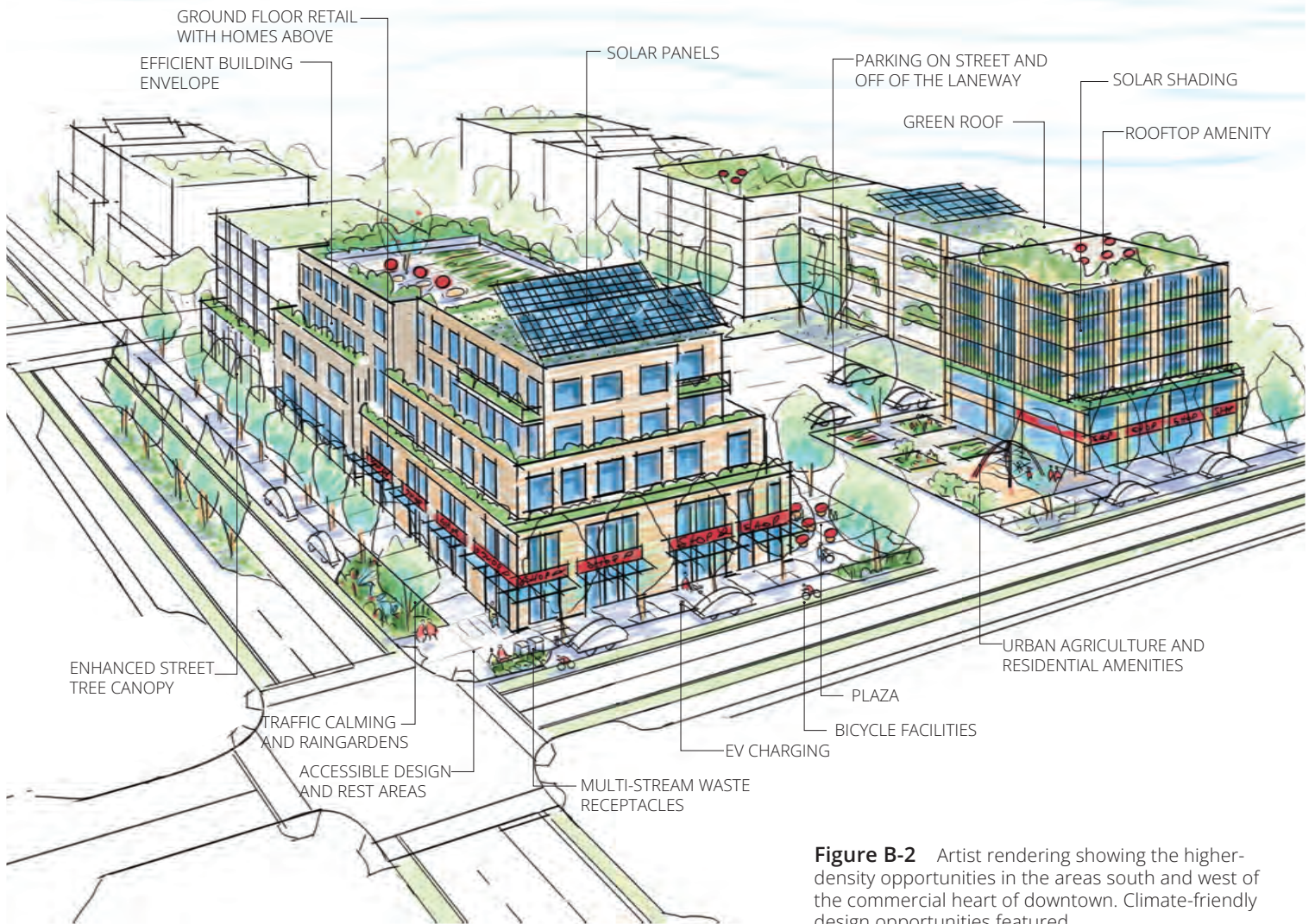
## SPECIFIC LAND USE DESIGNATION POLICIES

The following section provides general descriptions, land use policies, desired built form, and permitted land uses of each land use designation shown on Map B-1. The Land Use Designation Map and descriptions of each designation should be read together to identify the locations of permitted land uses, built form, and specific land use policies.

The permitted uses listed in each designation are not a complete list. Specific uses are provided in the Courtenay *Zoning Bylaw*. Zone boundaries established in the City's *Zoning Bylaw* will determine which zoning regulations apply such as specific land uses, permissible densities, setbacks, lot coverage, parking requirements, massing and height, as well as other associated regulations or requirements.

**Definitions:**

<p><b>GROUND-ORIENTED BUILDINGS</b></p>	<p><i>Up to 4 storeys, where each unit must contain a direct access to the outside at grade level.</i></p> 
<p><b>LOW-RISE</b></p>	<p><i>Up to 4 storeys</i></p> 
<p><b>MID-RISE</b></p>	<p><i>5 or 6 storeys</i></p> 
<p><b>HIGH-RISE</b></p>	<p><i>7 or 8 storeys</i></p>  <p><i>Buildings over 8 storeys are subject to view, solar access and shading analysis.</i></p>
<p><b>REGIONAL</b></p>	<p><i>Area within Comox Valley Regional District boundary</i></p>
<p><b>CITY-WIDE</b></p>	<p><i>Area within Courtenay boundary</i></p>
<p><b>LOCAL</b></p>	<p><i>Land use designation areas and/or its sub-areas</i></p>



**Figure B-2** Artist rendering showing the higher-density opportunities in the areas south and west of the commercial heart of downtown. Climate-friendly design opportunities featured.

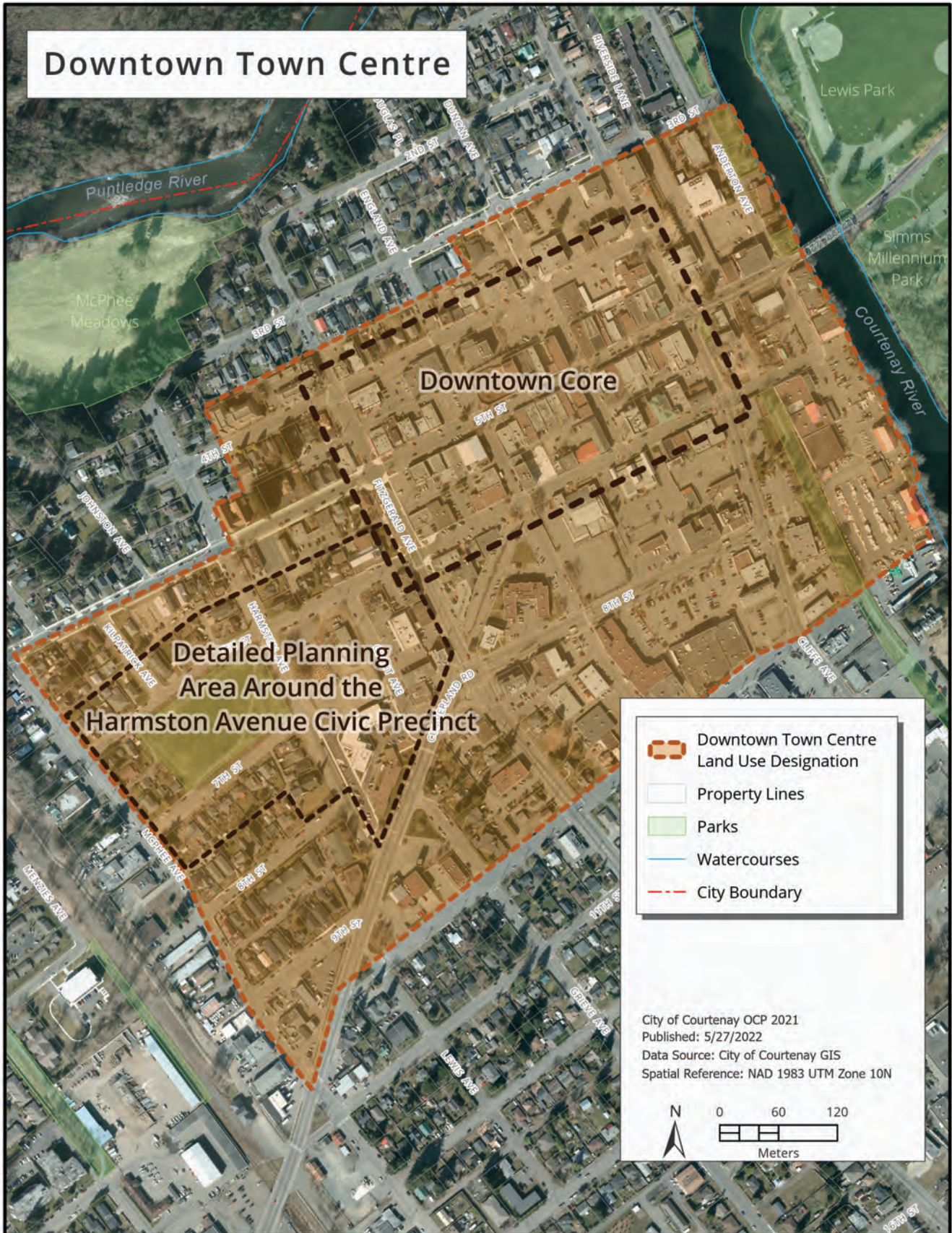
## DOWNTOWN

As a type of Town Centre, the downtown is intended to function as the local, city-wide and regional centre of cultural, civic, culinary, economic, and public life with the widest range of activities and attraction for residents and visitors, day and night, throughout the year. Identified needs in the downtown are more housing, more space for special events and gatherings, more access to and integration with the Tsolum and Puntledge rivers, and better opportunities to

get to and circulate within the downtown – particularly by foot, transit, and cycling.

The *2016 Downtown Playbook: A Partnership Action Plan* was created following extensive public consultation. It continues to reflect the future vision of the downtown and provides a reference when preparing development proposals and capital investments in the area.





Map B-2 Downtown Town Centre

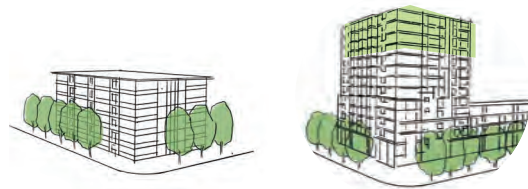


## Policies

1. Continue to support a diverse range of land uses within the downtown including diversity of multi-residential housing choices, small scale commercial uses, and other supportive uses to promote the establishment of a complete community and *10-minute neighbourhood*.
2. Locate new government facilities downtown.
3. Encourage post-secondary institutions to locate downtown, including satellite locations.
4. Require commercial uses at grade along 4th, 5th, and 6th Streets.
5. Consider and study the option of eliminating off-street vehicular parking requirements throughout the downtown.
6. Ensure more public and semi-public gathering spaces are incorporated into new developments.
7. Consider future use of public lands to promote community goals including for *affordable housing*, community gathering, and open space.
8. Ensure compatibility of land uses between the downtown and adjacent urban residential neighbourhoods by providing transitional form, character, and densities.
9. Protect the historic, small-scale retail character of the 4th, 5th, and 6th Street streetscapes through the use of form and character Development Permit Area guidelines.
10. Improve physical and visual connections to, along, and across the rivers, integrating nature and recreation with the downtown.
11. Support uses and activities that encourage both daytime and nighttime activation.
12. Protect views from public open spaces, including streets and sidewalks, of identified public realm view corridors. These include: Comox Glacier, Courtenay, Puntledge, and Tsolum Rivers, K'ómoks Estuary, and the Salish Sea.
13. Work towards the vision of a public plaza in the form of a Commons and Mews (described in *The 2016 Downtown Playbook: A Partnership Action Plan*) as the public heart of the downtown, providing for informal gathering and formal social and cultural events.
14. Seek opportunities to establish unique character districts such as riverfront, artisan, or live-work maker spaces for the lands between the Courtenay River and Cliffe Avenue.
15. Establish and promote distinctive character designations for the core downtown streets with the following concepts as inspiration:
  - a) 4th Street, the Market Street: Small food retailers, food festivals, flexible use of public space, food focus marketing and celebration.
  - b) 5th Street, the Shopping Street: Wide range of small retail, wider sidewalk, and street space for outdoor dining and product display, public seating arrangements for meetings and casual encounters.
  - c) 6th Street, the Green Street: Dedicated cycling and walking connection from west to east Courtenay, connecting community services and public spaces, serving as a festival street integrated with a Downtown Commons and Mews with plenty of public outdoor seating and greenery.

## Built Form

- Low-rise buildings along 5th Street and adjacent to Urban Residential Neighbourhood areas.
- Mid- and high-rise buildings to be considered in other parts of the downtown.



- Minimal or no street-fronting setbacks along 4th, 5th, and 6th Streets within the downtown core.

## Permitted Uses

- Multi-unit residential (with retail on ground level)
- Mixed use (retail on ground level)
- Commercial – retail & office
- Restaurant
- Craft brewing
- Regional scale offices
- Community services
- Institutional
- Artist live-work studio spaces
- Supportive and transitional housing
- Long-term care

## Downtown Area-Specific Profiles and Planning Directions

### HARMSTON AVENUE CIVIC PRECINCT

Harmston Park and the City-owned lands on the east side of Harmston Avenue are approximately two hectares of underutilized space in downtown Courtenay. The City's ownership of these lands provides a unique opportunity to achieve additional goals of the OCP and *2016 Downtown Courtenay Playbook*.

The Harmston Avenue Civic Precinct lands are designated as Downtown and they interface with the Old Orchard heritage neighbourhood and the McPhee Neighbourhood Centre.

### Policies

1. Initiate a process to develop a local area plan for the precinct in order to provide clarity of development goals for the publically owned lands as well as direction to the development of privately owned lands. The plan will include:
  - a) neighbourhood and community-wide consultation;
  - b) a mix of land use, and tenures including public and private ownership;





Figure B-3 Artist rendering looking north along Cliffe Avenue, Urban Corridor land use designation.



## TOWN CENTRE & URBAN CORRIDOR

The two Town Centres (lower Ryan Road area, and upper Ryan Road area) and Urban Corridor along Cliffe Avenue (between 11th Street and Anfield Road), are intended to be primary focus areas of commercial and residential densities outside the downtown. These areas will support a mix of uses that include a variety of higher-density housing choices as well as regional retail destinations.

### Policies

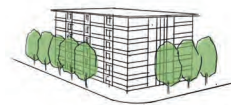
1. Support a mix of land uses, including commercial and a diversity of multi-residential housing choices to promote the establishment of a complete community and *10-minute neighbourhood*.
2. Encourage commercial uses at grade along Cliffe Avenue.
3. Use *redevelopment* opportunities to transform vehicle-centric development to pedestrian-priority urban designs.

### Permitted Uses

- Multi-unit residential
- Mixed use
- Commercial
- Commercial-big-box
- Community services
- Institutional
- Supportive and transitional housing
- Long-term care

### Built Form

Low- and Mid-rise buildings



Low-rise buildings adjacent to Urban Residential Neighbourhoods



Mid- and High-rise buildings





# NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

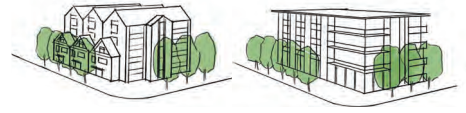
These areas include smaller-scale mixed-use areas (than Town Centres) that include a diversity of destinations and housing choices. These secondary growth locations include lands along the E&N railway corridor between 5th and 17th Streets, around the Lake Trail Community School, the Tin Town area, and a new neighbourhood centre to be planned around the intersection of Ryan Road and Anderton Road.

## Policies

1. Allow a diversity of multi-residential housing choices, small scale commercial uses, and other supportive uses to promote the establishment of a complete community and 10-minute neighbourhood.

## Built Form

Ground-oriented and low-rise buildings



## Permitted Uses

- Multi-unit residential
- Mixed use
- Commercial – small scale
- Small art studios & offices
- Community services and amenities
- Institutional use
- Supportive and transitional housing
- Long-term care
- Maker spaces and live-work studios

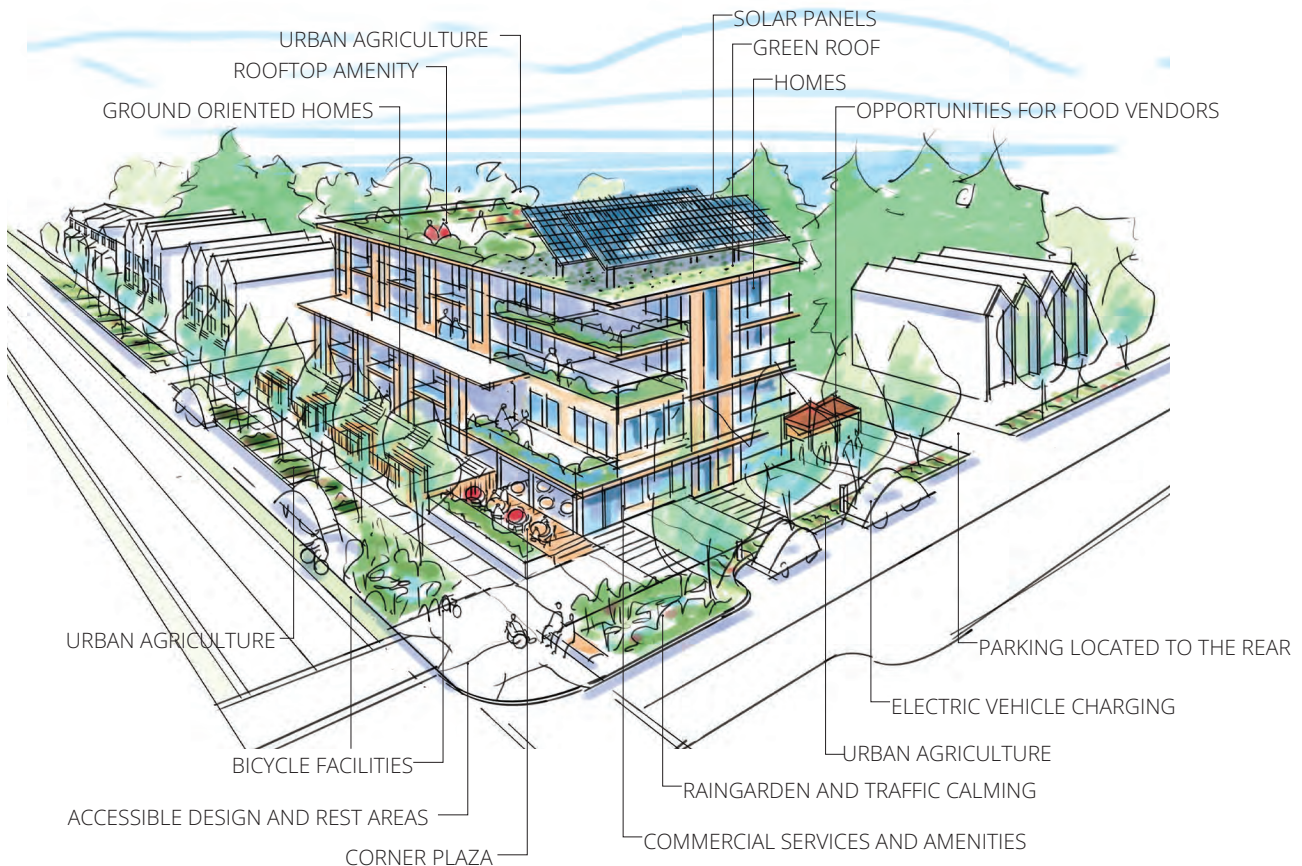


Figure B-4 Artist rendering showing a Neighbourhood Centre. Climate-friendly design opportunities featured.



## **Neighbourhood Centre Area-Specific Profiles and Planning Directions**

### **LAKE TRAIL**

The Lake Trail neighbourhood today includes a range of medium density, *affordable housing* options within the context of older suburban lots and some larger rural residential properties. The Lake Trail Community School has offered recreational programming opportunities to the wider community for over a decade and the Roy Morrison Park and connections to regional greenways provide enviable access to nature at the neighbourhood's doorstep. The Arden and Morrison Creeks that flow through and near this centre are also home to a federally listed endangered fish species. The Morrison Creek Lamprey is found nowhere else in the world.

The Neighbourhood Centre designation for these lands is supportive of Courtenay's long-term growth vision given its existing mix and density of uses, access to recreational amenities, and opportunities for further partnership with the School District to provide more recreational services to west Courtenay.

Under the direction of the OCP, this area will continue to support medium to higher density residential and mixed uses in order to create a vibrant neighbourhood centre along the city's western boundary. This area is identified as a candidate for local area planning process and plan in order to provide more specific guidance to this centre as the community grows including how best to protect and restore fish habitat and *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*.

### **McPHEE**

The Neighbourhood Centre designation for these lands is supportive of Courtenay's long-term growth vision given its strategic location within the heart of west Courtenay. Commercial and community amenities are within easy walking and cycling distance and more residential density could be accommodated to support transit frequency and use.

Under the direction of the OCP, this area will undergo a significant land use change from the predominantly industrial uses of the past hundred years to a mix of residential, commercial, and light industrial uses in the future.

Within these lands, uses that are similar to the Tin Town 'live-work' options will be available and encouraged to support a neighbourhood character that connects historical uses with future needs. This area is identified as a candidate for local area planning process and plan in order to provide more specific guidance to this centre as the community grows.

### **TIN TOWN**

The Tin Town development was designed in the 1990s as a live-work community with residential units located above a range of permitted commercial, office, and light industrial uses. The adjacent industrial lands reflect the area's historical location as 'edge of town', an area characterized by wetlands and numerous watercourses all connecting to the Piercy creek. Today, this area of Courtenay is surrounded by residential developments of a variety of ages, some quite new, and is immediately adjacent to an expanding greenway network that will connect Puntledge River to the Comox Valley Parkway.





Map B-4 West Courtenay Neighbourhood Centres



The Neighbourhood Centre designation for the industrial and Tin Town lands has been identified as supportive of Courtenay's long-term growth vision given its existing mix of uses and location near recent residential development.

Within these lands, uses that are similar to the Tin Town 'live-work' and light industrial options will be available throughout the Neighbourhood Centre and encouraged to support a neighbourhood character that connects historical uses with future needs, including ecological *restoration* of Piercy creek.

### RYAN ROAD AND ANDERTON ROAD FUTURE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE AREA



**Map B-5** Ryan Road and Anderton Road neighbourhood local planning area.

Located at the Ryan Road and Anderton Road intersection, this Neighbourhood Centre is a future development opportunity. Anderton Road is currently a jurisdictional boundary between the City of Courtenay and unincorporated lands within the Comox Valley Regional District. Within the planning horizon of the OCP, lands within Courtenay's boundaries to the west of this centre are expected to develop under their existing zoning as residential developments with a mix of housing choices, thus supporting more demand within close proximity of this future Neighbourhood Centre. Existing undeveloped School District 71 and park lands will form an important part of the new neighbourhood. The adjacent unincorporated lands are identified in the *Regional Growth Strategy* as Settlement Expansion Areas to be eventually incorporated into the adjoining municipality.

The neighbourhood has been identified as supportive of Courtenay's long-term growth vision given the existing zoning development opportunity and its strategic location along significant regional routes: Comox Airport, Little River Ferry, and the Canadian Forces Base in Comox.

Given that these lands are undeveloped, a local area plan approved by Council will be required before any new development approvals are issued for the identified area. The local area plan shall include development concept and detailed land use, transportation, and parks networks that are functional and well-coordinated with other areas of Courtenay. Regional consideration and coordination will be an important part of the future planning of this neighbourhood centre.



## MULTI-RESIDENTIAL

Multi-residential lands are located between the Lower Ryan Road Town Centre and surrounding Urban Residential Neighbourhoods, which include parts of Back Road, Dingwall Road, and Headquarters Road. They provide additional residential density in proximity to a mix of uses and act as transitional areas between higher-activity mixed-use and commercial areas and urban residential neighbourhoods.

### *Policies*

1. Ensure compatibility of adjacent land uses by providing transitional uses, form, character, and densities between Urban Residential Neighbourhoods and Town Centres.
2. Mid-rise buildings are subject to rezoning and neighbourhood form and character integration considerations.

### *Built Form*

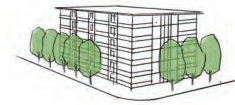
Ground-oriented



Low-rise buildings



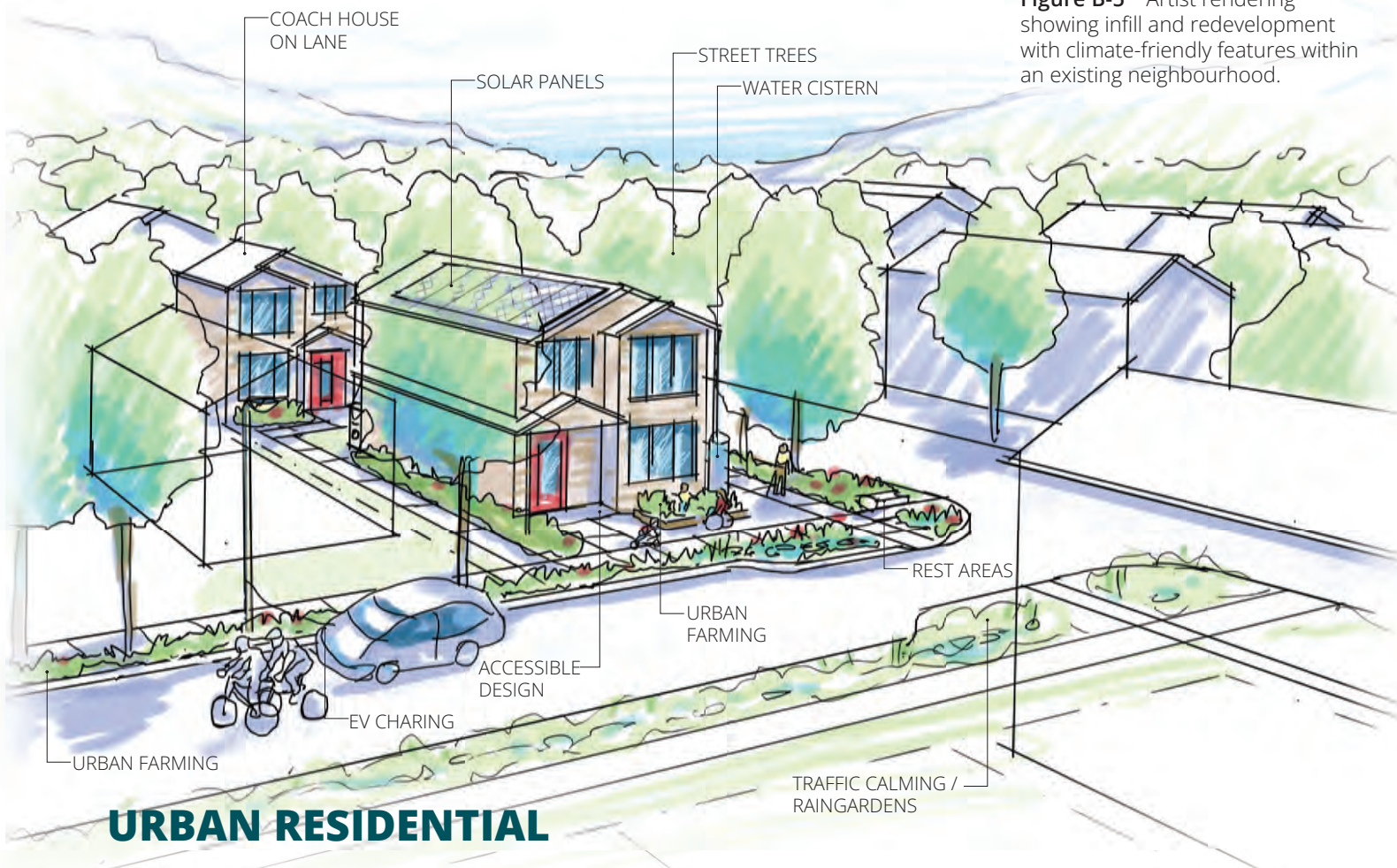
Mid-rise buildings



### *Permitted Uses*

- Multi-unit residential
- Community services
- Supportive and transitional housing
- Long-term care

**Figure B-5** Artist rendering showing infill and redevelopment with climate-friendly features within an existing neighbourhood.



## URBAN RESIDENTIAL

These neighbourhood areas are largely residential neighbourhoods comprised mainly of ground-oriented single-detached residential buildings. "Gentle *infill*" will be permitted in such areas in the form of an additional secondary residence. This may take the form of a secondary suite, or duplex, or carriage home or garden suite on lots with suitable access characteristics. Triplexes, townhomes, and small apartments will also be supported within these areas, particularly along the Frequent Transit Network, on a case-by-case basis and subject to rezoning applications. Limited small-scale commercial services will also be supported on a case-by-case basis and subject to rezoning applications.

### Policies

1. Support gentle *infill* that encourages greater housing choices and tenure types.
2. Support multi-residential buildings within the vicinity of the Frequent Transit Network, subject to rezoning.
3. Support limited small-scale, pedestrian-oriented, neighbourhood-serving commercial uses such as coffee shops and grocers, subject to rezoning.
4. Low- and mid-rise buildings are subject to rezoning and neighbourhood form and character integration considerations.
5. Support neighbourhood destinations and gathering spaces such as schools and community facilities.
6. Amend the *Zoning Bylaw* to permit secondary residences on all lots within traditionally single-residential dwelling neighbourhoods. For certainty, secondary residences are not permitted in *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* or floodplains.
7. Ensure new development reflects existing form and character of the established heritage neighbourhoods (Old Orchard, Terminal Addition, 40 Houses) through the use of intensive residential Development Permit Area guidelines.



### Built Form

- Ground-oriented buildings
- Low-rise buildings
- One (1) storey residential in the 40 Houses neighbourhood
- Cluster development



### Permitted Uses

- Single-detached residential
- Secondary suites
- Duplexes
- Multi-unit residential
- Detached secondary dwellings, where laneways are present and/ or where property dimensions allow for sufficient access
- Mobile homes and mobile home parks
- Small-scale neighbourhood-serving commercial uses, including with residential above the first floor
- Community services
- Urban agriculture
- Supportive and transitional housing
- Long-term care

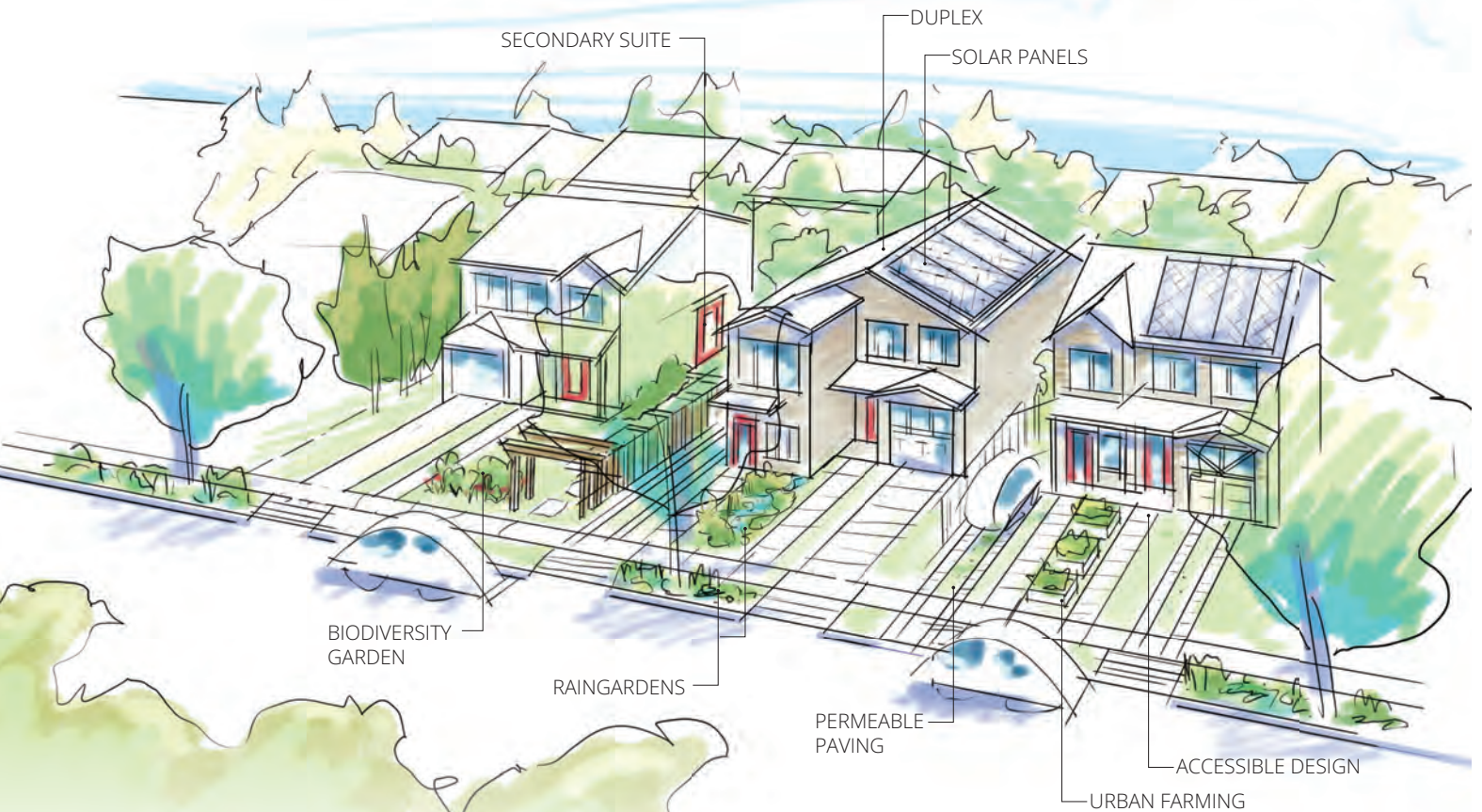


Figure B-6 Artist rendering showing infill and redevelopment on a residential street with climate-friendly design features.

## ***Urban Residential Area-Specific Profiles and Planning Directions***

### **OLD ORCHARD HERITAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Prior to Courtenay being incorporated, Joseph McPhee and Reginald Pidcock worked towards a *subdivision* of town lots in the area that would become downtown Courtenay. When lot sales failed to materialize, McPhee planted an orchard of 1,000 apple trees to supply produce for his store near 5th Street. Residential development eventually materialized, becoming one of the oldest residential neighbourhoods in Courtenay. The 'Old Orchard' residential neighbourhood maintains unique characteristics to this day that are identified for preservation and enhancement.

#### ***Policies***

1. Identify, preserve, and enhance heritage designs and landscapes.
2. Retain the neighbourhood building character as predominantly that of heritage style single-detached residential homes, following the neighbourhood-specific Intensive Residential Form and Character Development Permit Area guidelines.
3. Ensure a suitable interface and transition between the downtown commercial areas to traditional residential qualities of the neighbourhood.
4. Lot consolidation for the purpose of multi-residential and/or commercial development is discouraged, except where zoning permits or in transition areas adjacent the downtown.
5. Protect and preserve mature trees.

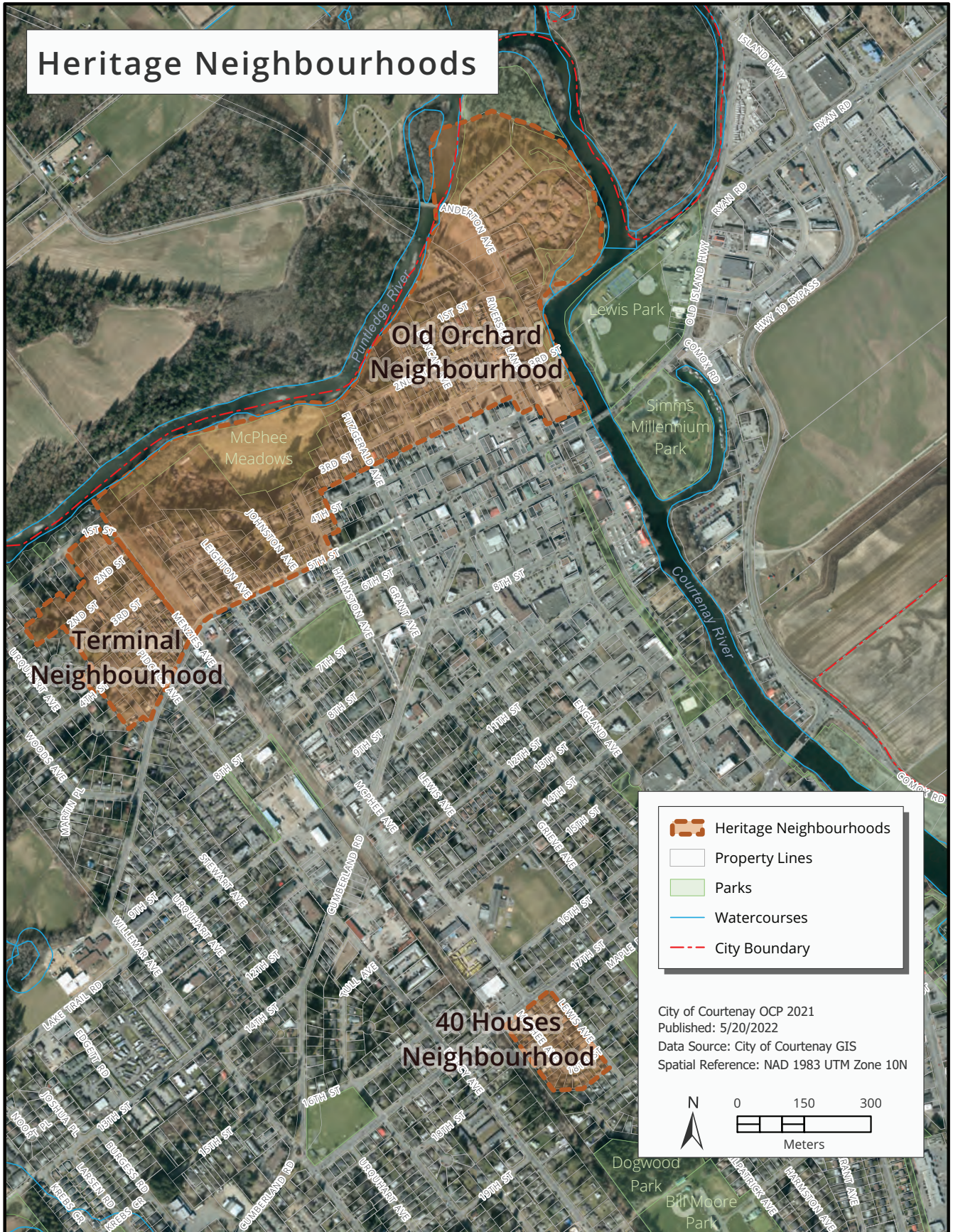
### **TERMINAL ADDITION HERITAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Located on the west side of the E&N railway track between 1st Street and 5th Street, and established in 1912, the Terminal Addition neighbourhood is one of the oldest residential *subdivisions* in Courtenay. The name originates from its proximity to the E&N rail terminus. Although the train station was located some distance away from the area, the track crossed 5th Street to the actual terminus of the line, where freight, including livestock, was unloaded. The neighbourhood displays distinctive heritage character and adds uniqueness to the history of Courtenay.

#### ***Policies***

1. Identify, preserve, and enhance heritage designs and landscapes.
2. Retain the neighbourhood building character as predominantly that of heritage style single-detached residential homes, following the neighbourhood-specific Intensive Residential Form and Character Development Permit Area guidelines.
3. Protect and preserve mature trees.





Map B-6 Heritage Neighbourhoods



## **40 HOUSES HERITAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD**

The 40 houses are valued as a group of properties for their connection to a federal housing program intended to provide returning veterans of World War II and their families with affordable and appropriate housing. This project was a joint Veterans Land Act and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation venture spearheaded by Mayor Harry Simms and the Courtenay Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. The houses were awarded to World War II veterans based on their length of service in Canada and overseas, intended length of residence, marital status, and number of dependents.

Historically, their construction reflects a significant stage in the development of Canadian communities. The construction of the 40 houses was part of the postwar response to a massive country-wide housing shortage created by the impact of the two World Wars. Similar housing developments were created across the country with modest homes on small, uniform lots aligning narrow, curving streets.

The neat, tidy, simple and efficient design of the houses and the *subdivision*, and the 40 houses location “in the woods,” reflects social attitudes of the early 20th century and influenced later housing styles and suburban development patterns.

### ***Policies***

1. Preserve the existing built-form by ensuring any redevelopment of properties replicates the original small-scale housing characteristics, following the neighbourhood specific Intensive Residential Form and Character Development Permit Area guidelines.
2. Create a new zone in the *Zoning Bylaw* to reflect the traditional height, massing, and siting.
3. Consider pursuing a formal heritage conservation area under the Local Government Act.

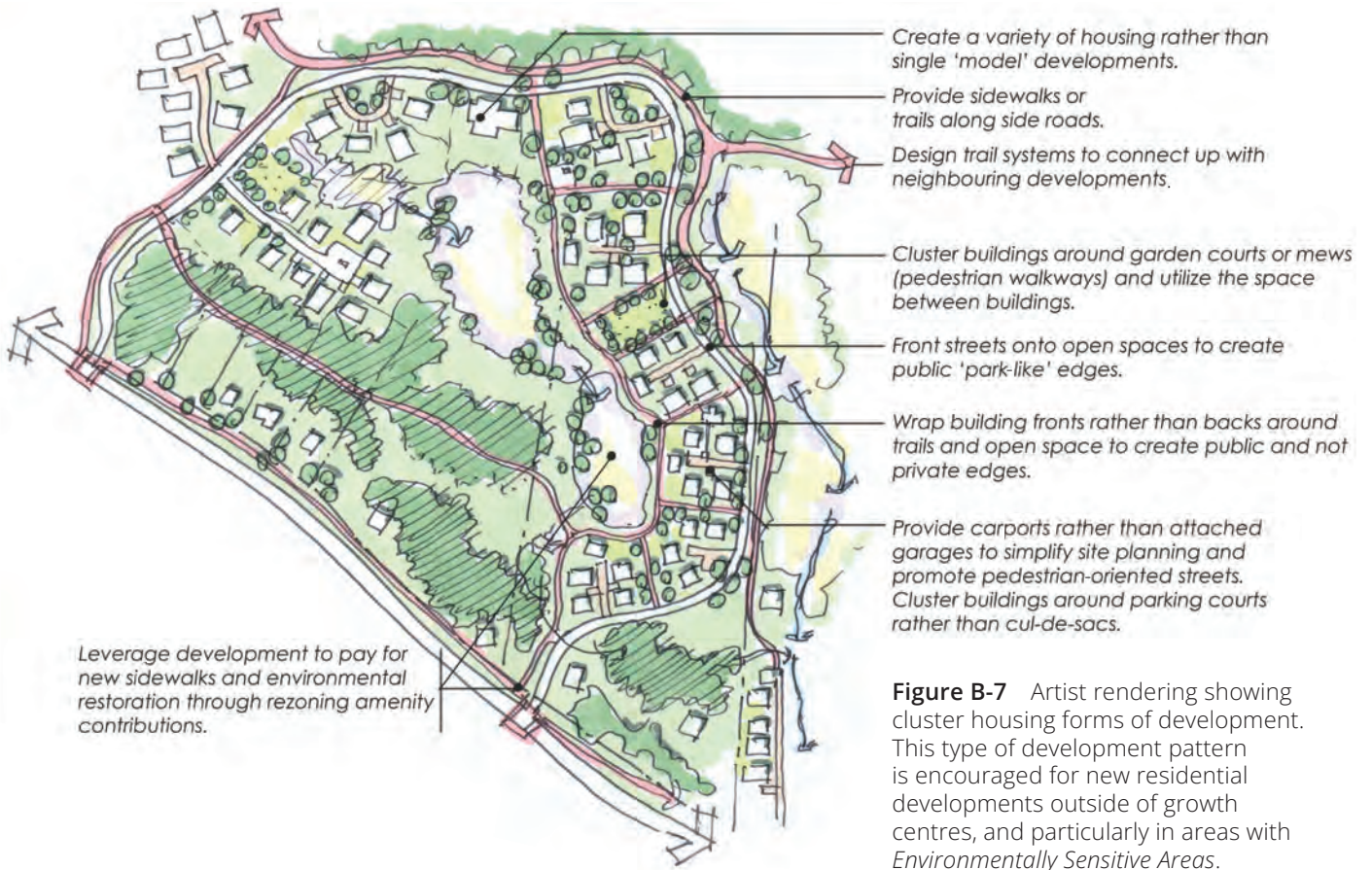
## **MOBILE HOME PARK RESIDENTIAL**

Mobile homes, including mobile home parks, are permitted in the Urban Residential land use designation and are subject to Intensive Residential Development Permit guidelines.

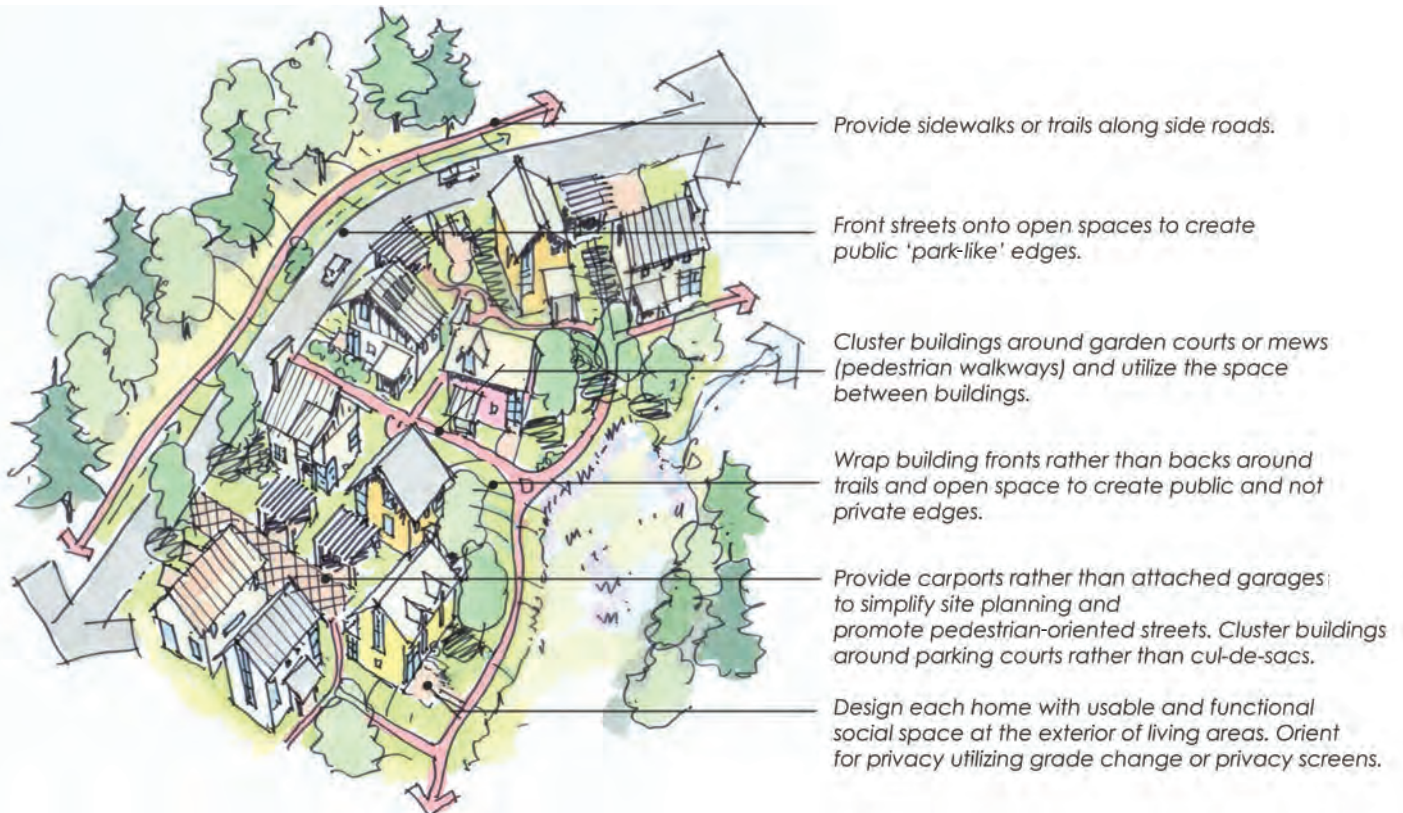
## **CROWN ISLE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Crown Isle refers to a master planned community area that has been steadily developing since the 1990s, when zoning was designated for an area approximately 3 km<sup>2</sup> (nearly 9% of the Courtenay's land base today). Predominant land uses include a golf course community with a significant residential component and commercial centres. Due to its master planned tailored zoning (Comprehensive Development (CD) zones in the *Zoning Bylaw*), that has been in place since the 1990s, the land use policy is to maintain the established uses as described in the relevant CD Zones. As described in the Neighbourhood Centres land use designation, a local area planning process is proposed for a new Neighbourhood Centre near the Ryan Road and Anderton Road intersection and will provide an opportunity for land uses to be explored in more detail in that area.





**Figure B-7** Artist rendering showing cluster housing forms of development. This type of development pattern is encouraged for new residential developments outside of growth centres, and particularly in areas with *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*.



**Figure B-8** Artist rendering showing cluster housing forms of development in more detail.

## SERVICE COMMERCIAL

These are specific parcels that are currently zoned for larger format commercial uses, including big-box, and that fall outside of Town Centres and Urban Corridors. They allow for the sale to the general public of goods that may require on-site storage to support the business' operation. A number of these lands are located within the floodplain and are not suitable for residential development.

### ***Policies***

1. Recognize the role of these lands as 'gateways' to or within Courtenay that must be managed to reflect their high visual profile, and promote a positive visual presence.
2. Use redevelopment opportunities to transform vehicle-centric development to pedestrian-priority urban designs.
3. Require commercial uses at grade where mixed use is permitted.

### ***Built Form***

- *Ground-oriented buildings*

### ***Permitted Uses***

- Commercial – service and big box
- Outdoor sales
- Agricultural (for lands within the floodplain)
- Mixed use commercial and residential for the lands outside of the floodplain

## LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Light industrial uses and employment lands accommodate a mix of light manufacturing, processing, warehousing, and distribution, and support the diversification of the City's economy.

### ***Policies***

1. Heavy industrial uses such as sawmills or outdoor manufacturing facilities are not supported.
2. Enable the flexible and appropriate adaptive use of industrial lands to meet evolving community needs.
3. Participate in monitoring at a regional scale the supply of readily serviced industrial land with the objective of maintaining sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the regional economy.

