CITY OF
Vernon

Official Community Plan

Live · Work · Play · Move
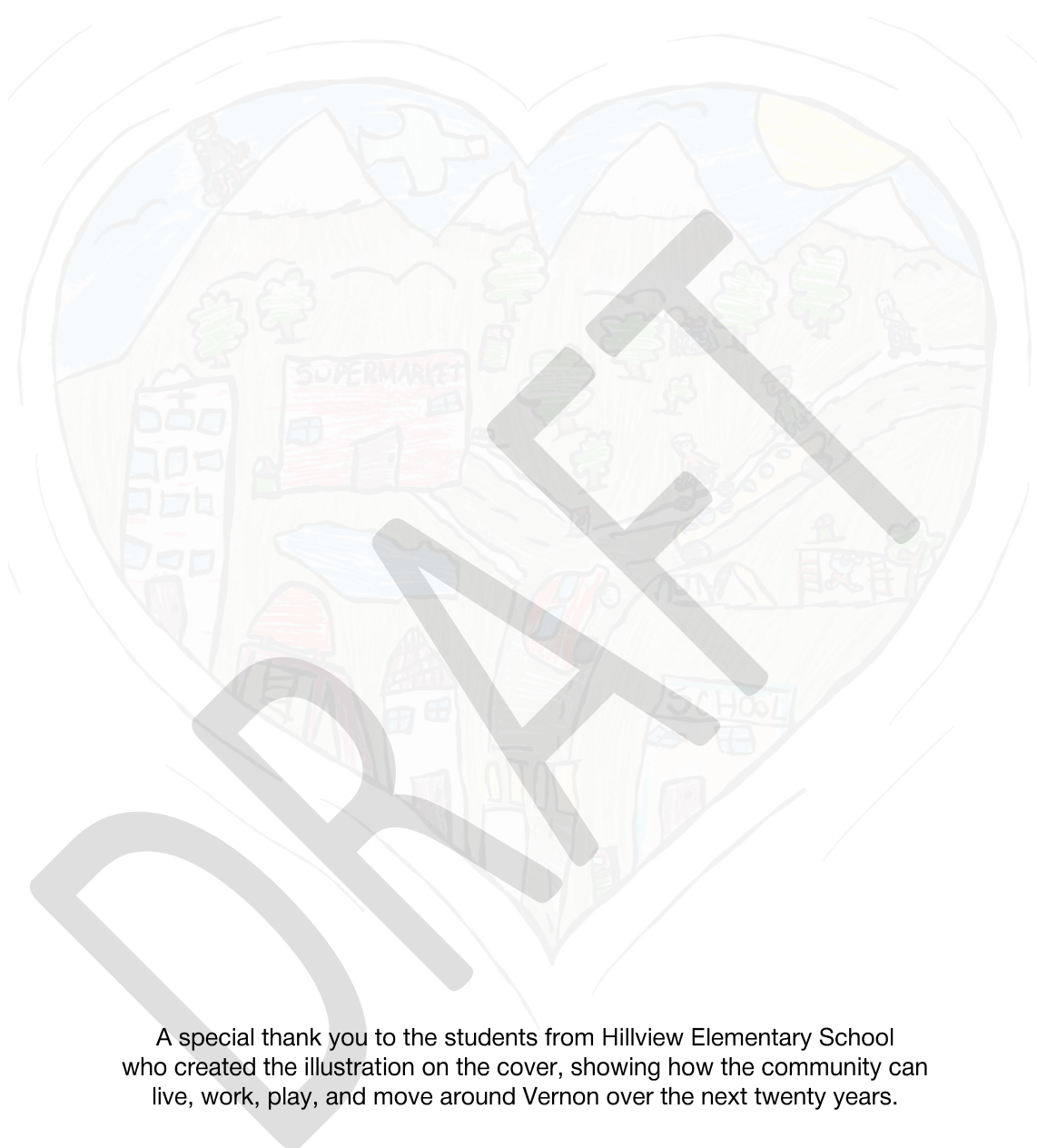
A special thank you to the students from Hillview Elementary School
who created the illustration on the cover, showing how the community can
live, work, play, and move around Vernon over the next twenty years.

Plan Framework

Foundation

Introduces the plan, including its purpose, relationship with other bylaws, and how community engagement shaped the document.

Context

Provides background information on community history, housing needs, and partnerships that inform where the community is today and opportunities for the future.

Growth Strategy

Establishes the community vision and values, including land use designations which set the tone for strategic growth and **gentle density.**

Citywide Policies

Outlines the policies, actions, and targets that will be leveraged to meet the community vision and values.

Land Use Policies

Characterizes the community into different land use types, including urban and village centres, neighbourhoods, industrial, and parks to facilitate strategic growth.

Development Permit Areas

Identifies areas where environmental or design factors may require extra consideration before development can take place.

Implementation

Outlines how the plan will be implemented and monitored for progress towards the community vision.

Land Acknowledgement

In this spirit of this document, we respectfully acknowledge that Vernon is located on the traditional territory of the Syilx people of the Okanagan Nation. The Syilx Okanagan people are the original stewards of the tmxʷulaxʷ (land) upon which we are privileged to live, work, and play.

From the northern tip of kɬúsx̌nítkʷ (Okanagan Lake) towards nkəkmaplqs (Kalamalka Lake) and everywhere in between, Vernon rests upon areas of natural abundance and cultural significance since time immemorial. Together we call upon our collective honored traditions and spirits to work towards building a strong community that can be enjoyed by current and future generations.

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Chapter 1 – Foundation

Vernon is growing. By 2045 an additional 20,000 people will live in our community.

BECKER BIKE PARK

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

An Official Community Plan is a long-term strategic plan for shaping how and where growth will be accommodated over the next 20 years. It provides a policy framework for Council and City Staff to address key community priorities - including housing, transportation, economic development, and sustainability - to ensure our neighbourhoods, infrastructure, and transportation networks can best support a growing population.

The Vernon 2045 Official Community Plan (OCP) envisions a resilient, inclusive, affordable, and vibrant community that makes a positive difference to those who live, work, and play in the community. This is done by painting the big picture policies and objectives that will facilitate coordinated decision making. Together, residents, businesses, developers, community groups, and City Staff can use this document to guide how Vernon will move towards the collective community vision for 2045.

1.2 Fitting Vernon's Plans Together

The OCP provides the overarching vision for Vernon's planning framework, ensuring that land use decisions complement the vision of the community. This facilitates a coordinated approach to address community priorities including transportation, housing, and sustainability. To achieve this vision, citywide plans, policies, and bylaws are used to address key areas as seen through the figure below.

Figure 1.1 Relationship between the Official Community Plan and other plans

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1.3 Legislative Background

British Columbia's *Local Government Act* (LGA) enables communities to adopt an OCP to guide long-term planning and land use decisions. The LGA specifies required content, including policies related to housing needs and **greenhouse gas emission** reduction, while allowing for the inclusion of policies related to social and economic needs to support community wellbeing. It also requires OCPs to be updated on a five-year cycle and consider relevant Housing Needs Reports within the context of the document. Vernon's OCP establishes an overarching policy framework for all lands within the municipal boundary to meet these requirements. It has also been prepared in compliance with all relevant provincial legislation.

The LGA also outlines specific adoption procedures for OCPs, including the requirement for Council to adopt an OCP as bylaw. While Council is not obligated to undertake specific actions or projects outlined in the OCP, all bylaws enacted or works undertaken by Council must be consistent with the OCP. Where the OCP references another bylaw or plan it is generally understood to reference the version that was in place when the OCP was adopted, including amendments as they occur from time to time.

1.4 Regional Context Statement

Section 446 of the *Local Government Act* requires communities to prepare a Regional Context Statement that identifies the relationship between their OCP and the Regional Growth Strategy. The Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) adopted *Regional Growth Strategy Bylaw No. 2500* on September 21, 2011, and last amended it on October 16, 2024.

The Regional Growth Strategy provides an integrated framework for addressing growth management across the RDNO, including objectives to prioritize regional cooperation, protect agricultural lands, and facilitate rural and urban lifestyle choices through designated growth areas. A key component of this strategy is the inclusion of a rural protection boundary which divides the lands that have access to water and sewer infrastructure from those that are limited to rural service levels. This facilitates compact development in urban areas, creating communities that are safe, healthy, and walkable, while protecting rural areas from sprawl.

The City of Vernon's Regional Context Statement, and the rest of the OCP, are consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. Please see Appendix A for a detailed comparison.

Diagram still in progress.
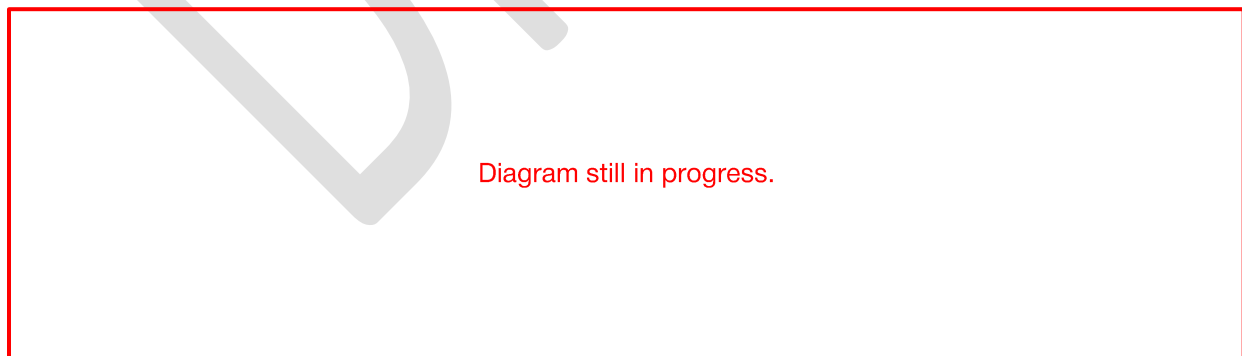
Figure 1.2 City of Vernon in relation to the Regional District of North Okanagan

1.5 Engagement Process
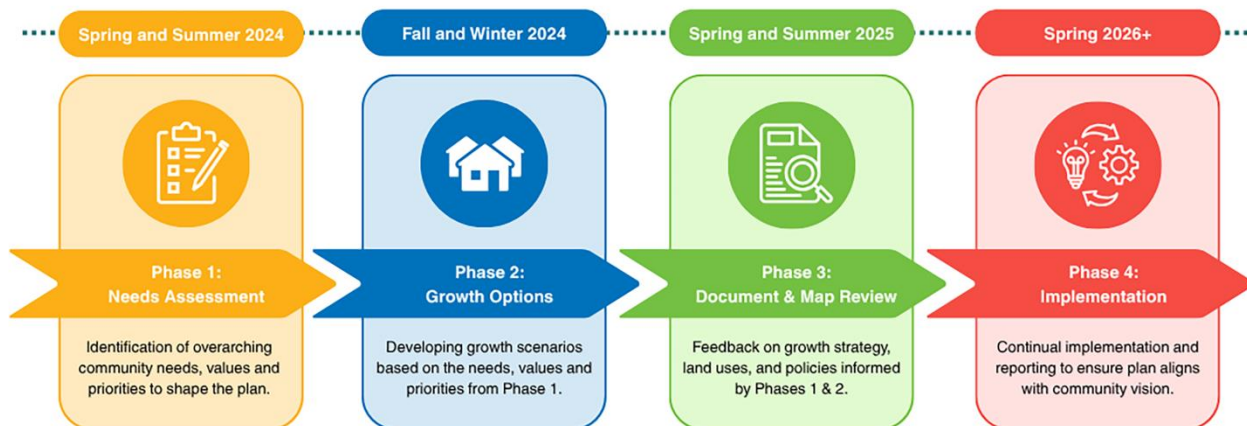
Figure 1.3 Official Community Plan engagement timeline

The OCP update process began in the Spring of 2024. An assessment was conducted to identify the key values, needs, and priorities that would shape the plan. This included a community survey, pop-up booths at events such as the Polson Park Night Market and the Sunshine Day Festival, and a series of workshops targeted at various community groups to inform Phase 1 of engagement. The objective was to meet the community where they are at, whether that be online or on the street, to clearly identify a collective community vision and goals.

Phase 2 of engagement began in the Fall of 2024 and was based on the need to further input from the community to refine what was heard in Phase 1. It included a second survey and an open house where attendees could learn about the findings of Phase 1, provide survey feedback, and receive more information from City staff. The objective of Phase 2 was to receive direction on how and where the community would like to grow in the future. This was summarized in reports which guided further refinement of the growth options analysis. They also informed the draft values that received support in principle from City Council in the Winter of 2024.

Phase 3 of engagement began in the Spring of 2025. During this phase, draft land use designations were provided for public feedback. This phase included a third survey, two open house events, and a series of targeted pop-up events in the community. Public feedback informed further refinement of the land use designations to ensure the plan connected with the vision identified by the community. The feedback from all phases of engagement as well as feedback from the formal referral process was incorporated into the draft plan presented to committees in the Summer of 2025 and then Council in the Fall of 2025.

Throughout the OCP update process, the objective has been to ensure this plan is shaped by the residents who live, work, play, and move around the community. Everyone plays a part in creating the community envisioned under this plan for 2045.

VISION & VALUES
JAN. - JUL. 2024

Community Survey #1

Online survey with **1,396** respondents on EngageVernon.ca

Survey highlighted community strengths, areas for improvement, and long-term growth priorities.

Workshops

10 workshops targeted at specific community groups with **168** attendees

Topics discussed include housing, community services, climate and parks, tourism, and economic development.

Pop-Up Booths #1

Pop-up booths at **9** events with **882** visitors interactions

Visitors provided input on community priorities, responded to polls, and engaged in discussions with staff.

GROWTH OPTIONS
AUG. - DEC. 2024

Values Identified

Community feedback synthesized into draft values supported by Council

These values shape OCP priorities and policies to ensure the plan aligns with our community vision.

Community Survey #2

Online survey with **744** respondents on EngageVernon.ca

Survey collected feedback on specific amenities and infrastructure to rank their importance to the community.

Public Open House #1

Open house with **245** attendees

Provided an overview of Phase 1 findings and an opportunity to give feedback on key areas of the plan.

POLICY DRAFTING
JAN. - JUNE. 2025

Public Open House #2

Two open houses with **107** attendees

Provided an overview of Phase 2 findings and an opportunity to give feedback on draft land uses.

Pop-Up Booths #2

Pop-up booths at **4** events with **168** visitors interactions

Visitors provided input on the draft land use classifications and engaged in discussions with staff.

Community Survey #3

Online survey on EngageVernon.ca

Survey collected feedback on proposed land uses including Urban, Village, and Neighbourhood Centres.