### ***Built Form***

- *Ground-oriented buildings*
- Low-rise buildings

### ***Permitted Uses***

- Manufacturing
- Distribution facilities
- Enclosed storage
- Indoor recreation requiring warehouse-type space
- Research and development
- Auto-oriented services
- Small item sales, service, and repair
- Accessory retail, office, and residential
- Fabrication and repair



## INSTITUTIONAL

These civic and institutional uses encompass educational facilities, health-care facilities, religious institutions, utilities, and agencies with limited accessory uses.

### *Policies*

1. Support integration of civic and institutional uses within centres and neighbourhoods.
2. Support limited office, commercial, and residential uses that are associated with and accessory to institutional uses.
3. Enable the flexible and appropriate adaptive use of institutional lands to meet evolving community needs.
4. Where land is designated as being within the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve, any uses must be permitted under the Agricultural Land Commission Act, regulations and orders.

### *Built Form*

- *Ground-oriented buildings*
- Low-, medium- and high-rise buildings

### *Permitted Uses*

- Government offices and facilities
- Schools and post-secondary institutions
- Health-care facilities
- Cultural and recreational facilities
- Community services
- Places of worship
- Supportive and transitional housing
- Long-term care
- Accessory commercial and office
- Accessory residential, including multi-residential
- Utilities
- Mixed-use

## PARKS AND RECREATION

Parks, trails, recreation facilities, and natural areas with limited accessory uses.

### *Policies*

1. Preserve, connect, and enhance access to natural areas, and open spaces.
2. Maximize opportunities for indoor and outdoor recreation programs and services.
3. Ensure safe, convenient access to neighbourhood parks and recreation amenities within walking distance.
4. Limit other uses that are associated with and accessory to parks and recreation uses.

### *Built Form*

- *Ground-oriented and low-rise buildings*

### *Permitted Uses*

- Parks and recreation areas
- Protected areas
- Recreational programs and services facilities

## ***Area-Specific Profiles and Planning Directions***

### **COURTENAY AIR PARK PRECINCT**

The Courtenay Air Park is comprised of public lands, some of which function as public park, and others that are leased to the Courtenay Airpark Association who manage and operate the Courtenay Airpark aerodrome. The Courtenay Airpark has more than 50 years of history since the first plane landed. The Airpark portion of the lands are used not only as a recreational airport, but also for medical aircraft, tourism, associated businesses, and local economic development purposes.

Surrounded by the rich, natural estuarine environment, these lands are within the floodplain and future uses must be carefully considered. With views of the mountains, the combined area of the aerodrome Airpark, public Air Park, and adjacent public marina and walkway is one of the most popular recreational destinations for the residents and visitors of the Comox Valley. Immediately surrounding the Airpark and Air Park are a mix of private commercial and residential uses and re-development opportunities. A precinct concept is envisioned in order that the wider area will continue to be a key destination for residents and visitors to experience and enjoy the public amenities and natural environment, while carefully accommodating new adjacent development where safe to do so.

### ***Policies***

1. Initiate a process to develop a local area plan for the precinct in order to ensure the area continues to be a key destination for residents and visitors to experience and enjoy while providing clarity of land use goals for the publically owned lands as well as direction to the development of privately owned lands.
2. Support expanded recreational use of the marina including rowing facilities.
3. Work with the Airpark Association as well as the wider public to develop the local area plan.
4. In advance of a local area plan, any new developments in the vicinity must pay careful attention to the safety of the airport operation as well as impacts on traffic, view of the mountains, and trails.
5. Work with the Airpark Association to assist them in obtaining a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) in order to address the current land use regulations on public land.





Map B-7 Courtenay Air Park Precinct.

## AGRICULTURAL

Agricultural lands which may or may not be within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

### *Policies*

1. Preserve agricultural lands for agricultural purposes including associated food processing and distribution.
2. Uses within the Agricultural Land Reserve are subject to the Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA) and Regulation.
3. *Subdivision* of ALR parcels is not supported.
4. For the purposes of *subdivision* of non-ALR lands, limit parcel sizes to 4 hectares.
5. Limit size of principal residences in the ALR through the *Zoning Bylaw* update.

### *Built Form*

- *Ground-oriented buildings*

### *Permitted Uses*

- Agricultural uses including production facilities
- Agri-tourism building and facilities, including accommodation
- Single-detached residential
- Secondary suites
- Detached secondary dwellings
- Home based businesses
- Education and research (not schools)
- Utilities within an existing right of way

## FUTURE GROWTH

Lands within the city that may be appropriate for future urban development beyond the life of this OCP. These lands are not currently designated for urban development due to their existing low density, limited transportation access, limited municipal services, and distance from growth centres. The suitability for urban development will have to be examined in more detail in a future OCP planning cycle.

### *Policies*

1. For the purposes of *subdivision*, limit lot sizes to 4 hectares.
2. Future consideration of urban development within the Future Growth areas will require that local area plans be first developed to provide a comprehensive plan for land uses, environmental protection, and servicing. A local area plan adopted by Council will be required prior to any rezoning applications being considered.
3. Rezoning is not supported within Future Growth lands until such time as 75% of the 2,900 residential units modelled for this plan have been approved.
4. In the north east Courtenay Block 71 area, only support future growth in accordance with existing Agricultural Land Reserve exclusion permissions.

### *Built Form*

- *Ground-oriented buildings*

### *Permitted Uses*

- Single-detached residential dwellings
- Secondary suites
- Detached secondary dwellings
- Agriculture



## SHORELINE

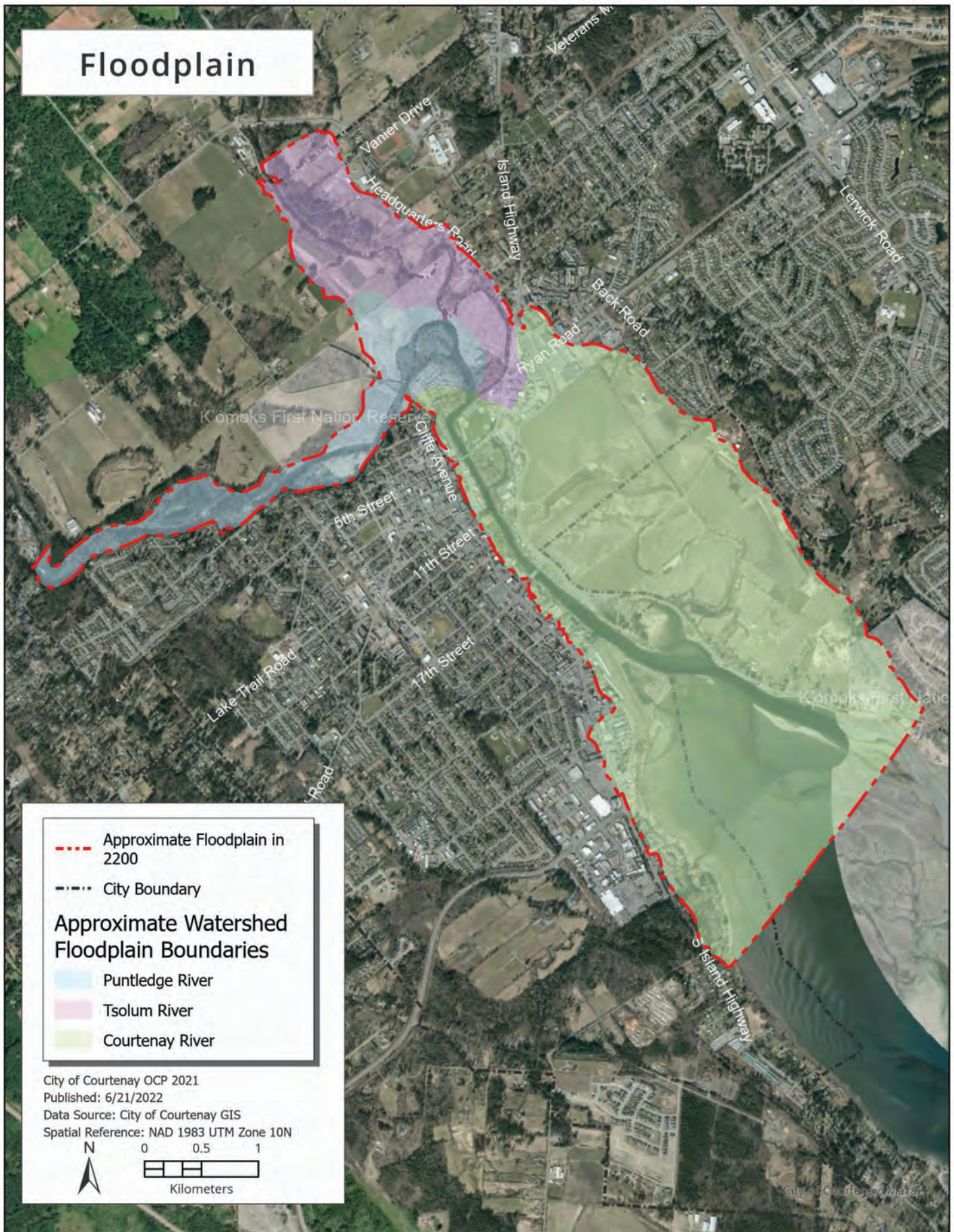
Shoreline includes the surface waters, extending from the present natural boundary to the extent of the City's jurisdiction. This includes an approximate 3 kilometre stretch of shoreline along the K'ómoks Estuary as well as both sides of the Courtenay River and all other shorelines within the City of Courtenay's boundaries. Activities are typically environmental protection and recreation including limited marina access.

### *Policies*

1. Create zones in the *Zoning Bylaw* to formalize shoreline uses and setbacks to include limited public marinas and boat launches, with an emphasis on prioritizing environmental protection and passive recreation.
2. Adopt green shores policies for shorelines as described in the Floodplain and Natural Environment sections of this Plan.







Map B-8 Floodplain areas.



## *Area-Specific Profiles and Planning Directions*

### **FLOODPLAIN**

Flooding is a risk in a number of existing highly developed central areas within Courtenay due to their location within the floodplains of the Courtenay, Puntledge and to some extent Tsolum Rivers as well as the K'ómoks Estuary. Damage to property from flooding is expected to increase due to climate change from both increases in river flows during peak rainfall events, as well as sea level rise and more frequent storm surges from the ocean. For Courtenay, flooding is one of the most important climate adaptation risk management factors.

At the same time, development within these vulnerable areas represent regionally important urban centres with significant public and private property investment and transportation connectivity.

At the time of drafting the OCP, the Courtenay Flood Management Plan was concurrently being drafted. The Flood Management Plan strives to understand the flood risk, identify options to mitigate risk, facilitate decision-making, and implement mitigation measures. The flood management policies presented here are intended to manage flooding risk as Courtenay's Flood Management Plan is developed over time.

### *Planning Objective*

- Minimize the impacts of flooding through mitigation and adaptation planning policies and regulations.

### *Policies*

1. Discourage new development within the floodplains, recognizing that floodplains are suitable for certain developments that can be used at times of low water, and temporarily retreated during flood events. Agricultural and Parks and Recreational uses are considered appropriate and encouraged within the floodplain.
2. Respect foreshore sediment and flow processes through the prevention of hard shoreline development solutions, and using green approaches that mimic ecosystem functions for erosion protection.
3. Continue to develop and implement the Flood Management Plan in order to minimize the safety risk, property damage, and environmental impacts associated with a flood event.
4. Develop a long-term strategy for managed retreat from vulnerable areas. The strategy shall include, but not be limited to, prioritizing the removal of key facilities and critical infrastructure to outside of flood hazard areas at the end of their current life cycle, and opportunistically retreating existing development.
5. Update the Floodplain Management Bylaw to ensure that it reflects the most recently available data and regulatory context.

6. Regularly review and ensure all floodplain related policies and regulations are up to date.
7. Regulate land development within the floodplain to ensure:
  - a. New residential development is avoided within the floodplain as reflected in the land use designations shown in Land Use Designations Map B-1. Recognizing that the floodplain mapping information provided is an estimate and may be updated as new information comes available, consider residential uses and a mix of uses along the floodplain boundary if more recent floodplain analysis demonstrates that the floodplain is not accurately represented in the Floodplain Areas Map, and therefore Land Use Designations Map.
  - b. Where development is permitted, new buildings and structures shall meet the flood construction standards, be designed to be temporarily retreated from during flood events, and meet all other associated requirements.
  - c. Where development is presently located within floodplains, future redevelopment in such areas shall meet the flood construction standards and all other associated requirements.
8. Develop a local area plan for the lands within the Courtenay River Floodplain as shown on Map B-8. Ensure it includes an adaptive land use focus and establishes a Development Permit Area for the purposes of protection of development from hazardous flooding conditions.



# PART C

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# THEMATIC POLICIES

Dozens of policies on a range of community topics are presented in Part C in order to support the OCP vision of a *high quality of life with a low-carbon footprint for all*. Three policy foundations are presented here to provide context and understanding on the policy connections in the following chapters: quality of life, a low-carbon approach, and affordability.

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## POLICY FOUNDATION: UNDERSTANDING QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life is influenced by a broad range of personal, social, economic, and environmental conditions in which we grow, live, work, and age. It is defined as the standard of health, comfort, and happiness experienced by an individual or group.<sup>1</sup>

To understand the connection that policies that Courtenay can enact to support high quality of life for everyone, the *social determinants of health* framework is presented here (Figure C-1). *Social determinants of health* are the

non-medical factors that influence individual and collective health outcomes and research suggests that they are collectively essential to one's health, and by extension their quality of life.

The OCP has direct and indirect influence on a number of these factors that affect one's quality of life. For example, the OCP directs policy on Courtenay's mobility network to support active lifestyles, choice and affordability; supports the creation of sufficient and *affordable housing*; includes land uses to support employment opportunities, a vibrant economy, and public spaces to promote social connections; promotes accessibility to municipal services; and safeguards a healthy environment.

This systems-based approach to understanding individual and community health and quality of life was used in developing the full suite of policies throughout the OCP. This ensures that policy proposals deliver on multiple outcomes.

<sup>1</sup> www.lexico.com, Oxford Languages



**Figure C-1** The *social determinants of health* (presented here) have a strong influence on quality of life.



# POLICY FOUNDATION: UNDERSTANDING COURTENAY'S LOW-CARBON APPROACH

High quality of life for the entire community must be achieved with a shrinking and eventually eliminated carbon footprint by 2050. To understand the influence that policies Courtenay can enact to support a low-carbon pathway, energy and emissions modelling was performed for the OCP.

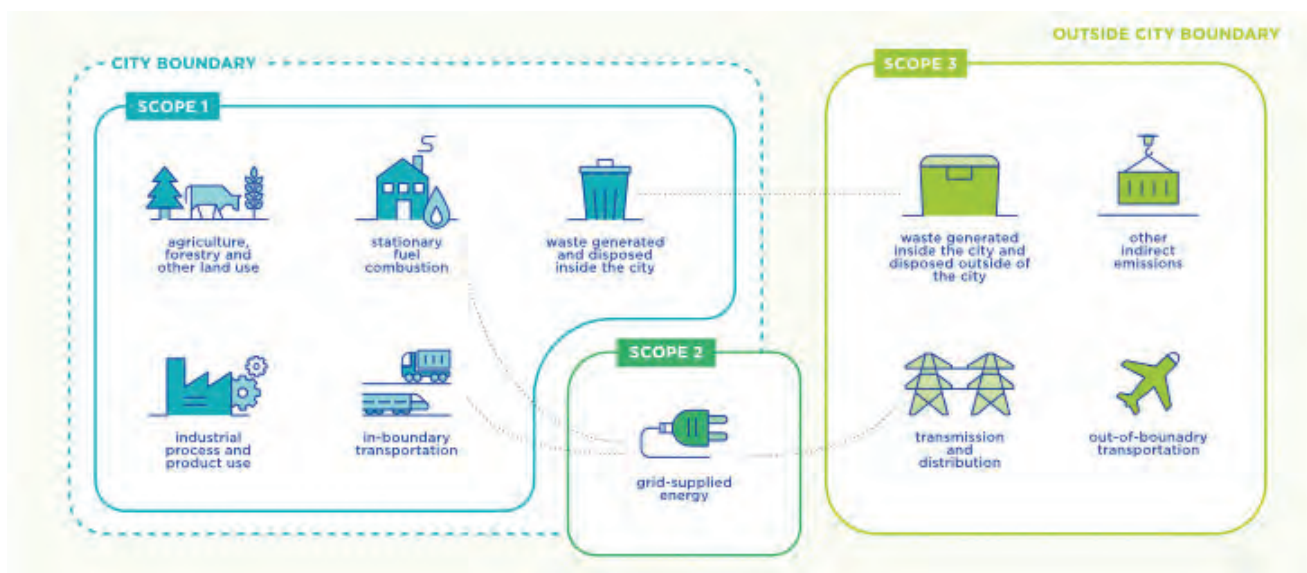
Cities are estimated to be responsible for 70% of global emissions. This means that local governments and their communities everywhere have important roles to play in directly controlling or influencing emissions production. The OCP includes policies that are formulated based on modelling of Courtenay's total community energy use and emissions production over the next 30 years.

Emission sources that are included in the modelling were selected using the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventories (GPC Protocol) framework,

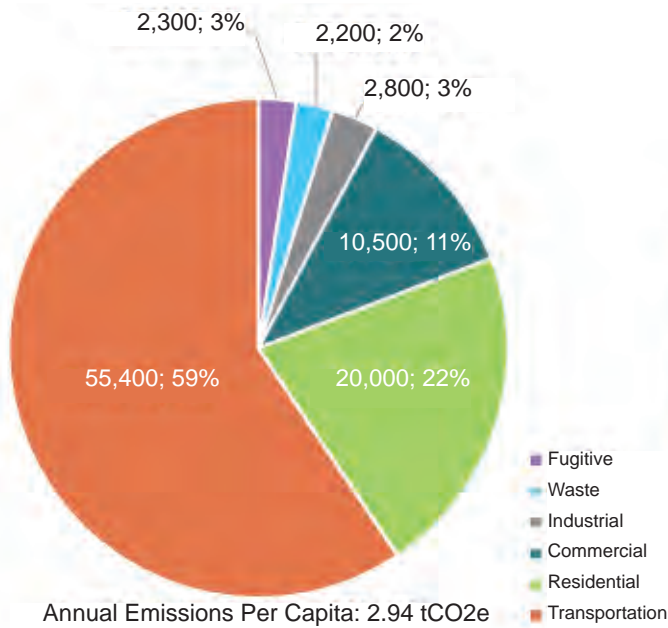
which organizes emissions sources by three scopes (Figure C-2). Scopes considered in Courtenay's emissions inventory and modelling include all of Scopes 1 and 2, as well as some of Scope 3 (emissions resultant from energy generation outside the city boundary).

Courtenay's total community emissions in 2016 were 93,200 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e). The emissions resulted from energy use in buildings, transportation, and infrastructure, as well as solid waste and wastewater decomposition.

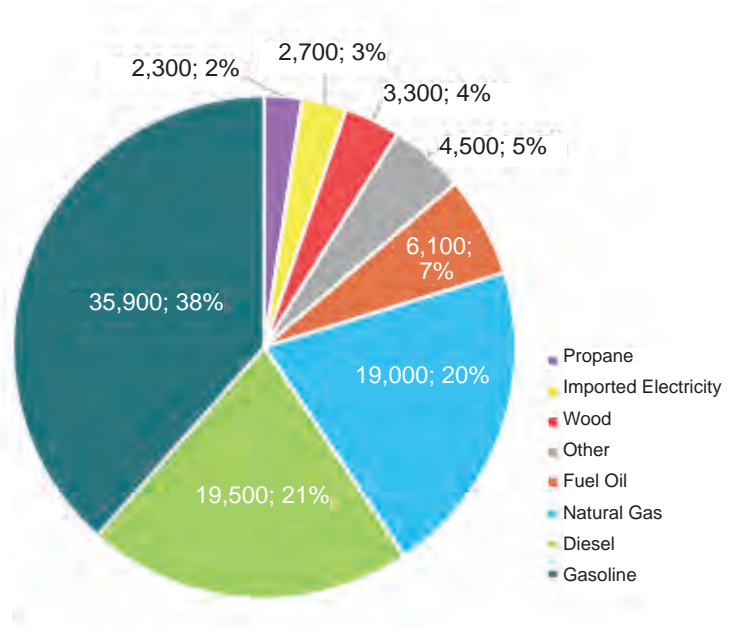
Transportation accounts for 59% of Courtenay's emissions, and is thus the area in which most change must occur. As explored throughout Part B, land use and urban form play a vital role in reducing transportation-related emissions. They also fall under Scope 1 – meaning that they are within the City boundary – and are within the jurisdiction and influence of City Hall.



**Figure C-2** GPC Emissions Scopes as They Relate to Geographic and Inventory Boundaries. Source: Consumption-based inventories of C40 Cities.



**Figure C-3** Courtenay Emissions (in tonnes) By Sector for Baseline Year 2016. Source: Sustainability Solutions Group, 2020.



**Figure C-4** Courtenay Emissions (in tonnes) By Source for Baseline Year 2016. Source: Sustainability Solutions Group, 2020.

Compared to most Canadian cities, Courtenay's total community emissions are low and at 2.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year per capita, Courtenay is well below the provincial average of 13 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year and national average of 19.5 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year. Even so, reductions in emissions are paramount in order to meet internationally established targets that prevent global temperatures rising above 1.5 degrees Celsius. Furthermore, other imperatives for pursuing energy efficiency and emissions reductions in the community include pollution reduction, economic justifications, and health benefits. This is particularly the case for active transportation which relieves congestion of the existing road network, is a more affordable form of transportation for the City to provide infrastructure for, and results in more active lifestyles which is strongly supported by the provincial and federal health authorities.

### ***Why the modelling only tells part of the story***

Community-wide energy and emissions modelling conducted for the OCP only tells part of Courtenay's emissions story as it does not include the embodied energy of some 'climate solutions' such as electric vehicles, the emissions associated with the wider consumption patterns (beyond energy) that occurs within Courtenay's boundaries, or as a result of activities by its citizens. In the pursuit of a truly net-zero emissions community, Courtenay should strive to reduce GHGs beyond what is measured in this OCP.

At the time of the writing of this Plan, methods to measure the embodied energy of actions and technologies and consumption behaviours within communities are being developed as



community planning tools. These analyses are expected to become more common in evaluating community-wide climate action opportunities over time and offer an opportunity for Courtenay to continue to understand, account for, and take action on emissions in future OCP updates. In identifying larger GHG footprints than currently accounted for, these analyses likely will also identify that net-zero community wide emissions are harder to achieve as we account for more GHG sources in our daily lives.

Similarly to the multiple R's of waste management – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle – which encourages reducing waste at its source by first refusing it wherever possible, carbon pollution can most effectively be achieved by taking the following steps, in this order:

- **First, avoid or reduce energy demand as much as possible,**
- **Second, improve energy efficiency, and**
- **Third, switch energy supplies to low-carbon sources.**

This approach prioritizes reducing energy demand as much as possible by avoiding energy-intensive activities and technologies and adopting conservation measures. Examples of this include reducing the amount of waste that gets produced, and therefore must be recycled, composted or disposed of, or replacing a single-occupancy vehicular trip with carpooling, walking, cycling, or transit. The benefit of avoiding energy use in these cases applies even if widespread municipal composting and recycling measures are available, or if all vehicles are electric. This is because moving and treating all types of waste takes energy and effort, and the creation of electric vehicles is highly energy and material intensive. For example, it's estimated that active transportation commuters

have about one-tenth the ecological footprint of a person who commutes by motor vehicle. Electric vehicles are also not within the financial means for many, and therefore are not an equitable transportation solution.

The next strategic effort is to improve the efficiency of energy using systems. Examples of increasing efficiency include retrofitting existing buildings to be highly insulating and replacing aging municipal infrastructure, such as water and sewage pump stations, with the most efficient technologies available.

The final step is to switch to low-carbon and renewable energy sources to supply the remaining energy demand. Examples include switching building heating systems from natural gas to heat pumps, or replacing a conventional vehicle with an electric vehicle.

**The sequence of the approach is important: by avoiding or reducing energy consumption (Avoid or Reduce), retrofit requirements (Improve) and the need to generate renewable energy (Switch) are both reduced.**

A co-benefit of this sequence of steps is that conservation of energy, construction materials, precious metals, water, and biodiversity are all enhanced.

## REDUCING MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT CORPORATION EMISSIONS

The City of Courtenay as a corporate entity has been a signatory to the BC Climate Action Charter since 2007. Most communities in BC have signed this Charter which stipulates that signatory local governments agree to develop strategies and take action to reduce emissions within municipal operations and community-wide, including committing to creating a complete, compact, and more energy efficient community. Subsequently, the City adopted a Corporate Climate Action Strategy in 2009 which identified actions the City could take to reduce GHG emissions from the delivery of municipal services in the areas of:

1. Fuel-efficiency and green fleet management
2. Energy efficient retrofits for facilities
3. Green design for new and replacement City buildings
4. Behavioural change to reduce energy demands
5. Energy efficient street and park lighting.



The City has implemented the Corporate Climate Action Strategy through rightsizing the City's fleet, including adding e-bikes to the fleet, conducting energy audits for all municipal facilities, converting light fixtures to LEDs, upgrading HVAC and building automation systems in major City facilities, LED conversions in street lights, water efficiency upgrades at municipal facilities, reusing loose asphalt into new applications, exploring EV charging stations on City property, leak detection and repairs on the municipal water system, and planting thousands of trees on public land.

In the 2019 reporting cycle the City of Courtenay municipal operations resulted in 1,262 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

## POLICY FOUNDATION: UNDERSTANDING AFFORDABILITY

As a public service entity, the City's affordability objectives are broad and long range. The City of Courtenay considers affordability when planning municipal services for residents and businesses, as well as the affordability of the households themselves.

A key assumption of the OCP is that reducing community-wide carbon pollution, supporting holistic community well-being including social equity, and meaningfully advancing reconciliation support municipal and household affordability.

A holistic definition of sustainability is embraced throughout the OCP, recognizing that the ability for present and future generations to meet their economic and social needs within healthy and sustainable ecological systems must be achieved by positively reinforcing economic, social, and ecological systems rather than putting them in conflict with one another.

Key affordability factors that are embedded within the policies of the OCP include:



**Cost of municipal services:** Municipal asset management studies show that compact and focused forms of community growth are less costly in the long run because costs for municipal services can be shared among a greater number of users. This has a direct impact on property taxes, the dominant source of municipal revenue.

**Cost of housing:** The 2020 Comox Valley Regional Housing Needs Assessment shows that a wider variety of housing options and forms are required in all communities of the Comox Valley, including Courtenay. Single residential dwellings are the dominant form of housing in Courtenay and the report concludes that even with more supply of this form of housing, it will not be affordable for many households in the future. The primary strategy to increase housing affordability is to support increases in supply by allowing more units throughout the entire city, with highest densities being focused into targeted growth centres.

**Cost of transportation:** Personal vehicle ownership is the second-greatest household cost for most Canadians after housing. Options that reduce dependence on a personal vehicle can significantly lower household costs. More compact and focused community growth and development can make more transportation options viable such as convenient transit services, cycling, and walking. In addition, roads, parking, and bridges that prioritize vehicles is more expensive for a local government to provide per trip than walking, cycling, and transit infrastructure.

**Cost of energy:** Carbon intensive energy such as natural gas, diesel, and gasoline will increase in price in the coming years, in part because the Federal and Provincial Governments have committed to placing a price on carbon pollution. Operational energy costs can be reduced by promoting compact and focused

forms of development that allow people to get around without a vehicle, as well as high energy performance buildings.

**Costs of externalities:** *Full cost accounting* is an important policy goal of the OCP to consider costs more holistically. This means that external costs associated with climate change, impacts, air pollution, motor vehicle collisions, and other health and sustainability impacts are factored into the policies and in the future will be better accounted for in decision-making.

*Full cost accounting* also recognizes the role that municipal *natural assets* play in providing 'free' services to a community (such as flood control, rainwater management, and cooling urban environments). Another example is considering the costs of other public agencies funded by the single 'tax payer'. For instance, the City could work with Island Health and School District 71 on specific mandates and budgets where there are mutual benefits and efficiencies. Using active transportation as an example, school districts wish to see kids come to school with some exercise, and reduce bussing costs and safety concerns in the parking lot drop off and pickup. Island Health supports increasing physical activity in our daily lives to address emerging chronic public health concerns that dominate public health challenges today outside of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Costs of inaction:** Studies show that the cost of not reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change will be much more costly than taking action. This including intergenerational costs that will be deferred to future generations.

## HOW THE THEMATIC POLICY CHAPTERS ARE ORGANIZED

### Each policy chapter includes:

- a list of objectives to provide an overview of what Courtenay intends to achieve within that policy theme.
- a summary of that theme in Courtenay today and a discussion of how the OCP can meet stated OCP directions, vision, and goals through the featured theme.

- a number of policies to inform City of Courtenay decisions.
- implementation categories assigned to each policy to help navigate implementation expectations.

Where greenhouse gas emissions modelling has been conducted for a policy chapter, information on the GHG reduction opportunity is also included.

## POLICY IMPLEMENTATION CATEGORIES

The City will wear many hats in the implementation of this OCP, ranging from regulator and service provider, to partner and advocate. The implementation categories assigned to the various policies are as follows:

	<b>Development standard</b>	<i>Policy directing a requirement or opportunity of new development proposals</i>
	<b>New City standard</b>	<i>Policy directing how or what municipal infrastructure, services, or programs will be delivered, often to a new standard</i>
	<b>City work plan action</b>	<i>Policy identifying the need to incorporate this action into the City's staff and work planning in order to be accomplished</i>
	<b>Routine City activity</b>	<i>Policy directing new perspectives or processes into existing and routine City activities</i>
	<b>Opportunity action</b>	<i>Policy identifying the City's position should such an opportunity present itself to advance the policy</i>
	<b>Partnership action</b>	<i>Policy identifying the need and willingness of the City to work in partnership</i>
	<b>Advocacy</b>	<i>Policy directing the City to advocate to other jurisdictions on the identified topic</i>

# STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

## OBJECTIVES

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1. 30% of trips are by walking, cycling, and transit by 2030
2. Transportation investments prioritize walking, cycling, and transit
3. Street standards include attention to safety, accessibility, and comfort at the pedestrian scale
4. Excess existing road space is repurposed to support public life, active travel, and *green infrastructure*
5. Zero emissions, electrified transportation is supported and increasingly the norm
6. The amount of land dedicated to parking is minimized
7. Parking standards reflect electric vehicle and cycling needs
8. New development integrates *multi-modal transportation network* planning into site design
9. Educational programs to support transit use, walking, cycling, and car sharing are widely available
10. Opportunities for innovation in transportation are explored
11. The City shows corporate leadership in the City's fleet and on City properties

Other policy chapters also influence the streets and transportation system. For example, connecting the transportation and the greenways system to better support active mobility is described in the Parks and Recreation chapter, reducing impervious surfaces to support watershed health is described in Natural Environment chapter, and form and character design objectives for streetscapes are described in the Development Permit designation in Part D.





## COURTENAY TODAY

Transportation accounts for 59% of Courtenay's emissions, and the city's existing transportation network is primarily oriented toward private vehicles. The majority of residents rely on their car, with 85% of all trips being made by private vehicle and only 15% by sustainable modes – 7% of trips by walking, 4% by cycling, and 4% by public transit.

Courtenay's sustainable mode share has historically been low due to several barriers that often make walking, cycling, and transit an afterthought for residents who have convenient access to a car. Development patterns are 'car centric' for many parts of the city, built with the assumption that most people will have access to a private vehicle. The sidewalk network has several gaps and the lack of safe crossings on some major roads can be challenging and inconvenient for pedestrians.

Similarly, the cycling network has significant gaps in connectivity and poses safety concerns for cyclists.

There are also barriers to transit use. The land use, population size and growth realities of a small urban community within a rural regional district pose challenges to transit viability. While Courtenay now has access to a frequent transit route, the limited services and indirect connections in other parts of the transit network mean transit is not as convenient as driving in many parts of the city.

# MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

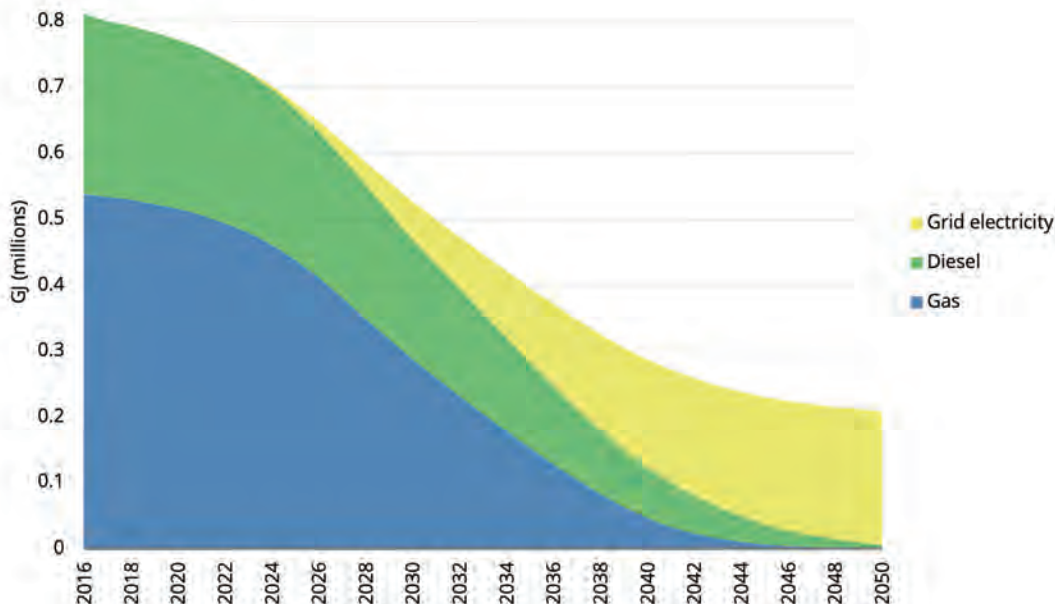
Prioritizing walking, wheeling, cycling, and transit modes of transportation – and integrating them with land use and urban form – are the greatest steps Courtenay can take to avoiding and reducing the amount of energy used in the transportation system, the greatest source of Courtenay’s GHG emissions.

Prioritizing these sustainable modes of transportation will mean Courtenay increasingly becomes a city that is best experienced at the pace and scale of a person travelling on their own power, especially for shorter trips. Ensuring streets are more ‘complete’ for all mobility options and users in turn supports street life, community character, active living, health, neighbourliness, investment in street *green infrastructure*, and economic vitality for businesses relying on foot traffic and tourism.

It also influences equity, as more affordable transportation choices will allow greater access to and within Courtenay for all residents, not just those who have a car. Children

and youth will have seamless and safe walking, cycling, and transit connections to schools, thus supporting active travel habits from a young age. And regardless of physical ability, convenient transportation options will be available.

Over time, Courtenay’s transportation sector will also become increasingly electric as electric vehicles, bikes and scooters have an important role to play in reducing GHGs. However, single occupancy electric cars should form only part of Courtenay’s transportation system of the future. Electric vehicles still require energy to operate and have large embodied energy and carbon footprints through their manufacturing, are not financially attainable by all residents, and contribute to a number of negative externalities associated with vehicle-centric community planning such as extensive road networks, traffic congestion and safety, sedentary lifestyles, and high household transportation expenses. As the City makes the transition to the goal of functional transportation choices, there will still be a place for single occupancy cars but they will be one option among many.



## MODELING ASSUMPTIONS

Energy and GHG emissions modelling shows that transportation-related energy use can significantly decrease and use more energy from the lower carbon electricity grid if 30% of all trips are made by walking, cycling, and transit in 2030 and 60% of all trips by 2050.

Figure C-5 Energy Used for Transportation Under OCP Implementation, 2016–2050.





**Objective 1** 30% of trips are by walking, cycling, and transit by 2030

**Objective 2** Transportation investments prioritize walking, cycling, and transit


## Policies

- ST 1** Defer major vehicle transportation-related infrastructure investments through land use, investment in non-automobile modes, and managing existing infrastructure. ✓
- ST 2** Ensure municipal transportation-related spending aligns with low-carbon and active transportation objectives. ✓
- ST 3** Support and participate in a regional approach to *multi-modal transportation planning*, delivery of infrastructure and services in accordance with this Plan. ✓🤝
- ST 4** Ensure new or enhanced walking, cycling, and transit infrastructure opportunities are considered whenever undertaking road upgrades and Master Transportation, Cycling, and Transit Future Plans. ✓
- ST 5** Establish Safe Routes to School and Active School Travel planning programs with School District 71 to identify strategic locations for active transportation improvements and promote active transportation. 🤝





## ST 6

Advance the short- and medium-term actions identified in the Transportation Master Plan and Cycling Network Plan with high priority allocated to actions that promote walking, cycling, transit, shared use and accessibility including, but not limited to (the 2019 Transportation Master Plan provides details): 

- a. Filling in the gaps in the pedestrian network, particularly along the Frequent Transit Network, within the Town and Neighbourhood Centres, around schools, and along major roads;
- b. Adding new multi-use pathways (also in accordance with the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan);
- c. Implementing the short- and medium-term cycling network by 2030 with first priority on developing the spine of the cycling network, connecting existing infrastructure, and focusing on easily achievable successes in neighbourhoods such as around schools;
- e. Prioritizing cycling intersection treatments;
- f. Enhancing accessibility features and transit passenger amenities at bus stops with priority given to along the Frequent Transit Network, within the Town and Neighbourhood Centres, around schools, community centres, and seniors housing;
- g. Establishing transit priority treatments at identified key intersections;
- h. Coordinating with regional partners to advance public education and information sharing to support active travel and transit use; and
- i. Prioritizing safety and operational improvements that improve road safety and efficiency.



### ST 7

Continue to work with the Comox Valley Regional District and BC Transit on implementation of the Transit Future Plan, including: 🤝

- a. Implementation of the Comox Valley Frequent Transit Corridor;
- b. Location and design of transit exchanges in the City; and
- c. Coordinating of the Frequent Transit Network and development within the city to promote transit supportive land use densities.

### ST 8

Develop or update municipal master transportation or mobility plans that provide guidance on the network, infrastructure, priorities, and phasing of all forms of transportation in order to: 🚲

- a. Reflect the land use plan and policies in the OCP;
- b. Identify the pedestrian network;
- c. Develop standards and locations for cycling facilities with an emphasis on protected or separated facilities wherever appropriate;
- d. Emphasize and incentivize active and low-carbon modes;
- e. Manage and improve safety of multiple uses along multi-use pathways;
- f. Establish traffic calming policy in order to determine appropriate site specific traffic calming measures including, but not limited to, reducing speed limits;
- g. Study and improve *multi-modal transportation* opportunities and circulation in the Downtown; and
- h. Identify goods movement and trucking routes, including as part of the road classification system.

### ST 9



Establish and promote incentive programs to support uptake of electric bikes in partnership and in relation to others developing such programs to cover gaps and maximize rebate uptake. 🤝

**Objective 3** Street standards include attention to safety, accessibility, and comfort at the pedestrian scale

**Objective 4** Excess existing road space is repurposed to support public life, active travel, and green infrastructure

## Policies

### ST 10


Supplement public amenity spaces within road rights of way in Downtown, Town, and Neighbourhood Centres by providing more places for people to gather including, but not limited to:  

- a. Creating urban plazas and activation at street intersections and mid-block connections;
- b. Establishing pedestrian-only streets either permanently or during certain times of the year and/or certain times of the day;
- c. Undertaking laneway improvements that transform them into multi-functional public spaces and pedestrian linkages; and
- d. Supporting restaurant patios, pop-up parks, and *parklet* initiatives.

### ST 11

Review current practice of on-street parking space to identify opportunities for active transportation, *green infrastructure*, and place-making features. Include on-street parking management tools such as paid parking and parking permits as part of the review. Review in coordination with the *Zoning Bylaw* off-street parking standards. 

### ST 12

Amend the *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* to incorporate wherever feasible the BC Active Transportation Design Guide recommendations including, but not limited to: 

- a. Enhanced cycling lane standards that incorporate protected facilities on key segments of the network as identified in the Cycling Network Plan;
- b. Increased sidewalk widths including opportunities for *green infrastructure* such as rain gardens and street trees;
- c. Multi-use pathway widths and separation distances from roads;
- d. Furnishing zone recommendations including furnishing zone widths between 2 and 5 metres depending on road classification;
- e. Design speeds and posted speeds with consideration given to 50 km/h for arterials, 40 km/h for collectors, 30 km/h for local roads, and 15 km/h for lanes; and
- f. Universal accessibility features such as curb ramp widths and *tactile attention indicators*.





### ST 13

Develop a strategy to increase bike parking throughout Courtenay. 



## Objective 5 Zero emissions, electrified transportation is supported and increasingly the norm

### Policies

- ST 14** Create an electric vehicle (EV) public charging network plan to ensure that public electric vehicle (including electric bike) charging and parking facilities are conveniently distributed throughout the city, establish common design guidelines, set standardized usage regulations and fees, and are coordinated across public and private properties such as large commercial properties, gas stations, within Town and Neighbourhood Centres. Work with the Comox Valley local governments, BC Hydro, and the business community to plan and install *Level 3 Direct Current Fast Charging* (DCFC) stations in strategic locations.  
- ST 15** Establish and/or promote incentive programs including rebates, bulk purchasing and financing mechanisms to install EV charging stations in existing single residential dwellings and multi-residences as well as commercial properties located within new Town and Neighbourhood Centres. Do this in partnership with and in relation to others developing such programs to cover gaps and maximize uptake.  



- Objective 6 The amount of land dedicated to parking is minimized
- Objective 7 Parking standards reflect electric vehicle and cycling needs

## Policies

### ST 16

Amend off-street parking requirements in the *Zoning Bylaw* to consider: 

- a. Vehicle parking maximums that reflect modal split targets;
- b. Reduced vehicle parking space requirements in all land uses, including no parking requirements in some areas;
- c. Vehicular parking spaces be equipped with energized outlets, with a percentage being capable of providing Level 2 charging (208/204V) for all land uses;
- d. Electric bike charging infrastructure for all land uses with consideration provided to enhanced security measures;
- e. Short- and long-term bicycle parking for all land uses with consideration provided to enhanced security measures;
- f. Car share parking;
- g. Community amenities as part of parking variance applications; and
- h. Cash-in-lieu options.



## Objective 8 New development integrates *multi-modal transportation network* planning into site design

### Policies

- ST 17** Require that all internal road and *multi-modal* networks are identified and provided as part of rezoning, *subdivision*, and development permit applications. 🏠
- ST 18** Ensure transportation network opportunities maximize pedestrian, cycling and transit connections in order to provide shortest active travel and transit routes to key destinations. This includes, but is not limited to, designing for mid block pedestrian and cycling connections in areas with low pedestrian and cycling connectivity, and securing Statutory Rights of Way for pedestrian and cycling use through strata developments, wherever such opportunities are part of the active travel transportation network. 🚶🚲🏠
- ST 19** Require all *multi-modal transportation networks* within developments to be designated as “highway” instead of linear parks and not as part of 5% park dedication (where required), except where the multi-modal network is located within a significant green space that offers park values. Add these multi-use pathways to the Road Network Map APX-3 – (Appendix 2 Maps). 🏠

## Objective 9 Educational programs to support transit use, walking, cycling, and car sharing are widely available

### Policies

- ST 20** Support safe cycling and electric vehicle (EV) skills training programs and transit use programs provided by other jurisdictions and the non-profit sector. +
- ST 21** Support programs that educate drivers and cyclists on how to share the road. +





## Objective 10 Opportunities for innovation in transportation are explored

### Policies

- ST 22** Review transportation policies as new mobility technologies emerge. ✓
- ST 23** Support car and bike sharing programs and services by working in partnership with other jurisdictions, public organizations, business and community partners to sustain such services. +
- ST 24** Work with the Province on removing barriers to micromobility devices such as personal electric scooters, which are not currently permitted on streets and sidewalks. Review and update relevant municipal traffic bylaws upon any new legislative authorities that support micromobility devices. +
- ST 25** Respond to emerging zero emissions technologies such as electric vehicles, hydrogen fuel and hydrogen vehicles, once the technology is established and widely used. This may include hydrogen producing storage and fueling facilities. +
- ST 26** Explore innovations in price-signaling and financing practices, such as paid parking, transportation utility fees or user pay systems, to better account for the public costs of personal vehicular transportation, particularly wherever such opportunities are presented through partnerships, granting opportunities, or other investments in innovation. +



## Objective 11 The City shows corporate leadership in the City's fleet and on City properties

### Policies

#### ST 27

Demonstrate leadership on public properties and with the municipal fleet by: 

- a. Establishing a green procurement policy;
- b. Ensuring vehicles are replaced with non-GHG emitting versions by 2030 within the City's fleet asset management planning wherever practicable;
- c. Using electric bicycles wherever operationally practical; and
- d. Installing electric bike parking and electric vehicle Level 2 and 3 charging stations at strategically located municipally owned properties.





# BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

## OBJECTIVES

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1. Existing buildings are upgraded for high energy and water efficiency, net-zero emissions, and renewable energy production
2. New buildings are highly energy and water efficient, perform at net-zero emissions standard and produce renewable energy
3. Living landscape elements are incorporated for water, energy, and biodiversity purposes
4. The designs of new buildings complement neighbourhood character
5. Innovation in building performance, accessibility, and construction waste diversion is encouraged
6. Municipal buildings and site design demonstrate leadership in building performance, accessibility, and design

Related objectives and policies to this topic such as parking are included in the Streets & Transportation chapter, water conservation in Municipal Infrastructure chapter, and form and character design objectives in the Development Permit designation section in Part D.





## COURTENAY TODAY

Buildings and landscape are spaces that create the context for public life, private life, and everything in between. They reflect a community's values as well as its sustainability and resilience.

For example, buildings and their occupants consume a great deal of energy. Existing buildings are responsible for 36% of Courtenay's total annual emissions, and are the second greatest source of emissions after transportation. Most of the energy is used for space and water heating – usually the biggest items contributing to energy bills.

Landscapes and buildings also consume a lot of fresh water. In order to reduce stress on the Comox Lake water supply during the

summer, the Comox Valley Regional District has established a water consumption target for 2050 that is 50% lower than the 2008 baseline year. Because summer peak water use nearly doubles in Courtenay due to irrigation, water-sensitive landscaping will be required to achieve these targets.

At the end of their life buildings can also generate a lot of waste if materials are not disassembled, repurposed, or otherwise diverted from the landfill whenever possible. Estimated at 25% of the total landfill waste stream, reducing the amount of construction and demolition waste is key to extending the life of the landfill and achieving GHG emission targets associated with waste management.

## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

When designed well, architecture can be beautiful, can inspire, and can minimize the building and occupant's ecological footprints. When designed poorly, architecture can exclude, can become a blight, and can be wasteful in materials and performance. OCP policies can establish high quality architectural design expectations, while also reducing building emissions and energy bills through well thought-out development and better energy efficiency and emissions standards.

For existing buildings, energy and emissions modelling shows that the greatest energy and emissions reductions can be made by switching building space heating systems to heat pumps (particularly for existing non-electrical heat systems), electrifying water heaters, and retrofitting older homes and commercial buildings to higher energy efficiency performance. Combined, these efforts can reduce Courtenay's buildings' greenhouse gas emissions by 90% by 2050 while making buildings more comfortable, providing better air quality, and lowering energy costs.

New buildings present an opportunity to ensure that energy and emissions performance are designed in right from the beginning, thus immediately contributing to climate action goals and avoiding the need to retrofit or switch energy sources at a later date.

This includes design features such as green roofs and renewable energy systems on larger buildings, biodiverse and watershed sensitive landscapes, and passive design features to increase natural ventilation and accommodate natural light or shade depending on the season.

Because redevelopment of existing properties will be an important part of accommodating Courtenay's growth, management of construction and demolition waste will be an important part of Courtenay's future. Wherever possible, the City will encourage the disassembly and reuse of construction materials.

As existing buildings are renovated or redeveloped, and new buildings meet efficiency and performance standards, Courtenay's buildings will become increasingly accessible, electric, healthy, and affordable to operate, while reflecting Courtenay's character, identity, and sense of place.





## *Modeling Assumptions and Policy Context*

Energy and GHG emissions modelling shows that the following building performance targets, building features and community-wide actions will need to be achieved within the identified timelines in order to contribute to the net-zero community-wide GHG target established by this Plan. The achievement of these targets will depend on the regulatory and development sectors working together towards common goals. For example, at the time of the development of this Plan, greenhouse gas emissions standards are not established within the BC Building Code, thus making the requirement of this for all new buildings within Courtenay difficult to enforce. Similarly, incentives to retrofit existing buildings will require partnership efforts thereby influencing the pace and scale of retrofitting efforts.

New single residential and small commercial buildings are referred to **Part 9 buildings** in the BC Building Code. Larger buildings such as multi-residential, industrial and large commercial buildings are referred to as **Part 3 buildings** in the BC Building Code.



### **What is Needed to Get to Net-Zero Emissions for New Buildings**

By 2025 at the latest:

- All new buildings are constructed to net-zero GHG emissions standards by performing at or better than a greenhouse gas intensity limit of 1kg/m<sup>2</sup>/year.
- All new buildings have at least 10% of their electricity produced on site by solar PV systems.
- Efficient fixtures and irrigation achieve a 30% reduction in water use compared to typical base building of the same type, floor area, and occupancy.

### **What is also Needed to Get to Net-Zero Emissions for New Part 3 Buildings**

To decrease the urban heat island effect, better manage stormwater, and promote biodiversity, all new Part 3 buildings have at least partial green roof coverage, according to Table C-1:

Available roof space is defined as the total roof area minus areas dedicated to renewable energy infrastructure. However, these two roof coverings are not mutually exclusive; renewable energy infrastructure can be installed overtop green roofing, provided the plant species are shade tolerant.

### **What is Needed to Get to Net-Zero Emissions for Existing Buildings**




- By 2040, 80% of buildings built before 2022 are retrofit to achieve deep energy efficiency improvements achieving a minimum of 50% energy use reduction. The thermal energy supply in these buildings will be met through electric systems.
- By 2050, 100% of buildings built before 2022 are retrofit to achieve deep energy efficiency improvements achieving a minimum of 50% energy use reduction. The thermal energy supply in these buildings will be met through electric systems.

<b>Gross Floor Area (Size of Building)</b>	<b>Coverage of Available Roof Space (Size of Green Roof)</b>
2,000–4,999 m <sup>2</sup>	20%
5,000–9,999 m <sup>2</sup>	30%
10,000–14,999 m <sup>2</sup>	40%
15,000–19,999 m <sup>2</sup>	50%
20,000 m <sup>2</sup> or greater	60%

**Table C-1** Green roof area coverage by building floor area.

## Objective 1 Existing buildings are upgraded for high energy and water efficiency, net-zero emissions, and renewable energy production

### Policies


- BL 1** Establish and promote incentive programs such as rebates or financing mechanisms (e.g., property assessed clean energy – PACE) to support decarbonizing and energy efficiency in existing buildings. Do this in partnership with and/or in relation to others offering such programs. 
- BL 2** Establish and promote incentive programs such as rebates and information audits to support water efficiency in existing buildings. Do this in partnership with and/or in relation to others offering such programs. 
- BL 3** Prioritize building permits for renovations that result in higher energy and emissions performance than minimum standards. 