FINE TUNING
JULY. - DEC. 2025

OCP ADOPTION

Council Feedback

1 Public Hearing and **4** bylaw readings

Draft OCP presented to Council for final review and consideration before being adopted into policy.

Committee Feedback

Feedback from **3** committees

Draft OCP presented to the Climate Action Advisory Committee, Affordable Housing Committee, and Advisory Planning Committee.

External Referral

Feedback from **4** external agencies

Draft OCP provided to the Agricultural Land Commission, Ministry of Transportation, Okanagan Indian Band, and others for comment.
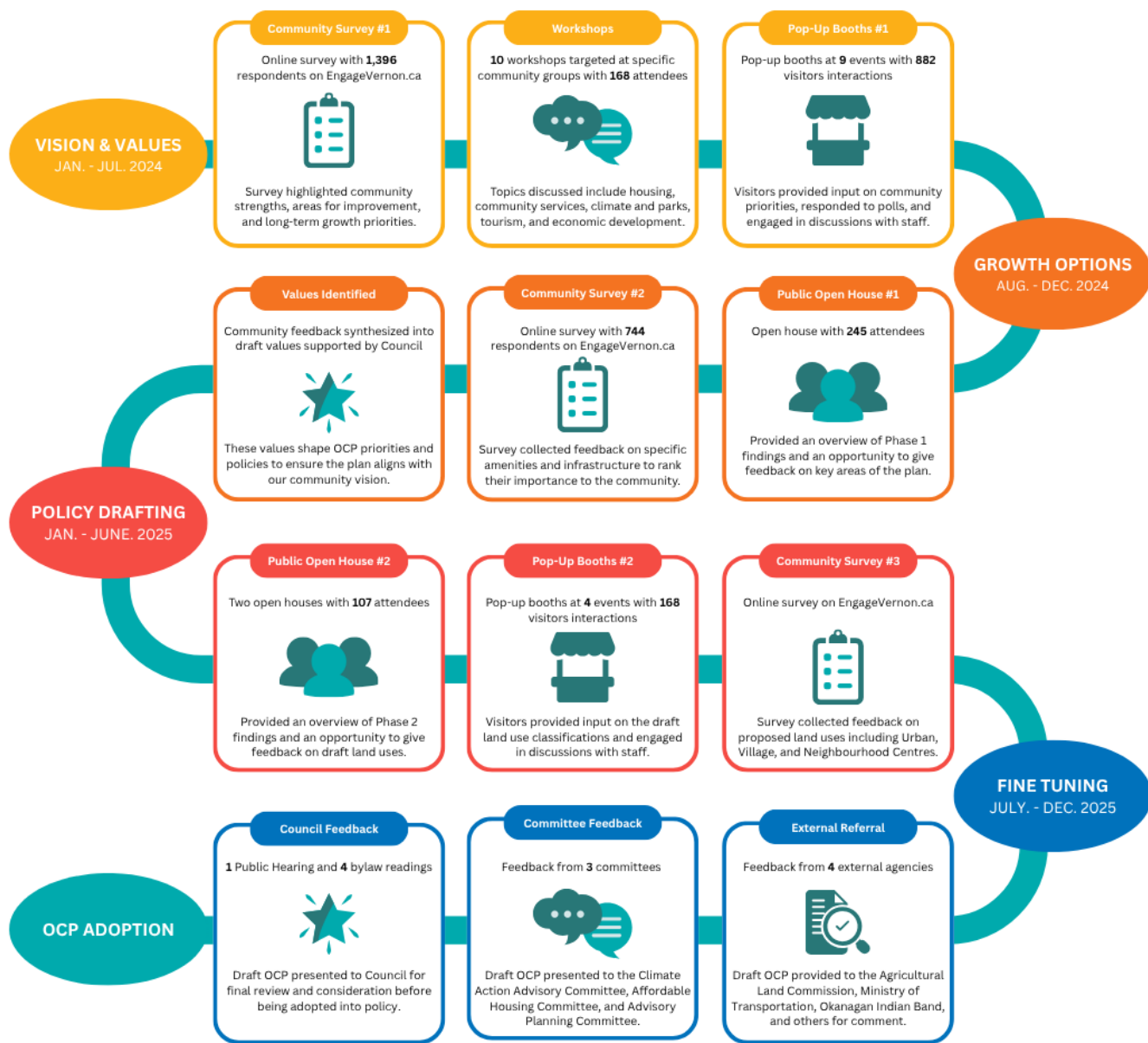
Figure 1.4 Official Community Plan milestones

1.6 How to Use the Plan

The OCP is for and about the entire community. While some sections of the OCP may be of more interest or relevance to a specific community member, every reader has a role in fulfilling our community vision identified in Chapter 3 – Growth Strategy. Chapter 4 – Citywide Policies outlines policies and actions that are directed toward decision-makers and City Staff, while Chapter 5 – Land Use Policies provides direction for property owners, developers, builders, and the community at large.

Residents

Residents are the life and soul of Vernon. They influence how the community grows, the amenities and services available, and the collective community spirit. Residents can use this plan to see where the community is headed, be informed about the ideas and policies designed to meet the collective vision, and identify how growth will be strategically directed to improve the community.

Businesses

Businesses are the economic foundation of the community, creating jobs, spurring innovation, and providing goods and services to the community. Businesses can use this plan to understand how growth may be directed to support current or future business opportunities.

Developers

Development plays a pivotal role in creating the livable and diverse neighbourhoods that make up Vernon. Developers can use this plan as a guide to inform the strategic and intentional placement of new growth, housing, and investment in the community.

Community Groups

Community groups are formed by people with a drive to create a positive change, often acting with limited resources to help those most in need. Community groups can use this plan as a guide to understand what we value and want to see in Vernon as the community grows.

City Staff

City Staff deliver services and amenities that support the daily lives of residents and businesses in the community. In alignment with Council's direction, City Staff can use this plan to guide land use and infrastructure decisions and prioritize strategic initiatives to help achieve community goals.

Mayor & Council

Mayor and Council are people elected to represent the voices of the community. Mayor and Council can use this plan to guide decision making practices, allocate resources, and prioritize community needs.

NORTH VERNON

Chapter 2 – Context

Vernon is the largest city in the North Okanagan. Our path forward begins with context.

2.1 Community Background

Situated within the traditional territory of the Syilx Okanagan people, the City of Vernon is the largest population centre in the North Okanagan and the second largest in the Okanagan Valley. Encompassing 11,451 hectares, and surrounded by Okanagan, Kalamalka, and Swan Lakes, this community is a place of extraordinary natural beauty. This location has made Vernon a popular destination, first as a wintering ground for Syilx Okanagan people, then as a trading post for the North West Company, a transportation hub for the Canadian Pacific Railway, a training ground for the Canadian Army, an agricultural hub for ranchers and orchardists, and most recently a gateway community known for recreational opportunities including water sports, mountain biking, and hiking.

Population growth has altered the community landscape over time, beginning on the valley floor and growing up on the hillsides, first with acreages and then subdivisions. Throughout these changes and gradual urbanization, Vernon has remained resilient to new social, economic, and environmental contexts, and this tradition of resilience will help the City continue adapting to the rapidly changing world seen today.