## Objective 2 New buildings are highly energy and water efficient, perform at net-zero emissions standard and produce renewable energy

## Objective 3 Living landscape elements are incorporated for water, energy, and biodiversity purposes

## Objective 4 The designs of new buildings complement neighbourhood character

### Policies

- BL 4** Accelerate adoption of the BC Energy Step Code in the BC Building Code to always be one Step ahead of the provincial minimum Energy Step Code standards. Buildings that include a low-carbon energy system that satisfies a greenhouse gas intensity limit of 3kg/m<sup>2</sup>/year for primary heating and hot water may be constructed to the minimum Provincial Step Code requirement. 



- BL 5** Require that new buildings subject to or developed as a result of rezoning achieve low-GHG emissions of a condition of rezoning, defined as achieving a greenhouse gas intensity limit of 3kg/m<sup>2</sup>/year for primary heat and hot water. 🏠
- BL 6** Advocate to and support the Province in amending the BC Building Code and other building related policies to: 🏠
- a.** Regulate carbon pollution for new buildings as soon as possible and no later than 2030 in relation to decarbonizing heat and energy sources;
  - b.** Regulate embodied energy of building materials and construction practices including demolition; and
  - c.** Enhance universal building accessibility requirements.
- BL 7** Review and update immediately relevant building, zoning, and development permitting policies upon any new legislative authorities that support policies within BL 6. 📣 + 🏠
- BL 8** Utilize Development Permit Area guidelines for the purposes of:
- a.** Energy and water conservation by encouraging all new buildings to exceed energy, emissions, and water conservation targets described on page 109.
  - b.** Incorporating biodiversity and sensitive rainwater management practices within landscapes; and
  - c.** Ensuring that the form and character of new developments complement surrounding neighbourhood and showcase Indigenous designs. 🏠
- BL 9** Explore the establishment of Development Permit Areas for wildfire hazard protection upon review of wildfire risk to Courtenay. 🏠
- BL 10** Consider establishing pre-approved form and character Development Permit Area designs for smaller lot *infill* housing in order to expedite the construction of high quality design *infill* housing. 🏠
- BL 11** Discourage the use of fossil fuel energy including natural gas in all development applications and prohibit the installation of wood burning devices in new buildings. 🏠 ✔️
- BL 12** Initiate a process to develop Indigenous design guidelines to inform Development Permit Area Form and Character Guidelines for future OCP amendments. Work with K'ómoks First Nation, other Indigenous partners, and in collaboration with other local governments to inform consistent regional design. 🏠

## Objective 5 Innovation in building performance, accessibility, and construction waste diversion is encouraged

### Policies

- BL 13** Encourage the adaptive reuse of buildings and building materials through permitting and planning processes to help reduce construction waste generation. +
- BL 14** Support amendments or variances to the *Zoning Bylaw*, *Building Bylaw*, or *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* when presented with development applications that:
- Exceed minimum universal accessibility requirements;
  - Include sustainable building practices that use low-carbon, renewable materials, and achieve self-sufficiency in energy, water and wastewater, wherever such opportunities are presented by building design professionals and meet the BC Building Code requirements. ✓

## Objective 6 Municipal buildings and site design demonstrate leadership in building performance, accessibility, and design

### Policies

- BL 15** Provide leadership with municipal buildings and site design including opportunities for demonstration and education of carbon neutral, Indigenous-informed, environmentally sensitive and high-quality urban design. ✓
- BL 16** Build all new municipal buildings to emerging best practices in energy efficiency and net-zero emission standards, universal accessibility, and follow integrated Development Permit Area guidelines for form and character, and energy and water conservation. This means:
- a. Meet 100% of energy demand through electrical means. Do not permit combustion heating and electrical systems including oil, natural gas, and wood unless for public emergency command centre purposes.
  - b. Incorporate high energy efficiency and zero-carbon building emissions designs and technologies such as passive design, green roofs, renewable energy generation, low-impact rainwater management, biodiverse landscaping, non-toxic and low embodied carbon building materials. ✓
- BL 17** Conduct a portfolio-wide energy audit and develop a retrofitting plan for all municipally-owned buildings, in alignment with asset management and strategic financial plans. Review the retrofitting plan every five years to evaluate progress and make necessary adjustments to meet high energy efficiency and net-zero emissions targets. 🏠



# AFFORDABLE HOUSING

## OBJECTIVES

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1. A variety of housing options are permitted and positively integrated in all neighbourhoods
2. No net loss of rental housing
3. New *non-market housing* is actively pursued and supported
4. Incentives are in place to create below-market housing
5. Partnership approaches are in place to deliver and manage non- or below-market housing
6. Development application approval processes are streamlined, transparent, and easy to understand

The affordability, location, and type of housing relate to a number of other policy chapters of the OCP. Objectives and policies regarding the density and location of housing are included in the Managing Growth chapter. Standards for new housing to ensure it is low carbon and accessible are included in the Buildings & Landscape chapter. Parking standards are discussed in the Streets & Transportation chapter.



## COURTENAY TODAY

Many Courtenay residents are struggling in the current housing situation that is not meeting their needs. Rising land and construction costs, a growing population, inability to keep supply at pace with demand, and a significant stock of single residential dwellings in a community with varying housing needs are all contributing factors to this struggle. Transportation options also contribute indirectly to housing affordability as the need for a car, the second greatest expense in most Canadian households, becomes a competing expense.

The 2020 Comox Valley Housing Needs Assessment indicates that the median sale prices across all dwelling types in Courtenay were generally stable between 2010–2017 then began to rise more rapidly in 2017. Prices for all dwelling types in 2019 were 50% higher than the average for 2010–2016; they continued to rise throughout 2020 and 2021. For rental housing during this same timeline, rental rates have also increased in both the primary (purpose built) and secondary rental markets. Both rental markets have displayed consistently low vacancy rates hovering around 1% and rarely exceeding 2% (3–5% vacancy rate is considered a healthy rate). Purpose-built rental housing development applications in Courtenay have been on the rise in

recent years and will help alleviate the high competition for rental homes once the units are available for occupancy. Even with this increase in supply, however, rental prices are expected to remain too high for a significant proportion of the population. With median income of \$34,367 amongst renters and \$69,500 amongst homeowners, 35% of Courtenay renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing and 17% of Courtenay renters pay more than 50% of their income on housing. Households who have no other housing choice than to exceed these respective housing price thresholds are considered to live in core housing need, or extreme core housing need, which are unacceptable affordability standards in Canada. Homelessness also continues to increase as documented in the regional point in time homeless counts which occur every two years.

Courtenay's population is also aging, resulting in smaller household sizes and older residents having to make decisions about living situations that are affordable and provide access to daily needs. The ability to age in place by moving to a smaller unit within the same neighbourhood or renovating one's home, are identified by Island Health as one of the most effective strategies for supporting seniors' health and independence.



More than a roof over one's head, adequate housing is a fundamental human right in Canada, and an important social determinant of health. It impacts the community's ability to attract and retain employees and sustain a vibrant economy. Specifically, the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce and Comox Valley Arts identify access to affordable and appropriate housing as top organizational priorities.

Given this context, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment indicates that the private

market is not able to provide housing for a significant proportion of the Comox Valley, and more residents than ever are at risk of homelessness or already in an unsustainable housing situation. It found that there is a need for more subsidized, supportive, and emergency housing and it uncovered a strong public desire to pursue alternative tenure types and forms of housing. The OCP consultation also confirmed public openness to more varieties of housing being incorporated into neighbourhoods across Courtenay.

## THE ROLE OF HOUSING IN MEETING OUR GOALS

Population growth trends and expected housing needs are identified in Part A. This OCP plans for an additional 4,500 more people over the 2016 population, and a corresponding 2,900 more housing units to be developed across Courtenay in accordance with Managing Growth policies (Part B). The 2020 Regional Housing Needs Assessment identifies more immediate housing needs for Courtenay by 2025: a total of 1,000 new units of the following sizes: 30 bachelor units, 65 1-bedroom units, 345 2-bedroom units and 570 3+ bedroom units.

While the Housing Needs Assessment does not stipulate what tenures or forms these new units should be, the data indicates that more rental housing, and an increasing amount of below- and non-market rental housing, will be needed. This means that while the private sector will continue to be a significant sector in the provision of more housing, there will also be a growing role for non-profit organizations to provide and manage housing with funding and assistance from senior governments. Housing Needs Assessments are now required of all local governments in BC, and must be updated every five years. These five year updated assessments will support better monitoring of housing needs as Courtenay grows and allow the City of Courtenay and all housing providers to better respond.

The primary strategy of the OCP to increase housing affordability is to support increases in supply by allowing more units throughout the entire city, with highest densities being focused into targeted growth centres. In this way, affordability may be achieved through a variety of size, location, and tenure options for residents to access as their housing needs change over time. The centralized locations of new development may also allow for a household to forego the

need for a private vehicle, the second greatest household expense (see more in Part C – Policy Foundations: Understanding Affordability to explore how the OCP considers affordability from many dimensions).

Key to achieving housing goals will be to ensure that the wide variety of players in the housing system are working proactively together towards mutually supportive goals. This includes ensuring that both the private and non-profit sectors can continue to viably provide housing for Courtenay residents, and exploring how the wider community can support dedicated housing funding for those in greatest need.

The City of Courtenay's role in supporting *affordable housing* for all citizens will be to:

- **Incentivize** the private and non-profit sectors by providing relief from various development fees, charges and development standards, or making land available to development through zoning controls.
- **Regulate** and mandate the provision of *affordable housing* as part of market developments.
- **Partner** with non-profit providers to build housing by providing public land, relief from development fees and charges, or directly awarding funding.
- **Educate** the wider community on the importance of diversity in housing and advocate to senior governments and other partners for support.

The City will have to take full advantage of all of its roles in order to achieve a number of community-wide housing goals and objectives.





## Objective 1 A variety of housing options are permitted and positively integrated in all neighbourhoods

### Policies

- AH 1** Support higher housing densities, including amending the *Zoning Bylaw* to permit two dwelling units per single residential lot, in all residential land use designations, as described in the Managing Growth Policy section of this Plan, and in accordance with protection of *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* policies. ✓ 🏠
- AH 2** Amend the *Zoning Bylaw* to reduce minimum lot size requirements and establish maximum lot size requirements in the Urban Residential designation to support densification of existing and future neighbourhoods. In the establishment of lot sizes, ensure that the ability to accommodate a second dwelling unit is considered, and that wherever *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* are present, their protection shall take precedence. 🏠
- AH 3** Consider maximum lot sizes within Neighbourhood and Town Centres to promote *intensification* of uses. 🏠
- AH 4** Require that a diversity of housing types and unit sizes be provided in new rezoning applications for *subdivisions*. Ensure that development of multi-residential units occur in early phases of the *subdivision*. 🏠
- AH 5** Require a minimum of 10% of new residential units be universally accessible in multi-residential rezoning applications. 🏠
- AH 6** Encourage the provision of 3+ bedroom units as part of a mix of unit types in new multi-residential buildings to create more housing choices for families. 🏠
- AH 7** Support amendments to the National Building Code and BC Building Code to facilitate the development of various sizes and types of housing. 🏠
- AH 8** Engage with and educate residents on the value of diversity of housing types distributed throughout Courtenay. ✓

## Objective 2 No net loss of rental housing

### Policies

- AH 9** Do not permit the conversion of existing occupied multi-residential rental buildings to strata ownership until, and only when, the vacancy rate as report by CMHC exceeds 3% for a period of at least 12 months. 🏠
- AH 10** Implement *Residential Rental Tenure Zoning* to protect existing and proposed rental housing stock. 🏠
- AH 11** When properties with existing purpose-built rental, co-op, and mobile home units are redeveloped or renovated, require development applicants to propose a strategy to accommodate displaced tenants, guided by options identified in the Courtenay Affordable Housing Strategy Options Study. 🏠
- AH 12** Ensure short-term rental accommodation limits impact on the long-term rental housing supply. Explore options such as requiring owner occupation of short-term rental accommodations and business licenses. ✔️

## Objective 3 New non-market housing is actively pursued and supported

## Objective 4 The City provides incentives to create below-market housing

### Policies

- AH 13** Identify undeveloped and underdeveloped municipal sites for future *affordable housing* projects with emphasis on providing a mix of tenures including supportive housing. ✔️
- AH 14** Remain aware of local equity-priority and demographic needs for housing over time and focus support and incentives, including housing agreements, on residents who need it most including, but not limited to, seniors, Indigenous residents, low to moderate income earners, and those at risk of homelessness. Use the weighted housing wheelhouse 'Intervention Priority by Tenure' information within the Courtenay Affordable Housing Strategy Options Study to inform the level of City effort and support for different tenure priorities. Update the weighted housing wheelhouse as new housing information comes available to define specific housing needs as they evolve over time. ✔️
- AH 15** Develop and adopt a tiered below-market incentive program in which more incentives are offered to those projects in which more units are offered at deeper levels of below-market affordability. Incentives may include but not be limited to application processing timeline targets, parking, zoning, and servicing variances, and waiving or reducing fees and charges. 🏠
- AH 16** Seek below-market rental units as priority amenities when negotiating Community Amenity Contributions in rezoning applications for multi-residential projects. 🏠
- AH 17** Develop a density bonus policy in the *Zoning Bylaw* to incentivize the creation of *affordable housing*. 🏠

## Objective 5 Partnership approaches are in place to deliver and manage non- or below-market housing

### Policies

- AH 18** Advocate for senior government funding for *affordable housing* projects and initiatives. 🏠
- AH 19** Strengthen partnerships to deliver and manage more *affordable housing*, specifically, but not limited to: 🤝
- a.** Regional partnerships with neighbouring jurisdictions, K'ómoks First Nation, and housing providers on the regional coordination of supportive housing.
  - b.** With K'ómoks First Nation and other Indigenous partners on the delivery of non- or below-market housing projects for Indigenous residents.
- AH 20** Explore creating a municipal or regional housing corporation or other type of organization that would lead development and operations of future non- or below-market housing. 🏠 🤝
- AH 21** Build internal capacity to support the development of *affordable housing*, including by connecting non-profits with funding streams, land opportunities, market developers, and managing housing agreements. ✅

## Objective 6 Development application approval processes are streamlined, transparent, and easy to understand

### Policies

- AH 22** Conduct a development process review in order to recommend improvements to the current approval process, including fee structure, customer service, and improve clarity and transparency of OCP requirements and expectations. 🏠





# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

## OBJECTIVES

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1. Remaining sensitive ecosystems are protected; lost or degraded sensitive ecosystems are restored
2. The K'ómoks Estuary is 'kept living' (Q'waq'wala7owkw) and environmental, Indigenous, subsistence and recreational values are protected and restored
3. Courtenay's air, water, and soil are clean
4. The urban forest is healthy and growing towards a 34-40% canopy cover target
5. Development practices meet ecosystem health and site adaptive design objectives
6. Information and opportunities are in place for the wider community to play an active role in the protection, *restoration*, and stewardship of the natural environment

Objectives and policies regarding Courtenay's parks are included in the Parks and Recreation chapter. Requiring that new local area plans incorporate watershed health goals is described in Part B - Managing Growth. *Green infrastructure*, water quality, and sensitive rainwater management to better support watershed health is a topic included in the Municipal Infrastructure chapter.



## COURTENAY TODAY

One of the strongest themes emerging from the city-wide engagement for this OCP process is that green and blue spaces are loved. They offer beauty, places to recharge, recreate and connect with nature and other people. They are recognized for their intrinsic value, in addition to the values they provide to humans.

Sensitive ecosystems in Courtenay include freshwater springs, creeks and rivers and their riparian zones, wetlands, low-lying floodplain and estuarine environments, and mature forests aged 60–100 years. These ecosystems would have dominated the Comox Valley only 150 years ago, but by 2014 they were reduced to less than 7% of the region and have experienced fragmentation, significant alternation, or

outright loss. Courtenay's experience as the urban centre is indicative of these trends. Further, watersheds within the City's boundaries have been heavily altered by urbanization, agriculture, and infrastructure such as highways, ditches, and other drainage systems.

Human-made green spaces, nature parks of all sizes, and the urban forest with an estimated 33% city-wide canopy cover (2018) also form important parts of Courtenay's urban ecosystems.

Known terrestrial and aquatic *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* within Courtenay's boundaries are shown respectively on Maps APX-6 and APX-7 (Appendix 2 – Maps).

## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Nature is at the heart of meeting many of the aspirations in this OCP. In Courtenay's future, *nature-based solutions* in the form of protecting, restoring, and managing natural and semi-natural ecosystems to slow and adapt to climate change are widely applied. Forested areas act as carbon sinks, riparian areas contribute to flood protection, and intact ecosystems offer "free" essential services such as water retention and infiltration, and air and water purification.

Beyond a mere utility or service, however, urban research is showing that a relationship with nature is integral to human well-being. Therefore all neighbourhoods will have access to these places within easy walking distance of all residents. Core to Courtenay's identity, nature also establishes sense of place by helping shape neighbourhood character and creating local destinations. Nature helps set Courtenay apart from other cities.

Courtenay's efforts will be in good company. The United Nations has declared this decade to be one of *Ecosystem Restoration* with the goal of preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.<sup>1</sup> This global call to action includes a recognition that species extinction is occurring at a rate tens to hundreds of times greater than natural background rates of extinction over the past 10 million years, that this rate is accelerating, and that how urban areas develop is part of the problem, and the solution.

Courtenay will contribute to this call to action by bringing the city back into balance with nature. This will include increasing *green infrastructure*, reclaiming and restoring natural areas and the ecological connections between them, designing development to better fit the land (site adaptive design), as well as intentional urban design attention to increase human connection to and encourage an ethic of care of the natural world.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.decadeonrestoration.org>



## Objective 1 Remaining sensitive ecosystems are protected; lost or degraded sensitive ecosystems are restored

### Policies

- NE 1** Preserve sensitive ecosystem areas and the connections between them in a natural condition to the maximum extent possible. ✓
- NE 2** Use an ecosystem-based, cross-jurisdictional approach to watershed planning and management to preserve ecological health and the ongoing function of ecological processes that give rise to biodiversity and ecosystem services. ✓
- NE 3** Establish cross-jurisdictional ecosystem connectivity corridors to preserve and restore long-term connectivity between sensitive ecosystems. ✓
- NE 4** Collaborate with land owners, other levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and neighbouring jurisdictions in developing regionally consistent approaches to inventorying, mapping, conserving, and restoring *environmentally sensitive areas*, watershed health and species at risk, using the principles of precaution, connectivity, and *restoration*. 🤝
- NE 5** Consider entering into joint ownership and/or management agreements of protected land with non-government organizations or other government jurisdictions where required. 🤝
- NE 6** Review opportunity to create a Local Conservation Fund in order to receive contributions, donations, or grants to assist in implementing *restoration* projects and to ensure a dedicated source of funding to support nature conservation efforts, offset greenhouse gas emissions, and support land acquisition for habitat conservation projects. 🏗️

<sup>1</sup> Sensitive ecosystems and *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* are terms that are used interchangeably throughout this section. Known terrestrial and aquatic *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* within Courtenay's boundaries are shown respectively on APX-6 and APX-7 (Appendix 2 - Maps).



- NE 7** Monitor compliance and other legal requirements such as covenants related to protecting sensitive ecosystems. ✓
- NE 8** Work in partnership to minimize the further introduction and spread of invasive species, and to develop an invasive species management plan to prevent, eradicate, contain, and control the spread of invasive species within Courtenay and the wider region. 🤝
- NE 9** Evaluate and bring together existing policies, plans, and programs, and conduct additional research as necessary, to inform a Biodiversity and *Green Infrastructure* Network Strategy in order to: 🏗️
- a.** Assess the current condition of Courtenay's biodiversity and habitat resources including the effects of invasive species;
  - b.** Anticipate the impacts of climate change on local ecosystems and biodiversity;
  - c.** Identify areas that are degraded or are good candidates for *restoration* on public and private land;
  - d.** Establish conservation and *restoration* targets and an adaptive management framework for natural areas and indicator species;
  - e.** Identify and integrate a *green infrastructure* network plan as part of existing and any new *Environmentally Sensitive Area* mapping;
  - f.** Encourage participation in the *green infrastructure* network across property lines and promote a culture of conservation, *restoration* and stewardship; and
  - g.** Identify partners and roles in implementing the Strategy.





**Objective 2** The K'ómoks Estuary is 'kept living' (Q'waq'wala7owkw) and environmental, Indigenous, subsistence and recreational values are protected and restored

## Policies

- NE 10** Develop a shoreline policy to conserve remaining natural shorelines, and restore armored shorelines with green shores approaches to the maximum extent possible. 🏡
- NE 11** Recognize and support K'ómoks First Nation sustainable aquaculture interests in accordance with the policies in this Plan. ✔️
- NE 12** Participate in regional K'ómoks Estuary management planning to support the objectives and policies of this Plan, in accordance with the policies within this Plan. 🤝





## Objective 3 Courtenay's air, water, and soil are clean

### Policies

- NE 13** Strive to meet the BC Air Quality Objectives and Standards<sup>1</sup>, including reducing sources of airborne fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) within the City of Courtenay. ✓
- NE 14** Continue to prohibit open burning within city limits. ✓
- NE 15** Continue to regulate the use of pesticides on private land and limit use on public land. ✓
- NE 16** Limit the extent of impervious surfaces on private and public land. ✓
- NE 17** Strive to maintain and/or restore the water balance. Consider options to reduce the volume of stormwater runoff through interflow, infiltration, retention, and/or detention.<sup>2</sup> ✓
- NE 18** Explore the use of enforcement tools to protect water quality related to development practices, such as an erosion and sediment control bylaw. 🏗️
- NE 19** Update the *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* to incorporate the recommendations of the Integrated Rainwater Management Plan. 🏗️
- NE 20** Continue to collaborate with the Comox Valley Regional District and regional partners to monitor and take coordinated action to improve local air and water quality. 🤝

<sup>1</sup> BC Provincial Government: [www2.gov.bc.ca](http://www2.gov.bc.ca)

<sup>2</sup> BC Provincial Government, Water Quality Guidelines: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/water-quality/water-quality-guidelines/approved-water-quality-guidelines>

## Objective 4 The urban forest is healthy and growing towards a 34-40% canopy cover target

### Policies

- NE 21** Continue annual planting targets of 300 new trees on public land and work towards 850 new trees on private land until 2040. ✓
- NE 22** Continue to regulate tree removal, and ensure replacement, through the use of the Tree Protection and Management Bylaw. ✓
- NE 23** Continue to integrate City trees, forests, and *green infrastructure* into asset management planning, including budgeting, policy development, and staff resourcing. ✓
- NE 24** Implement the Urban Forest Strategy plan, manage, protect, grow and partner actions. 🏠

## Objective 5 Development practices meet ecosystem health and site adaptive design objectives

### Policies

- NE 25** Enact *Zoning Bylaw* requirements to avoid impact to sensitive ecosystems, including but not limited to: 🏠
- a. Cluster housing zones to allow for a tighter grouping of homes on the most buildable portions of the property in exchange for retaining larger portions of the land in a natural state, and allowing the owner(s) of land containing *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*<sup>1</sup> to use the original site area in computing density allowances, in accordance with the *Zoning Bylaw*;
  - b. *Density bonusing* in exchange for increased nature protection or *restoration*; and
  - c. Limiting the extent of impervious surfaces.
- NE 26** Ensure connectivity of properties and landscapes to support ecosystem processes. This includes incorporating considerations such as wildlife movement and historical hydrological patterns into the development proposal including transportation and utility corridors. 🏠
- NE 27** Require all development proposals on properties equal to or greater than 4,000 metres square in size to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment to determine the presence or absence of *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. 🏠

<sup>1</sup> Known terrestrial and aquatic *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* within Courtenay's boundaries are shown respectively on Maps APX-6 and APX-7 (Appendix 2 - Maps).



- NE 28** Require developments adjacent to *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, including *ecosystem connectivity opportunity areas*, be subject to Environment Development Permit (EDP) area guidelines. 🏠
- NE 29** Establish a requirement within the Environmental Development Permit Area guidelines for a 30-metre setback from the stream boundary when conducting development on properties subject to the Riparian Areas Protection Regulations (RAPR), whenever opportunities for a 30-metre setback are possible. 🏠
- NE 30** Explore conducting an analysis to predetermine setbacks on streams subject to the Riparian Area Protection Regulation (RAPR), for areas where a 30-metre setback cannot be achieved. 🏠🤝
- NE 31** Require as part of the development permit process the submission of securities to ensure the completion of landscaping and environmental rehabilitation, or to address damage to the environment caused by development activity. 🏠
- NE 32** Require that *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* be retained under single ownership or dedicated to the City at time of *subdivision*. Such lands shall not be considered as part of the required 5% dedication for parkland, where applicable as a condition of *subdivision* approval. 🏠
- NE 33** Do not permit development within *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. New trails or facilities in *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* will be discouraged and installed only where they provide net gain for habitat values. 🏠
- NE 34** Continue to encourage participation of environmental stewardship organizations early in the design stages of a development project within or near sensitive ecosystems. 🏠
- NE 35** Explore development incentives and negotiation tools to encourage protection of the natural environment beyond minimum standards. 🏠



**Objective 6** Information and opportunities are in place for the wider community to play an active role in the protection, *restoration*, and stewardship of the natural environment

**Policies**

- NE 36** Partner with senior levels of government, regional jurisdictions, conservation professionals and organizations to maintain publicly accessible mapping and associated information of ecological systems of the area. 🤝
- NE 37** Conduct regular reviews of associated City bylaws to ensure they are up to date and are based on current research and best practices for protection of the natural environment. 🏗️
- NE 38** Work in partnership on the development and delivery of robust public education campaigns to promote a local culture of nature and watershed conservation, *restoration*, and stewardship. Opportunities on private land should include, but not be limited to, invasive species management, tree planting and care, pesticides, native, bio-diverse, and watershed sensitive landscaping. 🤝





# PARKS AND RECREATION

## OBJECTIVES

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1. Parkland in the form of natural areas, open spaces, and outdoor recreation is of sufficient amounts, is well-connected, equitably distributed, and is of high quality to enhance livability throughout the city
2. Recreation amenities, services, and programming are expanded and enhanced to support increased health, wellness, and social connections for all residents
3. Parks, greenways, and streets are better integrated to create a seamless and enjoyable active transportation system
4. The parks and recreation system exemplifies leadership in reconciliation, climate action, equity, and community well-being through its services, programs, and partnerships
5. Partnerships are in place to achieve parks and recreation objectives

The parks and recreational system touches on many parts of our lives, a low-carbon and sustainable future, and therefore many other aspects of the OCP. Complementary objectives and policies that relate to these important community assets are in the following sections: equity access and universal accessibility (Social Infrastructure chapter), cultural and diversity representation (Arts, Culture & Heritage), *green infrastructure* (Municipal Infrastructure), role in ecological health (Natural Environment chapter), active mobility (Streets & Transportation chapter), and locations for food production and exploration (Food Systems chapter).



## COURTENAY TODAY

Nearly all residents – approximately 98% of them – are within a 10 minute walk of a public park. This is a tremendous asset for a city of people who identify parks, trails, and other green spaces among the most valued attributes of Courtenay.

Courtenay's Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2019 identifies future needs for the community, with directions centring around eight goals: improving connectivity; fostering a healthy and active community; providing access for all; connecting parks and recreation with culture; protecting and enhancing beauty; protecting and enhancing the environment; enhancing communication and partnerships; and practicing sound financial management.

The community engagement results for this OCP process emphasized and complemented these priorities, including an identified need for parks programming, more recreational programming for seniors in particular, improving park and trail connectivity, and protecting and enhancing access to the estuary, creeks, and rivers. The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has further underscored the importance of access to inclusive and diverse indoor and outdoor recreational programs, multi-use accessible facilities, and public outdoor spaces to community well-being, and has reinforced their role as a unifying feature of Courtenay's identity and quality of life.





## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH PARKS AND RECREATION

The parks, trails and recreational system of programs and indoor and outdoor facilities is at its heart an opportunity for connectivity, whether that be to each other, the natural world, K'ómoks First Nation history and practices, in how we get around, or through the ecosystems across the city and region. Providing equitable access to these green and public places will support physical and mental well-being for residents of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Parks and recreation are a strategic community asset through which to welcome in and practice with the wider community the core directions of the OCP: reconciliation, climate action, equity, and community well-being.

Advancing the goals of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will help bring to life the goals of the OCP, including providing more space for nature as well as more opportunity for people to spend time in it. A strong local recreational spirit, and a climate that allows for year-round outdoor activities means that both indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and programs will continue to be an essential part of Courtenay's identity and future.

Connecting these public recreational spaces through trails and greenways will also advance the goal of more functional transportation choices throughout the city. By seamlessly connecting both the road and greenway network, these linear corridors will be an important – and delightful – transportation network for a low-carbon future: green, convenient, accessible, affordable, active and beautiful ways to travel through and across neighbourhoods on foot and on wheels.

Parks and greenways also provide a significant contribution to Courtenay's wider *green infrastructure* network that includes *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, the urban forest, and engineered rain gardens and wetlands.

Accessible spaces within walking distance for social connection and play, retreating into nature, and incorporating *green infrastructure* will be essential as the city and neighbourhoods grow and intensify. Inherently diverse, parks and recreational facilities provide for distinctive place making and place keeping opportunities that make Courtenay special.

**Objective 1** Parkland in the form of natural areas, open spaces, and outdoor recreation is of sufficient amounts, is well-connected, equitably distributed, and is of high quality to enhance livability throughout the city

## Policies

- PR 1** Develop an integrated network of neighbourhood, community and nature parks, linear parks and greenways, play spaces and recreation amenities generally in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2019. The Plan identifies specifically the objectives of improving parks and greenway connectivity, fostering a healthy and active community, providing access for all, protecting and enhancing beauty, connecting parks and recreation with culture, and enhancing communication and partnerships. ✓
- PR 2** Provide new parkland and greenways in areas identified in the OCP, in future growth areas, mixed-use and high-density development areas, and *intensification* areas through new development and *redevelopment* opportunities. ✓
- PR 3** Ensure appropriate and sufficient parklands, play spaces, and recreation infrastructure are provided as a form of essential social and ecological infrastructure to meet the needs of the community and accommodate new growth. Strive for a maximum 10 minute walk distance access from all residences throughout Courtenay (400–800 metres). ✓
- PR 4** Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to be in accordance with the Map APX-9 Parks and Greenways Map (Appendix 2 – Maps) in order to prioritize parkland supply around the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors. 🏡
- PR 5** Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify further opportunities and strategy to secure increased public access to the K'ómoks Estuary, creeks, and rivers. 🏡
- PR 6** Explore opportunities for a regional parks service in partnership with regional partners. 🤝



## PR 7

Develop a parkland acquisition strategy to provide equitable access to community amenities for residents. The strategy will include provision and proximity standards in accordance with the Parks and Recreational Master Plan and with special attention for Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors that will experience an increase in population: 🏠

- a. 1.2 hectares per 1,000 population for community parks and 0.5 hectares per 1,000 population for neighbourhood parks.
- b. Walking distance of 400 metres to neighbourhood parks and 800 metres to community parks.
- c. Minimum size of 1.0 hectare for community parks and 0.2 hectare for neighbourhood parks.
- d. Nature parks representative of Courtenay's biodiversity.
- e. Urban types of park features such as plazas.

## PR 8

Apply planning and design guidelines set out in section 3.2.1 of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2019) respecting parkland location, area and design, and including: 🏠

- a. Providing adequate, quality, useable and universally accessible open space opportunities for year-round activities related to play, social gatherings, leisure activities, food growing, rest and relaxation.
- b. Considering local infrastructure needs and amenities as well as safety, accessibility, aesthetics, and recreation.
- c. Environmentally sensitive design of siting, materials, surfaces and maintenance.
- d. Securing and locating new neighbourhood parks in prominent, accessible locations that are connected to the City's trail network and act as focal areas for the neighbourhoods they serve.
- e. Locating parks and open space, where appropriate, with areas for active and passive recreation use that accommodate institutions and social facilities, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, retail and restaurant areas, and other community amenities.
- f. Ensuring land dedicated as parkland meets the minimum standards.
- g. Discouraging creation of small, isolated, single purpose parks.





- PR 9** Develop specifications and guidelines to guide the timing and construction standards for land dedicated as parkland, new park acquisitions or park asset renewal or *redevelopment* initiatives. For multi-phase developments, park dedication and development should occur in the first phases of development. 🏠🏠
- PR 10** Prioritize parkland dedication over cash-in-lieu contribution, where opportunities exist. *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* and required setbacks areas are not considered as part of development related parkland dedications. 🏠
- PR 11** Seek opportunity to augment the Parkland Acquisition Reserve Fund in order to ensure a dedicated source of funding to support parks acquisition. Explore what contributions to include such as grants, money received from the sale or disposal of parkland, or parcel-based tax levy. 🏠
- PR 12** In case of school closure or relocation, work with the School District 71 to explore opportunities for protecting, retaining, enhancing, and acquiring the open space components of these properties as City parks. +




## Objective 2 Recreation amenities, services, and programming are expanded and enhanced to support increased health, wellness, and social connections for all residents

### Policies

- PR 13** Maintain and invest in the Lewis Recreation Centre, Lewis and Simms Parks as centralized, high-intensity regional recreation destinations intended to serve the indoor and outdoor recreation needs of the community. ✓
- PR 14** Continue to review plans for expansion or renovation of existing recreational facilities in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and in particular within the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors. 🏗️
- PR 15** Conduct a recreational needs assessment to define appropriate measures and supply of recreational services to match population growth and demographic trends. 🏗️
- PR 16** Regularly review programs fee structure and seek opportunities to offer more affordable or no-cost activities for those who have limited access to regular programs. 🏗️
- PR 17** Explore opportunities for mobile recreation services and 'pop-up' programming for greater outreach in parks and public open spaces, schools, and community facilities, in particular within the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors. 🏗️
- PR 18** Ensure outdoor key recreational areas are supported with adequate sanitary facilities, particularly during peak periods. 🍽️
- PR 19** Provide programming that reflects the directions of the OCP: reconciliation, climate action, equity, and community well-being. ✓

### Objective 3 Parks, greenways, and streets are better integrated to create a seamless and enjoyable active transportation system

#### Policies


- PR 20** Reclaim underutilized land within road rights of way to achieve a greater balance between the pedestrian and vehicular realm on streets identified as part of the pedestrian, cycling, and greenway network. Animate these streets with park elements such as trees, landscaping, community gardens, seating areas, small-scale play equipment and other amenities. Provide for policies to allow for both temporary and permanent installations. 
- PR 21** Update the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the 2019 Transportation Master Plan, and the *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* to include a modified green and active street standard to support multiple goals within the road right of way on select streets. 
- PR 22** Update the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the 2019 Transportation Master Plan to add green and active street connections and be in accordance with the Parks and Greenways Map APX-9 (Appendix 2 - Maps): 
- a.** West Courtenay east-west connections connecting Piercy Creek Greenway to the Riverway Greenway;
  - b.** East Courtenay connection connecting Muir Road to Lower Ryan Town Centre; and
  - c.** East Courtenay connections connecting new development lands north of Ryan Road and the Crown Isle residential golf course community.



## Objective 4 The parks and recreation system exemplifies leadership in reconciliation, climate action, equity, and community well-being through its services, programs, and partnerships


### Policies

#### PR 23

When designing and programming parks and recreational facilities ensure the following perspectives and factors are considered and included: 

- a. Indigenous perspectives and worldviews, including K'ómoks First Nation traditional use and practices, in the provision of recreational programming and in the formation of park types, layouts, features, and purposes; and
- b. Unique and culturally significant spaces highlighted in parks and provide spaces and amenities to celebrate a diversity of heritage, art and culture of our community.

#### PR 24

Where appropriate, use existing and new parks, greenways, and recreational facilities as climate-friendly leadership, education and demonstration opportunities that can be studied, evaluated, and marketed to foster support from the public, development community, and City for broader application. Specifically consider: 


- a. Test beds for emerging *green infrastructure* approaches;
- b. Water conservation and zero waste management technology and practices;
- c. New models for promoting and sustaining urban and semi-urban biodiversity, and include measurable targets and post-construction monitoring to track successes;
- d. Planting of local and climate-adapted species, and the *restoration* of local habitats in park spaces;
- e. Urban forest management and good arboricultural practices;
- f. Education about local ecosystems, their services and sensitivities, and our relationships and responsibilities to the natural world;
- g. Renewable energy; and
- h. Urban agriculture opportunities.

#### PR 25

Protect sensitive ecosystems and ecological functions within City parks by: 

- a. Creating designated protection areas;
- b. Limiting access points;
- c. Installing interpretive signage for increasing public awareness; and
- d. Developing guidelines to determine compatible and incompatible recreational land uses in *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*.


#### PR 26

Apply the planning process proposed in section 3.2.2 of the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan in order to ensure public participation in the provision of new parks and park renewal. 

## Objective 5 Partnerships are in place to achieve parks and recreation objectives

### Policies

#### PR 27

Seek out partnerships to achieve the goals and objectives of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan including, but not limited to working with: 

- a. School District 71 to increase access to school facilities after hours for community uses and City programs;
- b. Neighbouring jurisdictions to explore regional greenway connectivity opportunities;
- c. Community agencies to provide more programs in/around the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Urban Corridor;
- d. Non-profit and private sector organizations to expand sport and physical activity options, and expand recreation opportunities for all residents;
- e. Neighbouring jurisdictions and other government agencies and community groups, to coordinate recreation and park services and to consider alternative service delivery methods including maintenance agreements; and
- f. Citizens to foster resident-driven solutions and involvement in park use and community involvement.



# MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

## OBJECTIVES

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1. Infrastructure and services are resilient to risks and impacts of climate change
2. Infrastructure investments are guided by a multiple bottom line decision-making approach: this means energy efficient, fiscally responsible, equitably distributed, sustainable levels of service that protect public health, safety, and the environment
3. Natural and engineered forms of *green infrastructure* are integrated to manage rainwater resources, protect water and air quality, maintain ecosystem function, provide flood control, and address and adapt to climate impacts
4. Solid waste, potable water, sanitary sewer and rain and stormwater infrastructure life-cycle costs are minimized by increasing conservation actions and reducing the need to develop new infrastructure capacity
5. Third party utility providers such as energy and communications utilities are low carbon and reliable

Objectives and policies pertaining to the mobility network are included in the Streets and Transportation policy chapter. Aligning municipal infrastructure investment decisions with growth management is included in Part B.



## COURTENAY TODAY

While traditional municipal infrastructure – such as underground pipes and treatment facilities – is often hidden from public view, it's a complex system that forms a vital part of Courtenay's urban system contributing to health, sustainability, and fiscal success of Courtenay. Examples include:

- Courtenay's water is provided by the CVRD, sourced from Comox Lake. A new water treatment facility in 2021 services Courtenay residents among others.
- The City's sewer utility infrastructure includes over 150 km of sanitary sewer mains and nearly 7,000 individual connections. Household and business wastewater is conveyed to the Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Centre, which is operated by the CVRD.
- The City's storm drainage infrastructure includes over 167 km of gravity mains, approximately 650 culverts, and over 7,000 service connections. In addition, there are over 45 km of City-maintained drainage ditches, 22 public storm ponds and 18 private storm ponds. Storm drainage from public and private land in the City drains into the Puntledge River, Tsolum River, Courtenay River, K'ómoks Estuary as well as Millard-Piercy Creek, Morrison Creek, Little River, Portuguese Creek, and Brooklyn Creek watersheds.
- Solid waste curbside collection includes garbage, recycling, and yard waste. Additional recyclable materials can also be brought to the recycling depot located within Courtenay. A regional

organics composting facility is being established in Campbell River and will serve the Courtenay area in the near future. Other waste streams may be disposed of at the Comox Valley Waste Management Centre landfill. The Comox Strathcona Waste Management service reports that in 2021, industrial, commercial, institutional, and multi-residential garbage accounted for 55% of the 21,500 tonnes of waste brought to the landfill, construction and demolition waste accounted for 25%, curbside garbage collected from residents (other than multi-residential) accounted for 19%, with the remaining 1% coming from other sources.

Distributing water, treating wastewater, and collecting and treating solid waste all require energy efficient management. Under status quo (i.e., unchanged) management practices, this energy demand will continue to grow.

Furthermore, like in all cities, the reliable functioning of this complex network of infrastructure in Courtenay is threatened by climate change impacts. For example, projected decreases in summer precipitation and winter snowfall may reduce water supplies in future summer months. Similarly, increasing risks of flooding, storm surges, saltwater ingress, extended drought conditions, and more frequent and severe winter storms and spring and fall rainfall events will add strain and threaten municipal infrastructure systems.

## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE

Decisions made today about Courtenay's growth, its infrastructure and the levels of service from that infrastructure will affect Courtenay's future fiscal performance. Because higher density, better connected neighbourhoods are less costly to service over the long term, the City will embrace a holistic approach to land use management and associated infrastructure planning, accounting for long-term lifecycle costs associated with development.

Recognizing that the City's investments have far-reaching impacts on the well-being of people and the environment, the City will also apply a full-cost accounting approach to infrastructure planning and management. This means that external costs associated with climate change impacts, air pollution, motor vehicle collisions, and other health and sustainability impacts will be better accounted for in decision-making.

Courtenay will also integrate *natural assets* into core asset management practice and financial decision-making process, with the goal of understanding, managing, and valuing *natural assets* equally to more traditional grey or "hard" built infrastructure. Particularly for rainwater management, the City will shift focus to treating rain and stormwater as a resource rather than as a waste product. This means expanding the services of rainwater management from solely drainage and flood prevention, toward *green infrastructure* and regenerative

development practices that contribute to Courtenay's ecosystems. Letting nature "do the work" is not only ecologically beneficial, it offers financial benefits in the long run. This will require attention to the scale of *nature-based solutions*, from entire watersheds to property-specific opportunities. Such approaches may not be suitable in all locations, but opportunities for *nature-based solutions* will first be considered before being dismissed.

### MODELLING ASSUMPTIONS



Because pumping and treating water and waste water as well as moving and treating solid waste is a source of GHG emissions, the following targets are important to contribute to the community-wide 2050 net-zero GHG emission target.

- End-of-life pumps in the water distribution system are replaced with more efficient versions, reducing energy use by 30% by 2050 and increased use of remote monitoring technology limit staff manual inspection frequencies;
- Non-agricultural water use across Courtenay is reduced 50% by 2050; and
- 90% of residential and industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) waste, including 100% of organic waste, is diverted from the landfill by 2050.

## Objective 1 Infrastructure and services are resilient to risks and impacts of climate change

### Policies

#### MI 1

Conduct a high-level risk assessment (HLRA) to determine potential risks to Courtenay's infrastructure and identify priority areas for adaptation interventions. Ensure the HLRA includes direction to:  

- a. Involve internal and external stakeholders from neighbouring jurisdictions, the Comox Valley Emergency Program, Emergency Management BC, energy utilities, telecommunications providers, and transportation service providers, health authority, and other critical services including local *food security*.
- b. Conduct a risk and vulnerability analysis of municipally owned and operated infrastructure at the asset class and system level to determine the climate change impact vulnerability of municipal infrastructure and identify priority assets for adaptation interventions.
- c. Ensure risk assessments include analyses of changes expected due to climate change, such as forecasting of rainfall intensity-duration-frequency curves and sea level rise in order to assess the magnitude of climate change effects, and quantify that change over time.
- d. Establish a program of climate change adaptation measures to implement on local and regional infrastructure, according to the priority established in the assessments. Ensure that the program includes *green infrastructure* interventions including urban forest strategy recommendations wherever appropriate.
- e. Install or upgrade to zero-emissions back-up power in critical infrastructure (e.g., battery electric storage, green hydrogen).
- f. Develop inspection procedures for high-risk infrastructure to identify damage resulting from extreme events.
- g. Develop or update design standards for new municipal infrastructure that reflect anticipated results of the risk and vulnerability analysis.



## Objective 2 Infrastructure investments are guided by a multiple bottom line decision-making approach; this means energy efficient, fiscally responsible, equitably distributed, sustainable levels of service that protect public health, safety, and the environment

### Policies

#### MI 2

Make infrastructure planning, investment and operations and maintenance decisions with a long-term life-cycle *full cost accounting* asset management perspective for the design, maintenance, and renewal of infrastructure and utilities, including *natural assets*. 

#### MI 3




Utilize ecological services provided by natural systems wherever practical. This means applying and integrating natural capital in the City's Asset Management Plan to provide for their maintenance and regular support alongside traditional capital assets including reclamation and *restoration* of degraded *natural assets*.  



- MI 4** Coordinate between City divisions, other levels of government, and utility service providers to ensure all infrastructure expansion and renewal projects consider multiple community objectives and agency needs. ✓
- MI 5** Develop decision support tools to ensure the vision and goals of the OCP are being considered and incorporated into capital planning including capital asset renewal. 🏗️
- MI 6** Support variances to development and servicing specifications to permit *green infrastructure*, public amenity or active transportation infrastructure on public land where such opportunities are technically feasible, where operations and maintenance considerations have been identified and are supported, and where such infrastructure is in accordance with the vision and goals of the OCP. ✓
- MI 7** Encourage senior government regulations to allow *natural assets* in public service accounting frameworks. 📣
- MI 8** Explore the option of establishing, working in partnership to establish, or supporting the establishment of a sani-dump station within Courtenay in order to ensure proper disposal options for recreational vehicles. +
- MI 9** Seek opportunities for preserving utility or other rights of way for future linear paths as part of the pedestrian and cycle network. +
- MI 10** Ensure that high-efficiency improvements are applied to capital upgrades including, but not limited to: water and sewage pumps, treatment and conveyance; streetlights and other public realm lighting; and solid waste transportation and treatment. ✓
- MI 11** Investigate infrastructure systems and technologies to improve energy efficiency and resource reuse. Look for opportunities for capturing waste heat, heat exchange, energy generation, and rainwater reuse. 🏗️
- MI 12** When completing master plans for City services, endeavor to include the full costs of these plans to ensure Development Cost Charges can be accurately updated, and the City has a path to fulfill these plans in a financially sustainable way. 🏗️
- MI 13** Review fees and charges to fully recover costs of utility operations and maintenance as well as capital replacement through user fees and frontage fees. Explore the feasibility of a utility approach to rain and stormwater management, including incentivising permeable landscapes. ✓ 🏗️
- MI 14** Regularly review the Development Cost Charges Bylaw to reflect the costs of growth-related infrastructure including parks, and determine the appropriate balance of funding new infrastructure between the existing tax base and new developments. 🏗️

### Objective 3 Natural and engineered forms of *green infrastructure* are integrated to manage rainwater resources, protect water and air quality, maintain ecosystem function, provide flood control, and address and adapt to climate impacts

## Policies

- MI 15** Evaluate opportunity for *green infrastructure* specifications and best management practices for incorporation into regulatory tools such as Zoning and *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaws*. 
- MI 16** Ensure that rain and stormwater management planning and infrastructure support both watershed health and public safety objectives by:  
- a.** Minimizing and mitigating cumulative impacts, working at the watershed scale across jurisdictional boundaries, and avoiding inter-basin transfer of water via the drainage network;
  - b.** Designing new rainwater infrastructure to manage flows to pre-development rates including future climate change projections. This includes preventing frequently occurring small rainfall events from becoming surface run-off and ensuring the maintenance of minimum base flows, and in some instances augmented base flows, in water bodies;
  - c.** Returning water collected in drainage networks to the natural waterbody it belongs in as close to source as possible. This includes exploring the opportunity for multiple small outfalls throughout the watershed to maintain adequate stream flow;
  - d.** Supporting the integration of rainwater detention, infiltration, and conveyance systems with community or natural amenity space where possible. Promote park and streetscape designs that serve as temporary rainwater detention;
  - e.** Mimicking natural ecosystem processes in rainwater system design and construction as much as possible. This includes minimizing runoff, maximizing infiltration, preserving and protecting the water absorbing capabilities of soil, vegetation and trees particularly along riparian corridors, and minimizing impervious surfaces on both private and public lands;
  - f.** Encouraging the capturing of rainwater and discharging to ground where appropriate on public and private properties, while reducing impact to downslope properties;
  - g.** Ensuring stormwater meets applicable BC surface water objectives at the time it is discharged into receiving waterbodies;
  - h.** Ensuring that pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals with harmful water quality impacts are restricted or prohibited across all land uses where municipal authority exists to restrict such substances; and
  - i.** Applying best practices to land use management to prevent erosion and sedimentation during construction.

## Objective 4 Solid waste, potable water, sanitary sewer and rain and stormwater infrastructure life-cycle costs are minimized by increasing conservation actions and reducing the need to develop new infrastructure capacity

### Policies

#### MI 17

Support the continued extension of garbage, yard waste, recycling, and kitchen organics service to all Courtenay properties and work with the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board to increase the diversion targets to 90% of residential, industrial, commercial and institutional waste, including 100% of organic waste, by 2050. ✓

#### MI 18

Explore zero-waste approaches in waste management, including prioritizing upstream approaches that avoid, reduce, and reuse waste in all applications of local government jurisdiction. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Supporting regionally coordinated and sustained public education programs; 🤝
- b. Supporting neighbourhood-scale recycling and waste diversion facilities as part of complete neighbourhoods subject to access, form and character, and other neighbourhood integration considerations; +
- c. Ensuring sufficient and conveniently located spaces within all developments to support occupant waste diversion behaviours; 🏠
- d. Materials restrictions and bans from the landfill where alternatives exist and diversion options are viable; +
- e. Supporting the Province in applying Extended Producer Responsibility policies to more materials; 🗑️
- f. Obtaining accurate data of waste streams for monitoring, education, and planning purposes; ✓ and
- g. Demonstrating leadership in municipal operations, procurement, and capital investments, including renewal and disposal. ✓

#### MI 19

Implement initiatives and programs in the City's Water Smart Action Plan that aim to reduce water demand. Explore the implementation of demand-side management measures to reduce community water consumption including outdoor water use restrictions, universal water metering, rainwater harvesting, and conservation-oriented water rates. 🚰



## Objective 5 Third party utility providers such as energy and communications utilities are low carbon and reliable

### Policies

- MI 20** Support the creation of high quality and assured communications links. ✓
- MI 21** Work with utility companies to coordinate planning and development of electricity and other low-carbon energy infrastructure (e.g., solar, geothermal, etc.) to ensure project efficiencies, minimize costs, reduce public nuisance, and ensure sufficient supply. ✓
- MI 22** Encourage the generation of more renewable energy within Courtenay subject to form and character and other land use considerations. ✓







# SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

## OBJECTIVES

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1. All Courtenay residents experience equitable access to services
2. Coordinated, inclusionary, and systems-based responses are in place to address evolving complex social issues
3. Physical spaces are designed with the needs for social connection and accessibility in mind
4. Neighbourhood and community development-based organizing are leveraged as a source of community capacity and resilience

Objectives and policies pertaining to an important social infrastructure – Parks and Recreation – are included in the policy chapter by that name. Other social infrastructure such as community gardening and a resilient and equitable food system are included in the Food Systems policy chapter. Arts, Culture and Heritage as a foundation to thriving and expressive social systems are included in that policy chapter. *Affordable housing* and *affordable transportation* are addressed in those respective chapters as well.