2.2 Population Analysis

2.2.1 Population Statistics

Before considering growth within Vernon itself, it is important to understand the relationship with the surrounding area. This includes neighboring communities such as the District of Coldstream, Okanagan Indian Band Reserves No. 1 and No 6, and the Regional District of North Okanagan Electoral Areas B and C. Table 2.1 explores the population change among these areas over the past decade, demonstrating that the City of Vernon has contributed to over two-thirds of the neighboring area growth.

Table 2.1: Neighbouring Area Population Growth

Jurisdiction	2011 Census	2021 Census	Percent of 10 Year Neighbouring Area Growth
City of Vernon	38,150	44,519	72%
District of Coldstream	10,314	11,171	10%
RDNO Electoral Areas B and C	6,918	7,785	10%
OKIB Reserve No. 1 and No. 6	2,673	3,335	8%
Greater Vernon Area Total	58,055	66,810	100%

The City of Vernon has experienced nearly 17% population growth over the past decade, continuing a pattern of steady growth observed since the 1980s. Table 2.2 depicts this population growth, with a notable population change between the 1991 and 2001 census data as the City's boundary extended in 1993 to include the Okanagan Landing Area.

Table 2.2: City of Vernon Population Growth | * = projected numbers

Year	Population	10 Year Growth Rate
1981	20,500	-
1991	24,112	17%
2001	33,542	39%
2011	38,150	13%
2021	44,519	17%
2031	53,739*	19%*
2041	62,366*	15%*

The population of Vernon is forecasted to continue growing by an average of 1.9% per year over the next decade and then by 1.5% per year until 2041. A growing population requires balanced and sustainable growth to continue creating a livable City for both existing residents and the nearly 20,000 additional people anticipated by 2041. Ongoing monitoring will be key, and this plan will be reviewed on a five-year cycle to ensure growth projections remain aligned with the community's evolving needs.

2.2.2 Household Statistics

4,100 households moved to Vernon between 2006 and 2021, with approximately half of this shift occurring in the past five years. While the distribution of households by size has largely remained consistent, the share of one-person or two-person households has increased slightly from 69% to 72%, as seen through Figure 2.1.
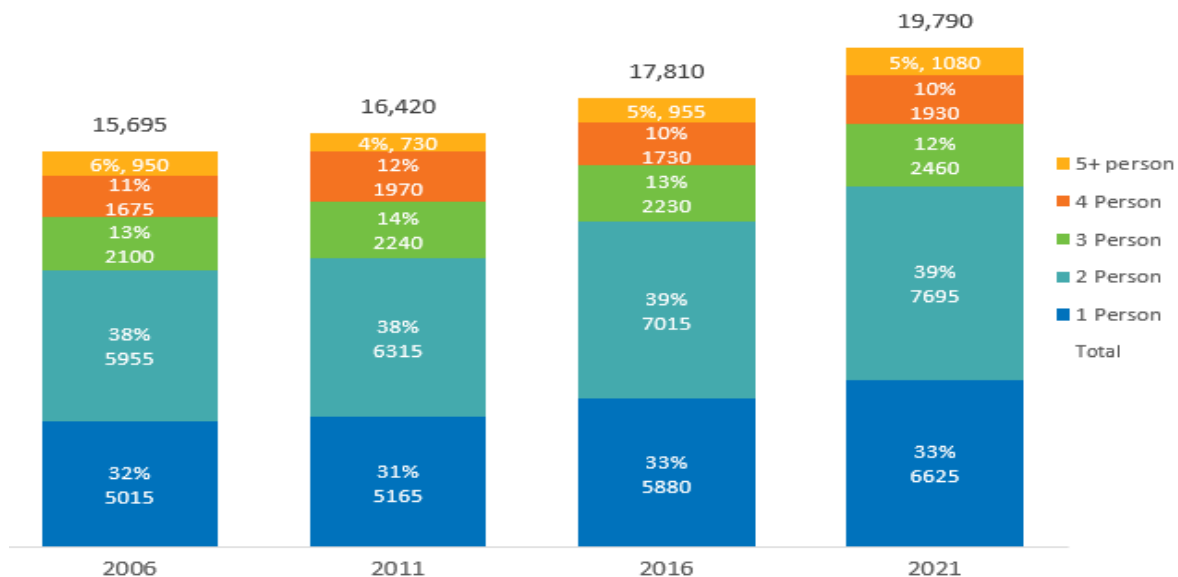
Figure 2.1 Households by size

The median age in Vernon was 49 years in 2021. This is notably higher than the provincial median of 44 and the city's median of 45 in 2006. There is an increasingly small share of the community aged 0-19, while the population of seniors is increasing, which aligns with national trends seen across the country. The share of people in their early working age to middle-age has remained largely the same over the past two decades as seen through Figure 2.2.
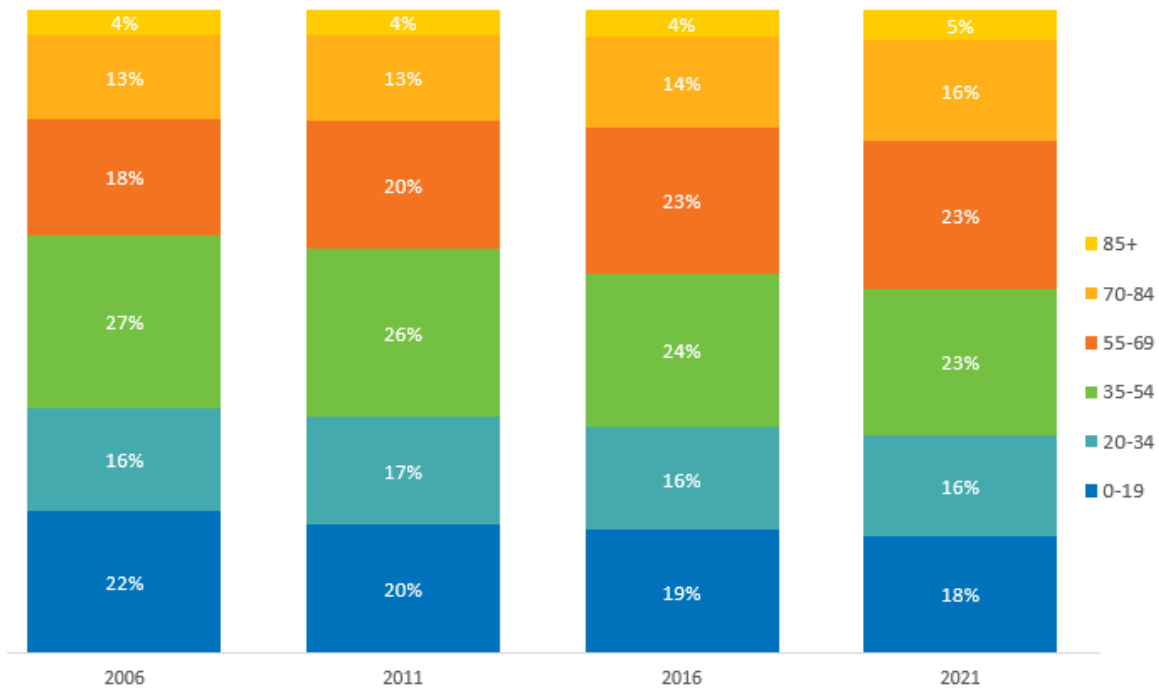
Figure 2.2 Population by age groupings