## COURTENAY TODAY

Social infrastructure is made up of foundational services and networks that support local quality of life. They are provided in response to the basic needs of communities and to provide more equity, stability, and social well-being. Social infrastructure will be unique to the needs of each community and will change over time.

In Courtenay, social infrastructure needs and issues are diverse. Depending on the barriers to social and economic participation, some residents may require a number of supports for varying durations. Common needs include: mental health and addictions services; sufficient food; child care that supports parental, particularly women's, full participation in the workforce; and supports to reduce the childhood vulnerability (as measured by the Early Development instrument scale). Poverty and lack of *affordable housing* are at the heart of a number of these complex social challenges, including real and perceived sense of community safety, which unfortunately remain a significant concern in Courtenay today.

For people who identify with *equity-priority groups* (such as women, seniors, youth, Black, First Nations, Inuit, Metis, people of colour, 2SLGBTQIAP and people with physical and/or developmental disabilities) barriers to social and economic participation are often higher due to systemic practices and processes that do not consider or provide for the needs and experiences of all people. Immigrant newcomers' experiences indicate that *affordable housing*, public transportation, access to employment, and initiatives to foster community connections are needed to accelerate the process of making Courtenay home.

Social infrastructure responses include providing services as well as nurturing the conditions for citizens to connect with and support each other. Services may take the form of meeting basic needs (safety, food, shelter, child care and health care), enriching quality of life (recreation, lifelong learning, diverse experiences, and having fun), or supporting community safety such as through *restorative justice* principles as practiced by the Community Justice Centre, to which the City of Courtenay appoints an elected official.<sup>1</sup> The delivery of social infrastructure relies on the coordination and partnerships of various government agencies and jurisdictions, community organizations, businesses, and volunteers.

<sup>1</sup> *Restorative Justice* is defined by the Comox Valley Community Justice Centre as "a way of addressing conflict and crime that enables the person who caused the harm, people who were affected by the harm, and the community to create a meaningful solution. In contrast to the traditional justice system in Canada which seeks to establish a punishment for each act of wrongdoing assuming that will contribute to victim and societal satisfaction, *Restorative Justice* focuses on repairing damage and restoring relationships. *Restorative Justice* is not a specific model, instead it is a set of principles that can be flexibly applied to a variety of situations of conflict, crime, abuse, etc. Definition from [www.communityjusticecentre.ca](http://www.communityjusticecentre.ca).



## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

People are at the heart of this OCP. Regardless of personal circumstance, all residents need to be included and feel a sense of belonging to maintain Courtenay's spirit. Therefore this OCP recognizes that social planning and infrastructure are as critical to community well-being as traditional forms of municipal infrastructure such as roads, pipes, and parks.









It takes a community to support and celebrate each other. The City's approach to social infrastructure will be to foster collaborative working relationships with diverse community partners, as well as support the conditions for social networks to deepen. This people-centric approach will be important in meeting social needs as well as nurturing behaviour changes that are needed for a climate friendly Courtenay. The City will contribute and work towards an expanding network of formal and informal spaces and services to bring residents together to volunteer, collaborate, receive and give supports, have fun, and get things done. Supporting each other, lowering our collective and individual carbon footprints, and preparing for the impacts of climate change are activities that will be particularly important at the neighbourhood scale.

People who previously were unable to enjoy the city because of unmet needs will discover more supports. People who have historically been excluded from public process will be equally valued, and their unique needs and aspirations will be included and represented. Structural inequities will be reduced through *affordable housing*, safe and accessible public spaces, social programming, and more representation in civic decision-making.

Because individual and community well-being are influenced by a broad range of personal, social, economic, and environmental conditions in which we grow, live, work and age, *social determinants of health* will be considered at the root of community decisions. This includes approaches to community safety that are founded on trauma informed, culturally safe and *restorative justice* practices. Given the diversity of *social determinants of health* (Figure C-1), other critical social infrastructure elements such as *affordable housing*, affordable, safe and accessible transportation, parks and recreation, arts and culture, community participation and a commitment to reconciliation and addressing inequities are covered elsewhere in this OCP.

## Objective 1 All Courtenay residents experience equitable access to services

### Policies

- SI 1** Develop and employ a locally-relevant framework for assessing social, equity, and health impacts in policy, development, program and service decisions.  
- SI 2** Undertake a city-wide equity audit to identify social inequities and barriers to access in municipal service delivery and develop a strategy to inform decision-making processes related to planning and service allocation in the community. Ensure anti-discrimination, diversity, and inclusion form part of any new policies and programs as well as equitable access to all City services based on needs.  
- SI 3** Provide learning and capacity building opportunities for City employees to ensure understanding and accountability to eliminate discrimination wherever such exists, and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the City's services. 
- SI 4** Ensure a comprehensive approach to universal accessibility is routinely considered in the development of new municipal plans, policies, built environment design, programs, services, and communication formats. This includes physical accessibility as well as access more generally that is free from systemic barriers. 
- SI 5** Conduct an audit of public facilities and spaces, transportation systems, and gathering places in consultation with the community, to evaluate accessibility. Prioritize improvements that provide functional barrier-free options.  

## Objective 2 Coordinated, inclusionary, and systems-based responses are in place to address evolving complex social issues

### Policies

- SI 6** Consider *social determinants of health* and adopt an evidence-based approach to policy formation, community education, advocacy, and decision making, including ensuring *equity-priority* voices are included in the creation, delivery, and evaluation of services. ✓
- SI 7** Identify an appropriate role for the City in the delivery of social infrastructure in relation to other organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions that provide services for *equity-priority groups*. 🏠
- SI 8** Continue to support regional partners on program administration and delivery for homelessness, poverty prevention, mental health, addiction, and overdose prevention programs. 🤝 ✓
- SI 9** Work regionally to increase child care spaces as identified in the Comox Valley Child Care Action Plan (2019). 🤝
- SI 10** Explore how the City can support School District 71 in the provision of child care spaces. 🤝
- SI 11** Work regionally to reduce poverty in the Comox Valley by 25% over the next 4 years by identifying an appropriate role for the City in addressing poverty systemically as identified in the Comox Valley Regional District's Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021). 🤝 ✓
- SI 12** Work regionally to further recommendations of the Comox Valley Substance Use Strategy Phase 1 Report (2021) including identifying an appropriate role for the City. 🤝
- SI 13** Support regional cooperation in the provision of addiction recovery centres, including those that provide on-site residential facilities. 🤝
- SI 14** Continue to support the regional coordination of the Comox Valley Emergency Program. Emphasize community capacity building responses as essential to that program, including community adaptation approaches to the longer-range climate emergency. 🤝
- SI 15** Through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), advocate to senior governments for action, funding, support, and coordination in addressing social infrastructure needs including, but not limited to: 🏠
- a. Poverty reduction
  - b. Homelessness and housing
  - c. Complex health care such as long-term care, mental health, and addictions care
  - d. High quality, affordable, and accessible child care space targets as identified in the Comox Valley Child Care Action Plan (2019)
  - e. Early childhood health and development
  - f. For a growing seniors population
  - g. Settlement services
  - h. *Food security*
  - i. Employment
  - j. Public safety





### Objective 3 Physical spaces are designed with the needs for social connection and accessibility in mind

#### Policies

- SI 16** Provide sufficient, high-quality public spaces that promote social connectedness. Include amenities to support all ages and abilities such as public washrooms, seating areas, and drinking fountains. ✓
- SI 17** Develop a strategy to address community need for public washrooms, including hand washing stations and access to secure potable water. Strive for public washrooms in all community parks, and spaced a maximum of 4 kilometres apart along multi-use pathways. ✓ 🚰
- SI 18** Whenever developing new public facilities such as recreation centres, hospitals, and government offices, explore the opportunity to include child care as part of the design. 🤝 +
- SI 19** Apply universal design principles in the review of development applications and in the design of new or retrofitted public facilities and infrastructure early in design and evaluation. These principles include complete streets, transit and parking facilities, public buildings, trails, recreation areas, and intuitive and accessible way-finding. ✓ 🏠
- SI 20** Apply both first- and second-generation *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED) principles in supporting community safety. This focus includes physical aspects such as street lighting and building orientation (first generation) and social aspects such as community connections and behaviour (second generation). Ensure consideration is given to unintended consequences associated with discriminatory surveillance practices that can target racialized and equity-priority groups. ✓



## Objective 4 Neighbourhood and community development-based organizing are leveraged as a source of community capacity and resilience

### Policies

- SI 21** Support volunteers, organizations, and other *social assets* to continue undertaking their work within the community. ✔️🤝
- SI 22** Explore opportunities for establishing volunteer programs that promote community-based stewardship and *restoration* of parks and natural areas. 🏡🤝
- SI 23** Support the creation of ambassador programs, such as a seniors ambassador's program, to connect residents to programs and services that are available to them. 🏡🤝
- SI 24** Support and build neighbourhood capacity in strengthening social connections, climate action, and *community resilience* through neighbourhood-driven initiatives based on *asset based community development* approaches. Such initiatives could include, but are not limited to: School District No. 71 community use of schools, Neighbourhood Houses, Safe Routes to School Programs, small-scale street-level projects, resilience assessments relating to climate change, and learning events for resident action. 🤝
- SI 25** Provide volunteer recognition opportunities. ✔️🤝
- SI 26** Work regionally to identify sufficient and suitable locations for emergency shelters, including during weather related events and evacuations. 🤝





# ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE

## OBJECTIVES

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1. Residents and visitors know they are in K'ómoks First Nation territory by the prominent tangible and intangible celebration of their culture and heritage
2. Local art, culture and heritage, including natural heritage, are showcased throughout Courtenay
3. Courtenay has a reputation as the regional centre for arts and culture
4. Community cultural and heritage assets are identified, preserved, and celebrated
5. Identities expressed in the public realm and cultural programming are representative of Courtenay and the region
6. Community access and participation in arts and culture is strong and widespread

Arts, culture, and heritage touch a number of aspects of the OCP. Recognition of these industries as economic opportunities are included in the Local Economic Development chapter. The Parks and Recreation, Streets and Transportation, and Social Infrastructure chapters contain objectives and policies to include arts, culture, and heritage considerations in infrastructure development and re-development opportunities. The Natural Environment chapter includes objectives and policies that support Courtenay's natural heritage.



## COURTENAY TODAY

Culture is the representation of who we are. It speaks to our values from the past and present, our traditions, and our expressions.

The living culture of the K'ómoks First Nation is the bedrock of the "Land of Plenty" – lands and waters rich in living heritage, which includes the area known today as Courtenay. K'ómoks First Nation's oral history and archaeology reveal a rich and bountiful relationship between the K'ómoks and the Land of Plenty.

The totems at the corner of Duncan Avenue and 6th Street offer a tangible example of this recognition of place and culture. More opportunities to honor this heritage continue to be explored by the City and numerous cultural partners.

Courtenay's wider cultural ecosystem is rich and varied, estimated to be practiced and provided by the over 4,000 cultural workers in the region.<sup>1</sup> Local arts and culture assets include the tangible and intangible: special places, heritage buildings and streetscapes, festivals, ceremonies and celebrations, art installations, farmers markets, independent restaurants, and hands-on opportunities such as community development initiatives and arts programs.

The City invests in arts, culture, and heritage through a number of community partners including the Comox Valley Art Gallery, the Courtenay and District Museum, the Sid Williams Civic Theatre, and the Comox Valley Community Arts Council. These cultural

<sup>1</sup> Comox Valley Arts Council 2017 local inventorying



assets are deeply valued by Courtenay residents, and they support important cultural and economic development within the region.

In 2019 a Cultural Services Review was conducted for the City which established the City's role in the provision of cultural services in Courtenay and provides short term, medium term and on-going strategies and recommendations to facilitate the City's cultural services development.

As of 2020, a number of community needs are identified including: a need for a larger outdoor performance venue than currently available at Simms Park; the downtown Commons outdoor performing space and public plaza; a community arts and culture centre; and a City hosting strategy for festivals and events. Amongst the wider cultural sector, limited capacity to sustainably deliver programs and services within community organizations, lack of available funding, and housing and studio affordability and availability are significant challenges.

*"Fish weirs, duck nets, berry picking techniques and clothing design met the needs of the K'ómoks and for generations provided variety, utility and sense of cultural uniqueness. Mask dances and rhythmic songs filled the winter nights and season. Property was distributed to guests in potlatches and elaborate naming ceremonies honoured the youth, leaders and elders of the communities... Following contact with Europeans [including]... a period of colonial policy and practices, the K'ómoks families have endured hardship and loss of land, resources and cultural connection. Modern leaders are striving to reclaim cultural expression and relationship with 'the land of plenty.'"*

*– K'ómoks Comprehensive Community Plan (page 26)*





## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE

Arts, culture, and heritage help re-frame and engage on important social topics such as climate change, reconciliation and equity, and provide for creative and safe opportunities to explore our complex and changing world. Seasonal celebrations and ceremonies help connect to the living heritage of local ecosystems, such as the K'ómoks First Nation tradition of celebrating the annual return of individual salmon species.

A thriving cultural climate is a sign of a vibrant community. Arts and culture renew communities, build identity and pride, strengthen bonds, and improve quality of life on all socioeconomic levels. Along with ecosystems, historical and contemporary arts and culture are place-makers and will continue to provide a foundation to Courtenay's identity. They help foster a love of local place and feeling of belonging. From these strong roots of place, the cultural sector grows in its role as a key economic driver, ranging from tourism to maker industries.

Arts, culture, and heritage can help cities embrace diversity, building trust and understanding across peoples, and



demonstrate how different identities can be expressed and celebrated in the public realm. Arts, culture, and heritage are important to relationship-building and to creating a city for everyone. This includes highlighting and nurturing the relationships of humans to nature and learning about and igniting a spirit of action on climate change and other critical social issues. Arts, culture, and heritage open the doors to a more dynamic, creative, and inclusive future.



**Objective 1** Residents and visitors know they are in K'ómoks First Nation territory by the prominent tangible and intangible celebration of their culture and heritage

**Objective 2** Local art, culture, and heritage, including natural heritage, are showcased throughout Courtenay

## Policies

- ACH 1** Incorporate art, culture and heritage, including K'ómoks First Nation heritage, into place-making efforts throughout the city, including in the design of new private and public buildings and spaces. ✓
- ACH 2** Develop a Public Art Policy or Guideline that supports the growth of public art and artistic expression in buildings, streets, parks and other areas of the public realm, giving preference to local and Indigenous artists. 🏛️
- ACH 3** Work towards the downtown Public Commons public plaza concept identified in the Downtown Courtenay Playbook (2016). 🏛️🤝
- ACH 4** Regularly monitor and update arts and culture programs to keep pace with the needs of a range of users as the community grows. ✓
- ACH 5** Support cultural amenity contributions as part of the community amenity contribution of new development. 🏠



### Objective 3 Courtenay has a reputation as the regional centre for arts and culture

#### Policies

- ACH 6** Create a Courtenay Cultural Plan that provides a foundation for partnership models, cultural development, asset investment, and management. 🏗️
- ACH 7** Continue to support the downtown as the region's arts, culture, and heritage hub by ensuring key cultural partners such as the Comox Valley Art Gallery, the Courtenay and District Museum, the Sid Williams Civic Theatre, and the Comox Valley Community Arts Council continue to be located downtown, and promoting and investing in public art and cultural opportunities downtown. ✔️
- ACH 8** Work regionally and in partnership to coordinate arts and cultural services and invest and raise the Comox Valley's profile as a centre for contemporary artistic creation. 🤝👟
- ACH 9** Recognize local cultural, arts, and heritage assets as foundational to Courtenay's community identity. ✔️
- ACH 10** Advocate for investment in arts, culture, and heritage as a local tourism economic development driver. 👟
- ACH 11** Consider the establishment of a dedicated community arts and culture space. 🏗️🤝

## Objective 4 Community cultural and heritage assets are identified, preserved, and celebrated

### Policies

- ACH 12** Collaborate with K'ómoks First Nation to conserve, promote, and build appreciation for local archaeological sites, heritage assets, and other cultural interests in coordination with their long-term planning policies such as K'ómoks First Nation's Comprehensive Community Plan policies and the Community Action Plan. 🤝
- ACH 13** Ensure enhanced protection of archaeological sites and places of cultural significance. This includes supporting the K'ómoks First Nation in obtaining information requirements to fulfill their Cultural Heritage Policy and Cultural Heritage Investigation Permits when applicable. ✔️🏠
- ACH 14** Promote awareness and conservation of the heritage of Courtenay through official designation and public educational programs. ✔️🤝
- ACH 15** Preserve, protect, and manage historic sites, structures, and landscapes in the city following the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada or relevant best management practices. 🏠
- ACH 16** Through the Heritage Alteration Permit process, ensure that repairs or renovations be carried out without compromising Character Defining Elements, while improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. 🏠
- ACH 17** Continue to identify and document heritage assets including historic sites, structures, and landscapes in consultation with the K'ómoks First Nation and the Heritage Advisory Commission and continually update the Housing Inventory and Heritage Register as per the provisions of the Local Government Act and Heritage Conservation Act for promoting the heritage of Courtenay. ✔️



## Objective 5 Identities expressed in the public realm and cultural programming are representative of Courtenay and the region

### Policies

- ACH 18** Support diverse arts programs, artistic exhibitions and expressions, cultural festivals, and other activities that celebrate and contribute to both Indigenous and Courtenay's cultural identity in public and private realms. ✓
- ACH 19** Ensure investments in, and creation of, cultural resources and activities, and cultural and artistic expression in the public realm. Include the diverse identities, aspirations, expressions and contributions within the community. ✓
- ACH 20** Do not permit oppressive symbols in the public realm such as plaques, signs, monuments, and place names that pay tribute to historic figures or acts that served to uphold systems of colonialism, racism, and sexism. ✓
- ACH 21** Conduct an audit to identify oppressive symbols and initiate a community engagement process. 🏛️
- ACH 22** Explore opportunities for place, parks, building or street renaming, or dual place naming where appropriate, to reflect K'ómoks First Nation traditional naming conventions. ✓ 🤝

## Objective 6 Community access and participation in arts and culture is strong and widespread

### Policies

- ACH 23** Examine opportunities for art installations in public spaces as a routine part of public realm and parks, trails and greenway upgrades, open space design, and infrastructure projects. ✓
- ACH 24** Explore opportunities within public buildings such as community centres and schools to display local arts, culture, and heritage. 🏛️ 🤝
- ACH 25** Seek new partnership models that support providing more arts and cultural opportunities throughout the city. 🏛️ 🤝



# FOOD SYSTEMS

## OBJECTIVES

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1. All residents have access to affordable, healthy, culturally appropriate, and local food outlets within walking distance, including food access services and programs when needed
2. All residents have access to food growing opportunities within walking distance
3. Lands supporting traditional foods are protected and traditional practices are celebrated
4. Agricultural lands are protected and are compatible with urban uses
5. Food processing, warehousing, and distribution activities are permitted in urban areas of Courtenay
6. *Food security* actions are regionally coordinated

Food systems connect to a number of other aspects of the OCP including as an important form of Social Infrastructure and Local Economic Development opportunity. Ensuring healthy soil, air, water, and ecosystems that can support a sustainable food system are addressed in the Natural Environment chapter.



## COURTENAY TODAY

One of the most intimate – and enjoyable – ways in which residents interact with living landscapes is through local food systems. The lands and waters that make up Courtenay today have been actively used in food production by settlers in Courtenay’s recent history and Indigenous peoples. In fact, the K’ómoks First Nation has referred to the lands and waters within the Courtenay area as the land of plenty since time immemorial and continue to be today.

Within urban communities, a food system typically includes production, processing, distribution, sales, consumption, and food recovery and nutrient cycling (i.e., composting).

In the Courtenay area, food systems encompass: commercial farms on both Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and other agricultural lands; urban agriculture ranging from edible landscaping to community gardens; value-add facilities and processing facilities such as community kitchens; goods movement; grocers and other food stores; restaurants; farmers markets and food celebrations. A number of social programs also exist such as food literacy and cooking workshops; food share programs, soup kitchens, and meals provided in social housing; school lunch programs; community gardens; and farm gleanings and fruit tree programs.





With over 95% of food imported from off island, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted many of the fragilities that currently exist in the local food system. The Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce identifies *food security* access a top priority for local businesses, despite this topic traditionally falling outside of their mandate. According to the Comox Valley Food Policy Council, there is a vital network of food growers, businesses, and organizations across the valley that are collaborating to strengthen food access and the local food economy. Farmers have the land capacity to increase production, but require more access to community food assets such as storage, and processing facilities, aggregation and distribution services, and locally produced feed.

A changing climate highlights *food security* risks as well, whether that food is local or imported. The Comox Valley's climate is expected to change to longer, hotter summers with less precipitation, and winters characterized by higher temperatures and more varied storm occurrences. An increase in expected frost-free and growing degree days can support more local food production, however more heat waves and insufficient irrigation are expected to be challenges to that production in the peak growing months.

On the demand side, recent engagement and research on the local food system have revealed that there is also a lack of sustained access to healthy, local food and food systems for *equity-priority groups* across the Comox Valley.<sup>1</sup> This work underscored the importance of shifting the community away from charitable and emergency food services to a system that focuses on empowerment, education, preventative measures, and upstream approaches that address systemic inequality.

<sup>1</sup> *Food Security, Poverty, Housing and the Local food system; closing the loop in the Comox Valley.* LUSH Valley. 2019



## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH FOOD SYSTEMS

Since 2020 City has supported the Island Food Charter which is committed to a just and sustainable food system in the Island region rooted in healthy communities. A food secure community is one in which everyone has access to food that is affordable, culturally preferable, nutritious and safe. This includes the ability for everyone to have the agency to participate in, and influence food systems. And this includes resilient, ecologically sustainable, socially just qualities that honour Indigenous food sovereignty. In order for a community's food system to be secure, the Charter recognizes the need for viable, sustainable, and resilient systems to grow, harvest, process, transport, and distribute food while also minimizing waste.

The OCP land use strategy protects local food production opportunities by ensuring that agriculturally optimal lands are retained for agricultural uses. By focusing future urban growth within existing urban areas, pressure to develop agricultural lands for urban purposes is reduced. This also supports climate goals as agricultural lands can serve as powerful carbon sequestering industries when employing regenerative soil farming practices.

Within the urban areas, food production spaces will be encouraged and gradually expanded in both public and private spaces.









Processing, distribution, storage and value-add opportunities will also be supported throughout Courtenay. Increased residential densities in existing neighbourhoods will provide more customers for new, locally-serving grocery stores, particularly in areas that are home to proportionately more *equity-priority groups*. Food vendors, community gardens, and edible landscaping will help to distinguish and celebrate the unique character and place-making elements of specific neighbourhoods.

Sales and celebration of food will continue to bolster food culture in Courtenay, and the City will coordinate with regional efforts to increase *food security* and food justice for all.

It is important for all residents to better understand local food systems and foster a sustainable food culture. Through collaboration and partnership with the K'ómoks First Nation and other Indigenous peoples, decisions about living landscapes, environmental protection, and park programming will seek to protect and restore access to traditional food cultivation and harvesting.

## Objective 1 All residents have access to affordable, healthy, culturally appropriate, and local food outlets within walking distance, including food access services and programs when needed

### Policies

- FS 1** Support establishment of small-scale healthy food retail options such as both year-round and seasonal farmers markets, small to mid-size grocery stores, mobile food vendors, bakeries and restaurants within or in proximity to the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors including the Downtown Town Centre. 
- FS 2** Work with the Comox Valley Farmers Market Association to secure a permanent site and facility for its year-round operation in a suitable and accessible location with necessary supportive amenities, preferably near the downtown. 
- FS 3** Ensure adequate space and amenities such as loading zones, washrooms, water and electricity are provided whenever a farmers market is planned. 
- FS 4** Develop a concept plan for the downtown Courtenay Market Street vision as described in the Downtown Playbook (2016). 
- FS 5** Develop a concept plan for the suitable location of a “food precinct” within Courtenay that offers and promotes local food production, distribution, and enjoyment as its defining character and place-making opportunity, complemented by an appropriate range of food-supportive businesses, activities, and spaces. 
- FS 6** Encourage large multi-residential mixed-use developments to include retail commercial uses such as small grocery stores or specialized food retails within the site, where appropriate. 
- FS 7** Work in partnership with *food security* organizations and regional jurisdictions to ensure food access services and programs are available when needed. 
- FS 8** Develop guidelines for food production and sales on private lands to support more increased food production and sales activity. All guidelines, and any applicable bylaws, shall be prepared to comply with current requirements of provincial and federal regulations for food production, safety, handling and sales, while responsibly managing wildlife attractants. 



## Objective 2 All residents have access to food growing opportunities within walking distance

### Policies

- FS 9** Review the *Zoning Bylaw* and other regulatory bylaws to allow for more food growing opportunities on private property, and allow more accessory structures for urban agriculture. Ensure protection of *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* and sensitive integration of accessory structures into the neighbourhood. 🏠
- FS 10** Encourage the provision of gardens and other food production spaces for the use of residents in new multi-residential housing, as guided in the Development Permit Area Guidelines. 🏠
- FS 11** Refine municipal regulations and identify the City's role in encouraging and integrating opportunities for sustainable urban agriculture (including community gardens, small plot farming, edible landscaping, greenhouses, and gardening to support pollinators and foraging) on municipal lands, boulevards, park spaces and vacant lands, including temporary accessory retail sales. 🏠
- FS 12** Develop a program for community gardens and other small scale food production spaces such as orchards or beehives across the City, prioritizing areas of higher residential density and areas home to *equity-priority groups*. Engage land holders who may have space to provide such uses, including on a short- to mid-term basis before land is developed. 🏠
- FS 13** Support educational programming on urban agriculture, traditional Indigenous foods practices, environmental stewardship, and *food security*. 🤝
- FS 14** Encourage gardening programs that promote health and well-being for residents, including at supportive housing sites, schools, recovery centres, long-term care facilities, and hospitals. +

## Objective 3 Lands supporting traditional foods are protected and traditional practices are celebrated

### Policies

#### FS 15

Collaborate with K'ómoks First Nation to identify and protect lands and waters supporting gathering, harvesting, preserving, and eating of traditional foods. 🤝

#### FS 16

Collaborate with K'ómoks First Nation to develop Indigenous gardens that focus on the cultivation of native and culturally important species of plants for food and medicine, and include public educational opportunities. 🤝



## Objective 4 Agricultural lands are protected and are compatible with urban uses

### Policies

- FS 17** Continue to support protection of lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) for agricultural uses. Applications for exclusion of land from the ALR are not supported. 🏠
- FS 18** Amend the *Zoning Bylaw* to guide the location of buildings and structures, including agricultural structures, to maximize the agricultural potential of prime soil resources. This includes establishing maximum farm residential dwelling and footprint sizes commensurate with urban lot areas and establishing maximum road setbacks. 🏠
- FS 19** Maximize the potential for agricultural land to be used for agriculture by discouraging *subdivision* into smaller parcels. 🏠
- FS 20** Where property is adjacent to land in the ALR and lands designated as agriculture, ensure that development limits associated negative impacts on and from adjacent agricultural operations by providing appropriate buffers, mitigation measures, careful site planning, and neighbourhood education as per Development Permit Area guidelines for farm protection, and by consulting with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). 🏠
- FS 21** Explore incentive programs and options to encourage agricultural land preservation and production. 🏠

## Objective 5 Food processing, warehousing, and distribution activities are permitted in urban areas of Courtenay

### Policies

- FS 22** Support amendment of the *Zoning Bylaw* to ensure that small-scale food processing, warehousing, distribution, and other activities required to strengthen a regional food economy are permitted in more land uses including commercial, light industrial, and where live-work uses are permitted. 🏠



## Objective 6 Food security actions are regionally coordinated

### Policies

#### FS 23

Support the establishment of a *regional food hub*. + 📍

#### FS 24

Support and participate in the development of a regional *food security* plan that considers emergency, short- and long-term food supply and infrastructure needs and opportunities as part of a critical infrastructure assessment, including developing the conditions for more local agricultural production and economic development. Identify an appropriate role for the City in supporting local *food security* in relation to other organizations, agencies, and jurisdictions. Strive to have Indigenous traditional food knowledge and experiences, needs of *equity-priority groups*, and *climate mitigation and adaptation* goals inform the plan. 🏠





# LOCAL ECONOMY

## OBJECTIVES

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1. Business retention, development, and investment are increasingly green, low-carbon, climate resilient, and equity-responsive
2. Local economic development opportunities are regionally coordinated
3. Municipal regulations and services are supportive of economic development within the long-term vision of environmental and social responsibility
4. People are at the heart of local economic development and are able to access adequate supports to participate in the economy

Supporting residents to participate fully in community, including the economy, is covered in the Social Infrastructure chapter. *Affordable housing* is covered in the Affordable Housing chapter. The relationship of investment in arts, culture, and heritage as a local economic development and tourism driver is included in the Arts, Culture, and Heritage chapter. Land uses that support economic activities are covered in Part B – Managing Growth.





## COURTENAY TODAY

Based on the current data available, Courtenay will likely remain as the primary employment centre in the Comox Valley over the life of this plan and beyond. The largest employment type in Courtenay in recent years is retail (approximately 2,000 jobs), followed by health care and social assistance (approximately 1,500 jobs), construction (approximately 1,000 jobs), and public administration (approximately 900 jobs). Local consultation indicates that there are nearly 4,000 people who identify as arts and culture workers. Agriculture is comprised of fewer jobs but forms an essential part of Courtenay's identity and local *food security*. If the participation and employment trends remain steady, over 2,600 new jobs are projected in Courtenay over the next 20 years.

In a global market where ideas, investments, and talents can flow across borders, unique and high quality of life community assets are essential to attract them. Courtenay, and the wider region, have diverse recreation and

lifestyle opportunities that are recognized as being key factors in attracting and retaining the next generation of entrepreneurs and skilled talent. Until recent years, available and *affordable housing* also contributed to these high quality of life factors.

With the COVID-19 pandemic still underway at the time this OCP was developed, the local economy will continue to face many unknown challenges. Businesses and entrepreneurs in the Comox Valley have identified key priorities for sustainable and strong economic recovery. These include:

- *affordable housing*;
- shop local and the arts;
- agriculture;
- tech and digital support;
- child care;
- transportation and regional connectivity;
- streamlining regulatory processes for businesses including through good regional governance.



## MEETING OUR GOALS THROUGH THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Attractive communities attract businesses. The most attractive places for the next generation of workers must have a thriving downtown core, inclusive neighbourhoods with a strong sense of place, a wide range of housing and recreational options, a vibrant arts and culture scene, and an openness and celebration of cultural and population diversity. Courtenay already has an excellent foundation to be the place for those who seek better opportunities.

When economic success is viewed holistically through the intersecting dimensions of environmental, social, and economic systems, it can contribute to community well-being in a broader and more inclusive and impactful way. For example, *affordable housing*, child care, equity, diversity and inclusion all supported by a healthy environment are increasingly being recognized as core to the success of economic development strategies.

The City of Courtenay is committed to creating the physical conditions for high quality of life and economic success through the OCP by taking a *full cost accounting* approach to community service delivery. Policies in this section are aimed to support: sustainable economy; investment opportunities; and progressive municipal government services.

## Objective 1 Business retention, development, and investment are increasingly green, low carbon, climate resilient, and equity-responsive

### Policies

- LE 1** Support the expansion of green, low-carbon place-based economic development and recovery. ✓
- LE 2** Support buy-local and *staycation* campaigns. ✓
- LE 3** Promote green and low-carbon construction and building retrofit programs as significant local economic development opportunities as per the CleanBC Economic Development Action Strategies. ✓
- LE 4** Support initiatives that generate value-added, community-based business development, including but not limited to, arts and culture, local food processing, specialty forest products, and other value-added product manufacturing. ✓
- LE 5** Support an eco-industrial networking approach for industrial land development such as co-locating businesses that can create collaborative networks to more efficiently and effectively use resources such as materials, energy, and talent. ✓
- LE 6** Consider how the impacts of climate change will affect local businesses in all aspects of policy development. This includes both positive and negative changes in seasonal events, recreation, tourism, and agriculture activities that rely heavily on specific weather conditions. ✓

## Objective 2 Local economic development opportunities are regionally coordinated

### Policies

- LE 7** Work collaboratively with neighbouring jurisdictions, the K'ómoks First Nation, Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Courtenay Business Improvement Association, North Island College, business and non-profit community organizations in the development of community and regional economic development strategies. 🤝
- LE 8** Identify appropriate roles and responsibilities for the City in the delivery of economic development services in the region. 🏢





### Objective 3 Municipal regulations and services are supportive of economic development within the long-term vision of environmental and social responsibility

#### Policies

- LE 9** Continue to support home-based businesses that are compatible with the residential character of neighbourhoods. 🏠
- LE 10** Support land uses that provide employment opportunities within or close proximity to the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors such as *intensification* of mixed-use office, retail, live-work studios and other commercial uses. 🏠
- LE 11** Support non-traditional light industrial and service commercial land uses or development proposals that accommodate emerging business trends and neighbourhood needs. 🏠
- LE 12** Work with the local business community and major employers to focus investment, facility and business development in Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors. ✔️
- LE 13** Support business infrastructure improvements to meet the needs for employment space, digital connectivity, and more efficient mobility of goods and services. ✔️
- LE 14** Liaise with senior governments, neighbouring jurisdictions, and the business community to identify barriers, improve business infrastructure, and streamline application processes. ✔️
- LE 15** Work with Comox Valley local governments to develop consistent regulatory standards. 🤝
- LE 16** Encourage data sharing, business intelligence, and best practices with the local business community. ✔️



**Objective 4** People are at the heart of local economic development and are able to access adequate supports to participate in the economy.

## Policies

- LE 17** Ensure that social policies such as, but not limited to, *affordable housing* and child care are integrated with economic policies to support 'people-centred' forms of economic development. ✓
- LE 18** Ensure all plans and strategies for economic development are data and performance driven based on identified community goals and include workforce planning and labour market forecasting. ✓
- LE 19** Support the exploration of holistic economic development frameworks as the basis of local economic development in order to better integrate ecological, social, and economic outcomes. ✓



## PART D

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# IMPLEMENTATION

## HOW WE START

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## THE OCP IS A TOOL FOR NAVIGATING AND INITIATING CHANGE

**Implementation of the OCP will occur through numerous municipal, stakeholder, and individual actions, incrementally over the next 10 years and beyond.**

This chapter identifies a number of core and common OCP related implementation tools to aid in the ongoing implementation process, and provides guidance on the implementation priorities to achieve net-zero GHG emissions as a primary directive

of this Plan. As a highest level policy document, the OCP cannot predict the exact sequencing of actions that are outside of the City's direct control, nor should it provide detailed costing for all actions that will occur over a 10 year timeframe. Many implementation actions will require further investigation, consultation, and resourcing. Therefore it is important that implementation of the OCP be viewed as the ongoing incremental decision-making process that it is while holding firm the vision established.

# 1. CORPORATE ALIGNMENT, PLAN ADMINISTRATION, AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The City of Courtenay has many plans, policies, and strategies in place that provide detailed direction for planning and development, engineering, parks and recreation, culture, and more. Some of these documents already align with the OCP and may require minor updates, while others require realignment of their approach to prioritize outcomes based on the OCP vision and goals. Whether updating exiting plans, policies or strategies, or creating new ones, they must all align with the OCP vision, goals, and related policies.

Current policies and regulations will be reviewed in a timely manner to bring them into alignment and support the OCP. Where existing regulations, as well as other standards, policies, and practices allow for interpretation, discretion or prioritization, such flexibility shall be considered in ways that support the objectives and implementation of the OCP.

The OCP is intended to be used as the foundation of all stages of the corporate decision-making process and source of directions, ideas, and actions to fulfill

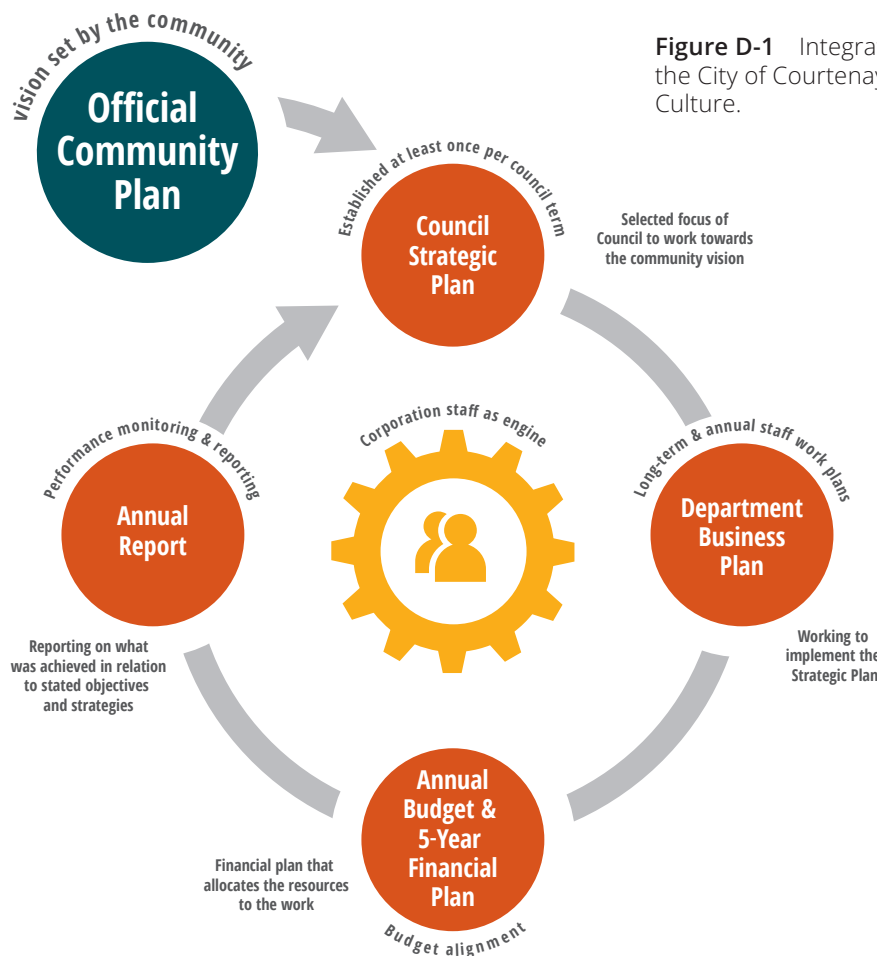


Figure D-1 Integration into the City of Courtenay Corporate Culture.

Courtenay’s vision. From the numerous policies and actions contained within the OCP, Council sets strategic priorities for their term to guide department work plans, the five year Financial Plan, and annual budgets. Outcomes are annually reported through the City of Courtenay Annual Report, which offers an opportunity for evaluation and further work plan refinement year after year.

The OCP provides the overarching strategic direction for the City, from which all other plans, bylaws, actions, and decisions should align. The full implementation of the OCP depends on its full integration with the City’s strategic and organizational action plans, budgeting, work planning, and annual reporting system.

A list of plans, bylaws, procedures, and services that need to be updated to reflect the OCP’s direction, and new plans, bylaws, procedures, and services that are needed to operationalize key policies within the OCP, are listed in Table D-7 Implementation Priorities, and Appendix 1 Implementation Actions.

## Performance Monitoring

Council, City staff, partners, and all residents are strongly encouraged to participate in decision-making processes and community-wide dialogue in order to respond to the evolving context of the community, and determine whether the OCP vision, goals, and targets are being achieved. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Plan is crucial to the successful implementation of the OCP.

### 1. Carbon neutrality by 2050

The primary indicator of the OCP’s success is carbon neutrality by 2050. In order to meet this target, a number of policies and actions must be implemented immediately while others can be phased in over time. To guide GHG reduction performance, the City of Courtenay commits to the phased GHG reduction targets in Table D-1.

### 2. Establishing performance indicators and monitoring framework

The City publishes an annual report outlining development activity and summarizing major planning, programming, and capital investment initiatives. This report will identify what actions have been initiated and completed and what the outcomes are; as well as and how well the City has responded relative to the vision, goals, and policies of the OCP. Appropriate performance indicators will be established, measured, and monitored on a regular basis.

Other creative performance monitoring approaches such as partnerships on indicator selection and data tracking, and third party reporting through the CVRD’s *Regional Growth Strategy* data collection and monitoring work will also be considered.

**Table D-1** GHG Modelling and Target Setting Conducted by Sustainable Solutions Group.

Target Year	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
tCO2e Reduced from 2016	-15,543	-37,642	-58,585	-77,,073	-86,600	-92,662
Percentage emissions reduction from 2016	-15%	-45%	-60%	-80%	-90%	-95%

*These targets align closely with those identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a United Nations governmental body responsible for advancing knowledge on human-induced climate change, and also generally align with the federal government’s most recent enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) on greenhouse gas emissions reductions (2021).*



## ***Municipal Government Corporate Climate Action***

As described in Part C Policy Foundations, the City of Courtenay has been working to reduce municipal government corporate emissions since 2007. Given that the City of Courtenay has not yet achieved carbon neutrality in municipal operations, the City continues to have an important role to play in demonstrating climate action leadership in all corporate actions. The OCP community-wide GHG modelling has indicated that there are strategic municipal corporate actions that the City should take to contribute towards Courtenay's net-zero GHG target. These actions are listed below and build on the policies identified in Part C. A priority implementation action is to update the Corporate Climate Action Plan to provide detailed guidance, phasing, and resourcing estimates to implement actions listed in this section.

### **Municipal Corporate Climate Action Themes**

#### **1. Implement multiple bottom line in municipal decision-making**

- a) Develop monitoring frameworks and tools to achieve triple bottom line (economic, social, and ecological) and full life-cycle cost accounting planning, capital investment, and decision-making in all municipal activities.
- b) Ensure climate implications are included in staff reports to Council (opportunity for all four cardinal directions of reconciliation, climate action, equity, and community well-being to be included).

- c) Adopt and implement tender and purchasing policies requiring sustainability outcomes as identified in this Plan, including climate action, equity, reconciliation, and community well-being, as part of procurement decisions.

#### **2. Achieve GHG, water and waste reductions in new and existing municipal facilities**

- a) Build all new municipal buildings to net-zero emissions standards with 100% of energy demands met through electrical means. Ensure green roofs are part of new municipal buildings.
- b) Conduct an energy audit of the full municipal building portfolio.
- c) Retrofit 100% of existing municipal buildings to a net-zero emissions standard with 100% of energy demands met through electrical means. This assumes a mixture of building energy efficiency and onsite energy production. Many large civic buildings are under Comox Valley Regional District jurisdiction and will require intergovernmental coordination.
- d) Implement waste diversion programs into all facilities.
- e) Include water reduction performance targets as part of new facilities and retrofit initiatives.

**3. Accommodate and promote green transportation at all municipal facilities**

- a) Install electric vehicle parking and charging stations on municipal property for municipal fleet and public use.
- b) Accommodate and encourage municipal employees and contractors to use bicycle and e-bike mobility options where possible.

**4. Generate, procure, and help others to access clean energy**

- a) Install ground-mounted solar photo voltaics in underused 'greyfield' locations such as beside roadways and in parking lots as solar canopies.
- b) Prioritize 'green energy' sources such as electricity and Renewable Natural Gas when procuring energy for any municipal asset or service.
- c) Administer a Property Assessed Clean Energy program (PACE).

**5. Protect and restore *natural assets* on municipal land**

- a) Include natural capital (*ecological assets*) in the Asset Management Plan.
- b) Protect and restore *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* and *ecological assets* on municipal properties.
- c) Achieve rain and stormwater management practices on municipal property that support both watershed health and public safety objectives, in accordance with the Integrated Rainwater Management Plan.

**6. Include climate adaptation considerations in all municipal infrastructure**

- a) Conduct and implement risk and vulnerability assessments for all municipal infrastructure, implement recommended infrastructure improvements, and install back-up power where recommended.

## 2. COMMUNITY EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

The OCP is a comprehensive policy document established by and for the community. Therefore, all members of the community have roles to play in its implementation. Ongoing community engagement will be critical to the success of this Plan.

Part A – How We Work Together – establishes the policies directing the City's approach to public engagement which reflects and builds upon the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) best practices. These policies shall be followed whenever engaging on specific projects to ensure the appropriate engagement, partnership approaches, and methods are used for the task at hand.

Partnerships are a critically important consideration in which the City must invest in order to achieve a number of the OCP's most ambitious goals. These partnerships include with neighbouring jurisdictions, with other levels of government including K'ómoks First Nation, youth, with stakeholders, academic institutions, and with private and non-profit organizations. As a defining principle of OCP implementation, partnerships will be explored wherever opportunity exists to make maximum use of existing capacity, coordination opportunities, and social capital.

Public education and communications will be an essential component to all public engagement to ensure that the OCP directions, vision and goals are guiding, and are reflected in, community decision-making. This means that more opportunities for community conversations will be required as the community works together in determining the most locally appropriate implementation considerations. To support the OCP goal of 'Investing in Relationships', creativity and additional resourcing in public education and engagement will form a foundation to the implementation of the OCP.



### 3. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION TOOLS

Much of the OCP's implementation will occur through new development and *redevelopment* by the private and non-profit sectors.

Proponents of development are responsible for clearly demonstrating how their proposals meet the objectives and vision of the OCP through the submission of required information. The City in turn is responsible for comprehensively and credibly evaluating how development proposals facilitate the realization of this Plan and for providing feedback to applicants where applications need improvements.

The City recognizes that such analysis cannot be selective in referencing elements of this Plan, and must comprehensively consider the OCP's vision and goals. This includes the four cardinal directions, greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, and applicable policies, as well as relevant development regulations such as the *Zoning and Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaws*.

The City will continuously improve the development approval process to provide effective customer-oriented services.

To assist applicants in navigating the land development process, the City will create educational and customer service support tools to assist private and non-profit development in the preparation of development proposals that meet the City's requirements and expectations.

To support clarity of the City's development requirements and expectations, three development application tools are included in the OCP:

- a. Development Approval Information Areas,
- b. Community Amenity Contribution Policy, and
- c. Development Permit Area Designations.

Other development application requirements are included in complementary land development bylaws.

## **A. DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL INFORMATION AREAS**

Pursuant to the Local Government Act, a local government (i.e., the City) may require the submission of development approval information to ensure that sufficient supporting documentation is provided to allow the City to carefully assess the potential impact of new development. Procedures for the preparation and review of development applications, and approval process information requirements are established within the City's Development Procedures Bylaw as is amended from time to time.

Pursuant to the Local Government Act, the entire City of Courtenay is designated as a *Development Approval Information Area* in which the following types of development approval information may be required in conjunction with a development application.

Development approval information may be required for the following circumstances and areas.

### **1. Flooding**

*Criteria* – Development application where the subject property is within the Courtenay, Tsolum, or Puntledge floodplains, the floodplain of any other watercourse, lake, marsh or pond, or adjacent to the K'ómoks Estuary as shown in Map APX-2 (Appendix 2 – Maps) and defined as all floodplain setbacks and construction levels identified in the City's Floodplain Management Bylaw.

*Rationale* – To assess the nature, extent, magnitude, frequency, and potential effect of natural hazards that may affect the development; and to assess the proposed development with regards to safe and intended use, building sites, building elevations and foundation design requirements, mitigation measures, and the construction of on-site protective works.

### **2. Geotechnical Hazards**

*Criteria* – Development application where the subject property is in or adjacent to an area subject to rockfall, land slip, or slopes over 20%, including, but not limited to, those identified on the Steep Slopes Map APX-8 (Appendix 2 – Maps).

*Rationale* – To assess the nature, extent, magnitude, frequency, and other potential effect of natural hazards that may affect the development; and to assess the proposed development with regards to safe and intended use, building sites, building elevations and foundation design requirements, mitigation measures, and the construction of on-site protective works.

### **3. Natural Environment Impacts**

*Criteria* – Development application within lands that contain *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, whether mapped or not, and on all properties equal to or greater than 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> in size. Mapping information for known *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* is included in Terrestrial *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* Map APX-6 and Aquatic *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* Map F-7 (Appendix 2 – Maps).

*Rationale* – To consider the impact and mitigation opportunities of the proposed activity or development including servicing of development, on water bodies, springs, wetlands, riparian areas, *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, ecosystem connectivity areas, and fish and wildlife habitat in order to meet the objectives and policies within this Plan.

#### **4. View Corridors, Solar Orientation, and Shadow Impacts**

*Criteria* – Development application where the subject property is located within Downtown, Town or Neighbourhood Centre, Multi-Residential or Urban Corridor land use designation or one of the Form and Character Development Permit areas

*Rationale* – To assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on:

- i. Significant views of historical landscapes or buildings/structures, or significant natural features including, but not limited to, the Comox Glacier, K'ómoks Estuary, Puntledge, Tsolum, and Courtenay Rivers.
- ii. Sun and daylight access to the surrounding context – including surrounding building façades, private and public outdoor amenity and open spaces, public parkland, sidewalks, and other components of the public realm – to demonstrate that the location and height of a proposed building will not cause undue shade on the subject and surrounding lands.
- iii. Form and character of adjacent low-rise residential structures, particularly in Form and Character Development Permit areas.

#### **5. Traffic Impacts and Transportation Demand Management**

*Criteria* – Development application that may affect traffic pattern in surrounding properties, the growth centres or transportation network.

*Rationale* – To assess potential impact of proposed development and implications to properties potentially impacted by the proposed development with respect to traffic, change of traffic flows, and the road network, and propose mitigation options to minimize impact, including *Transportation Demand Management* opportunities.

#### **6. Acoustical Impacts**

*Criteria* – Development application contains potential cause of significant noise in close proximity to residential properties. Source of significant noise includes, but is not limited to: external mechanical equipment, parking, truck loading zone, outdoor storage, or entertainment areas such as outside patio.

*Rationale* – To assess the proposed development with regards to impacts on acoustic comfort and safety within the affected neighbouring properties.

#### **7. Public Facilities and Community Services Impacts**

*Criteria* – Development application within the City of Courtenay that may impact existing or future use of public facilities and community services.

*Rationale* – To assess potential impact of proposed development and implications on adjacent lands or neighbourhoods in order to meet needs of the community and prevent negative impact on the level of service.



## 8. Urban Forest Impacts

*Criteria* – Development application that is subject to the Tree Protection and Management Bylaw.

*Rationale* – To assess the impacts of development including servicing of development, to urban forest values and opportunities for urban forest protection and mitigation measures.

## 9. Site Access and Servicing, including Municipal Infrastructure Impacts

*Criteria* – Applies to most development applications within the City.

*Rationale* – To assess the adequacy and provision of site access, services including but not limited to highways and lanes, active transportation infrastructure, water distribution systems, sewage collection systems and drainage collection systems as well as impacts to said existing infrastructure and systems.

## 10. Hydrological Impacts

*Criteria* – Development application in which proposed development including servicing of development, may cause negative impact to watershed health, including groundwater.

*Rationale* – To assess the impacts of development on the hydrological system (watershed or portion thereof) in which the development is proposed, including cumulative impacts.

## 11. Soil Agrology Impacts

*Criteria* – Development application in which proposed development may cause negative impact to agriculturally viable soils on agriculturally zoned lands including the Agricultural Land Reserve.

*Rationale* – To assess the impacts of development on agriculturally viable soils in order to preserve these lands for agricultural purposes.

## 12. Wildfire Hazard Risk

*Criteria* – Development application in which proposed development is adjacent to significant forested areas.

*Rationale* – To assess the contribution of development to wildfire risk and mitigate the risk of wildfire to development.

## 13. Archaeological Impacts

*Criteria* – Development application in which proposed development is within or adjacent to archaeologically valuable areas.

*Rationale* – To assess the impacts of development on archaeologically valuable areas and features and protect such areas and features.

## 14. Accessibility

*Criteria* – Development application in which universal accessibility to all or part of the development is an objective.

*Rationale* – To propose universal accessibility opportunities within the development in accordance with provincial regulations, City policies, and best management practices.

## 15. Housing Affordability

*Criteria* – Development application subject to Community Amenity Contribution *affordable housing* policies, or to provide rationale how *affordable housing* is being met otherwise in connection to rezoning applications.

*Rationale* – To provide *affordable housing* profile and opportunities within a new development.

## 16. Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions

*Criteria* – Development application that shall prove GHG emissions performance, particularly in connection to building performance as part of rezoning applications. Also in connection to if and when senior government regulations or City of Courtenay policies and regulations are amended to require more routine GHG emissions modeling and reporting as part of development applications.

*Rationale* – Buildings Chapter policy states that low-GHG emissions performance shall be sought in rezoning applications. Further, Buildings Chapter policy is to support the Province in amending the BC Building Code to regulate GHG emissions performance.

## 17. Electricity Demand

*Criteria* – Developments that are subject to Development Permit Area guidelines for Part 3 Buildings that requires that a minimum of 10% of electricity demand be met by providing on-site renewable energy generation (e.g. solar photovoltaic).

*Rationale* – To provide information on how to meet the stated Development Permit Area guideline.

**18. Other studies may be required** for the City to evaluate: whether a proposed development is suitable to the location and contributes the achievement of the vision and goals of the OCP; and determine whether specific conditions need to be applied to the proposed development in order to contribute to the vision and goals of the OCP.

## B. COMMUNITY AMENITY CONTRIBUTION POLICY

Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) policy is a commonly used planning tool practiced in many municipalities in BC to ensure that a proposed development contributes positively to the community.

CACs are negotiated with City staff and provided by development applicants during a rezoning application process. They are different from other required development charges such as Development Cost Charges (DCC), which are levied on new developments to pay for offsite infrastructure upgrades.

### Objectives

- To provide clear and transparent guidance for both the City and development applicants.
- To ensure that the impact of development and the mitigation of impact, including the provision of community amenities, are considered as part of the rezoning process.

### Principles

When negotiating CACs, a few principles must be considered:

- Nexus, wherein there is a direct, demonstrable link between CACs and the impacts of the proposed development.
- Amenities provided are proportional to the impact that the proposed development generates and consistent with CACs of other applicants.
- CACs shall apply only to the net increase in development rights achieved through zoning amendments.

### Exemptions

- Housing developments that achieve *affordable housing* through equivalent other means than CAC contributions are exempt from the *affordable housing* component of the CAC policy. Examples of achieving *affordable housing* through other means includes, but is not limited to:
  - Small units 29m<sup>2</sup> in size or less. This exemption shall be made in consideration to the desired mix of housing within new developments as described in the *Affordable Housing* chapter of the OCP; and
  - Dedicated price-restricted *affordable housing* development, or sufficient number of price-restricted units within a development, generally operated by a non-profit organization.

### Policies

1. Development proposals that require zoning are expected to properly address the impacts of the development on City facilities and services.
2. The City should only consider rezoning property following the submission of an application to amend the *Zoning Bylaw* and consideration of the applicant's impact assessment and mitigation proposals that the City considers necessary or appropriate. Mitigation costs should not exceed any increase in land value that is likely to result from the zoning amendment.
3. The City will negotiate, as a minimum, amenities in the form of both affordable housing as well as public amenity facilities in the form of parks, recreation, culture, and/or senior facilities.



4. The City may elect to accept in-kind amenities in the form of tangible capital assets, including land, and/or monetary contributions. The general preference of amenities is in the following order:
  - A. Capital assets:
    - i. *Affordable housing* units, in instances where residential units, including freehold properties, are being developed.
    - ii. Capital asset 'in-kind' community amenities listed further in Policy 5 and 9 in this section.
  - B. Monetary contribution:
    - i. Affordable Housing Amenity Reserve Fund in the amounts stated in Tables D-3 (contribution per multi-residential unit) and D-4 (contribution per lot).
    - ii. Parks, Recreation, Culture and Senior Facilities Amenity Reserve Fund in the amount stated in Table D-5.
5. In the case of rezoning applications that permit multi-unit rental apartments or stratified condominiums, the preferred form of CAC is a provision of below-market unit(s) in respective tenure forms. The affordable housing CAC target details are as follows:
  - a. 15% of units at 30% below market rate in case of stratified condominiums; or 30% below market rental rates in case of rental apartments.
  - b. The below-market units shall be representative of the mix of units in the development proposal with a goal of providing units with two bedrooms or more for family housing.
  - c. The units should retain their 30% below-market rate in perpetuity regardless of tenure.
  - d. In the instance of stratified condominium units, below-market units shall not be permitted to be rented.
  - e. Housing agreements or 219 covenants will be registered on title to secure the specific housing requirements of the negotiation. Where housing agreements are used, they may stipulate conditions in accordance with S.483 of the Local Government Act including: the form of tenure of the housing units; the availability of the housing units to classes of persons; the administration and management of the housing units; and rents and leases, sale or share prices that may be charged, and the rates at which they may be increased over time.
6. City facilities and services that should be considered in such assessments and mitigation proposals include, at a minimum, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Roadways, street works, and landscaped boulevards and buffer areas;
  - Sidewalk and trails;
  - Park land and facilities;
  - Open spaces for passive park use;
  - Protection of natural areas in addition to *Environmentally Sensitive Area* protection requirements;
  - Recreational space, equipment, or facilities;
  - Community activity centres, daycare centres, arts, culture, and library facilities; and

- Street furniture or transit service facilities including passenger shelters and bus bays.
7. In cases where particular mitigation measures such as a pedestrian crossing or traffic signal would be out of scale with the development being proposed, the City may permit the applicant to make a one-time financial contribution to a City Reserve Fund for the provision of the facility or project.
  8. Respective in-kind contributions should be equivalent to the respective monetary contribution targets indicated in the Tables D-3, D-4, and D-5.
  9. The value calculation of the in-kind contribution must be undertaken by a qualified professional. Submission of a detailed cost estimate for proposed amenities will be required for City review as part of the application process. The cost estimate must include the design, materials, physical construction costs, and other associated costs of the amenity proposed.
  10. In case a proposed development locates within a reasonable distance from the growth nodes identified in the Urban Framework Growth Concept (Figure B-1), facilities and services listed in Table D-2 may be referenced for considerations.
  11. In lieu of providing a project-specific impact assessment and mitigation proposal, applicants may make contributions to the City in the amounts shown in Tables D-3, D-4, and D-5. on the basis of the maximum net increase in development potential provided by the proposed rezoning.
  12. The monetary contribution structure only applies to rezoning amendments that result in a net increase in residential units. In the case of a resulting mixed-use building with residential units, the monetary contribution structure option only applies to the portion of the building that contains the residential units.
  13. Proponents of commercial or industrial rezoning applications and associated OCP amendment applications, including those uses in a mixed-use project, shall provide a specific analysis to demonstrate the *land lift*, of which the City will seek as a minimum negotiation target of 50% in amenities or monetary equivalent. The analysis shall be undertaken by a qualified professional such as a land economist.
  14. CACs must be secured through legal agreement prior to consideration of final adoption of the *Zoning Bylaw* amendment or the respective final decision of Council. This may take the form of:
    - a. A Section 219 covenant registered on the certificate of title of the property which outlines the timing and details of the community amenity to be collected or secured;
    - b. An irrevocable, unconditional letter of credit in the form acceptable to the City, is delivered to the City for the full amount of the community amenity; or
    - c. In some situations, CACs may be negotiated with the applicant and approved by Council, in a phased development agreement.

15. CACs shall not include:

- Park dedications required through *subdivision*;
- *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* otherwise protected by regulation;
- Off site improvements required under the *Subdivision and Development Services Bylaw*;
- Projects and contributions listed in the Development Cost Charges Bylaw; and
- Other regulatory requirements.

16. In all CAC negotiations, the applicant may elect to provide at their expense a land economics analysis to propose different amenity contribution amounts, whether in-kind or monetary contribution.

17. The City will review the CAC policy on a regular basis to better reflect the development industry market conditions and improve administrative efficiency. The considerations include the following:

- a. Separating the CAC policy from the OCP, allowing for more responsive updates to market conditions and development impacts without triggering an OCP amendment;
- b. Using a blended basket of goods approach and *land lift* approach to set monetary contribution targets so that contributions are clearly linked to community's needs but not more than what developments can support;
- c. Reviewing policy and monetary contributions every 2–5 years to ensure that amenities identified reflect community needs and the monetary amounts are economically viable based on market conditions;
- d. Including density bonus formulas as an alternative and complementary means of providing amenities in the *Zoning Bylaw*; and
- e. Exploring opportunity to apply CAC policies to Development Variance Permits.



Table D-2 List of Potential In-kind Capital Asset Amenity Contributions by Location.

LOCATION	DESIRED AMENITIES
<b>Courtenay Airpark Precinct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotary Skypark expansion or upgrade, addition of other amenities such as gathering places and more trails/trail connectivity;</li> <li>• 29th Street sidewalk upgrades;</li> <li>• 19th Street and Highway 19A intersection traffic controls;</li> <li>• Pedestrian crossing on Cliffe Avenue;</li> <li>• Mansfield Drive road improvements.</li> </ul>
<b>Terminal Addition Residential Neighbourhood</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Rail-trail park end;</li> <li>• Rotary trail extension or upgrade.</li> </ul>
<b>McPhee Neighbourhood Corridor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Improvement of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Bill Moore/Dogwood Park;</li> <li>-Maple Park;</li> <li>-McPhee Avenue;</li> <li>-17th Street road right of way;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Trail connectivity and safety enhancement;</li> <li>• Sidewalk improvements on Cumberland Road between McPhee and Piercy Avenues.</li> </ul>
<b>Lower Ryan Town Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Park Improvements to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Trumpeter Glen Park;</li> <li>-Lawrence Burns Park including trails and trail connectivity;</li> <li>-North entrance to Lewis Park.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Trail connectivity between East and West Courtenay;</li> <li>• Ryan Road corridor management (e.g., Convert two-way left-turn lane to centre median);</li> <li>• Back Road &amp; 6th Street East intersection traffic controls;</li> <li>• Sidewalk improvement (e.g., Back Road from Tunner Drive to 10th Street East);</li> <li>• Trail through existing commercial and mixed-use properties fronting Ryan Road;</li> <li>• New park and recreational facilities.</li> <li>• Road improvements to Old Island Highway from Comox Road to Ryan Road – centre median, dedicated left-turn lanes, improvements for pedestrian and bike crossings;</li> </ul>
<b>Upper Ryan Town Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Park improvements at:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pinegrove Park;</li> <li>-Walbran Park;</li> <li>-Monarch Park;</li> <li>-Elderberry Park.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dingwall Road hill trail to North Island College.</li> </ul>

Table D-2 continued

LOCATION	DESIRED AMENITIES
<p><b>Downtown</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Public realm improvements:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Downtown Commons Plaza and Downtown Mews;</li> <li>-Street furniture;</li> <li>-Street trees;</li> <li>-Decorative paving;</li> <li>-Weather protection.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Intersection signal improvement/replacement;</li> <li>• Improving access to Courtenay River with dike upgrades;</li> <li>• 6th Street active commuter bridge;</li> <li>• Cycling infrastructure along Anderton Avenue and 6th Street;</li> <li>• Street character enhancements for 4th, 5th, 6th Streets;</li> <li>• Strengthen link between downtown and Courtenay river at 4th Street as described in the <i>Downtown Playbook</i>;</li> <li>• Sidewalk widening;</li> <li>• 'Place making' enhancements of McPhee Avenue;</li> <li>• <i>Park improvement of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Harmston Park (after completion of a local area plan process);</li> <li>-Lewis Park;</li> <li>-McPhee Meadows (after completion of a Park Plan process);</li> <li>-Condensory Park trails;</li> <li>-Simms Park;</li> <li>-Standard Park.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 11th Street &amp; Cliffe Avenue intersection traffic controls.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lake Trail Neighbourhood Centre</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morrison Creek Park improvement (trails/trail connectivity);</li> <li>• Lake Trail Road upgrade (multi-use path);</li> <li>• '4-square church' tree permanent preservation;</li> <li>• Arden and Morrison Creek stream <i>restoration</i>.</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** These desired amenities are listed for reference purpose. There may be other facilities and services desired. In case other facilities and services are desired, then the City and the developer negotiate. More information on desired amenities is included in respective master servicing or local area plans.

## COMMUNITY AMENITY MONETARY CONTRIBUTION TARGETS

### For the Affordable Housing Amenity Reserve Fund

**Table D-3** Affordable Housing Amenity Reserve Fund Contribution Per Multi-Residential Unit

TENURE	CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT	
	<i>Effective upon adoption of OCP</i>	<i>Effective January 2025</i>
Strata	\$4,000	\$8,000
Rental	\$4,000	\$5,000

**Table D-4** Affordable Housing Amenity Reserve Fund Contribution Per Lot

LOT SIZE	CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT
Up to 650 m <sup>2</sup>	\$5,000
650 – 850 m <sup>2</sup>	\$6,000
850 – 1,250 m <sup>2</sup>	\$7,000
1,250 – 2,500 m <sup>2</sup>	\$8,000
2,500 – 4,000 m <sup>2</sup>	\$9,000
4,000 – 1 ha	\$11,000
Greater than 1 ha	\$15,000

### For the Parks, Recreation, Culture and Senior Facilities Reserve Fund.

**Table D-5** Parks, Recreation, Culture, and Senior Facility Reserve Fund Contribution

\$1,000 per residential lot
<i>does not apply to secondary residences</i>

and





## C. DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA DESIGNATIONS

### Introduction and Context

Development Permit Areas (DPAs) offer an implementation-oriented framework to ensure that development decisions support the community's broader aspirations as articulated in the Official Community Plan (OCP) within the authorities granted by the Local Government Act (LGA).

DPAs fit within a broader land use policy context and hierarchy:

OCP

- **Land Use Designations** – Reflecting long-term community goals and ambitions, the OCP guides overall City growth by designating land uses according to area of intended activity.
- **Zoning** – Regulated according to the *Zoning Bylaw*, specifics of scale and type of development in each land use zone outline permitted uses, densities, heights, setbacks, etc.
- **Development Permit Areas** – These focused tools then guide form and character, access, environmental protection measures, and a variety of other characteristics for development within each development permit area and specific land uses.

Zoning Bylaw

Division 7, Section 488 (1) of the LGA allows OCPs to designate DPAs for a variety of purposes, and allows for specific

design objectives to be achieved, making sure development is responsive to its context. DPAs may be designated for the purposes of:

- Protection of:
  - a) The natural environment, its ecosystems, and biological diversity
  - b) Development from hazardous conditions
  - c) Farming
- Establishment of objectives for the form and character of:
  - d) Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted
  - e) Intensive residential development
  - f) Commercial, industrial, or multi-residential development
  - g) In relation to an area in a resort region, establishment of objectives for the form and character of development in the resort region
- Promotion of:
  - h) Energy conservation
  - i) Water conservation
  - j) Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions

With the exception of g) (resort region), all designations are contained within the Courtenay DPAs as described further in each DPA category. The Development Permit Areas are designated within the OCP and the implementation-oriented guidelines are contained within the *Zoning Bylaw*.

## DPA Categories

**Five Development Permit Areas are designated, the objectives for which and lands to which they apply are described further in the following pages.** All of the City of Courtenay is a Development Permit Area but only the following listed uses, lands, or specific areas are subject to Development Permits:

**Table D-6** Development Permit Area Categories

DPA Category	Purpose
1. Commercial, industrial, mixed-use developments and any multi-residential with three units or more.	Form and character guidelines contained within the <i>Zoning Bylaw</i> communicate urban design expectations, including for the purposes of commercial revitalization, energy and water conservation, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and protection of farming for properties adjacent to agricultural lands. These guidelines support design decisions that are responsive to context and climate and offer the flexibility to respond creatively while ensuring cohesive and thoughtful planning and design of new development.
2. Intensive residential development including: duplex, detached secondary residences, single-residential homes in areas with special heritage considerations as well as bare land stratas and mobile home parks.	
3. Farm Protection.	Farm protection guidelines contained within the <i>Zoning Bylaw</i> communicate setback, siting, separation and screening requirements when developing adjacent to agricultural lands in order to minimize the potential for conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.
4. Environmental.	Environmental and hazardous guidelines contained within the <i>Zoning Bylaw</i> communicate environmental protection and development safety considerations when conducting any form of development near <i>Environmentally Sensitive Areas</i> (ESA) or Steep Slopes.
5. Protection from hazardous conditions: Steep Slopes.	

## General Exemptions

**In general, where land is within a DPA, an owner must obtain a development permit prior to:**

- *Subdivision*;
- Construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building or structure, land, or parking area;
- Alteration of land containing or adjacent to an *Environmentally Sensitive Area* (ESA).

A number of general exemptions are listed here. More specific exemptions are included within the Development Permit Area guidelines provided within the *Zoning Bylaw*.

## Exemptions for Normal Farm Practices

Normal farm practices in accordance with the Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act do not require a Development Permit.

## Exemptions for Environmental Development Permits

Environmental Development Permits are not required:

- For the replacement of windows;
- For painting the exterior of a building;
- Institutional uses; or
- For any of the activities or circumstances defined within the Exemptions section of the Environmental DPA Guidelines.

## Exemptions for Form & Character Development Permits

A Form and Character Development Permit is not required if any of the following are the case, including if multiple exemptions are the case:

- Institutional uses;
- Replacement of windows;
- Painting the exterior of a building;
- Construction of a fence;
- Replacement of a roof;
- Accessory buildings that do not require a building permit;
- Single residential dwellings, except when in an Intensive Residential Development Permit Area (e.g. heritage neighbourhoods and as part of a bare land strata development).
- For a minor alteration to the exterior of a building that does not change the architectural character of the development. For the purpose of this Section, "minor" is defined as a change which does not:
  - a. Increase site coverage more than 25% of the approved coverage;
  - b. Alter more than 25% of the existing floor area to a maximum of 200 m<sup>2</sup>;
  - c. Change the exterior design of a building on any one side more than 25%, including the addition or removal of windows.
- Where a *subdivision* or strata plan including a phased strata plan is consistent with a Development Permit issued for a development on a property.



# DPA-1 COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, MIXED-USE & MULTI-RESIDENTIAL FORM AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA

## JUSTIFICATION:

This Development Permit Area is intended to achieve attractive, architecturally coordinated and context-appropriate higher density, employment and mixed-use building and landscape designs that consider the relationship between buildings, open areas, and circulation systems, in order to promote walkable, safe, and vibrant developments.

This category applies to all development proposals that contain commercial, industrial and mixed-uses as well as multi-residential buildings with more than three dwelling units. Within this category, additional guidelines are provided for a defined area of the downtown as shown on Map D-1.

The designation and guidelines are integrated within this DPA in order to achieve a number of objectives. The designation and guidelines are in accordance with sections 488 (1) (a), (d), (f), (h), (i), and (j) of the Local Government Act.

## Objectives:

1. To ensure urban *infill* and *redevelopment* is well integrated and context-sensitive.
2. To promote compact urban form that is well-connected and accessible by walking, cycling, and transit and supportive of transit supportive densities.
3. To promote the creation of new destinations that help meet residents' daily needs by short walkable trips to grocers, shops, restaurants, personal services, community centres, and gathering spaces.
4. To transform vehicle-centric developments and prioritize the pedestrian environment.
5. To ensure attractive streetscapes, landscapes, building design, and vibrant public spaces.
6. To foster neighbourhood connections and a shared sense of community across the city.

7. To improve urban ecological functions such as local biodiversity and rainwater infiltration.
8. To reduce energy and water consumption as well as greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) associated with the built environment.

*Within the Downtown Core (Map D-1):*

9. To protect and enhance the historic, small-scale retail character of the 4th, 5th, 6th Streets streetscape.

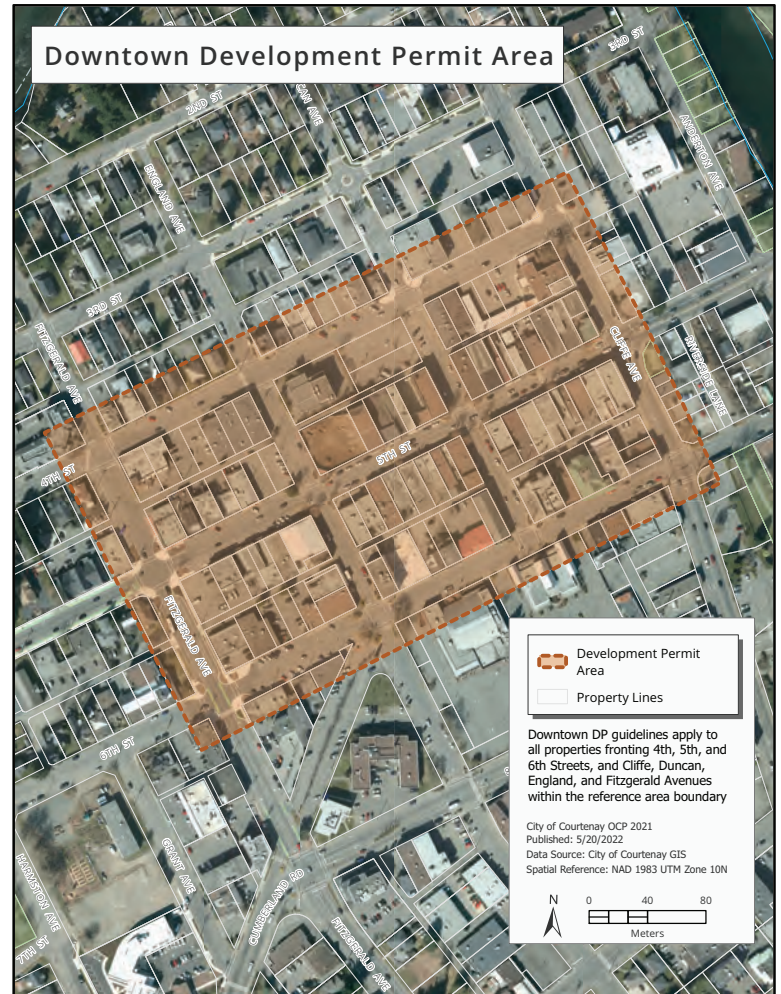
*On Lands with a Multi-Residential Component:*

10. To support a greater diversity of housing choices and affordability.
11. To ensure a high standard of livability and well-being within multi-residential developments.

*On Lands with a Commercial and/or Industrial Component:*

12. To enable the flexible and appropriate adaptive use and design of industrial lands to meet evolving community needs.
13. To provide convenient and safe access to industrial areas via all modes of transportation, including commercial or personal vehicles, transit, walking, and cycling.

**Map D-1** Downtown Development Permit Area



**Guidelines:**

See *Zoning Bylaw*

# DPA-2 INTENSIVE RESIDENTIAL FORM AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA FOR DUPLEXES, DETACHED SECONDARY RESIDENCES, HERITAGE NEIGHBOURHOODS AND BARE LAND STRATAS AND MOBILE HOME DEVELOPMENTS

## JUSTIFICATION:

This development permit area is intended to ensure that new residential *infill* development achieves attractive, architecturally coordinated, and context-appropriate residential designs.

This category applies to all duplex and detached secondary residences as well as single-residential homes in areas with special heritage consideration (as shown on Map 2 and 3) as well as bare land stratas and mobile home parks with three or more dwellings.

The designation and guidelines are integrated within this DPA in order to achieve a number of objectives. The designation and guidelines are in accordance with sections 488 (1) (a), (e), (h), (i), and (j) of the Local Government Act.



### Objectives:

1. To support housing choices and affordability in both established and new neighbourhoods while protecting existing character.
2. To enable intensive residential development, including duplexes and detached secondary residences, to enhance and evolve the neighbourhood's sense of community and place.
3. To ensure single-residential homes in areas with special heritage consideration reflect neighbourhood characteristics.
4. To contribute positively to the urban form of the city by establishing well defined streets, designing appropriately scaled buildings, activating building frontages, enhancing the public realm, and improving urban ecological functions.
5. To reduce energy and water consumption as well as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the built environment.

### Guidelines:

See *Zoning Bylaw*

**Map D-2** Old Orchard and Terminal Addition Heritage Neighbourhood Development Permit Area



**Map D-3** 40 Houses Heritage Neighbourhood Development Permit Area



# DPA 3 – FARM PROTECTION

## JUSTIFICATION:

This development permit area is intended to protect agriculture and farming operations from adjacent new development and to reduce conflicts that could arise between agricultural use and non-agricultural uses through the use of possible requirements for screening, landscaping, fencing and siting of buildings or other structures.

This category applies to all properties adjacent to agriculturally zoned lands, including lands adjacent to those within the Agricultural Land Reserve (as shown on Map D-4). This includes properties that abut and are contiguous to agricultural lands.

The designation and guidelines are in accordance with sections 488 (1) (c) of the Local Government Act.

## *Objectives:*

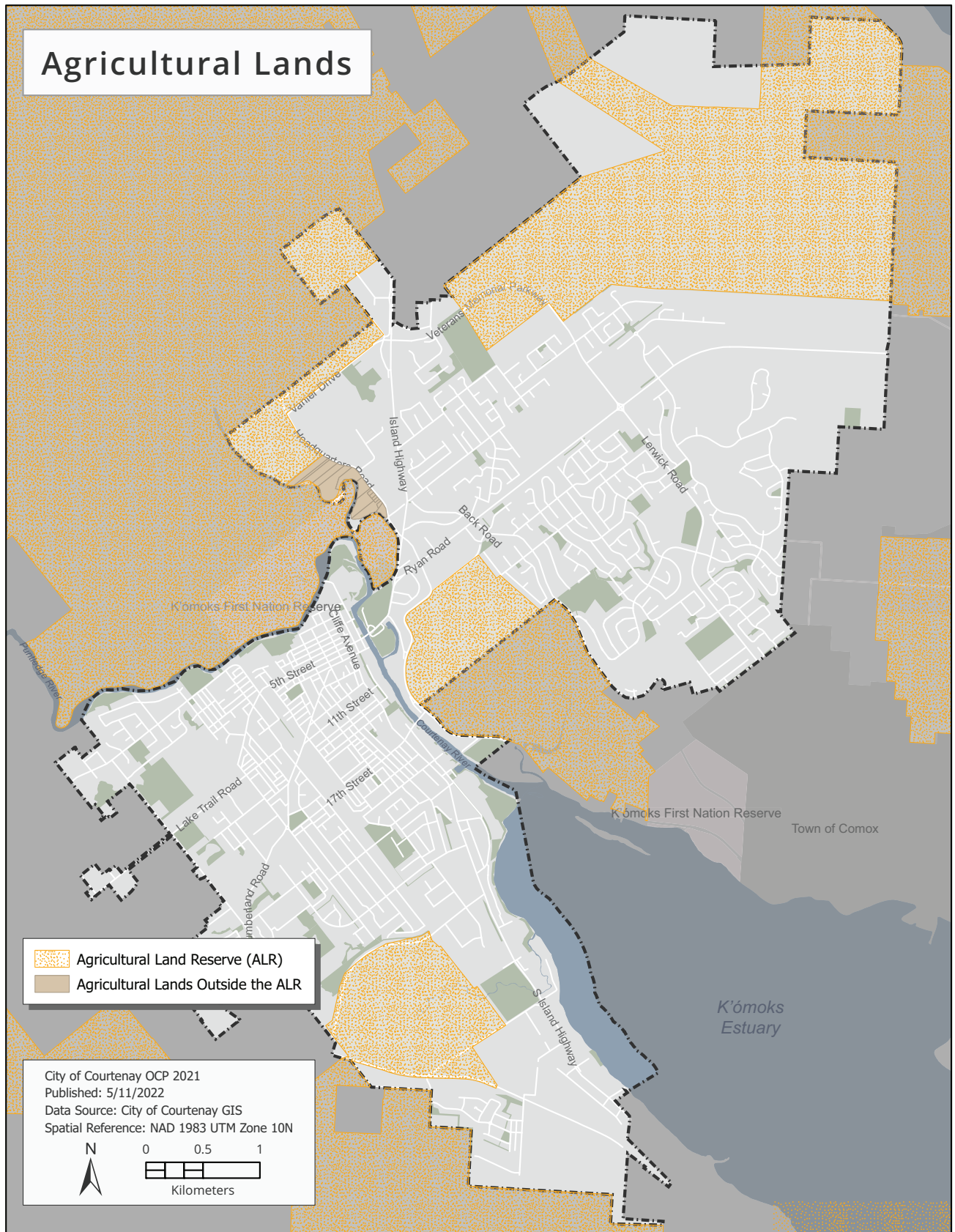
1. To minimize the conflicts that may arise between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses including as a result of nuisances such as agricultural odor, noise and dust to urban lands, or of urban light, noise and trespass to agricultural lands.
2. To minimize the impact of urban encroachment on agricultural lands.
3. To protect and/or develop effective vegetated buffers along agricultural land boundaries.

## *Guidelines:*

*See Zoning Bylaw*



Map D-4 Agricultural Lands.





# DPA 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL

## JUSTIFICATION:

This development permit area is intended to protect ecosystems and features that provide habitat for aquatic and terrestrial species, preserve biodiversity, and provide ecosystem services, when conducting development near *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. Where the term *Environmentally Sensitive Area* (ESA) is used, it is meant to include the buffers, also known as protection setbacks, of that ESA.

This category applies to all lands shown on the Terrestrial *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* Map D-5 and the Aquatic *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* Map D-6 as well as to any property that contains an *Environmentally Sensitive Area*, whether mapped or not. Because not all ESAs are mapped, all properties that are equal to or larger than 4,000 metres square in size are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment prior to development approvals to confirm the presence or absence of ESAs.

The types of *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* fall into the following categories:

- **Freshwater aquatic ecosystems:** Those natural systems that are either permanently or periodically under water. Water may be running, as in a river or stream or springs or still, as in lakes and wetlands. This includes their riparian areas, specifically lands within 30 metres of the natural boundary of such ecosystems. (Shown in Map D-6). These ecosystems may also be subject to provincial Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR).
- **Estuary and marine shorelines:** The waters and lands adjacent to the K'ómoks Estuary as well as the Courtenay River and including to the Condensory Bridge at Anderton Avenue and Condensory Road.
- **Terrestrial ecosystems:** Those ecosystems that are land-based. Common designations follow the provincial Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory categories: seasonally flooded agricultural fields,

terrestrial herbaceous, older forest, older second growth forest, sparsely vegetated (cliffs and bluffs), wetland, riparian, and woodland such as Garry Oak ecosystems. (Shown in Map D-5).

- **At-risk species and ecological communities:** These include, but are not limited to, species listed under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA) and species and ecological communities provincially designated as red- or blue-listed.
- **Ecosystems Connectivity Areas:** The Biogeoclimatic Zone in which Courtenay is situated (the Coastal Western Hemlock, very dry maritime, CWHxm) is one of the most at risk in BC. The greatest opportunities for protecting at-risk ecological communities within this zone are generally represented in the Ecosystem Connectivity Opportunity Areas shown on Map D-5 *Terrestrial Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. The map includes gaps in the corridor that will require *restoration*.
- **Raptor and heron nests:** Under the BC Wildlife Act, the nest of an eagle, peregrine falcon, gyrfalcon, osprey, heron, or burrowing owl is protected whether occupied by a bird or its egg or not. Raptors are a term used to describe birds of prey including hawks, owls, falcons and eagles. This includes the nests themselves and their setbacks as determined by a Registered Professional Biologist.

The designation and guidelines are in accordance with sections 488 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act.

The City of Courtenay's regulations do not

negate the need for compliance with any federal or provincial statutes and regulations governing the management of the environment and wildlife.

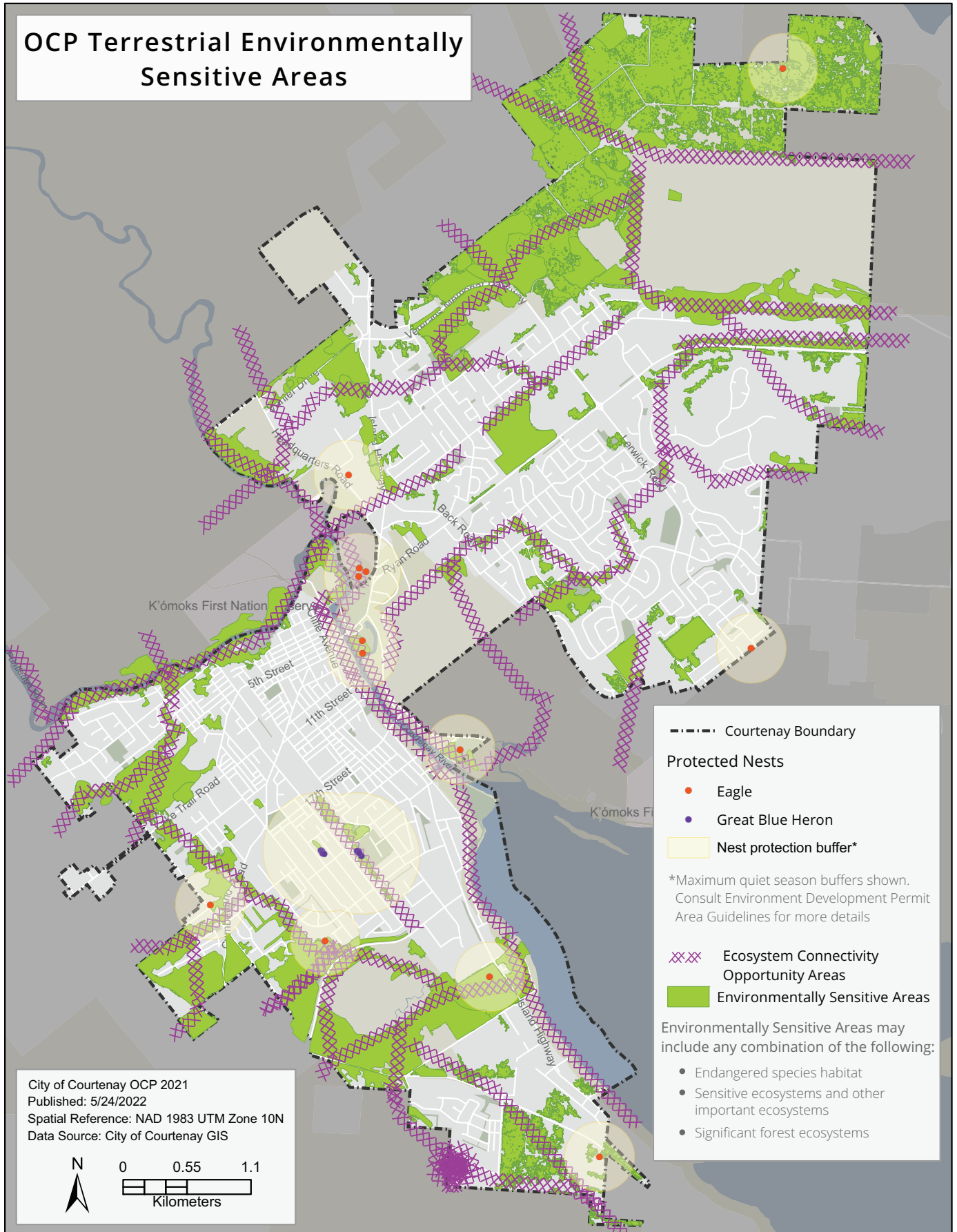
### **Objectives:**

1. Protect areas of high biodiversity and ecological sensitivity within Courtenay including ground and surface water, shorelines, forests, wildlife and important wildlife habitats, ecosystem features and functions, and rare and endangered ecosystems, ecological communities and species.
2. Maintain ecosystem connectivity.
3. Restore and enhance previously degraded ecosystems.
4. Ensure that ecosystem protection and enhancement values are elevated and prioritized in the development design and review process, and specify where and how lands are developed around *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*.
5. Protect and enhance water quality and prevent contamination of water from land use and development activities.
6. Meet and generally exceed the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR) requirements.
7. Provide comprehensive environmental protection guidelines that are scientifically rigorous, clear, and transparent to development applicants and the greater community.

### **Guidelines:**

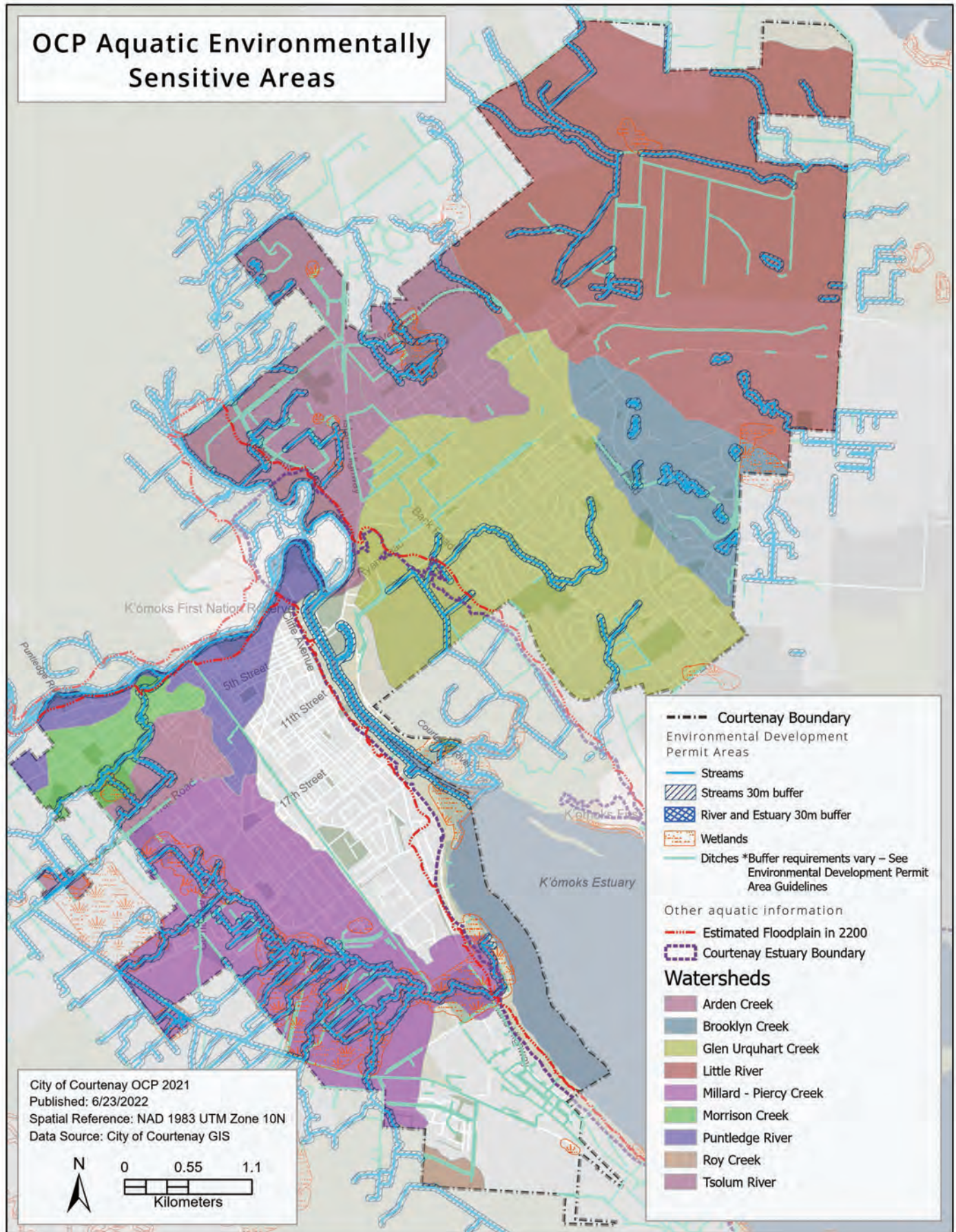
See *Zoning Bylaw*

Map D-5 Terrestrial Environmentally Sensitive Areas.





Map D-6 Aquatic Environmentally Sensitive Areas.



# DPA 5 – HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS – STEEP SLOPES

## **JUSTIFICATION:**

This development permit area is intended to establish a process for hazard assessment over those areas that are susceptible to land slippage and ensure that development is protected from such hazardous conditions.

This category applies to all properties containing a slope of equal to or greater than 20% measured over a minimum horizontal distance of 10 metres (as shown on Map D-7).

The designation and guidelines are in accordance with sections 488 (1) (b) of the Local Government Act.

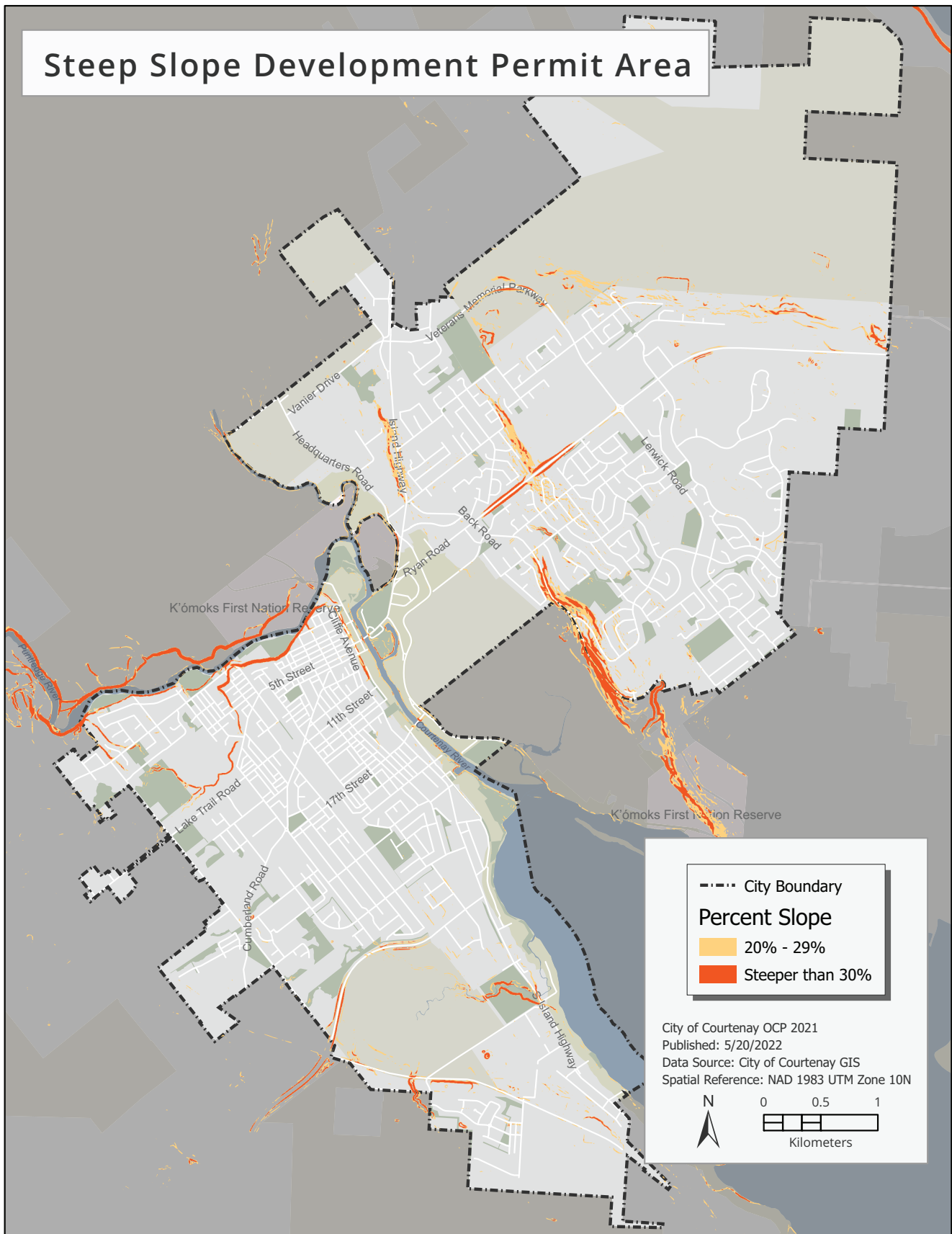
## **Objectives:**

1. Minimize the risk to people and property from natural hazards.
2. Provide stable and accessible building sites.
3. Promote development that is appropriate for steep slope areas by respecting terrain, maintaining natural vegetation and drainage patterns.
4. Inform land owners of potential hazards and encourage development and property maintenance that is resilient to hazard risk.

## **Guidelines:**

*See Zoning Bylaw*

Map D-7 Steep Slope Development Permit Area.





## 5. IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

This section identifies proposed priority policy implementation actions that will provide a foundation for and enable a number of other actions identified in the OCP. The intent of this list is to provide guidance for City Council and Administration to support the vision, goals, and policies in the beginning stages of the OCP implementation cycle. This list does not include additional

recommendations from master servicing plans (e.g., Transportation Master Plan, Cycling Network Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Water Servicing Plan, Sanitary Sewer Servicing Plan, Urban Forest Strategy, Integrated Rainwater Management Plan, Flood Management Plan, etc.) that provide direction on City of Courtenay capital investments, asset renewal, and program development.

The following letters are used to reference various policy chapters;

R - Reconciliation  
 CP - Community Participation  
 LU - Land Use  
 ST - Streets & Transportation

BL - Buildings & Landscape  
 AH - Affordable Housing  
 NE - Natural Environment  
 PR - Parks & Recreation

MI - Municipal Infrastructure  
 SI - Social Infrastructure  
 ACH - Arts, Culture & Heritage

FS - Food Systems  
 LE - Local Economy

**Table D-7** List of Implementation Priorities

	Action	Intended Outcome	Lead City Departments & Partnerships	OCP Policy Reference
1	Develop a corporate OCP implementation, monitoring, and reporting administrative structure and procedure to implement the OCP. i. Include decision-making support mechanisms that balance and ensure multiple goals are being considered and incorporated into capital planning.	OCP policy guides all City of Courtenay activities across all departments. This includes establishing indicators of OCP outcomes, staff resourcing and establishing decision-making support mechanisms. This includes ensuring climate adaptation is incorporated into all City activities.	Senior staff leadership team	Part D – Implementation
2	Update the Municipal Climate Action Plan	City of Courtenay shows demonstrative climate action leadership in all corporate activities.	Interdepartmental staff committee	Part D – Implementation
3	Create a Reconciliation Framework	City of Courtenay shows demonstrative Reconciliation leadership in all corporate activities	Senior staff leadership team  <i>Partnership Potential:</i> K'ómoks First Nation and other Indigenous peoples who live within the region.	Part A – Reconciliation R 1
4	Develop a local area plan for Harmston Avenue Civic Precinct.	A clear vision and development goals for public and private lands support public and private investment in the downtown. Neighbourhood engagement processes are piloted and evaluated for application in other Local Area Plans.	Development Services	Part B – LU 9a; Part B – Harmston Avenue Civic Precinct specific Policies

	Action	Intended Outcome	Lead City Departments & Partnerships	OCP Policy Reference
5	Identify roles for the City in the delivery of: i. Social infrastructure ii. Local economic development iii. Food security	City of Courtenay identifies appropriate roles and resourcing required to advance policies within each of these policy themes.	i. Recreation, Culture and Community Services & Development Services <i>Partnership potential:</i> Community organizations, government agencies and jurisdictions that provide services for <i>equity-priority groups</i> .  ii. Development Services <i>Partnership potential:</i> Neighbouring jurisdictions, local business community.  iii. Development Services, Recreation, Culture and Community Services, and Public Works Services <i>Partnership potential:</i> Food Policy Council	i. Part C – SI 7 ii. Part C – LE 8 iii. Part C – FS 24
6	Explore and establish a partnership approach with School District 71 (SD71) on topics of mutual interest such as active school travel planning, community use of schools, shared facilities, climate action, reconciliation, child care and youth engagement.	City of Courtenay has a strong working relationship with SD71 to advance topics of mutual interest.	Development Services; Engineering Services; Public Works Services.  <i>Partnership Potential:</i> SD71	Part C - ST 5, PR 27, SI 10, SI 24
7	Update key land use regulatory tools to reflect the OCP: i. <i>Zoning Bylaw</i> ii. <i>Building Bylaw</i> iii. <i>Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw</i> iv. <i>Flood Management Plan &amp; Flood Management Bylaw</i> v. <i>Development Cost Charges</i> vi. <i>Affordable Housing Policy</i> including development incentives	City of Courtenay land use regulations collectively ensure development enacts the OCP vision. i. <i>Zoning Bylaw</i> update will be in two phases. First phase at time of OCP adoption will: • Allow for secondary suites; • Establish bike parking standards; • Include Development Permit Area Guidelines.	i. Development Services ii. Development and Engineering Services iii. Development Services iv. Engineering Services v. Development, Engineering, and Public Works Services vi. Development Services	i. Part B - Various area specific land use policies; Part C - ST 11, ST 16, AH 1, AH 2, NE 25, FS 9, FS 18, FS 22 ii. Part C - BL 4, BL 7 iii. Part C - ST 12, NE 19, PR 21, MI 15 iv. Part B – Floodplain Policies v. Part C - MI 12, MI 14 vi. Part C AH 17
8	Create development application support system/tools to assist in navigating land development process with an emphasis on supporting <i>affordable housing</i> .	Development approvals that align with the OCP and meet regulatory requirements are streamlined, transparent, and easy to understand.	Development Services	Part C – AH 22





**PART E**

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**LOCAL AREA  
PLANS**



# ARDEN CORRIDOR LOCAL AREA PLAN

## 1. Project Objective

The overarching goal of the Local Area Plan (LAP) was to engage the community in conducting comprehensive planning along the City's western boundary in order to respond to development pressure and anticipated growth in the Settlement Expansion Area (SEA), as identified in the Comox Valley *Regional Growth Strategy*. The original LAP was conducted in 2012 and has been updated with minimal revisions to reflect the 2022 OCP. No Settlement Expansion Areas are anticipated to be incorporated within the City's boundaries within the time horizon of the 2022 OCP. However, the LAP provides guidance on land use and community priorities within the City's boundaries, and provides for long-range thinking for when incorporation of the SEAs may occur.