2.2.3 Employment Statistics

The median income in Vernon was $73,500 in 2020, with the median for homeowner households being $89,000 and renter households being $50,800. Despite this, the increase in median renter household income has consistently outpaced homeowner households over the past decade, increasing by 39% compared to 22% for homeowners from 2016-2021. The median income in Vernon is slightly below the provincial median of $85,000 but is on par with similar sized communities as seen through Figure 2.3.
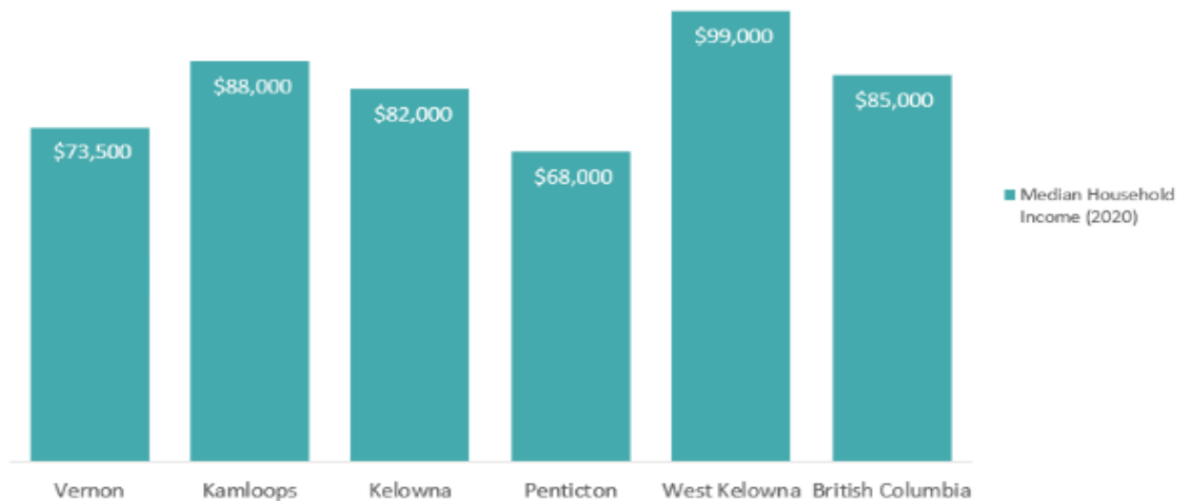
Figure 2.3 Income by household

Vernon's labour force is comprised of more than 20,000 people, representing approximately 56% of the population. As of 2021 the most prominent sectors were Retail, Accommodation, and Food Services (25%), Education and Healthcare (21%), and Administration and Professional Services (18%). Together these three sectors account for over 60% of the workforce as seen through Figure 2.4 below.
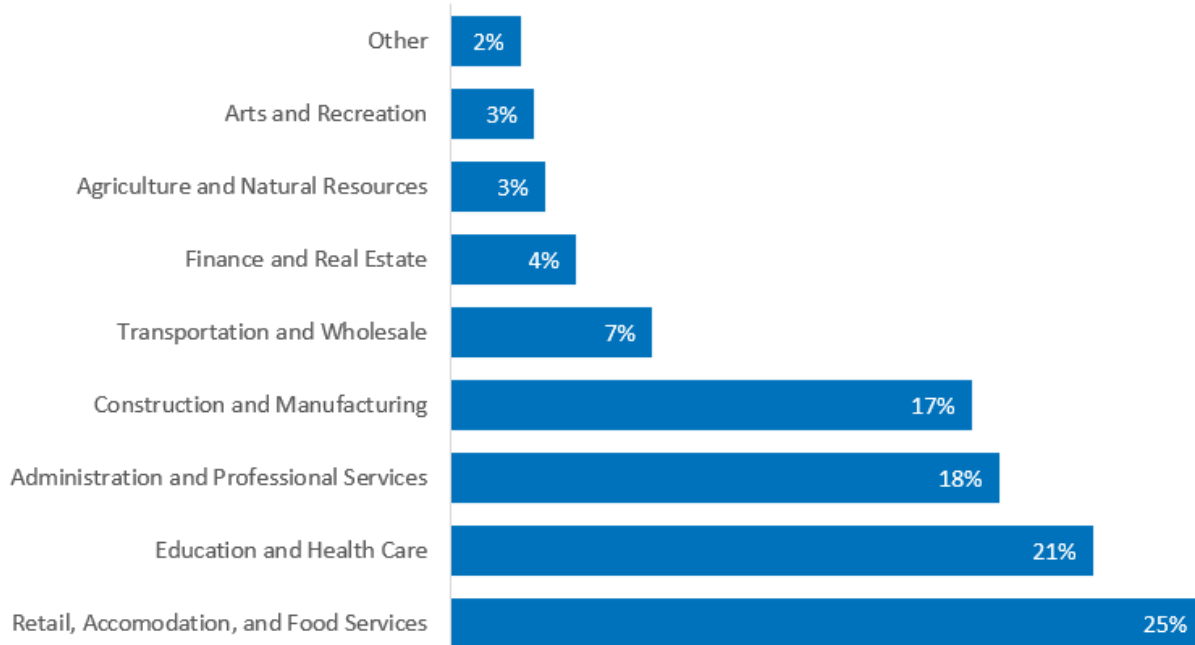
Figure 2.4 Workforce by sector

2.3 Housing Needs Analysis

The Federal Government identified the availability and affordability as a key priority across the country in Canada's Housing Plan. Recognizing this and seeking to accommodate a growing population, more housing is needed in Vernon. To inform future growth and determine the most appropriate housing forms, research on trends in the housing market was completed in conjunction with the population projections to form the Housing Action Plan and Housing Needs Report.

There were nearly 20,000 housing units in Vernon based on the 2021 census. Single-detached and duplex housing were the most popular building forms, accounting for more than half of the housing stock as seen through Figures 2.5 and 2.6 below.
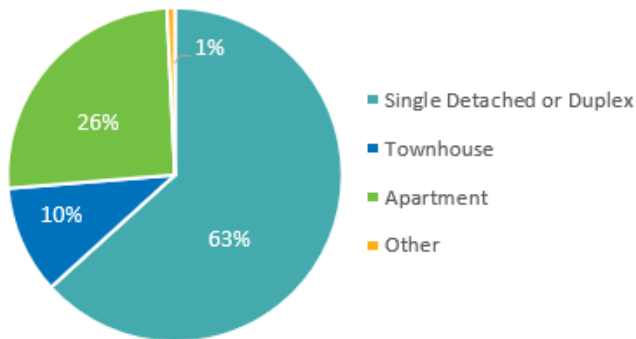
Figure 2.5 Housing by built form
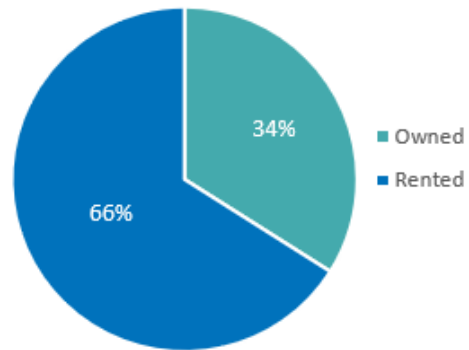
Figure 2.6 Housing by tenure

While this existing housing stock provides shelter for many residents, the Housing Needs Report has identified demand for an additional 5,993 housing units over the next ten years and 11,484 over the next twenty years to accommodate the growing population and aging housing stock present within the community. Growth within the Central Okanagan is also anticipated to contribute to this demand as population growth in the area facilitates an increase in housing prices and a spillover effect where those priced out of the Central Okanagan look for more **affordable housing** options farther north. A two-step approach is proposed to address this housing demand, beginning with short-term actions which can be addressed over the next five years and then extending to long-term objectives that we can work towards leading up to 2041.

ALEXIS PARK

2.3.1 Short-Term Needs

In the next five years Vernon needs to see an increase in the overall rate of home building through **gentle density**, purpose-built rental units, and entry-level home ownership options. Rental vacancy rates in the community have remained below 2% for the past decade, contributing to a 72% increase in rents which is unsustainable for many community members. This tight rental market has made it difficult for community members to secure suitable housing that meets their needs, as seen through Figure 2.7 below. While there is a broad need for inclusive, diverse, and equitably distributed **affordable housing** across the community, there is also a need for housing options that can accommodate different life stages and household types or sizes.

Housing targeted towards seniors, working-age residents, youth, newcomers, and low-income households can help to address this gap. The introduction of a broader range of housing forms such as apartments, condos, and smaller homes located near services and amenities including parks, recreation, shopping, and transit can further help to address these short-term needs.
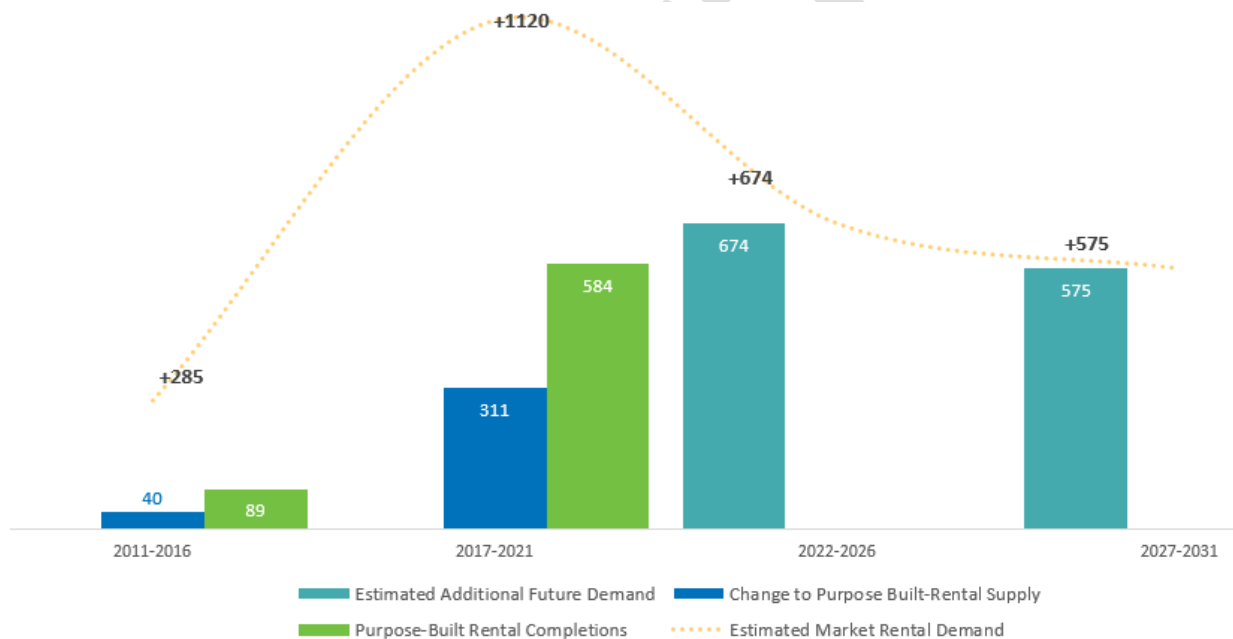
Figure 2.7 Purpose-built rental housing and estimated future demand

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2.3.2 Long-Term Needs

In the next twenty years Vernon needs to see a greater diversification of our housing supply. This includes dispersing transitional and social housing options throughout the community, as well as increased housing options for smaller households looking to downsize in retirement or enter the housing market as first-time homeowners. The need for a variety of bedroom options can be seen through Figure 2.8 below. In urban areas and along transportation corridors, the introduction of mixed-use developments with commercial opportunities on the ground floor and residential units above can both address community housing needs and support the local economy. By encouraging the community to grow upwards rather than outwards, densification can be promoted within the valley floor and limit sprawl – protecting hillsides and environmental corridors that surround the community.

Housing Type	Estimated Monthly Cost
Deep Subsidy & Supportive	< $500
Non-Market Rental	$500 - $1,500
Market Rental	$1,500 - $3,125
Ownership	> $3,125
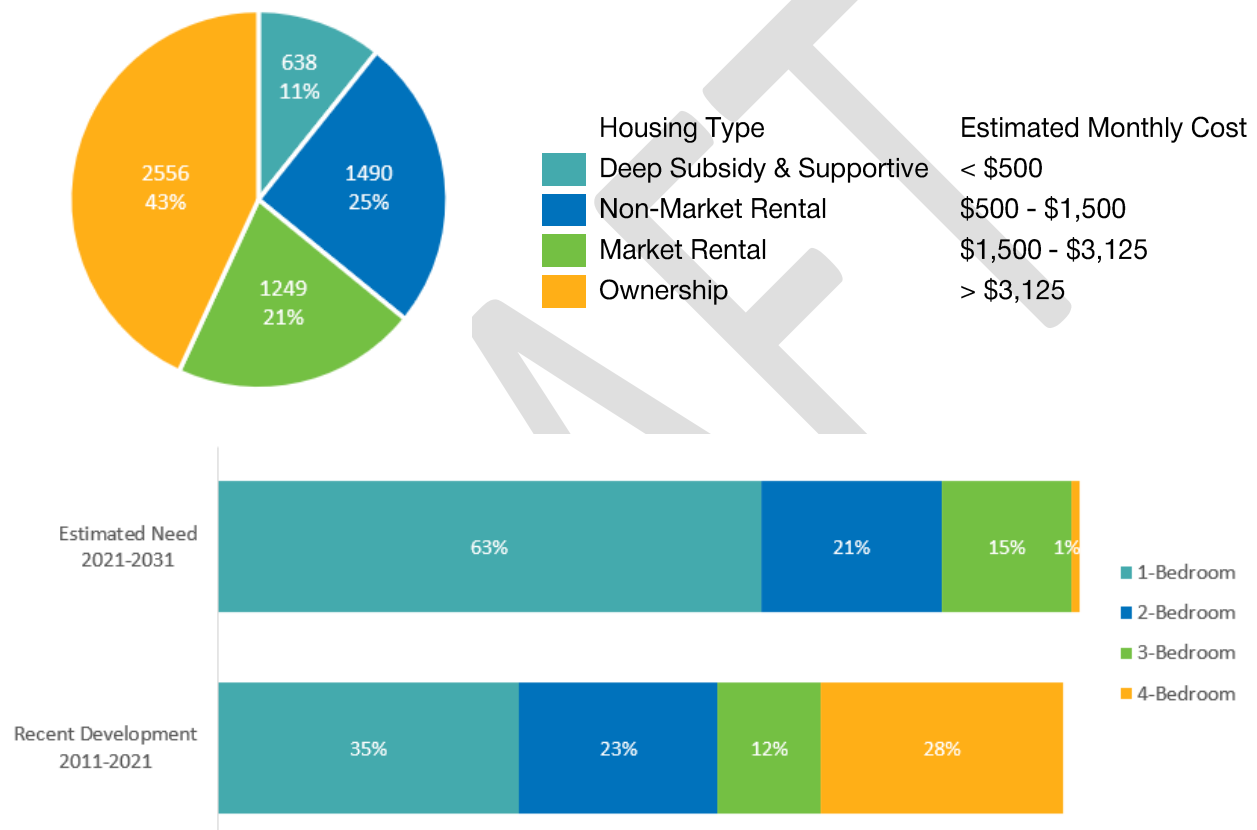
Figure 2.8 Long-term housing needs by type

Vernon's housing needs cannot be addressed by the City alone. It is critical to work alongside other levels of government, the private sector, and non-profit organizations to form partnerships, coordinate efforts, and address these short and long-term housing needs in the community.