See Map E-1 for the boundaries of the LAP area. All reference material including consultation findings, additional maps and illustrations and all analysis can be found in the *Arden Corridor Local Area Plan – Reference Plan*.

The objective of the LAP is to project and respond to anticipated growth in the Arden Corridor through regulation of land use and servicing that is in keeping with the values of the community, the identity of the City and the City's commitment to environmental protection.

A foundational principle of the Plan is that development must not be permitted to compromise environmental features of high ecological value. This principle is reflected through the policies that are contained

within the Plan. Recognizing that development necessarily has some degree of environmental impact, the goal of the Plan is to limit the extent that site disturbances have on:

- Other properties
- Critical habitats of rare and endangered species
- Fish, the waters they inhabit and the riparian areas that support them
- Nesting birds and the nests (whether occupied or not) of all raptors
- Hydrological features and function
- Watershed health at the site level and cumulatively over the entire Plan area including adjacent neighbourhoods

The Plan contains a strong emphasis on protecting environmental values in part due to the work of the Millard Piercy Watershed Stewards and Morrison Creek Streamkeepers who for over 20 years have amassed biophysical data on the watershed. Their scientifically based work has concluded that there is increasing evidence that the declining health of elements of the Millard/Piercy Watershed can be linked to land use practices and related policy. The community consultation exercises also revealed strong support for environmental values, which are expanded upon further in the Plan.

## 2. Plan Process

The Plan was created through the following five processes:

1. Site analysis and community vision
2. Concept options
3. Preferred land use plan development
4. Review of policy and implementation options
5. Council adoption

The public consultation strategy was designed to provide an opportunity for the entire community to participate directly in the formulation of the Arden Corridor Local Area Plan. The public consultation strategy contained the following elements:

1. Introductory workshop on site analysis, formulating plan opportunities and constraints.
2. Series of three workshops to provide opportunity for community to participate in 'design charette' of the LAP. A separate stakeholder workshop was held parallel to this process.
3. Survey.
4. Final public open house to vet the findings from the survey and the final plan principles and land use concept plan to the community.

Both the survey and workshops provided valuable information which has been the foundation of the Arden Corridor Local Area Plan.

## 3. Vision statement

*To maintain the rural character of the community while allowing for environmentally responsible new developments that respond to the community's growth, that support a network of trails and rural roads, parks, cost-effective infrastructure systems and a diversity of housing and small home-based businesses.*

## 4. Plan Implementation

The following sections provide the policies of the Plan, which will be used to implement the vision of the Arden Corridor LAP. The following section contains a number of overarching strategies and design principles that inform the approach and layout to the Plan. In addition, a number of more specific policies, actions, and in some cases illustrative examples, are included for each of the topic areas:

- Environment
- Mobility
- Land use (Housing; Commercial, Industrial and Institutional; Parks and Greenways)
- Servicing

Maps are provided to illustrate the study area in context with the city and adjacent Settlement Expansion Area. Data used to create the maps have come from a variety of sources including the City, Project Watershed, the Comox Valley Regional District and the Ministry of Environment. The background information, analysis and consultation outcomes for each topic area are presented in a separate reference Plan entitled *Arden Corridor Local Area Plan – Reference Plan*.

## 5. Plan strategies

The Plan is founded on a number of strategies that inform the range of policies contained within the Plan. The strategies are meant to ground decision making about development in the core values and vision the Plan is intended to uphold. These strategies are:

- a) Use the Precautionary Principle as a basis upon which to make decisions about changes to land use, within reason. This means seeking out the best available, evidence-based information to inform a decision, particularly pertaining to the environmental impact of development proposals, recognizing that the protection of the environment and regulating for environmentally sensitive development is a key objective of this Plan.
- b) Use Low Impact Development site layout, patterning and building form to guide and evaluate development in the study area. This principle recognizes that the building and development form supported by this Plan should aim to understand the interrelationships between drainage, landforms, soils, habitat and land use and that there is an explicit desire to depart from the 'conventional' approach of stormwater servicing, road widths and layouts including single family 'tract' housing developments.
- c) Involve the community in decisions pertaining to the implementation of the Plan. While the community cannot be expected to be consulted on every change to take place in the neighbourhood the key changes that shall seek public consultation are:
  - Boundary extensions including servicing and taxation implications
  - Rezoning and OCP amendments, as per standard land use amendment procedure
  - Activities that may have significant environmental impact on public lands including culverts over fish bearing streams and in parks
  - Any major amendments to this Plan

## 6. Plan Design Principles

The Plan promotes a number of community design principles, which together enable a development pattern that supports the vision described in this Plan. These principles, and how they can be applied, are listed in Table E-1. The drawing contained within Map E-2 illustrates these principles.



**Table E-1** Arden Corridor Local Area Plan Design Principles.

	<b>Design Principle</b>	<b>How addressed in the Plan</b>
1	Where <i>infill</i> development is permitted, it is in keeping with existing neighbourhood character.	Design guidance is provided within this Plan to provide direction on desirable building character.
2	Public trail networks should be secured especially along Piercy and Morrison Creeks and connect to key destinations within and beyond the study area.	An identified trail network in the OCP can ensure that trail opportunities are identified early in a development application process. The City may also pursue land acquisitions and access agreements to secure public use. Environmental professionals must advise on the suitability of trail locations.
3	Multiple mobility modes are provided along major roads including Arden Road, Cumberland Road and Lake Trail Road.	Updated standards that provide provisions for walkers and cyclists are identified as priorities in this Plan.
4	Preserve contiguous parcels of green space to protect against forest and habitat fragmentation.	Development proposals will be required to provide environmental studies that include ground truthed mapping of environmentally sensitive features and recommendations on how to maintain connectivity of those features.
5	Provide trail access, but not vehicle access, from new development to existing local streets.	Vehicular road access will be reviewed upon each development application in which new roads are proposed to ensure that new roads adhere to the vision of this Plan and that traffic impact to the existing neighbourhood is reduced.
6	Create clustered family oriented housing on sites close to Arden Elementary School.	The land use plan focuses growth around existing destinations and on lands that are likely to physically best support development, within the study area.
7	Require rehabilitation of creeks and wetlands as part of new developments.	Development proposals adjacent to <i>Environmentally Sensitive Areas</i> will be required to identify restoration opportunities.
8	Preserve the hydrological function of the landscape by using Low Impact Design principles.	Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the hydrological functions and features of the site will be protected.
9	In general, support clustered forms of development, not typical tract housing.	Design guidance is provided within this Plan to provide direction on desired site layout approaches.
10	Limit crossings to streams. Where crossings are required, clear span bridge crossings are encouraged.	This is a stated policy of the Plan.

## 7. Environmental Protection

### *Environmental protection objectives:*

- Protect and restore watercourses.
- Protect surface and groundwater quality and quantity.
- Protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat.
- Protect and restore trees and understory vegetation.
- Maintain air quality.
- Promote environmental education and land stewardship.

### *Environmental protection policies:*

1. All necessary studies required for development applications, and particularly environmental studies, should be conducted prior to site layout being designed to ensure that the information about the biophysical realities of the site may inform the development concept.
2. Tree removal along Arden Road, Cumberland Road and Lake Trail Road will be minimized to maintain the rural character elements of these rural roads
3. Retain an open-channel stormwater drainage system as the primary means of conveying water (rather than stormwater infrastructure pipes). The open-channel stormwater drainage system envisioned for the area does and will consist of natural watercourses and wetlands, ditches, and other water

retention and detention opportunities to enhance water quality and environmental features including source controls where appropriate

4. Minimize surface run-off into watercourses and encourage rainwater infiltration by limiting the amount of impervious cover and maintaining trees and other vegetation. Where infiltration is deemed to be unsuitable by a hydrological study, maintaining existing tree and vegetation cover on the site should be considered at a minimum.
5. Support studies that explore groundwater quality and quantity including recharge rates to the aquifer.
6. The City encourages and in some instances requires the dedication of *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* as part of development proposals, but ESAs shall not be considered part of the 5% *subdivision* parkland requirement, where this requirement is triggered.
7. When existing buildings and structures that are located within the 30m of the buffer of a stream (on either side) are decommissioned, *restoration* of the site under the direction of a Qualified Environmental Professional is encouraged.
8. Where public trails are permitted near streams, watercourses and other *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, trail location must follow the following guidelines:

- a. Where residential uses are adjacent to *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, public trails should be created between residential lots and the public properties in order to discourage encroachment into *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* by private lots.
  - b. Trails must not be located within Streamside Protection and Enhancement Areas (SPEAs) as defined under the Riparian Area Protection Regulation or any other critical buffer distance deemed necessary by a Registered Professional Biologist to maintain the habitat of endangered species or otherwise protected species.
  - c. Trail alignment must aim to follow the least environmentally intrusive path. For example, trails should avoid locating within areas of poorly draining soils which may indicate the presence of ephemeral wetlands, should be located away from identified valuable habitat features such as wildlife trees, and should route around tree roots wherever possible, as determined by an ISA arborist or other environmental professional. Boardwalks may be required in some instances.
9. Both ecological and recreational greenways will be supported throughout the study area recognizing that each greenway type may provide different functions. For example, when designing ecological greenways special attention will be given to connectivity opportunities

for wildlife where sufficient vegetation cover, connectivity and extent of native vegetation shall be maintained.

10. Should certain wildlife species become a nuisance (e.g. overabundance of deer, or increased bear activity), the City will work with appropriate partners such as local conservation groups, Provincial agencies and providers of programs such as “Bear Smart” to address nuisance wildlife.

*Environmental Protection Actions:*

- 1. Work with the nature stewardship sector to provide and compile all publically available environmental studies that have been conducted for individual properties within the study area.
- 2. Establish a tree canopy target for the area.
- 3. Develop a Watershed Blueprint in partnership with community associations, residents, environmental groups, neighbouring local governments and other governments and agencies to preserve the natural environment within each the Piercy Creek and Morrison Creek watersheds. The City supports the work of any data collection and compilation work on the watershed even in the absence of a work plan dedicated to a watershed blueprint, provided that the data collection follow scientifically defensible methods.



## 8. Housing

### *Housing Objectives:*

- Strive for a housing form that maintains a 'rural aesthetic'.
- Maintain housing opportunities for a diversity of resident demographic profiles including young families, family members and seniors.
- Continue to allow for live-work or home occupation opportunities.

### *Housing policies:*

1. Follow the land use concept plan as shown in Map E-8 when considering zoning amendments. Use the illustrative examples provided in Appendix B of this Plan to inspire and provide guidance on acceptable development patterning, building massing, housing densities and character.
2. Concentrate higher density housing along Arden Road, near the intersection of Arden and Cumberland and near the Arden Elementary school. Encourage higher densities in line with the land use designations in the OCP.
3. Promote a "clustering" form of development, including of single family housing developments, adjacent to roads to facilitate conservation of sensitive ecosystems, provision of open space and economical infrastructure costs.
4. Allow *infill* development on all lots. *Infill* development includes:

- a. detached, one-story units (e.g. 'granny flats') or 'carriage house' units above detached garages.
  - b. secondary suites within the principal building.
5. Support rental and special needs housing.
  6. Appropriate lot sizes will designated upon rezoning application and shall be in accordance with the OCP.
  7. Energy efficient housing construction including the use of passive design principles will be supported.
  8. Sound attenuation treatments shall be accomplished within the architecture; the use of tall walls is not supported within the study area.

## 9. Commercial, industrial and institutional land uses

### *Commercial, industrial and institutional land use objectives:*

- Limit new commercial/heavy industrial development.
- Allow for some small scale home based businesses.
- Maintain local institutional uses as community assets to be retained (e.g. Arden Elementary School).
- Restrict new institutional uses that are not consistent with the rural character.

*Commercial, industrial and institutional land use policies:*

1. Work with SD71 to promote Lake Trail Community School as a centre for community interaction, recreation and learning.
2. The City will support the development of a community school at Arden Elementary should the SD71 choose to pursue this option.
3. Other private schools are permissible within the Arden Corridor, subject to community consultation and other site design and servicing considerations.
4. Support the establishment of home-based businesses in existing residential areas including light industry provided it conforms to neighbourhood character and good neighbour considerations (noise, odor, etc.), and all necessary zoning regulations.
5. Re-visit the need and appropriateness of commercial uses in keeping with the neighbourhood character, as the area develops, and further boundary extension is considered, in consultation with the community.

## 10. Parks and Greenways

*Parks and Greenways Objectives:*

- Expand the network of greenways as part of the municipal and regional greenways system that is connected and accessible to multiple users.
- Ensure that all homes are within service distances as stated by the OCP.

- Acquire natural parks to preserve and restore watercourses, wildlife habitat, rural landscapes, and viewscales.

*Parks and greenway policies:*

1. Develop the trail network in accordance with the general connections shown on Map E-8.
2. The City will continue to provide future acquisition and development of park lands in a variety of ways including:
  - a. 5% dedication of land or cash-in-lieu at the time of *subdivision*, with preference to land dedication.
  - b. Dedication of *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* to the City. ESAs are excluded from the 5% dedication.
  - c. Development cost charges.
  - d. Restrictive covenants.
  - e. Working with the SD71 on a conceptual parks plan for Arden Elementary.
  - f. Purchase where appropriate.
  - g. Community Amenity Contributions.
3. Large parcel nature parks and smaller neighbourhood parks (possibly with playgrounds) will be the park provisions in the Arden Corridors. The installation of community gardens will be considered if there is sufficient demand by residents. Sports fields are not supported.

4. Parks shall be designated within neighbourhoods in a manner that provides a highly visible presence from the public street system and connected to greenway and pedestrian routes. This includes ensuring that the majority of the park perimeter is open to the street.
5. The City will pursue securing public access to the Comox Logging Road right of way as a public trail.
6. Maintain unused road rights of way as informal greenspaces with potential to be incorporated into a formal park or greenway.
7. All trails adjacent to ESAs must be on-leash.

*Parks and Greenways Actions:*

1. The Parks Master Plan should include a concerted effort to establish consistent Valley-wide greenway standards, and connected greenways between jurisdictions, as defined by the *Regional Growth Strategy*, in particular in relation to the form and function of ecological greenways as distinct from recreational greenways. Aim to develop consistent standards regarding greenways such as minimum buffer distances from *Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, trail width and materials, and maintenance prescriptions. Ecological greenways will likely be wider than recreational greenways and will require intact vegetation cover. Human activity will be limited in ecological greenways.
2. Where road rights of way are to be retained for park, prepare a road closure bylaw and rezone to an appropriate park zone. The City will consider and may pursue a land

swap where it is deemed in the public interest to do so including the protection of environmental values.

3. Work with landowners to acquire trail rights of way or easements as necessary to complete the trails network.
4. Establish a committee comprised of local residents to create management plans for any special use parks in the area including Tarling Park and any newly established special use parks.
5. The City will encourage and provide in-kind and where appropriate limited financial support to volunteer groups that identify and work towards key parks and greenway priorities such as signage, furnishings, revegetation and habitat enhancement goals.
6. The City will conduct a cost benefit analysis of adopting smaller trail and park maintenance equipment and of establishing less mechanized forms of trail and park maintenance.

## **11. Mobility**

*Mobility objectives:*

- Contribute to a multi-modal regional transportation network with an explicit goal of increasing cycling, walking, transit and carpooling mobility modes and decreasing single occupancy vehicle modes.
- Maintain the character of rural roads.
- Maintain safe mobility networks for all road users.



*Mobility policies:*

1. The rural road character will be maintained where feasible for collector and residential roads within the study area. Variances to the engineering specifications for roads within the study area will be supported where they are necessary to maintain the rural character.
2. When local roads, that are currently within the CVRD/MOTI jurisdiction, become under the City's jurisdiction upon approved Boundary Extension, the local roads will primarily remain 'as is' and will not be developed to an urban standard, recognizing that the character of roads have impact on the overall character of the community.
3. Protect and promote the rural character of local roads by encouraging informal native landscaping, roadside ditches, narrow road widths and pervious surface treatments on public lands and private lands.
4. Require that large trees be maintained, wherever it is safe to do so as indicated by an ISA certified arborist, along Arden Rd, Lake Trail Rd and Cumberland Rd in order to preserve the rural character of these roads and provide a visual buffer between these roads and adjacent land uses.
5. Balance safety, 'dark skies', wildlife and aesthetic considerations when reviewing requests for the installation of street lights.
6. Ensure that safe provisions for walking and cycling are provided on Cumberland Rd, Arden Rd and Lake Trail Rd, recognizing that the primary strategy for accommodating walking and cycling in the Arden Corridor is through the development

of a functional and safe greenway network that complies with *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED) best practices.

7. Work with BC Transit to maximize access to transit by considering new routes, frequency and timing of service improvements, non-conventional transit service options, and/or park and ride facilities if there is sufficient demand from residents.
8. Should the opportunity arise to obtain rights of way along Cumberland Rd, Lake Trail Rd, Arden Rd and Comox Logging Rd to support a separated multi-path, this option shall be considered.
9. The City's preference for crossings over streams include clear spanned bridges. Such approaches to stream crossings shall be first explored before alternatives are considered.
10. A vehicular crossing over Morrison Creek along Arden Rd is not desired. A cycling/ pedestrian bridge is supported.
11. Roundabouts will be considered for intersection treatments.

*Mobility Actions:*

1. Amend *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* to include engineering specifications for rural collectors and rural residential roads that are in keeping with the character and use of these roads.
2. Work with School District 71, the school principal and Parent Advisory Committees to designate safe walking/cycling routes to school plans to Arden Elementary and to address issues related to student drop-off/ pick-up.

## 12. Servicing

### *Servicing Objectives:*

- Retain effective open channel stormwater management in order to promote natural hydrological functioning of the area, specifically stream health.
- Ensure safe, environmentally responsible and cost effective methods of sewage waste management.
- Ensure safe drinking water to all residents within the City's jurisdiction in the form of municipal servicing.

### *Servicing policies:*

#### *For all municipal services (Stormwater, Sanitary Sewer and Water)*

1. Prior to Boundary Extension within the Arden Corridor, conduct studies to ensure that the condition of servicing assets and need for new servicing commensurate with growth are understood.
2. Any private servicing infrastructures (including, but not limited to, strata developments) are required to create and submit to the City maintenance manuals for the maintenance of said servicing infrastructures.
3. Municipal service and private service intrusion into *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* shall be minimized. The location of the necessary roads and other facilities required to maintain such services shall take into consideration environmental impact.

### *Sanitary Sewer*

On lands within the study area, support the efforts of the Vancouver Island Health Authority (and the Comox Valley Regional District where septic systems are within their geographical boundaries) to:

1. Enforce regulations respecting approval, the correct operation, maintenance, and inspection of on-site sewage disposal systems; and
2. Provide ongoing public education program about the correct operation, maintenance, and inspection of on-site sewage disposal systems.

### *Potable Water*

Maintain potable groundwater by:

1. Supporting the CVRD and the Province to monitor groundwater quality and quantity;
2. Supporting education campaigns about protecting groundwater quality, water conservation for private well and municipal water users.

### *Electricity*

Work with BC Hydro to establish a road standard that accommodates underground electrical services as well as the open channel stormwater system.

*Stormwater Management*

1. Retain an open-channel stormwater drainage system comprised of watercourses, ditches, floodplains, storm ponds of varying designs (dry, wet, wetland, on-stream, off-stream) and other water quality and environmental features, some of which are privately owned while others are publically owned.
2. The stormwater management approach shall follow the follow 'hierarchy' on all sites:
  - a. Firstly, every attempt shall be made to introduce source controls, and must be demonstrated by an engineering study that such an attempt has been made;
  - b. Introducing upstream detention facilities is a second preferred option;
  - c. Enclosing stormwater in a piped, underground system should be considered only as a last resort.
3. Stormwater capacity studies must demonstrate that a site's stormwater approach will not result in added pressure on downstream stormwater infrastructure.
4. Where stormwater detention ponds are created the design of such ponds shall follow these guidelines:
  - a. Aim for a decentralized stormwater pond system of many ponds located suitably to service localized needs;
  - b. More and smaller ponds is preferred over few larger ponds, including on individual sites where such an approach is appropriate;

- c. Ponds shall be designed to be 'natural' and aesthetic and should ensure that there is adequate topsoil and planting with a variety of native aquatic and riparian species under the guidance of a landscape architect and/or Registered Professional Biologist proficient in wetland landscaping practices;
- d. Stormwater ponds and other stormwater facilities that service strata or commercial developments shall be privately owned.
5. Where the stormwater approach to a site contains practices such as bioswales, raingardens, added topsoil requirements, on private lots, a covenant may be required to be registered on title to ensure that property owners are aware of their stormwater features and how to properly maintain them. The City may consider an educational approach in some instances instead of a covenant.

*Servicing Actions:*

1. Complete area specific studies (in order of priority) on Stormwater, Sanitary Sewer and Water servicing.
2. Incorporate updated studies of Stormwater, Sanitary Sewer, Water as they are completed to ensure the Arden Corridor LAP remains current.

**13. Arden Area development checklist**

A list of questions is provided within the *Arden Corridor Local Area Plan – Reference Plan* to guide development applicants through the range of performance metrics that staff will be evaluating the development proposal on.







Map E-2

Demonstration Plan and High Level Design Principles

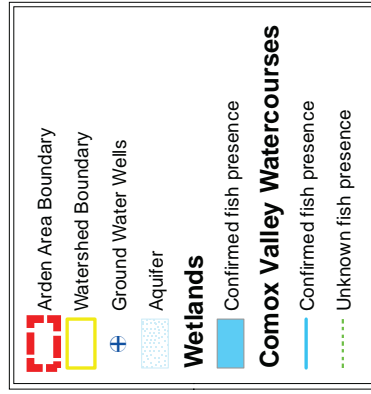


Note: Areas coloured yellow represent properties already rezoned. Some of these areas are developed.



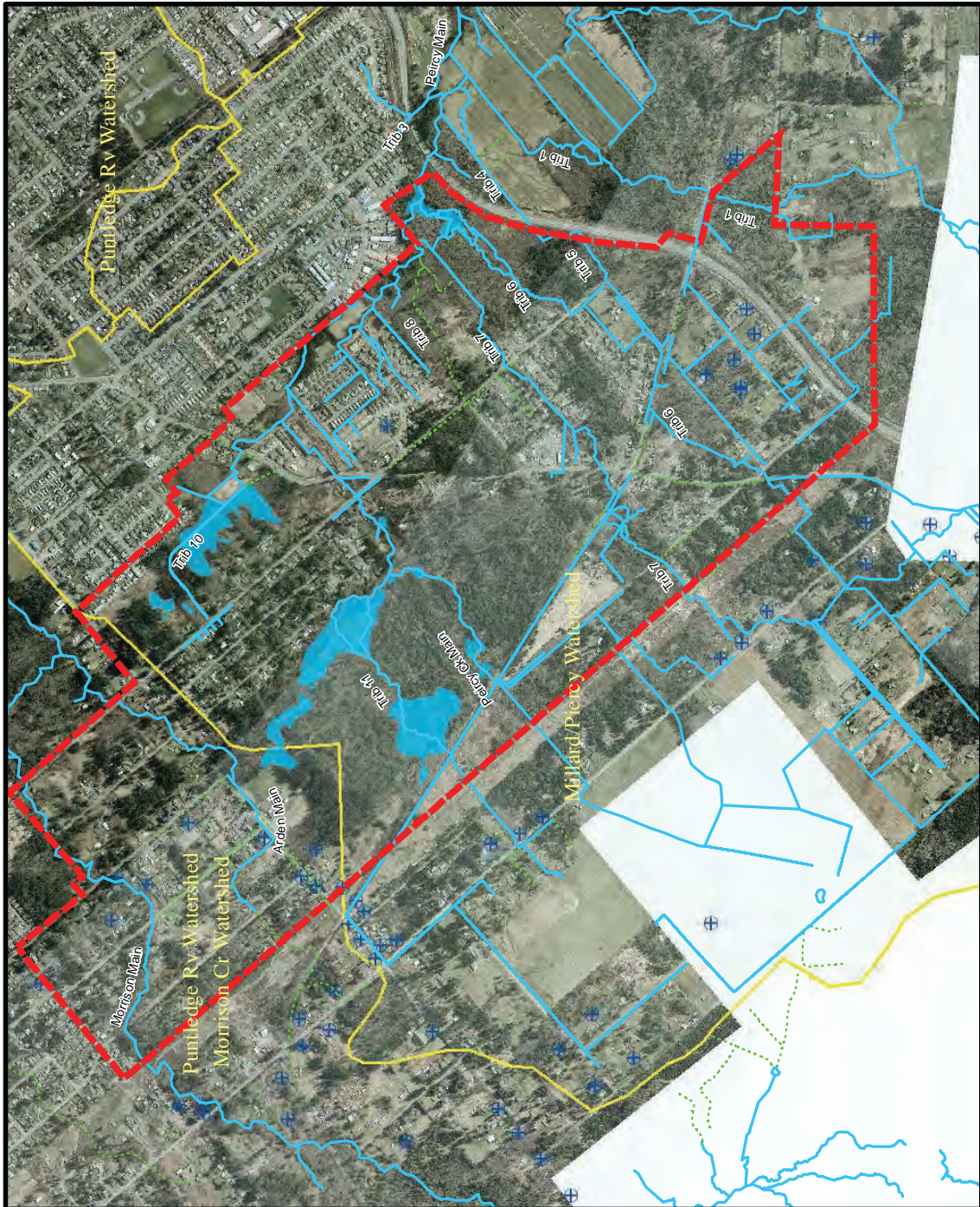
# Arden Local Area Plan Water Courses, Wells, and Aquifers

Map 3



A note on the accuracy of mapping and its intended use: In some cases information displayed on the maps is based on aerial photography and remote sensing data. Where data have not been ground truthed, these maps provide a conceptual understanding of the information presented and may require further ground truthing to determine accurate boundaries. The maps should be used as information only and not as basis for legal land survey.

Date: 12/07/2013  
 Map Base: Orthophoto 10cm; Project Watershed

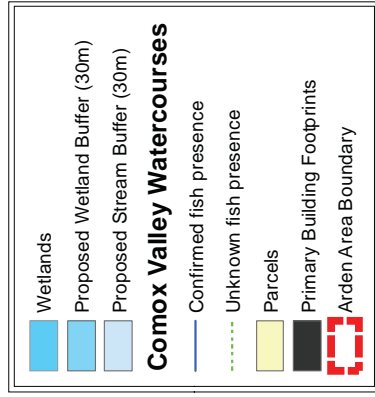


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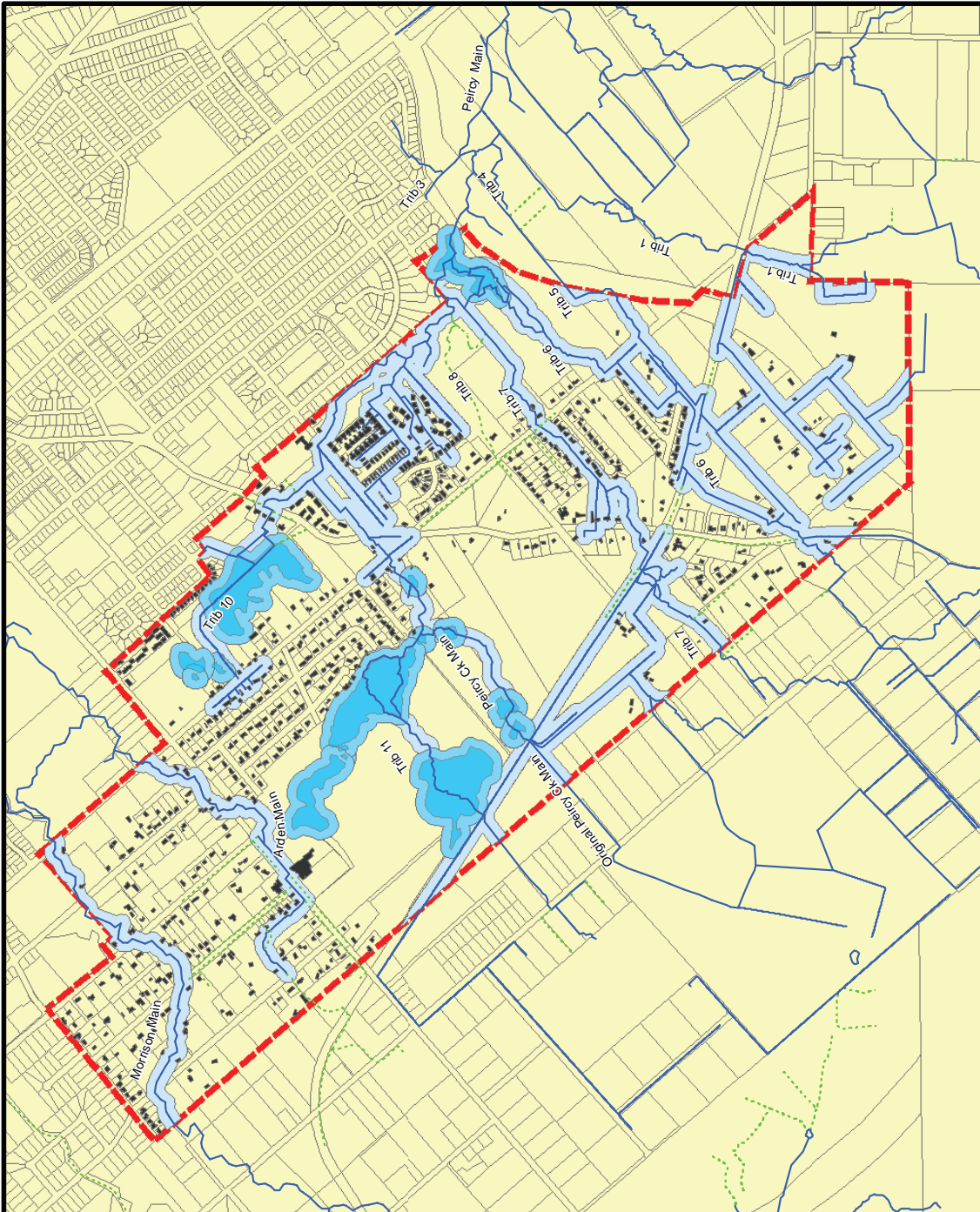
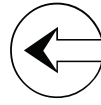
# Arden Local Area Plan Proposed 30m Riparian Buffer (30 m each side)

Map 4



A note on the accuracy of mapping and its intended use: In some cases information displayed on the maps is based on aerial photography and remote sensing data. Where data have not been ground truthed, these maps provide a conceptual understanding of the information presented and may require further ground truthing to determine accurate boundaries. The maps should be used as information only and not as basis for legal land survey.

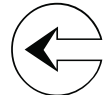
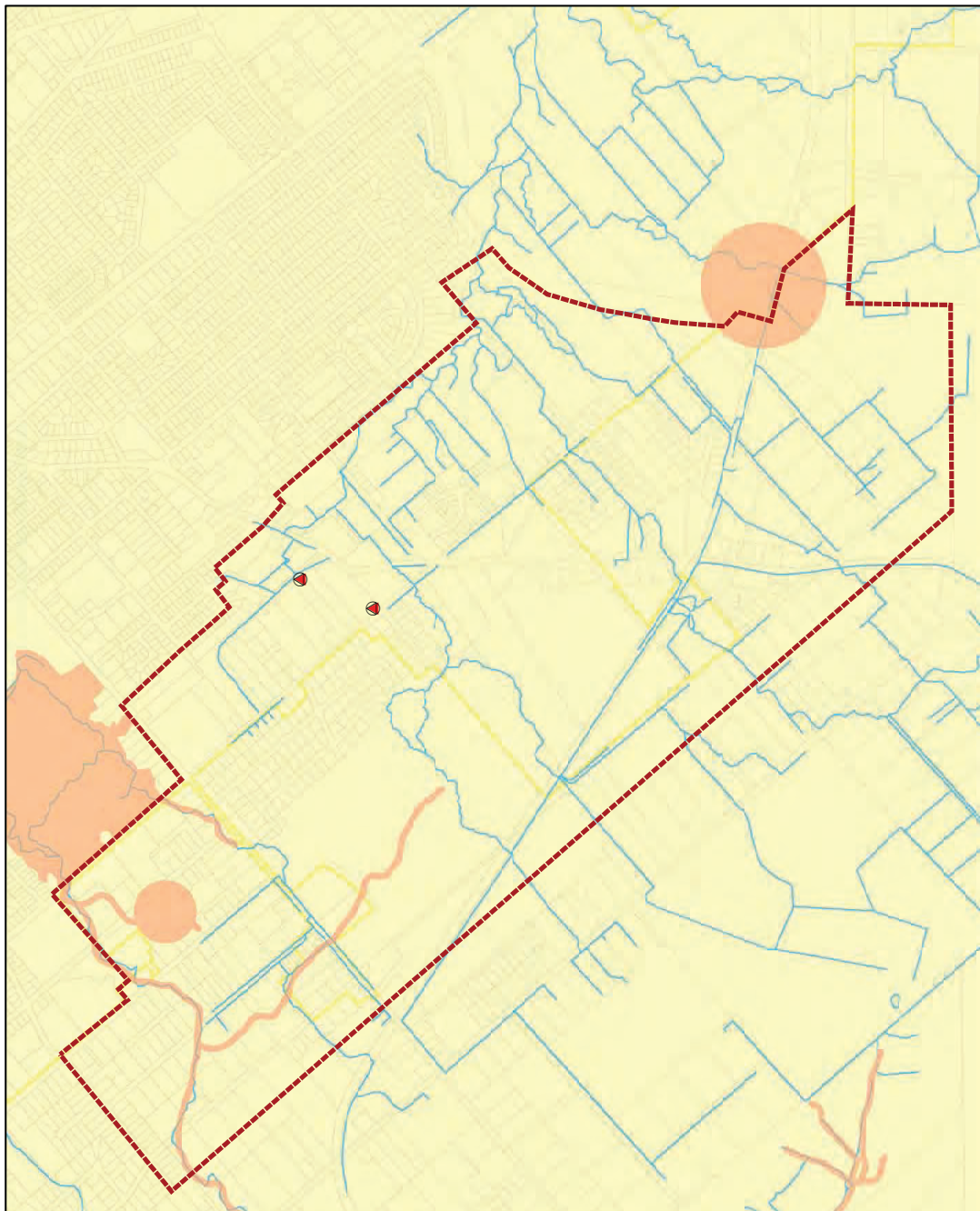
Date: 12/07/2013  
 Map Base: CVRD and City of Courtenay Parcels, Project Watershed



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# Arden Local Area Plan Rare Species

Map 5

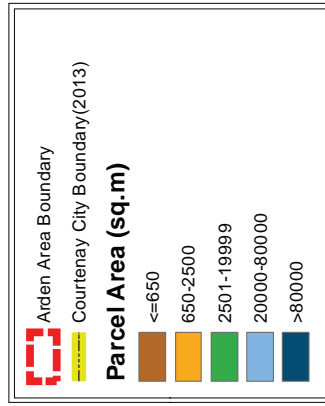


Date: 23/08/2013  
Map Base: CVRD and City of Courtenay Parcels  
330 165 0 330 M

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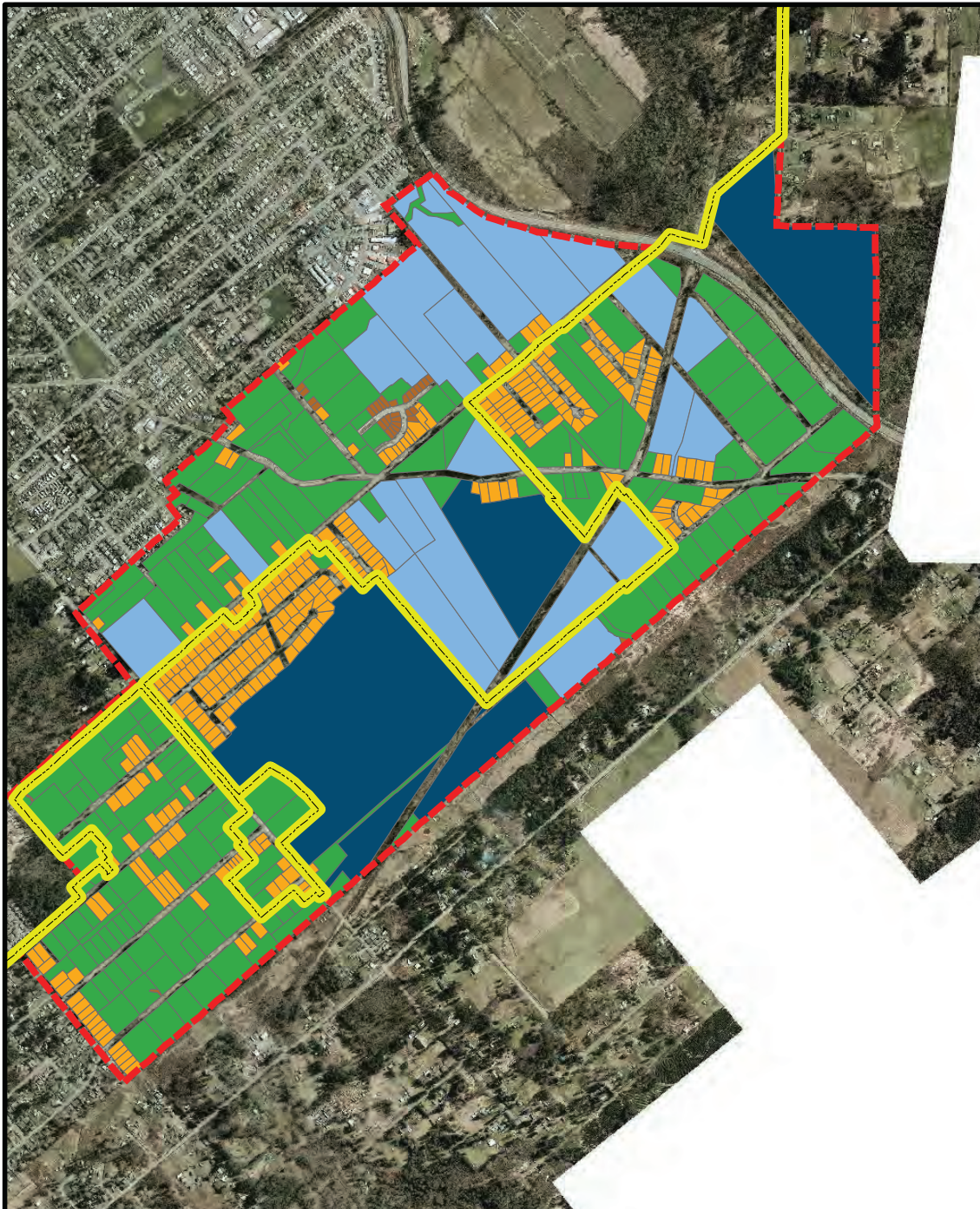
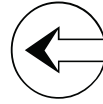
# ArdenLocal Area Plan Parcels by Size



Map 6

A note on the accuracy of mapping and its intended use: In some cases information displayed on the maps is based on aerial photography and remote sensing data. Where data have not been ground truthed, these maps provide a conceptual understanding of the information presented and may require further ground truthing to determine accurate boundaries. The maps should be used as information only and not as basis for legal land survey.

Date: 12/07/2013  
 Map Base: Orthophoto 10cm; City of Courtenay, CVRD



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# Arden Local Area Plan Community and Neighbourhood Parks Level of Service

Map 7

**Legend**

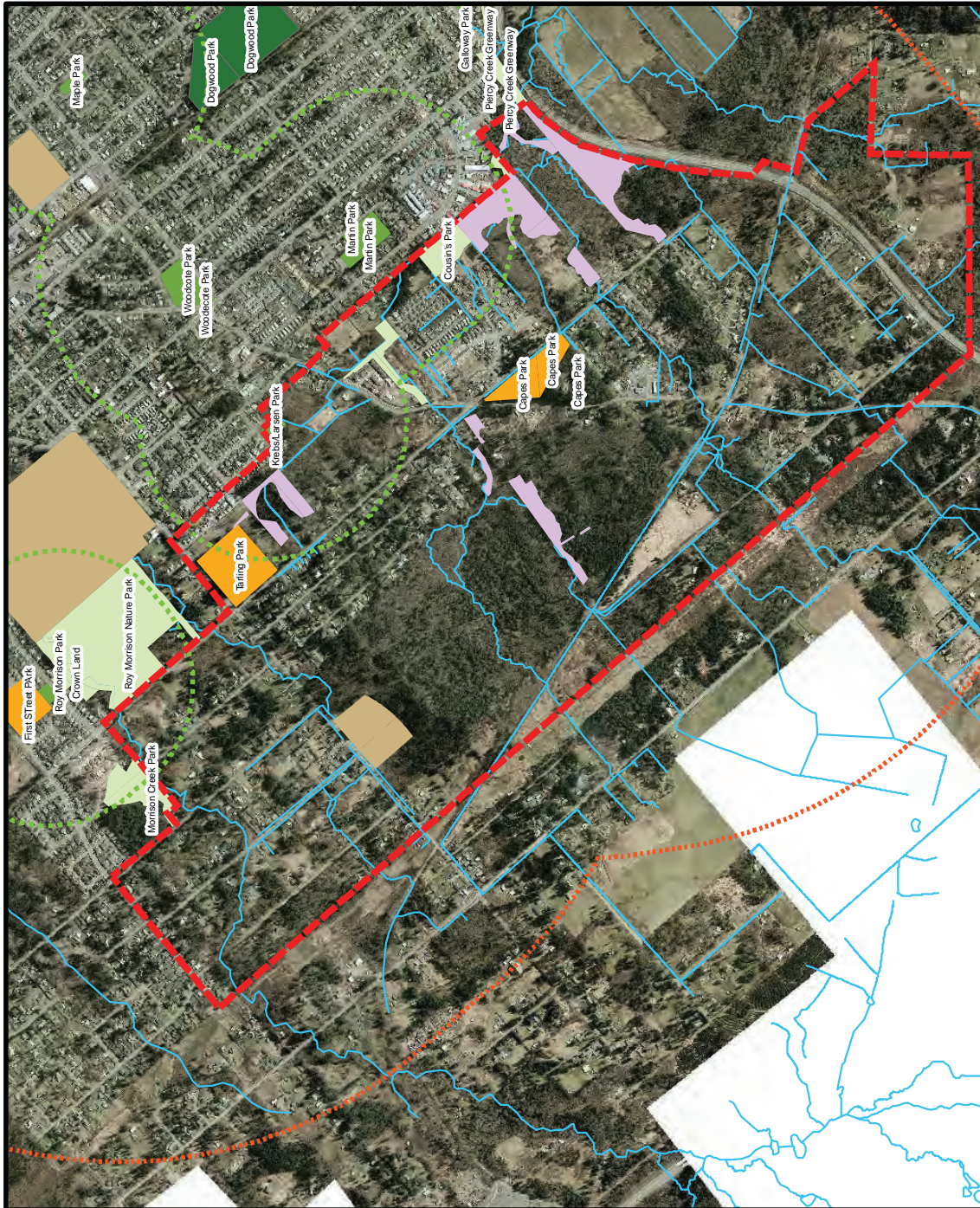
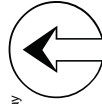
- Aden Area Boundary
- Neighbourhood Park Service Distance: 400m
- Community Park Service Distance: 1500m

**Parks Classification**

- Community Park
- Future Greenspace
- Neighbourhood Park
- Special Use Greenway
- Special Use Park
- School

A note on the accuracy of mapping and its intended use: In some cases information displayed on the maps is based on aerial photography and remote sensing data. Where data have not been ground truthed, these maps provide a conceptual understanding of the information presented and may require further ground truthing to determine accurate boundaries. The maps should be used as information only and not as basis for legal land survey.

Date: 12/07/2013  
Map Base: Orthophoto 10cm; City of Courtenay



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Map E-8

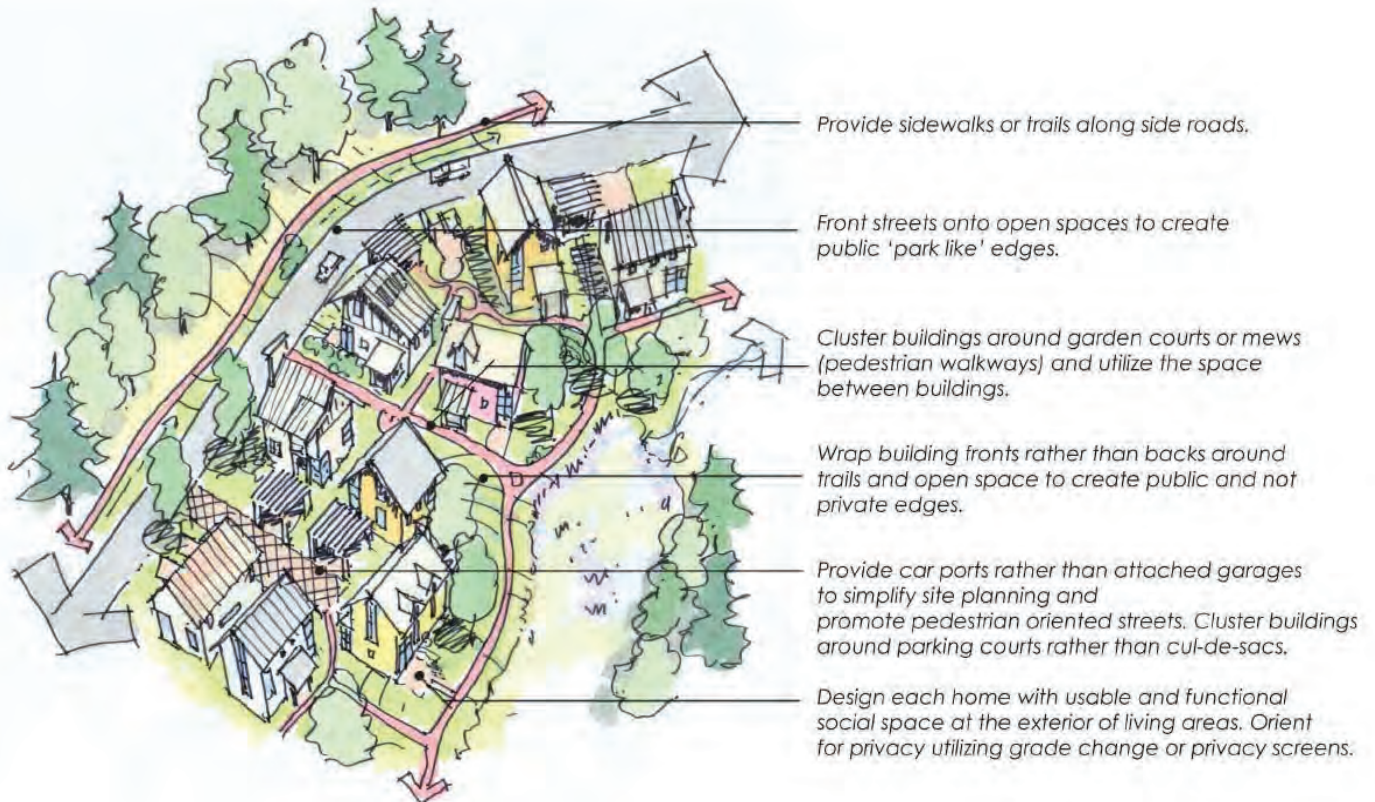
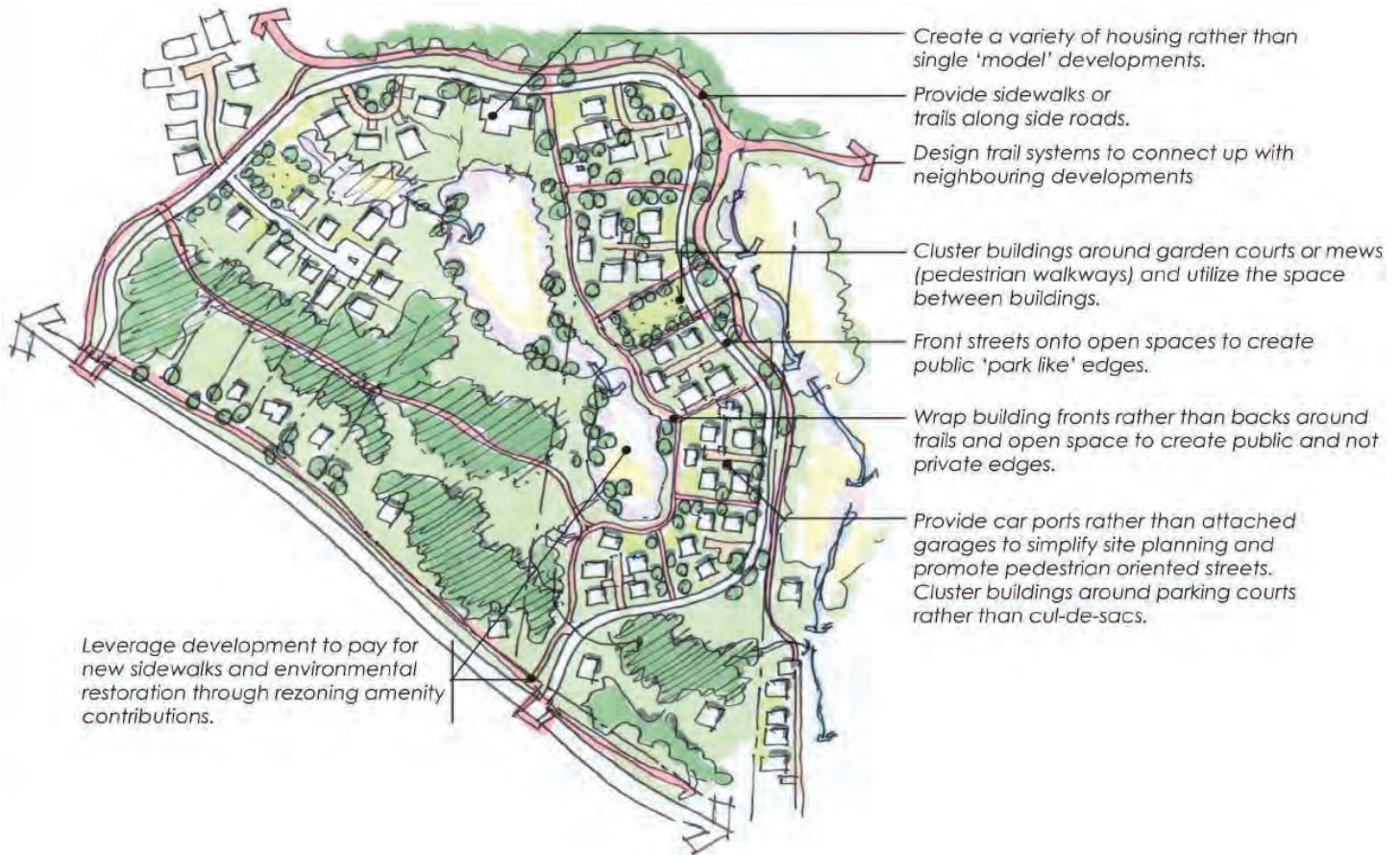
Conceptual Land Use Plan for the Arden Corridor





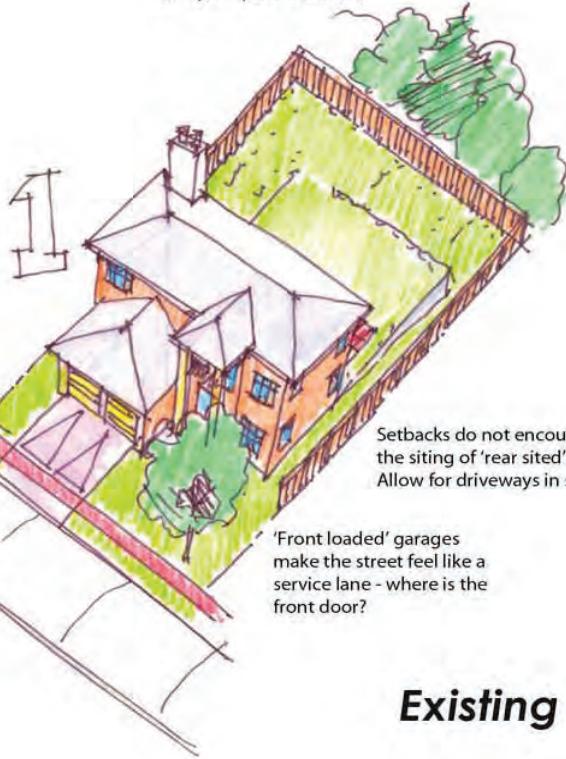
## Appendix B – Arden Corridor LAP Illustrations

The illustrations on the following pages provide examples of the types of layout and building designs that are desired in the Arden Corridor.