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2.4 Partners & Relationships

Vernon values its neighbors and collaborative partners, as the combined populations interact across jurisdictions. As more people move to live, work, and play in the North Okanagan, collaboration and shared values are essential to manage growth and foster vibrant, and thriving communities while protecting our key natural areas and features. A coordinated planning approach, founded upon a shared vision and healthy partnerships, will enable Vernon to direct growth and manage change for the long-term health of the community and the region. Key partners are listed below.

Local Government Partners

Neighboring communities whose growth and development shape and are shaped by the regional land use context.

- District of Coldstream
- Okanagan Indian Band
- Regional District of North Okanagan

Provincial Government Partners

Provincial ministries that guide and support the delivery of essential services such as health, transportation, and housing within the community.

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs
- Ministry of Transportation and Transit

Economic Partners

Private sector groups that drive housing development and contribute to the economic vitality and vibrancy of the community.

- Canadian Home Builders Association
- Downtown Vernon Business Association
- Kelowna International Airport
- Urban Development Institute
- Vernon Chamber of Commerce

Institutional Partners

Public institutions that deliver essential community services and expand access to educational opportunities within the community.

- Interior Health
- Okanagan College
- School District #22
- University of British Columbia Okanagan

Chapter 3 – Vision, Values, and Growth Strategy

Vernon has a vision. Our vision and values begin with embracing how we want to grow.

3.1 Vision

Vernon is a vibrant, welcoming community where people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can thrive. Rooted in care for one another, our environment, and our economy, we believe that lasting progress comes from listening, engaging, and working together. As we welcome 20,000 new residents over the next 20 years, we will grow thoughtfully – guided by the voices of our community. Together, we are committed to honouring and protecting the natural landscapes that make Vernon a desirable place to live, visit, and belong.

Vernon is a city where people have choices in how and where they want to live and how they want to experience the community. Housing is abundant, attainable for a variety of income levels, and supportive for those who need it. The local economy is prosperous and provides opportunities for work where jobs are close to home. Entrepreneurship is encouraged, local shops and businesses are supported, agriculture is nourished, and new ideas are welcomed. Play is a part of daily life as the Trails Capital of BC with ample access to outdoor adventures, a vibrant arts and culture scene that honours Indigenous and historical roots, a variety of outdoor sports fields and parks, and easy access to Okanagan Lake. People have choices in how they like to move around the City from place to place with connected multi-modal options for pedestrians, cyclists, rollers, transit users, and drivers.

Neighbourhoods and Centres are vibrant, lively, and safe with small-scale neighbourhood shops and cafes, gentle residential density, and pedestrian friendly streets. Cohesive character is built into Centres through intentional planning and guidance, including renewing and improving existing infrastructure. Buildings feature designs that balance high-quality materials and architecture with accessibility, energy efficiency, and affordability. Placemaking and wayfinding is established through distinctive buildings and colourful art that helps all ages navigate the community.

Through engagement outlined in Chapter 1 - Foundation, the community has identified four goals for the City: Affordability, Diversity, Accessibility, and Sustainability. These principles are woven throughout this OCP to shape a city that prioritizes the well-being of individuals and the strength of community.

The 2045 Official Community Plan builds off the successful components of the previous OCP and considers the social, economic, physical, and environmental factors that create a thriving and resilient city. Thoughtful allocation of land uses that balance residential, commercial, agricultural, industrial, and park space supports compact growth that enriches neighbourhoods, strengthens the local economy, and ensures a sustainable future.

Vernon is an inclusive and equitable city where diversity of cultures, ages, and abilities are welcomed. You belong here.

Figure 3.1 Four community goals

3.2 Values

To promote balanced and strategic growth with a high quality of life which were identified as priorities through community engagement, the following seven values have been established as foundational pillars to support the more detailed land use policies in the OCP. By incorporating these community values into the policies that will shape the future of Vernon, this plan supports the way Vernon wants to grow.

Balanced growth is promoted by focusing development where infrastructure already exists, near urban services, vibrant community spaces, and multi-modal transportation networks.

Housing is diverse, affordable, and guided by inclusive policies that address the needs of residents at every stage of life.

Community and individual wellbeing are enhanced through inclusive policies to address social inequalities in the community, relationship building with local indigenous nations, and working to advance truth and reconciliation.

The local economy thrives through policies that support and diversify business, tourism, and the agricultural industry, streamline regulatory processes, encourage new investments and locally owned enterprises.

Active living, arts, and culture are celebrated in a vibrant community that invites residents and visitors to gather, engage, and enjoy shared experiences.

Natural resources are protected through policies that enhance sensitive ecosystems, protect agricultural land, encourage actions to mitigate climate change, and grow the urban tree canopy.

Community is prepared for emergencies and is resilient to climate change with plans and services in place to keep the community safe and prepared for emergency events.

3.3 Growth Strategy

The City of Vernon's **growth strategy** focuses on promoting sustainable growth by increasing housing density in strategic areas while protecting natural features such as hillsides, waterbodies, wetlands, and agricultural lands that together contribute to the beauty, health and resilience of Vernon. To achieve this, the City will encourage balanced growth in existing neighbourhoods (Map 3.1) and urban areas where infrastructure already exists and discourage it in areas where infrastructure is lacking. Encouraging housing in the right locations is the primary mitigating factor in reducing **greenhouse gas emissions** and elevating Vernon's Climate Action Plan.

A lack of housing supply is putting pressure on housing affordability in Vernon, the Okanagan, and across Canada. To ensure affordability for all community members, an increase in the supply of all types of housing is necessary including market, rental, **special needs**, and **affordable housing**. The Federal Government has acknowledged this need for housing supply across the country by developing and releasing Canada's Housing Plan. This plan and our OCP provide policies and actions that focus on building more homes, making it easier to own or rent a home, and helping those who can't afford a home.

The Housing Needs Report, completed in late 2024, projects the need for 11,484 new housing units over the next 20 years to accommodate existing residents, growing families, and new residents. The report also recommends a greater diversity of built forms including apartments, mixed-use, and higher density multi-family options including 1- and 2-bedroom homes. This aligns with the Provincial Housing Target that establishes the number of housing units that are needed in the community each year for the next 5 years and has been used to inform the density allocations in this Plan. By regularly measuring and reporting on this target, the City can ensure that the community is realizing the housing it needs to support all members.

Housing is diverse, affordable, and guided by inclusive policies that address the needs of residents at every stage of life.

In combination with needing access to a diversity of housing types, people also need access to other things like employment, transportation, parks, schools, shopping outlets, and services. The **growth strategy** focuses growth in certain areas to support a compact city form through the use of an **Urban Containment Boundary** and following the principles of **gentle density.** The Land Use Designations (Map 3.2) and associated policies in Chapter 5 – Land Use Policies provide the framework and guidance to foster balanced growth.