Rear yards do not provide eyes on the park (or open space corridors)



Setbacks do not encourage the siting of 'rear sited' garages. Allow for driveways in setbacks

'Front loaded' garages make the street feel like a service lane - where is the front door?

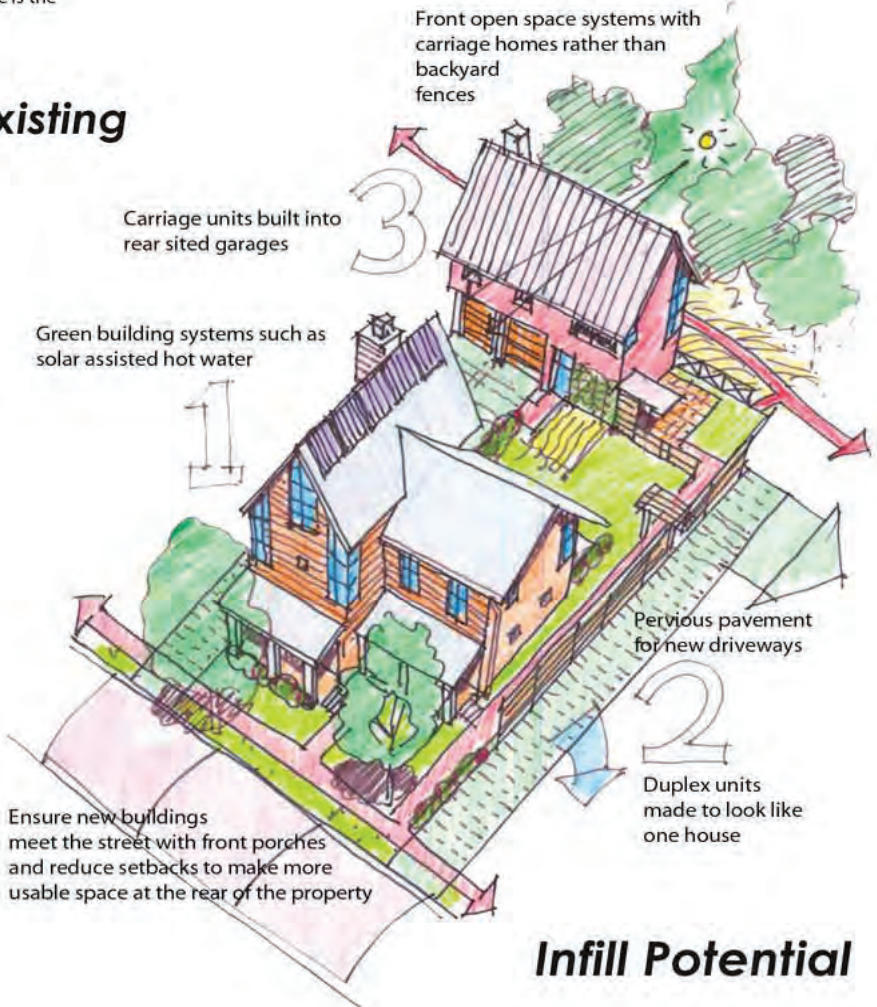
### Existing

*Infill development is permitted in a large part of the study area (subject to public process). Infill development generally occurs at an incremental pace, resulting in slow changes to the neighbourhood. Where infill is proposed, it must be consistent with the direction of this Plan. These illustrations shows examples of the types of elements that can be modified on a property to help achieve the Vision of the Plan.*

Front open space systems with carriage homes rather than backyard fences

Carriage units built into rear sited garages

Green building systems such as solar assisted hot water



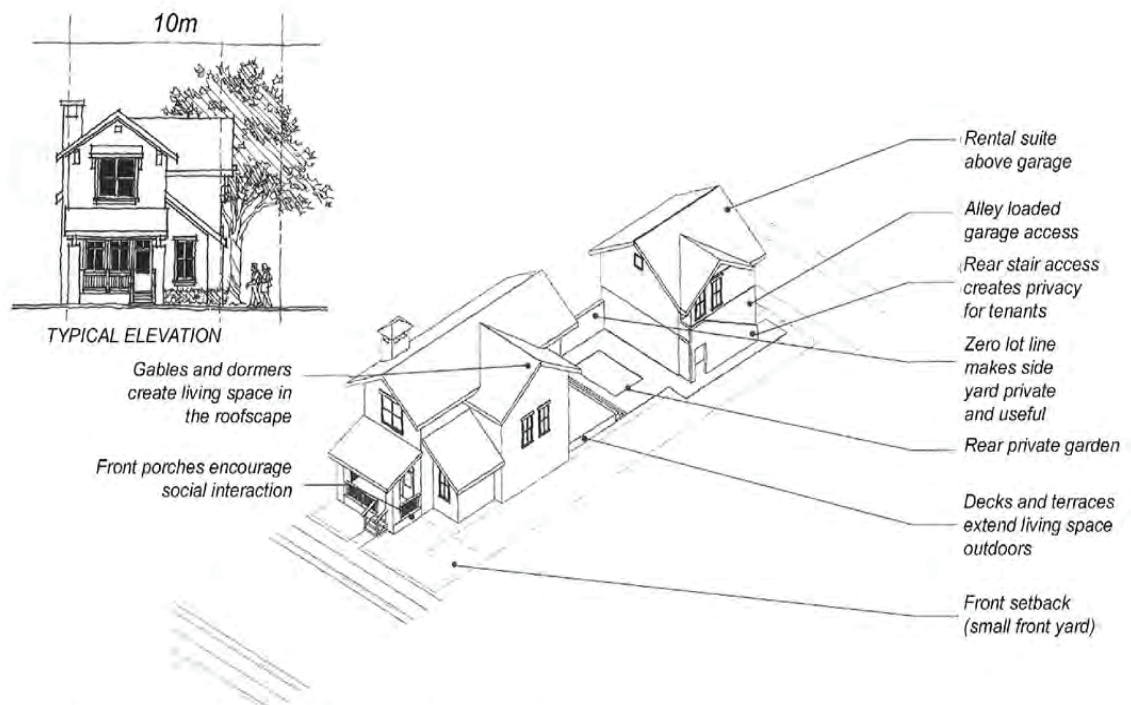
Pervious pavement for new driveways

Duplex units made to look like one house

Ensure new buildings meet the street with front porches and reduce setbacks to make more usable space at the rear of the property

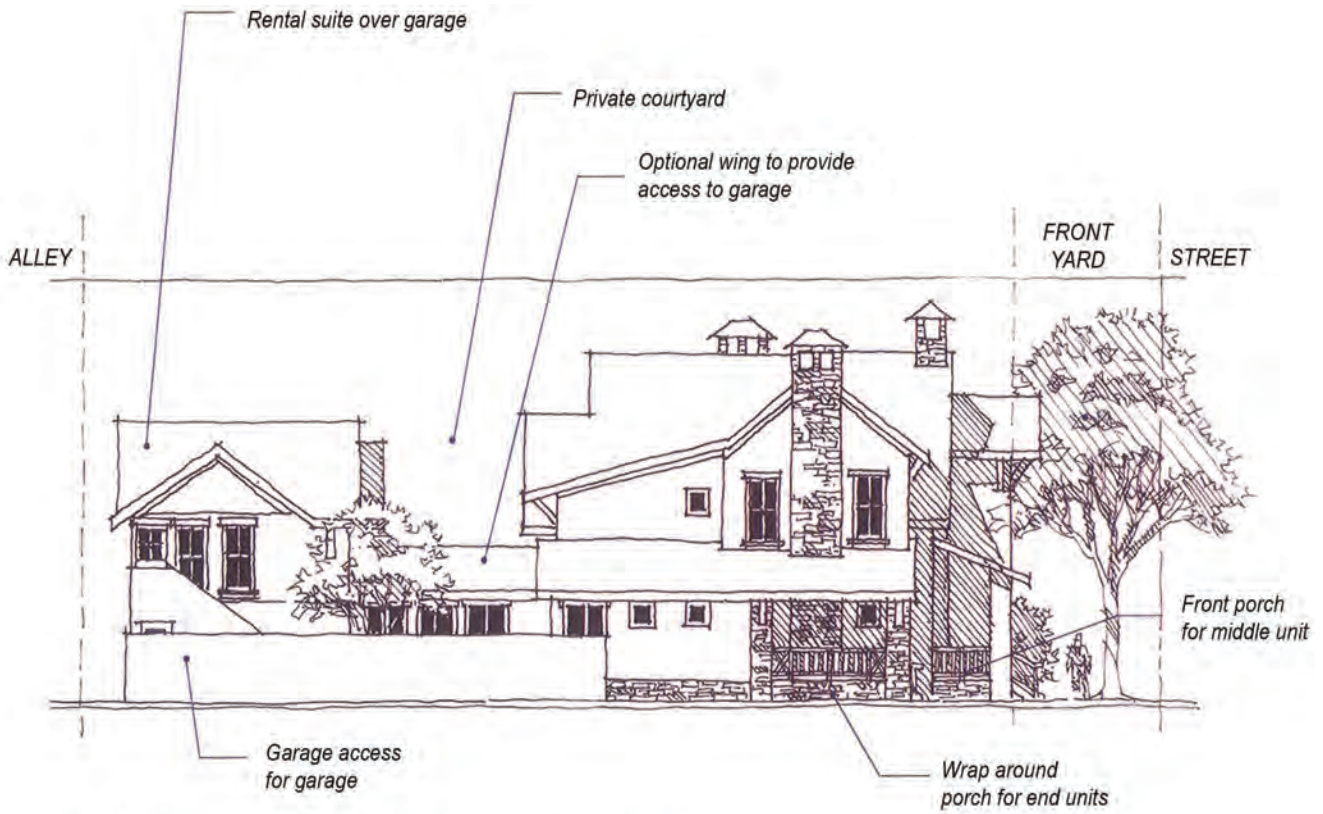
### Infill Potential

These images provide examples of building design that can help to achieve a suitable character for the neighbourhood.



Typical Traditional Neighbourhood Small Lot Housing





**TYPICAL TARDINESS NEIGHBOURHOOD HOME - SIDE ELEVATION**

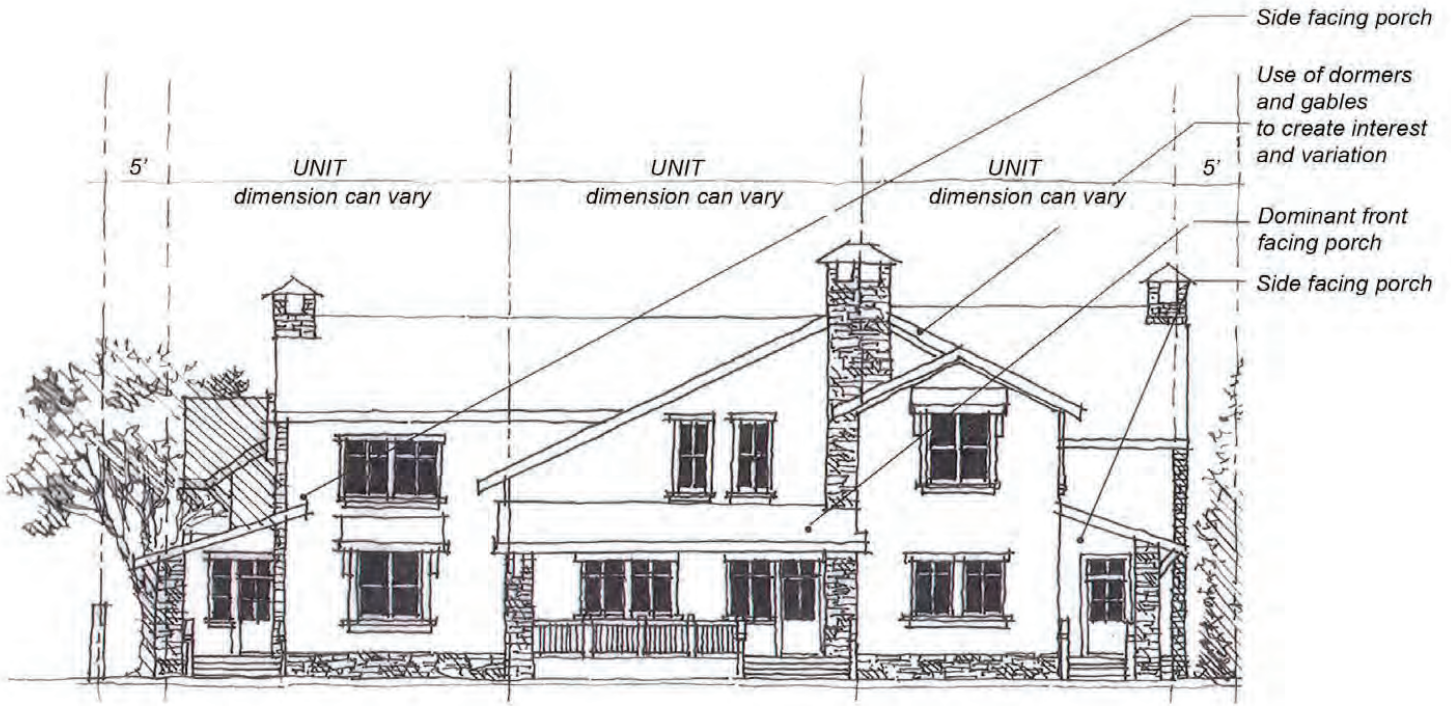
12 units per acre in triplex configuration  
Requires 90' frontage x 120' depth lot dimensions  
Blends into single family neighbourhoods



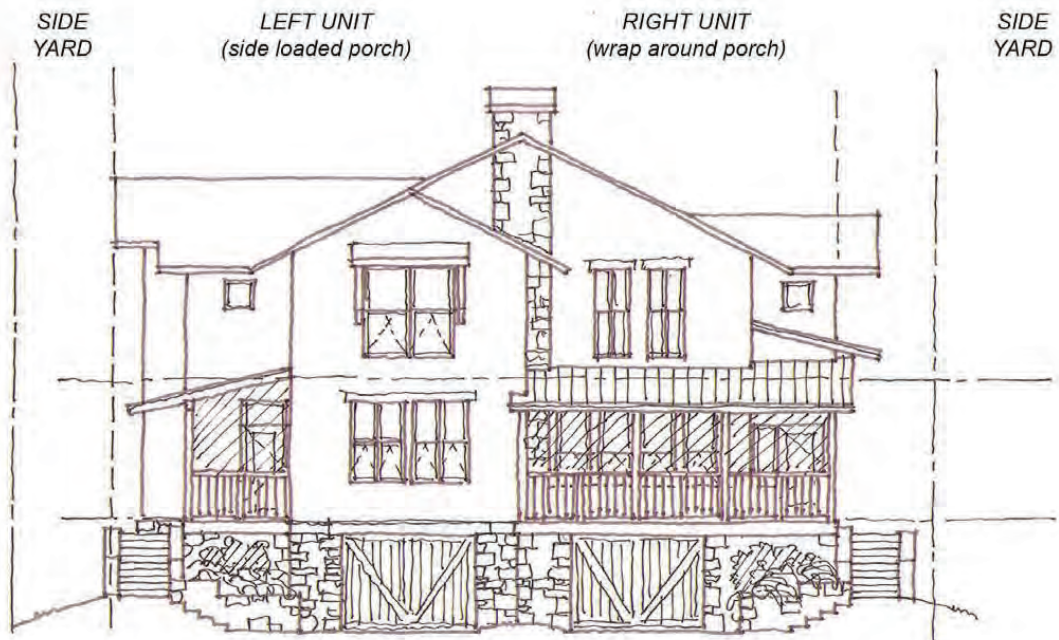
**TYPICAL TRADITIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD HOME - TYPICAL FORM BASED ZONING DIAGRAM**

12 units per acre in triplex configuration  
Requires 70' frontage x 100' depth lot dimensions  
Blends into single family neighbourhoods





**TYPICAL TRADITIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD HOME - FRONT ELEVATION**  
 12 units per acre in triplex configuration  
 Blends into single family neighbourhoods



**TYPICAL TRADITIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD HOME - FRONT ELEVATION - INFILL DUPLEX**  
 12 units per acre in duplex configuration  
 Requires 70' frontage x 100' depth lot dimensions  
 Blends into single family neighbourhoods  
 Can be built without alley access





*These images show a more traditional form of density in the form of ground oriented row houses which are generally designed as a 'repeating pattern' of homes oriented in the same direction. The multiplexes on the previous pages may employ more creative designs to avoid the 'repetitious' look.*

**6M WIDE ROWNHOMES**  
*Typical Elevation/ Volumetric*



**Low Rise Multi Family Housing Options**





# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX 1: IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

### SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

This section identifies implementation actions that the City will have to undertake to assist in achieving the vision, goals, and a wide range of other OCP policies following or in coordination with the priority actions identified in Table D-7 Implementation Priorities. Figure D-1 in the body of the plan illustrates how the OCP will be integrated into City of Courtenay strategic and financial planning, and corporate culture. It identifies that from the numerous policies and actions contained within the OCP, Council sets strategic priorities for their term to guide department work plans, the five year Financial Plan, and annual budgets. The intent of this table is to guide the City in initiating implementation actions when resources such as staffing or funding are adequately allocated in accordance with the municipal government corporate decision making cycle. Identified actions correspond to the 'work plan' policies identified throughout the OCP. They are organized by City department assigned to lead the action item, in order to represent how OCP implementation will affect the various municipal services. Most City services are coordinated through a number of departments, therefore regardless of the department leading the action, they will work closely with relevant departments. For example, few of the OCP work plan action items are assigned to Financial Services directly, but Financial Services must be involved in all City decisions that have budget implications. As departmental responsibilities may change over time, this table is only meant to serve as a guide.

#### The City of Courtenay departments are as follows:

- Development Services
- Engineering Services
- Public Works Services
- Corporate Services
- Financial Services
- Recreation, Culture, and Community Services
- Interdepartmental committees may also be used when actions require leadership across a variety of departments

Table APX-1 Suggested Implementation Actions

ACTIONS		OCP POLICY REFERENCE	LEAD CITY DEPARTMENTS
1	Complete local area plan in Lake Trail Neighbourhood Centre.	Part B – LU 9c	Development Services
2	Complete local area plan in McPhee Neighbourhood Corridor.	Part B – LU 9d	Development Services
3	Explore creating a municipal or regional housing corporation or other type of organization that would lead development and operations of future non- or below-market housing.	Part C – AH 20	Development Services
4	Establish and/or promote incentive programs to support decarbonizing and energy efficiency in existing buildings.	Part C – BL 1	Development Services, Financial Services, Corporate Services
5	Develop and adopt a tiered below-market housing incentive program.	Part C – AH 15	Development Services
6	Explore DPAs for wildfire hazard protection.	Part C – BL 9	Development Services
7	Consider establishing a pre-approved form and character DPA framework.	Part C – BL 10	Development Services

ACTIONS		OCP POLICY REFERENCE	LEAD CITY DEPARTMENTS
8	Initiate a process to develop Indigenous design guidelines.	Part C – BL 12	Development Services
9	Develop a concept plan for the suitable location of a “food precinct” within Courtenay.	Part C – FS 5	Development Services
10	Explore enforcement tools to protect water quality, such as Erosion and Sediment control bylaw	Part C – NE 18	Development Services, Public Works Services
11	Explore and consider incentives to encourage food land preservation and production.	Part C – FS 8 and 21	Development Services, Financial Services
12	Establish and promote distinctive character designations for 4th, 5th and 6th Streets.	Part B – Downtown Area Specific Policies	Development Services, Public Works Services
13	Consider pursuing formal heritage conservation area for 40 houses neighbourhood.	Part B – 40 Houses Neighbourhood Specific Policies	Development Services, Corporate Services
14	Develop a local area plan of the Air Park and ancillary City-owned lands	Part B – Air Park Precinct Specific Policies	Development Services, Recreation, Culture, and Community Services
15	Implement the Urban Forest Strategy plan, manage, protect, grow and partner actions.	Part C – NE 24	Development Services, Public Works Services, Corporate Services (enforcement)
16	Explore predetermining setbacks on streams for areas where 30m setback cannot be achieved.	Part C – NE 30	Development Services
17	Explore development incentives to protect more than minimum environmental standards.	Part C – NE 35	Development Services
18	Establish and/or promote incentive programs to support water efficiency in existing buildings.	Part C – BL 2	Development Services, Public Works Services, Financial Services, Corporate Services
19	Establish and/or promote incentive programs to install EV charging stations in existing developments.	Part C – ST 15	Development and Financial Services
20	Review current practice of on-street parking space to identify opportunities for active transportation, <i>green infrastructure</i> , and place-making features. Include on-street parking management tools such as paid parking and parking permits as part of the review. Review in coordination with <i>Zoning Bylaw</i> off-street parking standards.	Part C – ST 11	Development Services, Engineering Services, Public Works Services
21	Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan and the <i>Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw</i> to include a modified green and active street standard to support multiple goals within the road right of way on select streets.	Part C – PR ST 12, PR 21, PR 22	Development Services; Recreation, Culture and Community Services, Public Works Services, Engineering Services
22	Participate in a regional food security plan.	Part C – FS 24	Development Services and Recreation, Culture and Community Services
23	Conduct a risk and vulnerability analysis of municipally owned and operated infrastructure at the asset class and system level to determine the climate change impact vulnerability of municipal infrastructure and identify priority areas of adaptation intervention.	Part C – MI 1 a-g	Engineering, Public Works and Recreation, Culture, and Community Services

ACTIONS		OCP POLICY REFERENCE	LEAD CITY DEPARTMENTS
24	Investigate infrastructure systems and technologies to improve energy efficiency and resource reuse.	Part C – MI I 11	Engineering and Public Works Services
25	Develop a green shores shoreline policy for all shorelines, including capital works.	Part C – NE 10	Engineering Services
26	Develop a concept plan for the downtown Courtenay Market Street vision as described in the Downtown Playbook (2016).	Part C – FS 4	Engineering and Public Works Services
27	Ensure rainwater management approaches support watershed health through a variety of tools.	Part C – MI 16 a-i	Engineering Services, Public Works Services, Development Services
28	Create an EV charging plan in partnership with regional players	Part C – ST 14	Public Works and Engineering Services
29	Implement initiatives and programs in the City's Water Smart Action Plan.	Part C – MI 19	Public Works Services
30	Conduct an audit of public spaces, transportation systems and gathering places to evaluate accessibility.	Part C – SI 5	Public Works Services
31	Develop a strategy to address community need for public washrooms, including hand washing stations and access to secure potable water.	Part C – SI 17	Public Works Services, Recreation, Culture and Community Services
32	Conduct a portfolio-wide energy audit and develop a retrofitting plan for all municipally-owned buildings in alignment with asset management and financial plans.	Part C – BL 17	Public Works Services, Engineering Services
33	Advance the short- and medium-term actions identified in the Transportation Master Plan and Cycling Network Plan with high priority allocated to actions that promote walking, cycling, transit, shared use and accessibility.	Part C – ST 6 a-i	Public Works Services, Engineering Services
34	Develop or update municipal master transportation or mobility plans to align with the OCP.	Part C – ST 8 a-i	Public Works Services, Engineering Services
35	Demonstrate low carbon transportation leadership on public properties and with the municipal fleet.	Part C – ST 27 a-d	Public Works, Financial Services
36	Develop specifications and guidelines to guide the timing and construction standards for lands dedicated as park or park asset renewal or <i>redevelopment</i> initiatives.	Part C – PR 9	Public Works Services, Development Services and Recreation, Culture and Community Services
37	Explore expanding user fees and charges approach to rain and storm water infrastructure.	Part C – MI 13	Financial Services, Engineering Services
38	Create a Courtenay Cultural Plan, including consideration of a dedicated community arts and culture space.	Part C – ACH 6, 11, 25	Recreation, Culture and Community Services
39	Update Parks and Rec Plan to prioritize parkland supply around growth centres, and secure public access to prominent waterfront lands.	Part C – PR 4, 5, 14, 15	Recreation, Culture and Community Services
40	Establish volunteer programs that promote community-based stewardship of parks and natural areas and connect residents to programs and services.	Part C – SI 22, 23	Recreation, Culture and Community Services



ACTIONS		OCP POLICY REFERENCE	KEY PLAYERS
41	Regularly review fee structures to promote affordable access to recreational services.	Part C – PR 16	Recreation, Culture and Community Services
42	Explore opportunities for mobile and 'pop-up' recreational programming.	Part C – PR 17	Recreation, Culture and Community Services
43	Develop a Public Art Policy/Guidelines	Part C – ACH 2	Recreation, Culture and Community Services
44	Conduct an audit to identify oppressive symbols, and initiate a community engagement process as required.	Part C – ACH 21	Recreation, Culture and Community Services
45	Develop a program for community gardens or other small-scale food production across the City.	Part C – FS 11 and 12	Recreation, Culture, Community Services and Public Works Services
46	Develop a parkland acquisition strategy, including augmenting the Parkland Acquisition Reserve.	Part C – PR 7 a-e, PR 11	Recreation, Culture and Community Services, and Public Works Services
47	Review opportunity to create a Local Conservation Fund.	Part C – NE 6	Recreation, Culture, and Community Services, Financial Services
48	Work regionally to identify sufficient locations for emergency shelters.	Part C – SI 26	Recreation, Culture and Community Services
49	Provide reconciliation educational opportunities for general public	Part A – Reconciliation	Interdepartmental committee
50	Explore options to ensure <i>equity-priority groups</i> participate in key engagement and decision-making processes.	Part A – Community Participation	Interdepartmental committee
51	Develop a strategy to increase bike parking throughout Courtenay.	Part C – ST 13	Interdepartmental committee, Engineering Services
52	Create a Biodiversity and <i>Green Infrastructure</i> Network Strategy.	Part C – NE 9 a-g	Interdepartmental committee
53	Regularly review the DCC bylaw to reflect costs of growth-related infrastructure.	Part C – MI 14	Interdepartmental Committee
54	Conduct regular reviews of City bylaws to ensure they reflect best management practices with respect to protection of the natural environment.	Part C – NE 38	Interdepartmental committee
55	Work towards the vision of the Downtown Commons and Mews public plaza.	Part B – Downtown Area Specific Policies No. 8; Part C – ACH 3	Interdepartmental committee
56	Undertake a city-wide equity analysis; identify social inequities and barriers to access in municipal service delivery; and develop a strategy to inform decision-making processes related to planning and service allocation in the community.	Part C – SI 1, 2 and 3	Interdepartmental committee

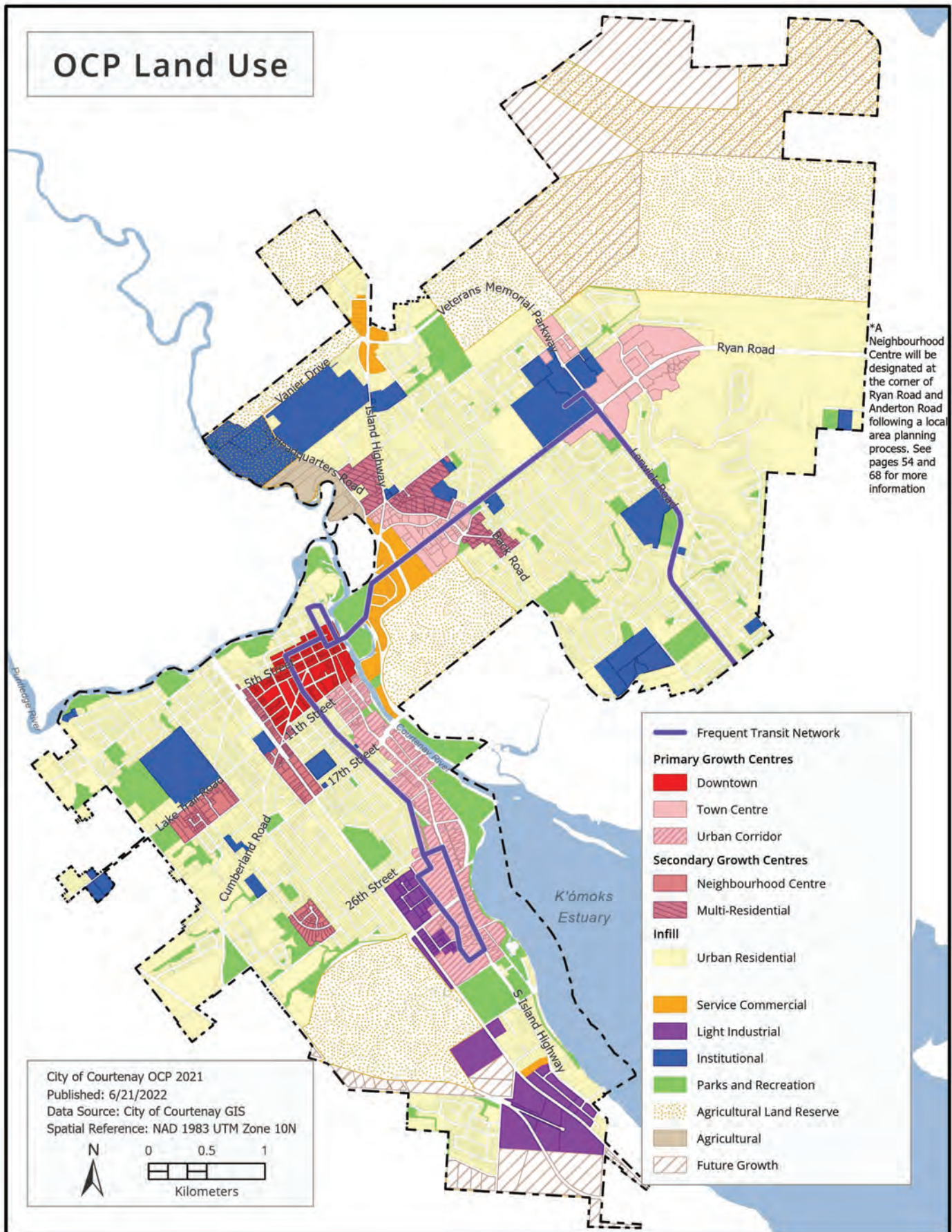




# APPENDIX 2 – MAPS

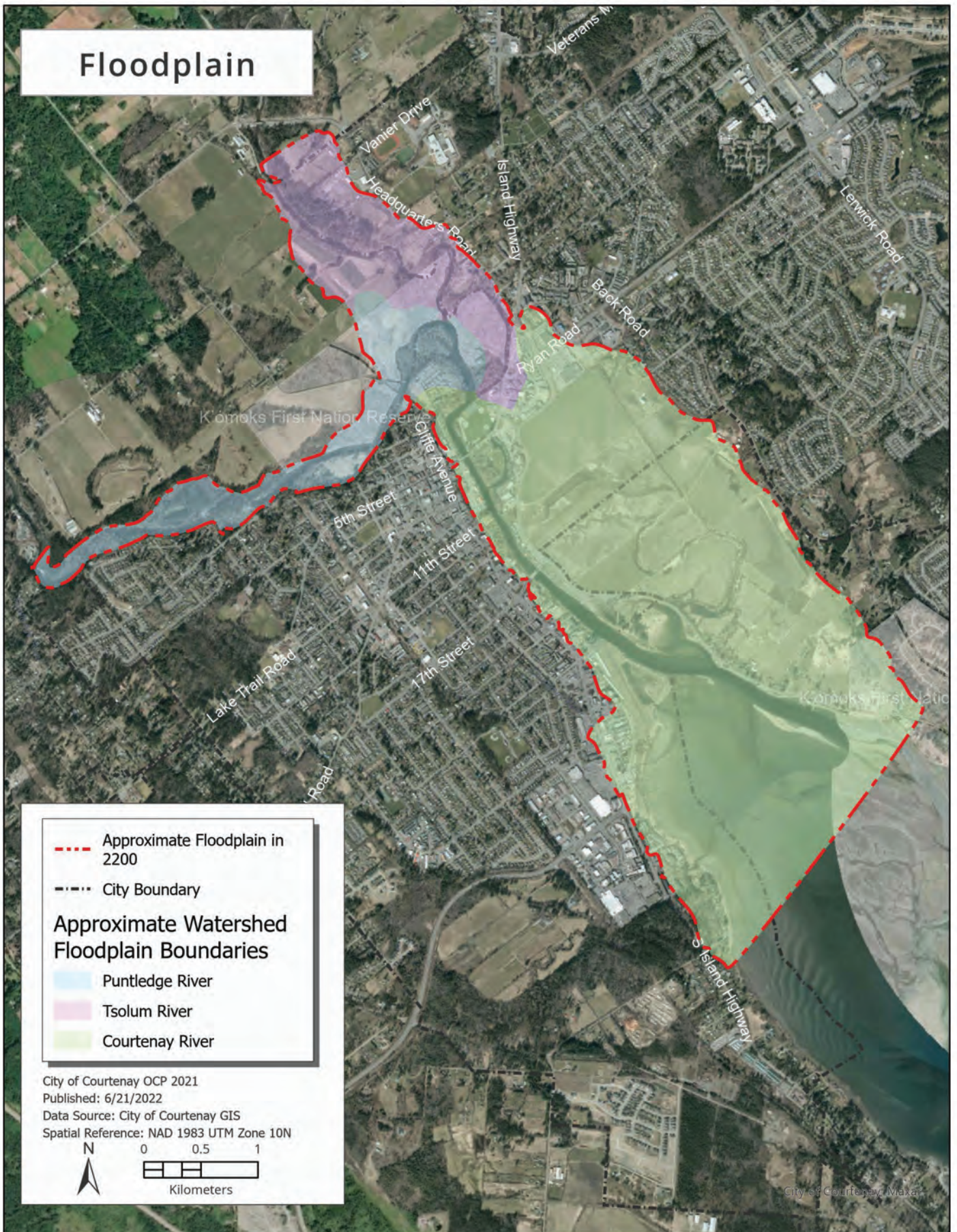
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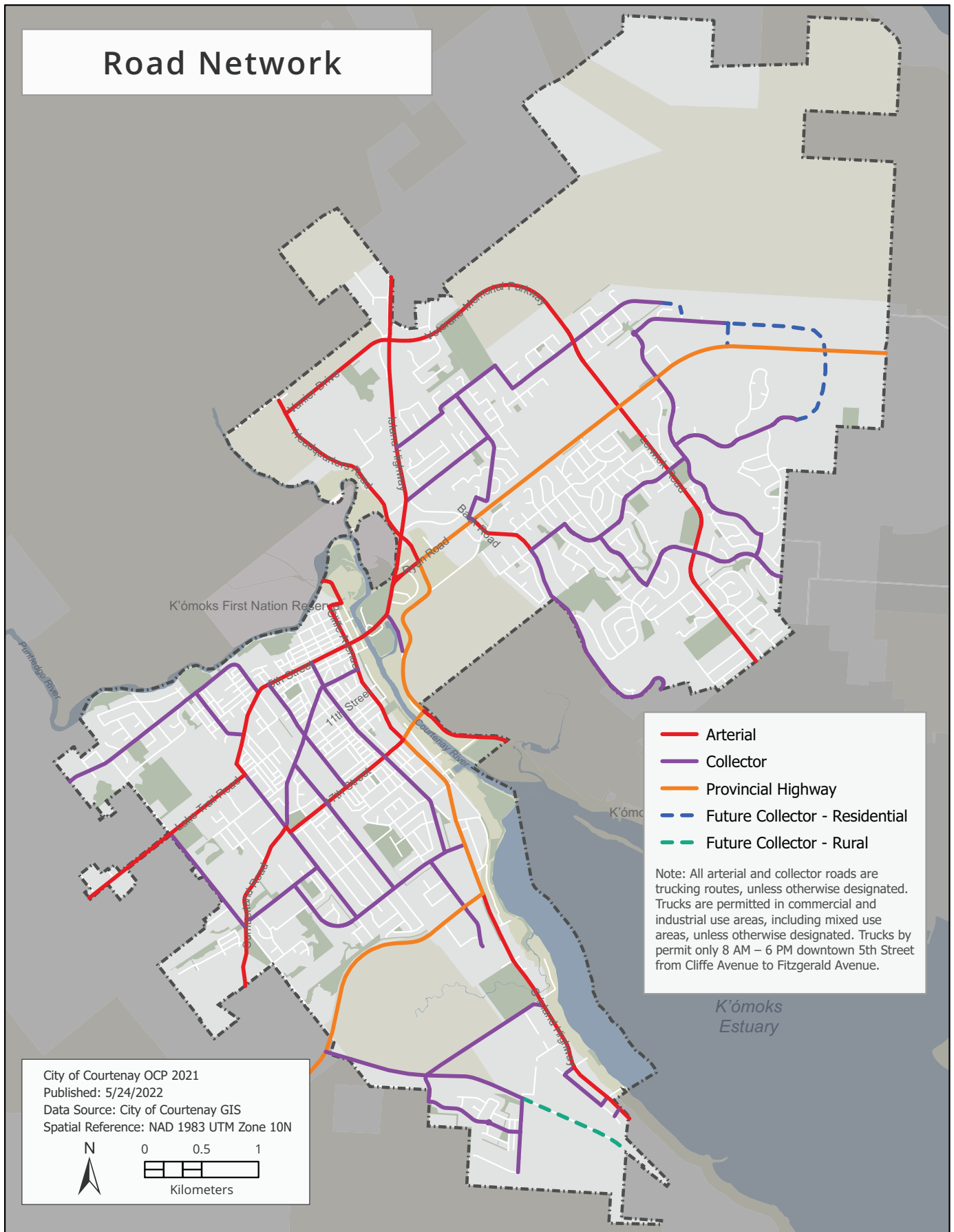
Map APX-1 Land Use Designations



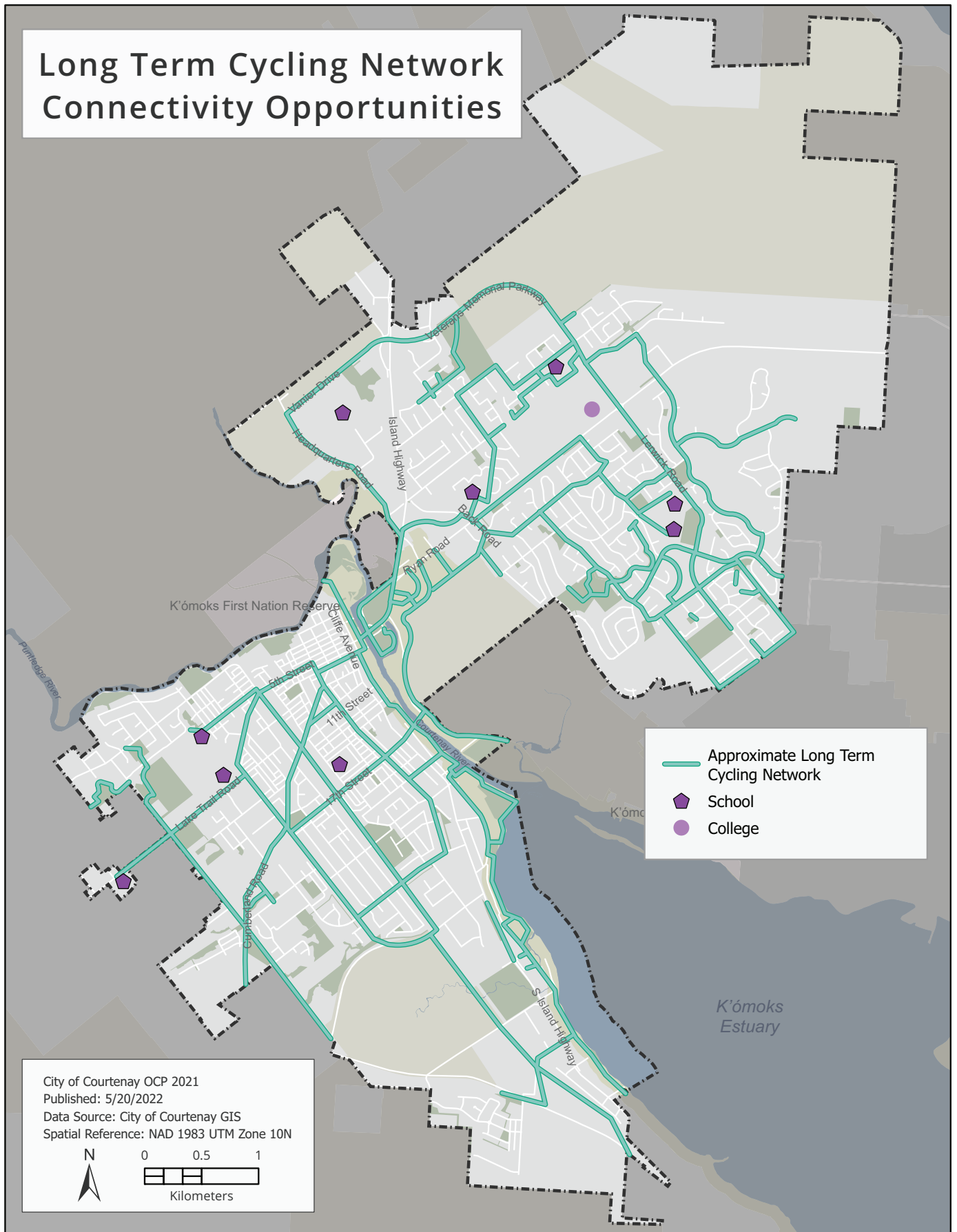


Map APX-2 Floodplain



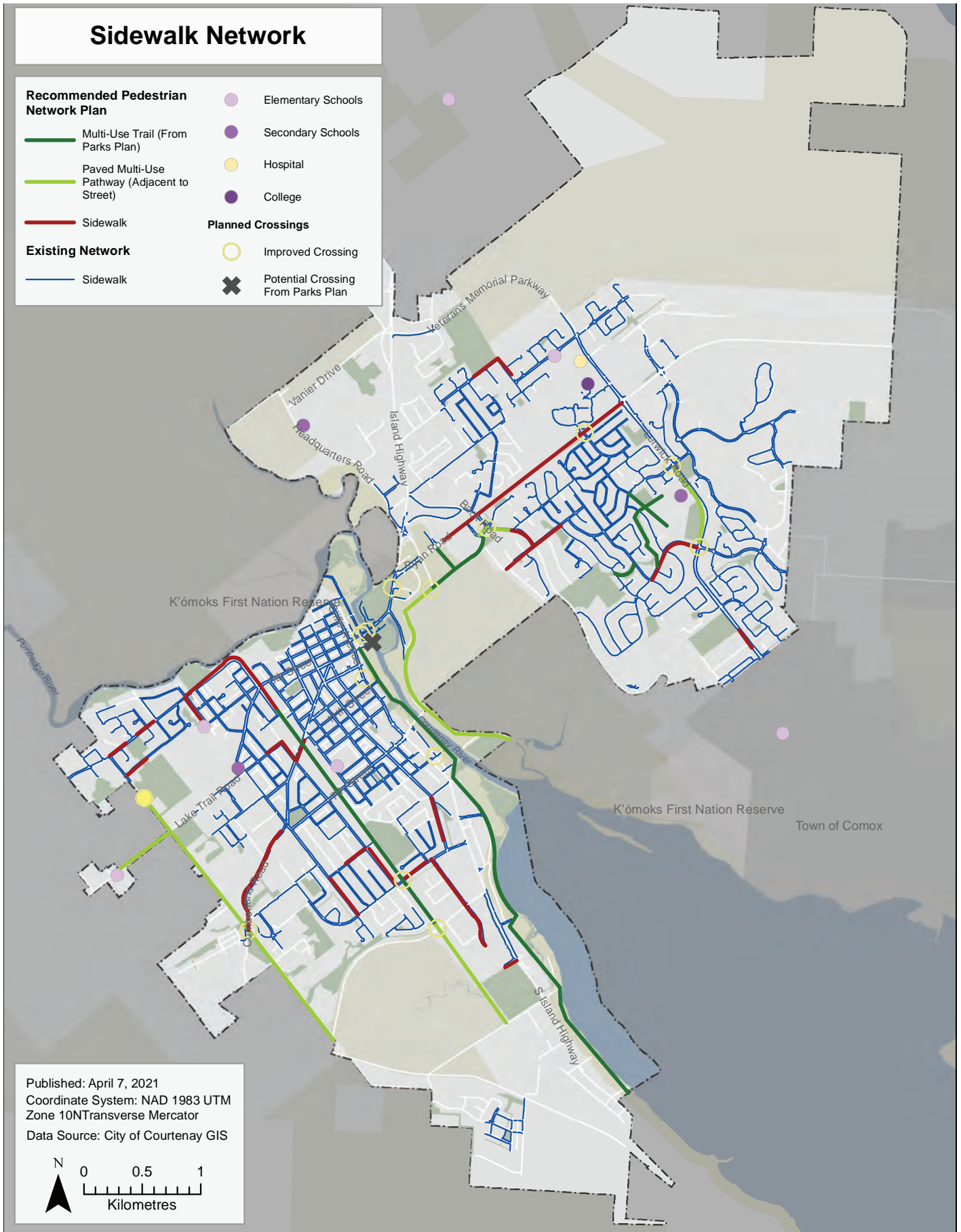


Map APX-3 Road Network



Map APX-4 Long Term Cycling Network Connectivity Opportunities

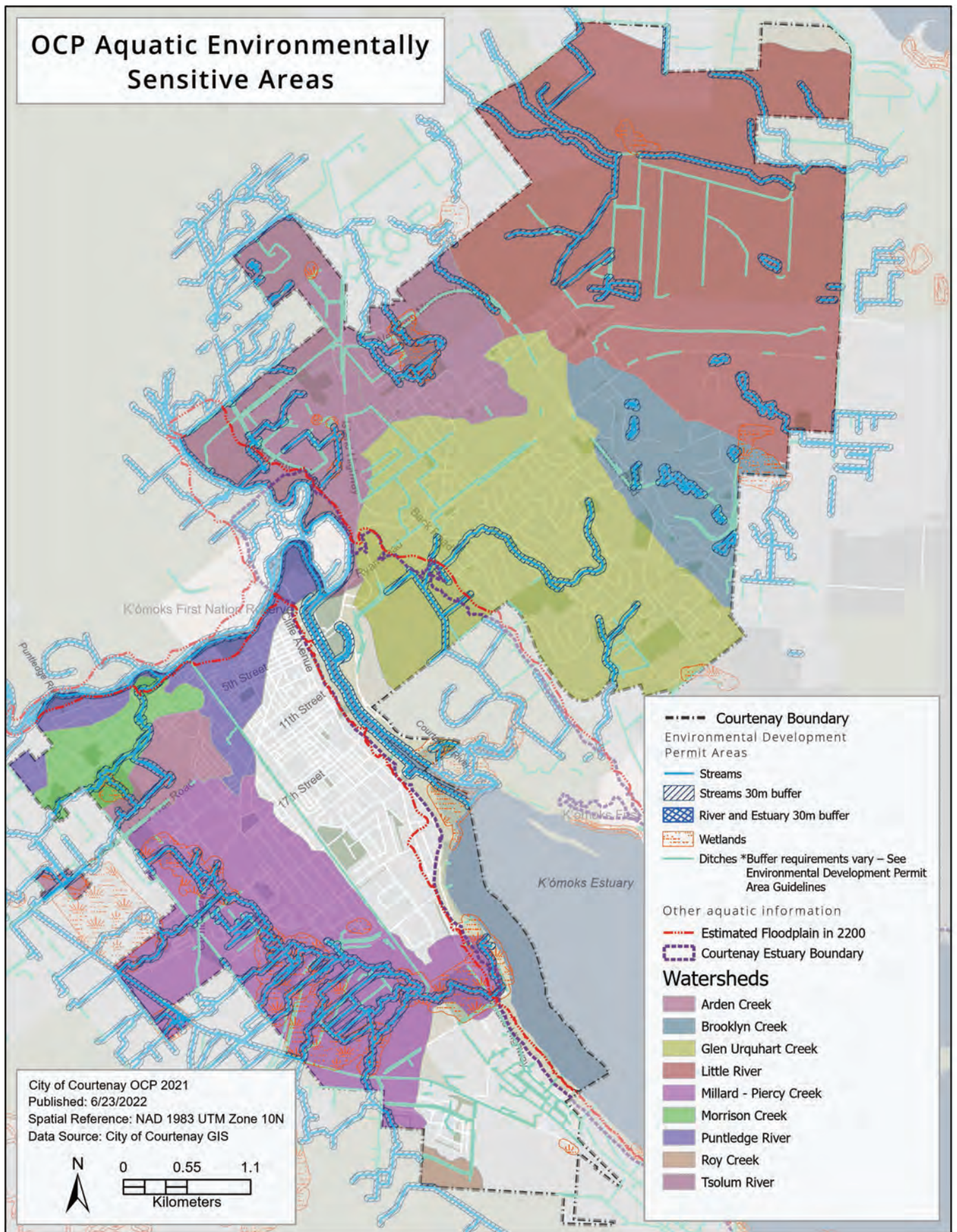




Map APX-5 Sidewalk Network



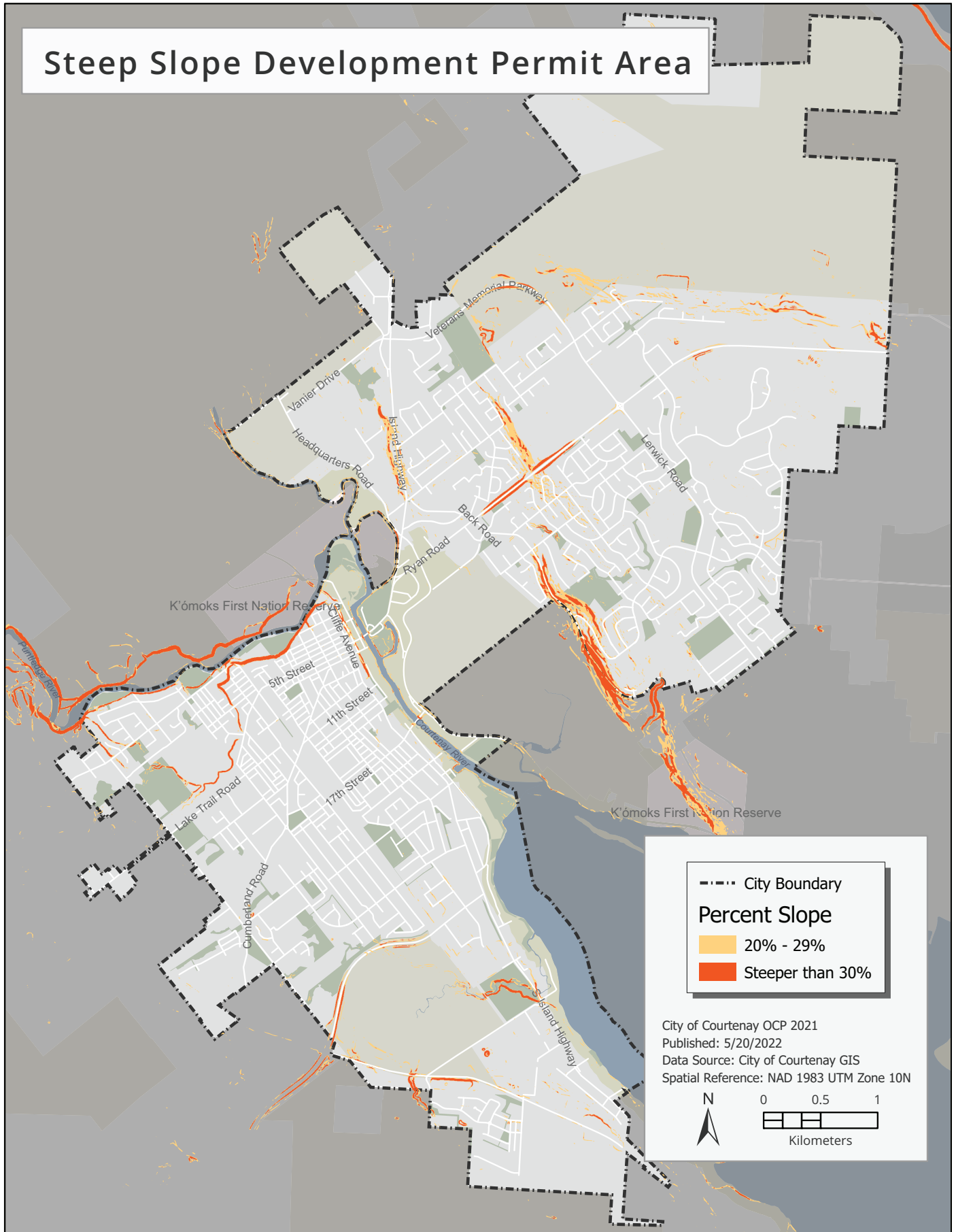




Map APX-7 Aquatic Environmentally Sensitive Areas

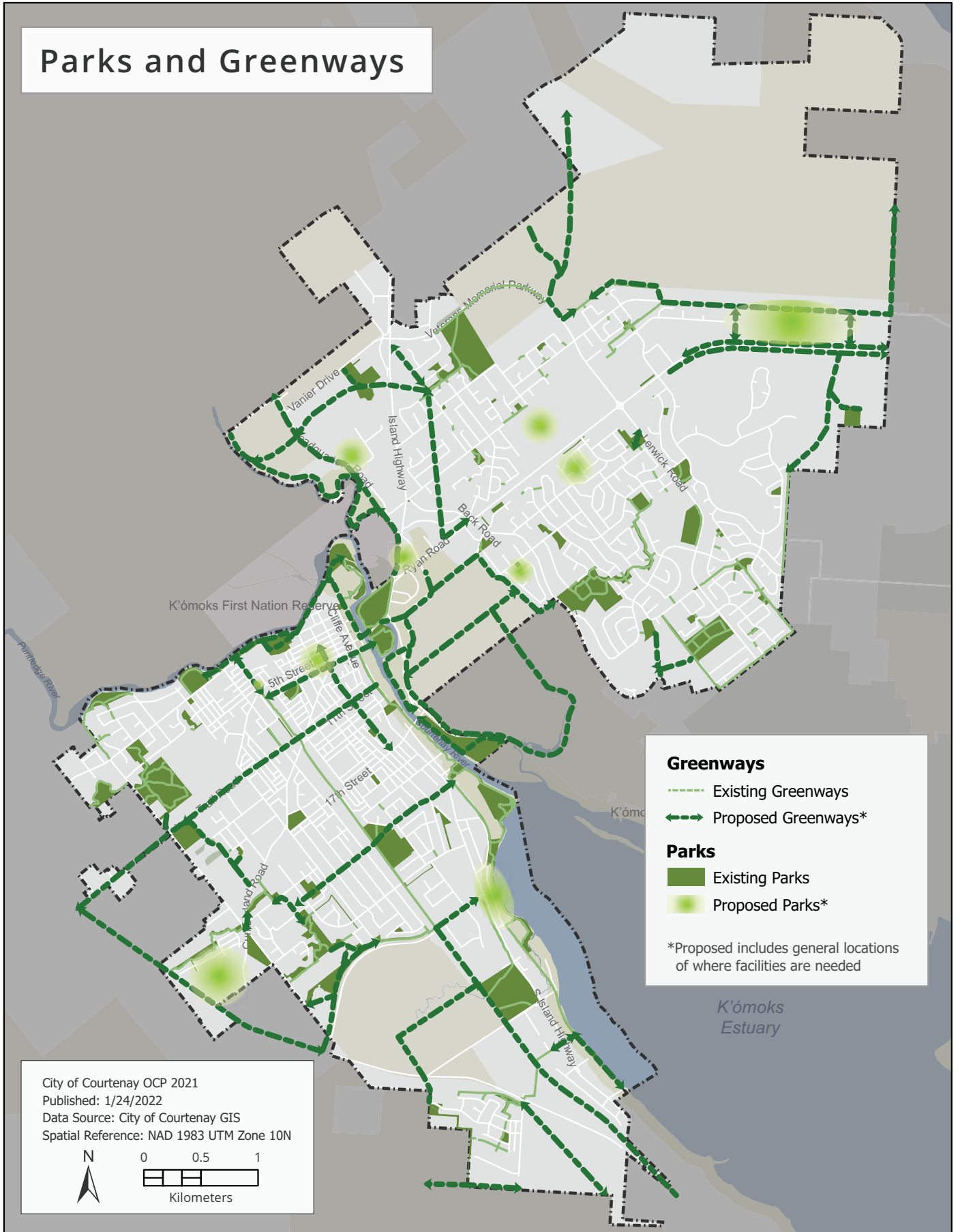


# Steep Slope Development Permit Area



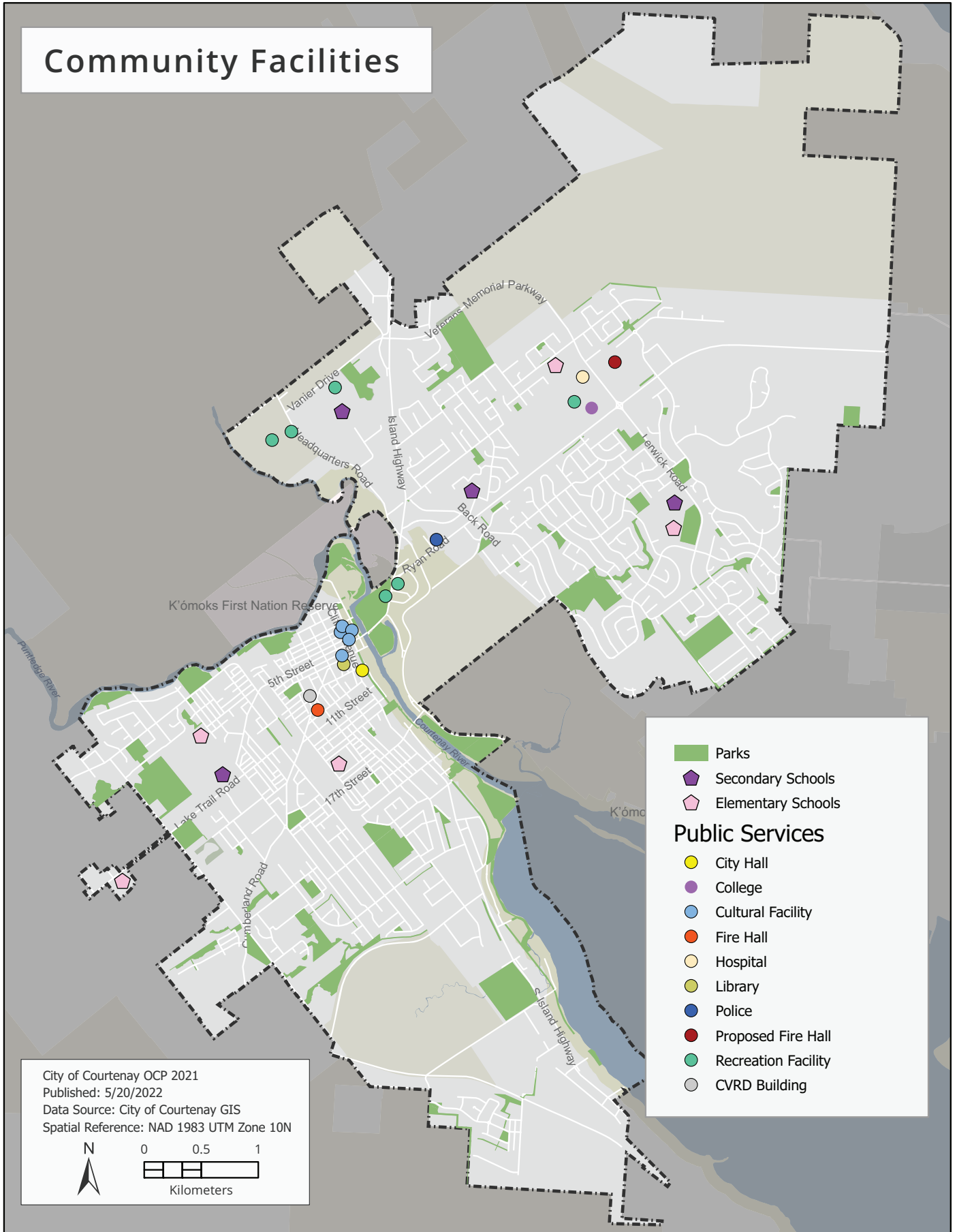
Map APX-8 Steep Slopes

# Parks and Greenways

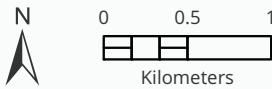


Map APX-9 Parks and Greenways

# Community Facilities

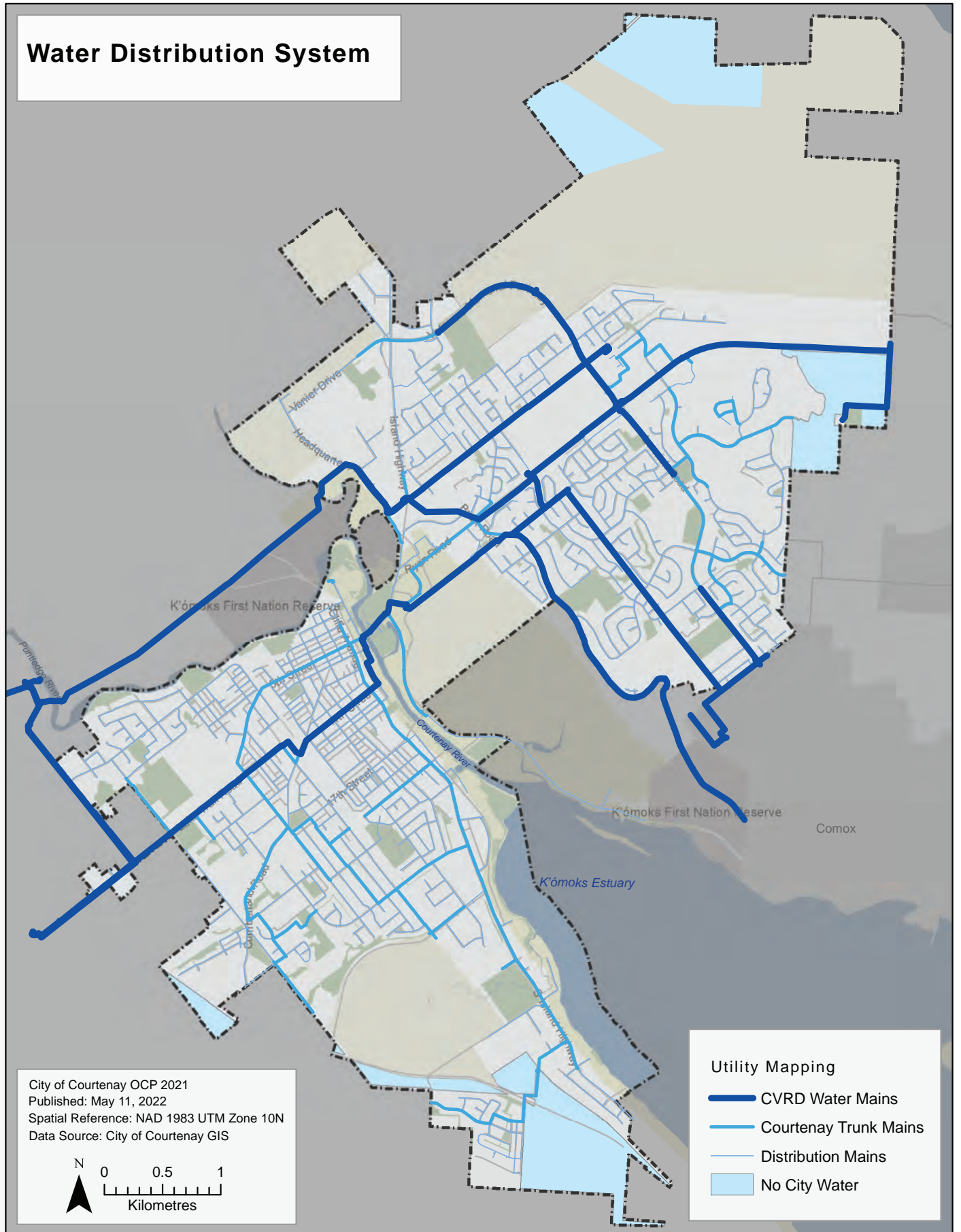


City of Courtenay OCP 2021  
 Published: 5/20/2022  
 Data Source: City of Courtenay GIS  
 Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 10N

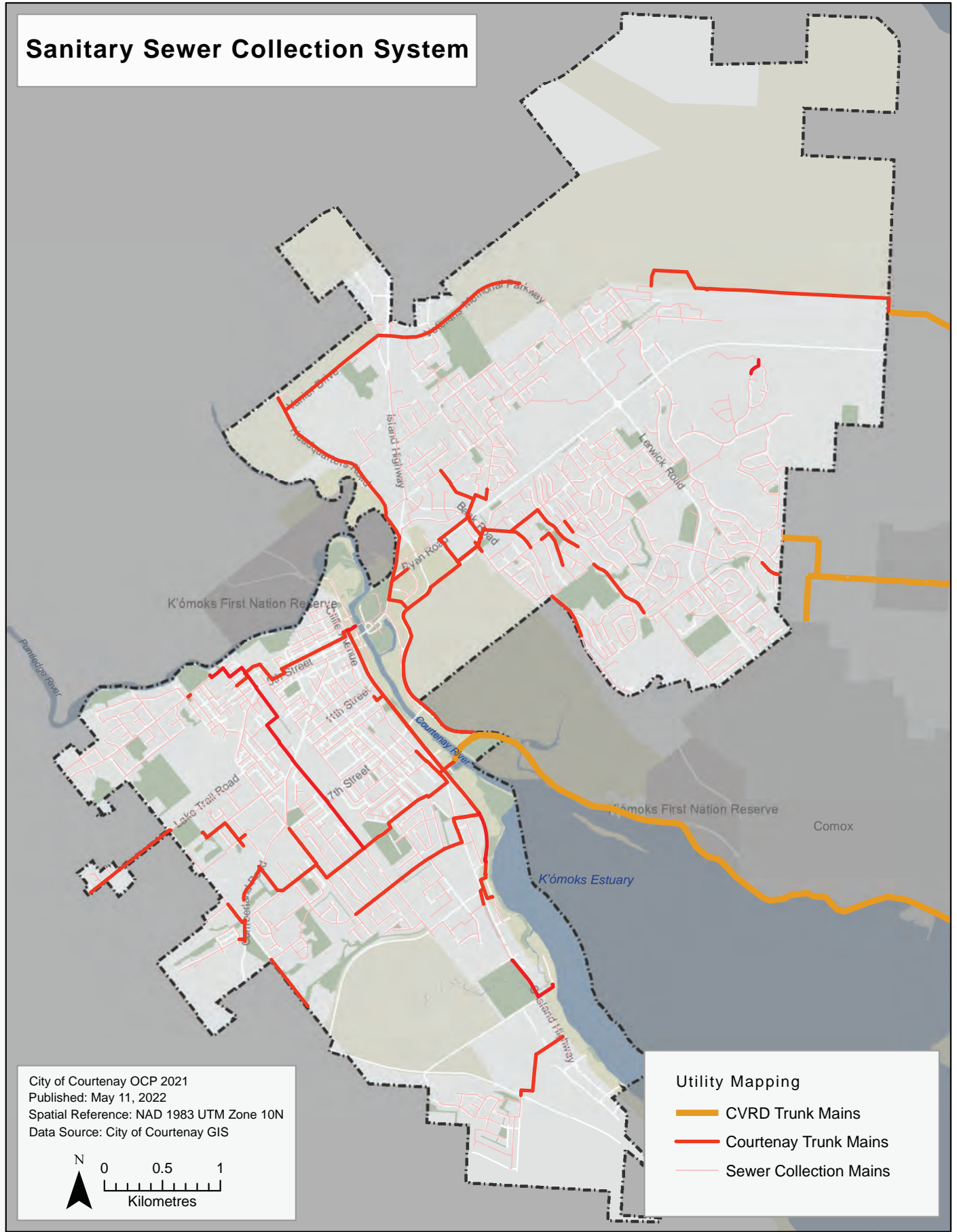


Map APX-10 Community Facilities

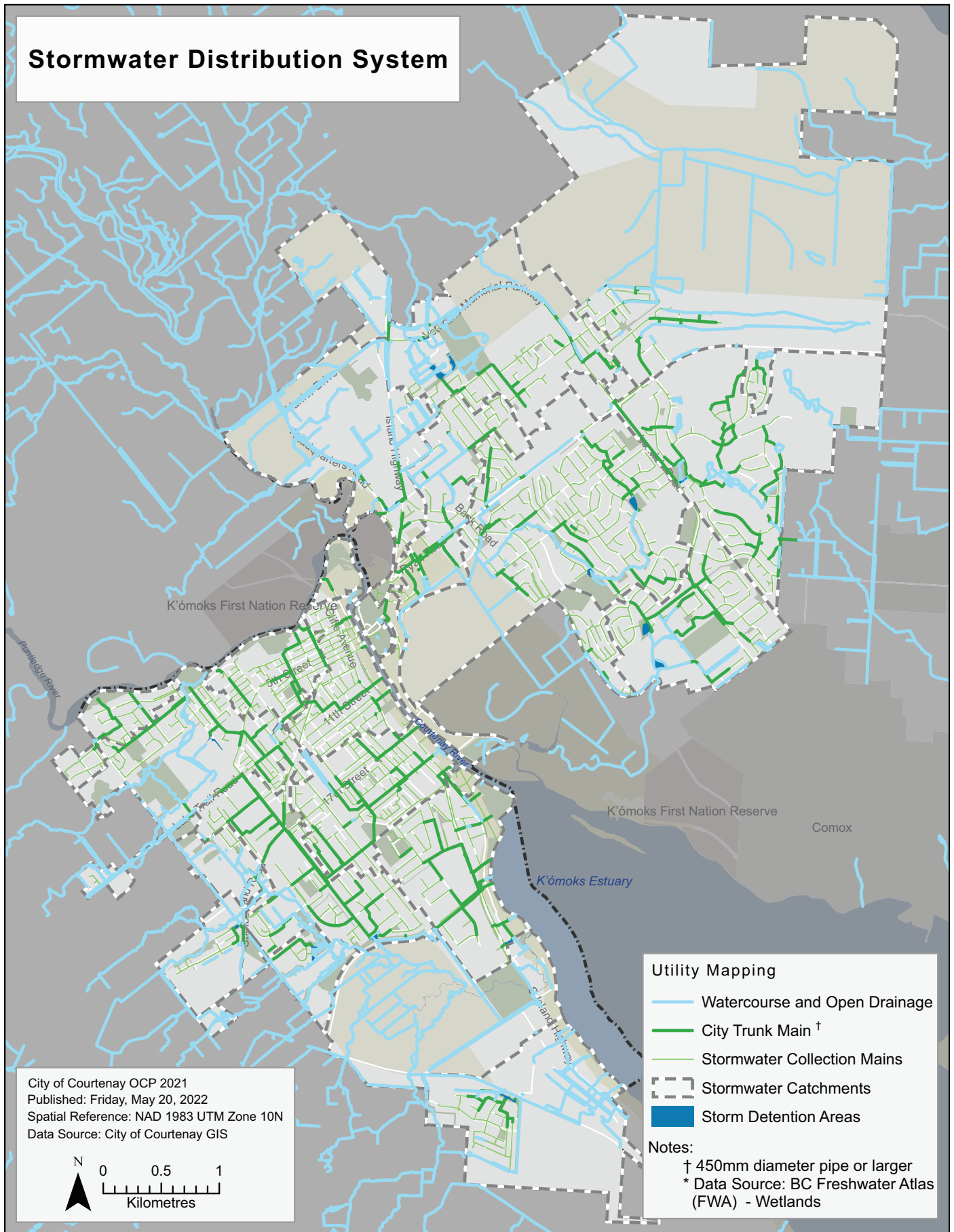




Map APX-11 Water Distribution System




Map APX-12 Sanitary Sewer Collection System



Map APX-13 Stormwater Distribution System



A photograph of a kayaker in a yellow and black outfit navigating white-water rapids in a river. The river is surrounded by dense green forest, with large trees and foliage visible in the background and foreground. The water is turbulent with white foam. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**APPENDIX 3 –  
REGIONAL CONTEXT  
STATEMENT POLICY  
ANALYSIS TABLES**

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**Table APX-2** Alignment with CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Growth Management Policies

<i>Related RGS Growth Management Policies</i>	<i>OCP Growth Management and Land Use Policies</i>
<p><b>Development within Core Settlement Areas</b></p> <p>Municipal Areas are a type of Core Settlement Area defined by the boundaries of the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, and Village of Cumberland. A minimum of 90 percent of the growth within the Comox Valley will be directed to Core Settlement Areas, in order to promote the efficient use of land and public infrastructure, provide densities supportive of alternative transportation choices, and achieve environmental benefits resulting from compact growth.</p> <p>Additionally, directing growth to Core Settlement Areas will limit sprawl and curtail urban encroachment into Rural Areas, working landscapes, and natural areas.</p>	<p>The strategy for managing Courtenay's growth is to build upon, strengthen, and connect existing successful nodes and corridors within existing neighbourhoods across the city by guiding the majority of future growth toward a series of identified distinct and connected higher-density mixed-use areas and corridors along the Frequent Transit Network</p> <p>Future growth is focused within existing Courtenay boundaries. The large majority of future residential and commercial growth is focused in Town Centres/Corridors and Neighbourhood Centres to support compact growth, prevent urban encroachment on natural and rural areas, optimize infrastructure efficiency, and enable an increasing proportion of residents to meet their daily needs by walking, cycling, and transit.</p> <p>Outside of Town Centres and Neighbourhood Centres, modest growth is permitted to further support compact growth and improve housing choices for a greater diversity of residents.</p>

<i>Related RGS Growth Management Policies</i>	<i>OCP Growth Management and Land Use Policies</i>
<p><b>Town Centres</b></p> <p>Town Centres are to be identified within all Core Settlement Areas. These areas are to be developed as walkable and complete communities, providing for the broadest range of housing, employment, and commercial uses.</p> <p>Town Centres should support transit-oriented development through the establishment of minimum densities, in the range of 100–150 combined residents and jobs per hectare with a reduced minimum of 75 combined residents and jobs per hectare for ground-oriented housing, within OCPs.</p>	<p>Town Centre &amp; Urban Corridor designations are established within the OCP as the areas of the Downtown, Lower Ryan Centre, Upper Ryan Centre, and Cliffe Avenue Corridor. Land uses in these areas include higher-density residential and diverse commercial uses, including the tallest residential buildings in the city. With projected future growth, the densities in these areas will meet, exceed, or move toward the target densities of 100–150 residents and jobs per hectare, building on existing densities of homes and jobs.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Centres are also established within the OCP. They will include lower densities and range of uses than the Town Centres, but will form an important function in the growth framework of a series of connected neighbourhood hubs.</p> <p>Other land use and transportation policies, as well as development permit area guidelines prioritize walking, cycling, and transit use by: improving the quality of the pedestrian realm; and providing safe and efficient access to cycling infrastructure and amenities, and transit service.</p>
<p><b>Identification of Settlement Expansion Areas within OCPs</b></p> <p>Settlement Expansion Areas shall be identified within the official community plan of the Municipal Area intending to incorporate it. Such official community plans shall contain policies for Settlement Expansion Areas consistent with specific policies contained in the RGS pertaining to servicing and requirement of local area plans.</p>	<p>The OCP does not identify any Settlement Expansion Areas to be included into the City within the time horizon of this Plan. The growth strategy is to first intensify uses within the existing Town Centres and Corridor, Neighbourhood Centres, and wider urban residential areas rather than expanding Courtenay's boundaries.</p>



**Table APX-3** Alignment with CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Policy Areas

Wherever numbers are listed next to OCP objectives, the numbers refer to the objective number in the thematic chapter.

<b>RGS Policy Goals by Policy Area</b>	<b>OCP Policy Objectives by Policy Area</b>
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>Ensure a diversity of housing options to meet evolving demographics and needs.</p>	<p>One of the OCP goals is Housing Choices for All. This topic is addressed primarily within the Affordable Housing policy chapter. Stated policies are designed to encourage and support the development of a wide range of housing options. Particular attention is given to increasing <i>affordable housing</i> supply that appropriately responds to the regional Housing Needs Assessment within the context of a changing, and aging, population. The City continues to collect, monitor, and analyze local housing trends and take necessary actions in partner with neighbouring jurisdictions and community partners. The objectives for this policy area are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A variety of housing options are permitted and positively integrated in all neighbourhoods.</li> <li>2. No net loss of rental housing.</li> <li>3. New non-market housing is actively pursued and supported.</li> <li>4. Incentives are in place to create below-market housing.</li> <li>5. Partnership approaches are in place to deliver and manage non- or below-market housing.</li> <li>6. Development application approval processes are streamlined, transparent, and easy to understand.</li> </ol>

<b>RGS Policy Goals by Policy Area</b>	<b>OCP Policy Objectives by Policy Area</b>
<p><b>Ecosystems, Natural Areas and Parks</b></p> <p>Protect, steward, and enhance the natural environment and ecological connections and systems.</p>	<p>One of the OCP goals is More Space for and Time in Nature. This topic is addressed across a number of OCP chapters including the Natural Environment chapter, Parks and Recreation chapter, <i>green infrastructure</i> approaches within the Municipal Infrastructure and Streets and Transportation chapters, as well as the Environment Development Permit Area guidelines. These chapters include a range of policies that respond to protecting remaining critical habitat, stewarding <i>ecological assets</i> across public and private lands, restoring ecosystems and connectivity corridors, valuing <i>ecological assets</i>, and investing in <i>green infrastructure</i> to provide public services. Select policy objectives that meet these goals include:</p> <p><b>Natural Environment chapter:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remaining sensitive ecosystems are protected; lost or degraded sensitive ecosystems are restored.</li> <li>2. The K'ómoks Estuary is 'kept living' (Q'waq'wala7owkw) and environmental, Indigenous, subsistence and recreational values are protected and restored.</li> <li>3. Courtenay's air, water, and soil are clean.</li> <li>4. The urban forest is healthy and growing towards a 34-40% canopy cover target.</li> <li>5. Development practices meet ecosystem health and site adaptive design objectives.</li> <li>6. Information and opportunities are in place for the wider community to play an active role in the protection, restoration, and stewardship of the natural environment.</li> </ol> <p><b>Parks and Recreation chapter:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parkland in the form of natural areas, open spaces, and outdoor recreation is of sufficient amounts, is well-connected, equitably distributed, and is of high quality to enhance livability throughout the city.</li> <li>5. Partnerships are in place to achieve parks and recreation objectives.</li> </ol> <p><b>Municipal Infrastructure chapter:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Natural and engineered forms of <i>green infrastructure</i> are integrated to manage rainwater resources, protect water and air quality, maintain ecosystem function, provide flood control, and address and adapt to climate impacts.</li> </ol> <p><b>Streets and Transportation chapter:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Excess existing road space is repurposed to support public life, active travel, and green infrastructure.</li> </ol>

<b>RGS Policy Goals by Policy Area</b>	<b>OCP Policy Objectives by Policy Area</b>
<p><b>Local Economic Development</b></p> <p>Achieve a sustainable, resilient, and dynamic local economy that supports Comox Valley businesses and the region's entrepreneurial spirit.</p>	<p>One of the OCP goals is Economic Success Emerges from Community Values and Place. This topic is addressed primarily by the OCP Managing Growth policies and Land Use designations which support the land use employment opportunities within Town Centres and other employment lands throughout the City.</p> <p>The Local Economy chapter includes more specific policies that recognize the City's primary role in local economic development is to create the physical conditions for high quality of life and economic success through responsible management of public assets and sustainable levels of high-quality service delivery. The chapter also recognizes the importance of supporting key sectors within the local economy such as low-carbon construction and building retrofitting industry and value-added, community-based businesses such as arts and culture, local food processing, specialty forest products, and other value-added product manufacturing. The specific objectives for this policy area are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Business retention, development, and investment are increasingly green, low carbon, climate resilient, and equity-responsive.</li><li>2. Local economic development opportunities are regionally coordinated.</li><li>3. Municipal regulations and services are supportive of economic development within the overall long-term vision of environmental and social responsibility.</li><li>4. People are at the heart of local economic development and are able to access adequate supports to participate in the economy.</li></ol>



<b>RGS Policy Goals by Policy Area</b>	<b>OCP Policy Objectives by Policy Area</b>
<p><b>Transportation</b></p> <p>Develop an accessible, efficient and affordable <i>multi-modal transportation network</i> that connects Core Settlement Areas and designated Town Centres, and links the Comox Valley to neighbouring communities and regions.</p>	<p>One of the OCP goals is Functional Transportation Choices. This topic is also addressed primarily by the OCP Managing Growth policies and Land Use designations which support the compact, mixed-use, complete community type of growth management policies identified in the RGS. The growth modelling exercise explicitly evaluated the ideal locations for new <i>infill</i> development to support transit supportive densities, maximize <i>'10-minute' walking neighbourhoods</i>, and acknowledges transportation as the most significant contributor to local GHG emissions.</p> <p>The Streets and Transportation chapter includes more specific policies to reduce dependency on automobiles, boost active mobility and transit use, regard streets as first and foremost places for people, reduce the amount of land dedicated to parking, and provide charging infrastructure to support the mainstreaming of electric vehicles. The specific objectives for this policy area are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 30% of trips are by walking, cycling, and transit by 2030.</li> <li>2. Transportation investments prioritize walking, cycling, and transit.</li> <li>3. Street standards include attention to safety, accessibility, and comfort at the pedestrian scale.</li> <li>4. Excess existing road space is repurposed to support public life, active travel, and green infrastructure.</li> <li>5. Zero emissions, electrified transportation is supported and increasingly the norm.</li> <li>6. The amount of land dedicated to parking is minimized.</li> <li>7. Parking standards reflect electric vehicle and cycling needs.</li> <li>8. New development integrates multi-modal transportation network planning into site design.</li> <li>9. Educational programs to support transit use, walking, cycling, and car sharing are widely available.</li> <li>10. Opportunities for innovation in transportation are explored.</li> <li>11. The City shows corporate leadership in the City's fleet and on City properties.</li> </ol> <p>Parks and greenways will also form an important part of the active transportation network as is identified as an objective in the Parks and Recreation chapter.</p>

<b>RGS Policy Goals by Policy Area</b>	<b>OCP Policy Objectives by Policy Area</b>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p>Provide affordable, effective, and efficient services and infrastructure that conserves the land, water, and energy resources.</p>	<p>The topic of sustainable service delivery is addressed principally through the Managing Growth policies and Land Use designations which affirm that compact and contained community growth is responsible fiscal municipal Asset Management practice. The OCP chapter on Municipal Infrastructure contains a number of specific policies to direct the investment and renewal of municipal infrastructure services that achieve multiple community objectives.</p> <p>Additionally, the topic of low carbon, energy and water efficient buildings and landscape are addressed in the Buildings and Landscape chapter. Related policies ensure energy and water conservation will be designed into new developments and that the City will exemplify leadership in its facilities as a source of public awareness and technical demonstration. The specific objectives for these policy areas are:</p> <p><b>Municipal Infrastructure:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Infrastructure and services are resilient to risks and impacts of climate change.</li> <li>2. Infrastructure investments are guided by a multiple bottom line decision-making approach: this means energy efficient, fiscally responsible, equitably distributed, sustainable levels of service that protect public health, safety, and the environment.</li> <li>3. Natural and engineered forms of <i>green infrastructure</i> are integrated to manage rainwater resources, protect water and air quality, maintain ecosystem function, provide flood control, and address and adapt to climate impacts.</li> <li>4. Solid waste, potable water, sanitary sewer and rain and stormwater infrastructure life-cycle costs are minimized by increasing conservation actions and reducing the need to develop new infrastructure capacity.</li> <li>5. Third party utility providers such as energy and communications utilities are low-carbon and reliable.</li> </ol> <p><b>Buildings and Landscape:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Existing buildings are upgraded for high energy and water efficiency, net-zero emissions, and renewable energy production.</li> <li>2. New buildings are highly energy and water efficient, perform at net-zero emissions standard and produce renewable energy.</li> <li>3. Living landscape elements are incorporated for water, energy, and biodiversity purposes.</li> <li>4. The designs of new buildings complement neighbourhood character.</li> <li>5. Innovation in building performance, accessibility, and construction waste diversion is encouraged.</li> <li>6. Municipal buildings and site design demonstrate leadership in building performance, accessibility, and design.</li> </ol>

<b>RGS Policy Goals by Policy Area</b>	<b>OCP Policy Objectives by Policy Area</b>
<p><b>Food Systems</b></p> <p>Support and enhance the agricultural and aquaculture sectors and increase local food security.</p>	<p>The OCP contains a chapter on Food Systems which is a new addition to Courtenay's focus policy areas. This addition has been included to recognize the important land use considerations of a viable local food system. Policies are designed to support more food production, education, and promotion throughout the city and surrounding lands in order to contribute to regional <i>food security</i> and as an economic development opportunity. The K'ómoks Estuary is also acknowledged as an important subsistence and aquaculture resource for the K'ómoks First Nation.</p> <p>Most significantly, however, is the emphasis on delaying Courtenay boundary extensions through the Managing Growth policies. This will reduce pressure on surrounding rural and agricultural lands for urban development. The specific objectives for this policy area are:</p> <p><b>Food Systems chapter:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All residents have access to affordable, healthy, culturally appropriate, and local food outlets within walking distance, including food access services and programs when needed</li> <li>2. All residents have access to food growing opportunities within walking distance.</li> <li>3. Lands supporting traditional foods are protected and traditional practices are celebrated.</li> <li>4. Agricultural lands are protected and are compatible with urban uses.</li> <li>5. Food processing, warehousing, and distribution activities are permitted in urban areas of Courtenay.</li> <li>6. <i>Food security</i> actions are regionally coordinated.</li> </ol> <p><b>Natural Environment chapter:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The K'ómoks Estuary is 'kept living' (Q'waq'wala7owkw) and environmental, indigenous, subsistence, and recreational values are protected and restored.</li> </ol>



<b>RGS Policy Goals by Policy Area</b>	<b>OCP Policy Objectives by Policy Area</b>
<p><b>Public Health and Safety</b></p> <p>Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety, and well-being.</p>	<p>Community well-being is a cardinal direction of the OCP which recognizes the <i>social determinants of health</i> as a guiding and systemic framework for understanding individual and public health outcomes and intervention approaches. As such, the topic of public health and safety is embedded throughout all of the OCP policy chapters by ensuring safe air, water and soil quality standards, promoting safe and convenient active transportation opportunities to support active lifestyles, ensuring adequate access to high-quality outdoor and indoor open spaces and recreational amenities for physical and mental health, promoting access to food growing opportunities and food programs, and ensuring adequate <i>affordable housing</i> for all residents.</p> <p>Equity is another cardinal direction of the OCP in recognition that some traditional planning practices have resulted in policies, programs, and regulations that disproportionately impact and stymie the progress of some groups of people, thereby affecting their health, safety, and well-being. Therefore, the OCP strives to ensure that equity considerations are embedded in all municipal regulations and service delivery.</p> <p>The chapter on Social Infrastructure addresses most specifically <i>equity-priority</i> considerations and needs within Courtenay with supportive policies and the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All Courtenay residents experience equitable access to services.</li> <li>2. Coordinated, inclusionary, and systems-based responses are in place to address evolving complex social issues.</li> <li>3. Physical spaces are designed with the needs for social connection and accessibility in mind.</li> <li>4. Neighbourhood and community development-based organizing are leveraged as a source of community capacity and resilience.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>Minimize regional greenhouse gas emissions and plan for adaptation.</p>	<p>With the Courtenay City Council declaration of a Climate Crisis in 2019, the OCP was directed to consider climate change mitigation and adaptation at all stages of its development. A net-zero GHG target by 2050 was later adopted to guide the policy proposals. Therefore GHG modelling and policies to achieve net-zero has been considered in all policies that either directly or indirectly influence Courtenay's community-wide emissions. Climate adaptation is another critical consideration of the OCP, although one that will require further detailed work to standardize climate adaptation measures into all City services, infrastructure, and emergency responses.</p> <p>Given that a climate lens is fundamentally embedded into the OCP, objectives, and policies that advance climate action and prepare for climate change are considered and included in all the policy areas identified above.</p>



## APPENDIX 4 – GLOSSARY

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### **2SLGBTQIAP**

Refers to individuals who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual, or two-spirited.

### **10-minute neighbourhood**

This is a neighbourhood that provides easy access to shops, services, schools, nature, and community within a 10-minute walking radius. Ten minutes of walking generally translates into approximately 800 metres of pedestrian infrastructure.

### **Affordable housing**

The technical definition is housing which costs 30% or less of a household's gross annual income. (Rent or mortgage plus taxes and including minimum down payment). However, an individual's and community's housing needs are diverse and change over time. Affordability of housing also considers the availability and accessibility to the type of housing that an individual needs at a particular time in their life.

### **Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)**

ABCD emphasizes strengths, connections, citizen leadership, and individual gifts in approaching community change.

### **BC Building Energy Step Code**

The new BC Building Code is a performance-based regulation that requires that enhanced energy efficiency standards, or "steps", be met over time. By 2032, all new construction in BC will be required to be net-zero ready. Net-zero buildings produce as much clean energy as they consume, and are highly efficient.

### **Census family**

Defined as a married couple and the children, if any, of either and/or both spouses; a couple living common law and the children, if any, of either and/or both partners; or a parent of any marital status in a one-parent family with at least one child living in the same dwelling and that child or those children. All members of a particular census family live in the same dwelling. Children may be biological or adopted children regardless of their age or marital status as long as they live in the dwelling and do not have their own married spouse, common-law partner or child living in the dwelling. Grandchildren living with their grandparent(s) but with no parents present also constitute a census family.

### **Climate mitigation and adaptation**

Actions that combat and respond to climate change are often categorized as mitigation or adaptation activities. Climate mitigation approaches reduce greenhouse gas emissions or re-capture carbon in carbon sinks using vegetation, soil restoration, and/or technological storage.

### **Community resilience**

This is a measure of a sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations respectively. It includes but is not limited to public health and emergency preparedness, climate adaptation, infrastructure protection, and economic recovery.

### **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

CPTED is a multi-disciplinary approach for reducing crime and fear of crime. CPTED strategies include architecture and urban planning design approaches that aim to reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants.

First Generation CPTED focused on the four principles of: sense of informal ownership over public spaces by residents; natural surveillance or "eyes on the street"; physical condition and maintenance of properties; and control of access into properties.

Second Generation CPTED focuses on social concepts and small-scale environments, and also includes principles of: social cohesion; community culture; physical connectivity; and threshold capacity, which is the idea of creating rich and genuine diversity within the build environment where residents can socialize, shop, and recreate together.

### **Development Approval Information Area**

Development Approval Information refers to information on the anticipated impact of a proposed activity or development on the community, including but not limited to information regarding impact on matters such as transportation patterns, local infrastructure, public facilities including schools and parks, community services, and the natural environment of the area affected. A Development Approval



Information Area is the designated area for which Development Approval Information is required, as per Section 485 of the Local Government Act.

### ***Density bonusing***

Is a zoning tool that allows developers to build additional density or floor area in exchange for community amenities. This is permitted under Section 482 under the Local Government Act.

### ***Ecological or Natural Assets and Ecosystem Services***

Ecological assets (eco-assets) are natural assets such as lakes, rivers, wetlands, aquifers, mountains, forests, riparian areas, estuaries, and salt marshes. These features have considerable economic value and provide goods and services (ecosystem services) such as water purification, soil stabilization and fertility, food production, and recreation. They are also critically important to responding to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

### ***Ecosystem connectivity opportunity areas***

Ecological connectivity is the unimpeded movement of species and the flow of natural processes that sustain life on earth. The role of ecological connectivity has become increasingly important in the past decades due to habitat modifications, such as overexploitation and fragmentation, that have led to the consequent decline of biodiversity. Ecological connectivity opportunity areas were identified through Courtenay through the Urban Forest Strategy study and are shown on the Terrestrial *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* Map APX-6 in Appendix 2 – Maps.

### ***Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)***

Those parcels of land that already have, or with restoration or enhancement could become, natural features. These features contribute to the retention and/or creation of wildlife habitat, soil stability, water retention or recharge, vegetative cover and similar vital ecological functions. Environmentally Sensitive Areas range in size from small patches to extensive landscape features. They can include rare or common habitats, plants and animals. Environmentally Sensitive Areas may overlap hazardous condition areas.

### ***Equity-priority group(s)***

These are people who often face discrimination or other forms of systemic disadvantage. They include but are not necessarily limited to persons of colour, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQIAP individuals, and women.

### ***Food security***

Food security includes at a minimum the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and as an assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.

### ***Full cost accounting***

Method of accounting that recognizes the indirect and direct economic, environmental, health, and social costs of a project, policy, or action.

### ***Green infrastructure***

Broadly defined as a strategically planned network of high quality natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of *ecosystem services* and protect biodiversity in both rural and urban settings. More specifically green infrastructure, being a spatial structure providing benefits from nature to people, aims to enhance nature's ability to deliver multiple valuable ecosystem goods and services, such as clean air or water.

### ***Ground-oriented building***

A type of building in which each dwelling unit has a direct entrance at street/ground level. They can include single-detached houses and detached secondary suites, duplexes, triplexes, rowhouses, and townhouses.

### ***ICI buildings and land uses***

Refers to buildings and land uses that are Industrial, Commercial, or Institutional.

### ***IPCC***

This is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a United Nations governmental body responsible for advancing knowledge on human-induced climate change.

### ***Infill***

This refers to adding new residential units to an existing neighbourhood, and may or may not include population increases as the number of people per household may be in decline. Since infill occurs within lands within the built-up area of a community, it makes more efficient use of land than developing lands in areas that were previously in a natural or agricultural state.

### ***Intensification***

The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists, through development, *redevelopment*, infill and expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

### ***Land lift***

Increase in land value from a Council approved rezoning.

### ***Level 3 / Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC)***

These are ports for electric vehicle charging. Level 3 Charging or *Direct Current Fast Charging* enable most electric vehicles to charge to 80% in under an hour, making road trips easier and quicker.

### ***Nature-based solutions***

These are actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore nature or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

### ***Net-Zero Emissions***

This is the target of completely negating the amount of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) produced by human activity through the reduction of GHGs and absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. There is international consensus that GHGs must be reduced to zero by 2050 at the latest, in order to stabilize global temperatures and avoid catastrophic climate change impacts. Canada committed to this target in the 2015 Paris Agreement, which is a legally binding international treaty on GHG reductions.

### ***Non-census family***

Households in which there is either one person living alone or a group of two or more persons who live together but do not constitute a census family.

### ***Non-market housing***

Housing that is for low and moderate income households, often subsidized through a variety of ways including senior government support.

### ***Multi-modal / multi-use transportation planning***

This refers to planning that considers various modes – such as walking, cycling, transit, driving, wheelchair and scooter use – and the connections between those modes.

### ***PACE program***

PACE refers to property assessed clean energy, and a PACE program is a tool that provides access to long term financing for energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy, and resiliency measures for owners and developers of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-unit properties. PACE loans are repaid through an addition to property tax bills that are transferred from one owner to the next when properties are sold.

### ***Parklet***

Parklets are public seating platforms that convert curbside parking spaces into vibrant community spaces. They are typically the product of partnerships between the City and local businesses, residents, or neighbourhood associations.

### ***Reconstruction***

The act of restoring something to an earlier state.

### ***Redevelopment***

The demolition of existing development and the construction of something new.

### ***Regional food hub***

Shared-use food and beverage processing facilities that offer food and agriculture businesses access to commercial processing space, equipment, expertise and resources to support business development and growth.

### **Regional Growth Strategy**

The Comox Valley's regional growth plan adopted by the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) directs long-term planning for Courtenay, Comox, Cumberland, and the unincorporated Electoral Areas A, B, and C. While each community must create more implementation detail through their respective OCPs, a commitment is made by municipalities and regional districts to collaborate and ensure sustainable growth management by taking into account shared services, unique natural environments, and available resources.

### **Residential Rental Tenure Zoning**

This is BC legislation that provides local governments with the authority to zone for residential rental tenure (i.e. rental housing) and enact *zoning bylaws* that: require new housing in residential areas be developed as rental units; and ensure that existing areas of rental housing are preserved as such. This authority can only be used where multi-residential use is a permitted use.

### **Restoration**

In the context of ecological, environmental, or natural restoration, refers to repairing the damages caused to natural ecosystems and seeks to return them to an earlier state or another state that is closely related to its natural state.

### **Restorative Justice**

A way of addressing conflict and crime that enables the person who caused the harm, people who were affected by the harm, and the community to create a meaningful solution. In contrast to the traditional justice system in Canada which seeks to establish a punishment for each act of wrongdoing assuming that will contribute to victim and societal satisfaction, Restorative Justice focuses on repairing damage and restoring relationships. Restorative Justice is not a specific model, instead it is a set of principles that can be flexibly applied to a variety of situations of conflict, crime, abuse, etc.

### **Social asset**

These are the networks, organizations, and institutions, including norms of reciprocity and the mutual trust that exist among and within groups and communities.

### **Social determinants of health**

Non-medical factors that influence individual and collective health outcomes. Research suggests that they are collectively essential to one's health, and by extension their quality of life.

### **Staycation**

This is a vacation spent at home, in the local community. Staycations have become more common during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw**

This bylaw regulates the subdivision and development of land within the City of Courtenay, and outlines standards for works and services. It is designed to meet current community needs by modernizing engineering design guidelines, construction specifications, and detailed drawings.

### **Tactical attention indicators**

These are a system of textured indicators commonly used at pedestrian ramps, stairs, crossing platforms, and sidewalks to improve accessibility, including for persons with disabilities.

### **The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC)'s Calls to Action**

The TRC was created through a legal settlement between Residential School Survivors, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit representatives, and the parties responsible for creation and operation of the schools, which were the federal government and church bodies. The TRC's mandate was to inform all Canadians about what happened in residential schools.

The TRC made 94 calls to action to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation. The calls to action can be found here: [https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

### **Transportation Demand Management**

Information, encouragement and incentives that help people make decisions that reduce the demand on the transportation network.



### ***Universal design and accessible design***

Accessible design is a design process in which the needs of people with disabilities are specifically considered. Universal design broadens this concept, and refers to the design of products and environments that are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible. Sidewalks with curb cuts and doors that automatically open when a person moves near them are examples, as they benefit people with disabilities, parents with baby strollers, delivery workers, and others. Human characteristics considered in universal design may include age, gender, stature, race/ethnicity, culture, native language, and learning preference.

### ***Zoning Bylaw***

This regulatory bylaw establishes what land uses may occur where at what densities, how large a lot can be, where development can occur on a property, what setbacks and yards are required, the height and overall massing of structures, the number of structures, if landscaping and open space are required (in some zones), and parking requirements.