Balanced growth is promoted by focusing development where infrastructure already exists, near urban services, vibrant community spaces, and multi-modal transportation networks.

3.3.1 Urban Containment Boundary

The **Urban Containment Boundary** (Map 3.3) is the City's principal tool in limiting sprawl, growing sustainably, and supporting a robust economy by reducing the distance between where people live and where they work and play. This links efficient land use planning with sustainable transportation planning to reduce **greenhouse gas emissions.** Properties within the Urban Containment Boundary are supported for growth in a variety of densities ranging from low to high, depending on infrastructure, transit, services, and topography. Areas outside of the **Urban Containment Boundary** are restricted for growth and often feature sensitive environmental areas, challenging topography, limited community services, and the **Agricultural Land Reserve**.

Figure 3.2 Relationship between growth nodes and the **Urban Containment Boundary**

Within the **Urban Containment Boundary**, medium to high density growth is directed to the **Focused Growth Area** (Map 3.4). The **Focused Growth Area** identifies properties that are currently serviced with community sewer and water, are within a 10-minute fire response time, have access to transit, and are ideal for medium to high density growth. Within this area, densities are allocated in Primary and Secondary Growth Nodes, along specific **transit corridors**, and within Urban Neighbourhoods. Nodes, corridors, and urban neighbourhoods are foundational to balanced and smart growth that promotes sustainable, efficient, and livable neighbourhoods.

3.3.2 Primary Growth Nodes

Nodes are locations of activity where people live, work, play, move, shop, access services, and gather. They are typically compact and walkable, featuring higher density housing and mixed-use buildings, with higher-volume intersections, transit exchanges, or community amenities.

3.3.2.1 Urban Centres

The local economy thrives through policies that support and diversify business, tourism, and the agricultural industry, streamline regulatory processes, encourage new investments and locally owned enterprises.

To achieve the residential and employment density required to support a thriving and sustainable city, the Primary Growth Nodes for high-density mixed-use development will be the two **transit oriented development areas (TODAs)**: Downtown Urban Centre and Uptown Urban Centre. Both Urban Centres feature transit hubs and represent Vernon's target areas for the most growth and reinvestment. The goal for these areas is to create a walkable and bikeable centre, where the majority of daily errands do not require a car. There are plans to provide excellent transit options and expand multi-use pathways, giving residents choices in how they like to get around.

Mixed-use development will play a pivotal role in shaping Vernon's future as a compact, balanced, and sustainable community. Mixed-use development is a type of development where multiple land uses are integrated into one building or on one site. An example would be a site that includes a restaurant facing the street with an apartment building behind, or both within the same building. By embracing this type of

development, the places where Vernonites live, work, and play are located closer together to create a more walkable community. This can help create vibrant centres that support housing opportunities and business prosperity, aligning with **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design**, and shortening vehicle trips and expanding multimodal transportation options to reduce **greenhouse gas emissions**.

Growth in these areas will achieve a wide variety of housing options including higher density forms and will typically look like apartments and high-rises, with commercial units at street level. Parking will typically be accommodated in enclosed and structured parking, wrapped with active uses, and back of house items will be hidden from the public view. Pedestrian movements and quality public amenities will be prioritized, and a higher level of **streetscape** design will be encouraged in prominent locations.

Downtown is already the heart of Vernon's civic life, commerce, and culture. With its historic street grid, active storefronts, and a mix of uses, it has a strong foundation for intensification of residential density and commercial activity. Increasing the residential population downtown will support local businesses, activate streets beyond daytime business hours, and create a more inclusive city centre. Investing in Downtown will help revitalize underutilized spaces, enhance the public realm, and build community togetherness. Downtown will continue to be a place to celebrate Vernon's arts and culture by preserving the historic feel while promoting revitalization.

Uptown is the name the Official Community Plan gives the Village Green Mall and the surrounding areas including properties fronting Anderson Way. Uptown holds a prime opportunity for redevelopment into a Business district and a more complete, mixed-use primary growth node. Currently dominated by auto-oriented retail and large surface parking lots, this area is reimagined to be a modern centre that features apartments, high rises, a business district, public spaces, and the integration of transit. Large land parcels make it highly suitable for phased development that brings new residents and services together.

29TH ST

3.3.3 Secondary Growth Nodes

3.3.3.1 Village and Neighbourhood Centres

The Secondary Growth Nodes for medium-density, mixed-use development will be the Waterfront Village Centre, and two Neighbourhood Centres – Alexis Park and Jubilee Hill. These secondary growth areas will offer a diverse mix of housing options and commercial opportunities, local services, and public spaces within a community-oriented setting. These centres will grow to be very walkable and very bikeable where most errands can be accomplished on foot, and biking is convenient for most trips. Expanding transit in these areas will help fill the gaps where walking or biking is not sufficient, making car ownership a choice rather than a requirement.

Alexis Park is a connected neighbourhood that benefits from defined arterial and collector roads such as Alexis Park Dr, existing multi-family housing, the new Vernon Active Living Centre, and access to schools and parks. Being near transit routes and amenities makes Alexis Park well suited for modest infill and incremental density such as townhomes, apartments, and small-scale mixed-use.

Jubilee Hill is strategically positioned between the south side of Downtown and along Highway 97. It will grow to support the Vernon Jubilee Hospital with medium density housing, mixed-use buildings, short term accommodation, and institutional and cultural opportunities. A mixed-use and multi-modal corridor along 33 St will help support a balance of housing, mobility options, and public spaces to reinforce it as a compact community hub.

Vernon's lakeshore along Lake Okanagan is one of its defining features, and the Waterfront Village Centre Plan has been incorporated into this Official Community Plan to create a distinct, destination-oriented node that blends urban life with access to nature. With careful planning to protect environmental values, cultural values, and archaeological sites, this area could grow to support medium density residential development that respects the operational height limits of Vernon Regional Airport (Map 3.5). Incorporating small-scale retail, cafes, public spaces, and tourist-oriented uses can activate the waterfront and improve public access. Taller buildings can be strategically located along **transit corridors** including 25 Ave and Okanagan Landing Rd.

As secondary growth nodes, Alexis Park, Jubilee Hill, and the Waterfront Village Centre can support moderate sustainable growth that reinforces housing diversity, mobility options, and neighbourhood vibrancy. Larger apartment buildings could be developed where land assemblies are achievable, and smaller single stair egress buildings could be infilled onto smaller lots and constrained sites. Apartments will be supplemented with townhouses and smaller-scale infill to provide sensitive transitions to the existing fabric of the neighbourhoods. Commercial units may be incorporated into apartments at street level or as standalone developments. These secondary growth nodes can offer people the opportunity to live and work close to daily needs, to play in green spaces, and to move about the city in a variety of modes that prioritize pedestrians, rollers, and transit users.

3.3.3.2 Potential Transit Oriented Development Areas

Potential **transit oriented development areas** are identified as locations where two or more transit routes intersect and may evolve such that the frequency of service is 15 minutes or less. Currently, there are several locations in the city that meet these criteria, and these potential nodes could support compact commercial hubs and medium density housing in the mid-term future.

3.3.3.3 Transportation and Transit Corridors

Transportation and **transit corridors** are generally connections between primary and secondary growth nodes and exist along higher capacity roads such as arterials and collectors and feature transit routes. **Transit corridors** can support residential, mixed-use, commercial, and community use developments. This type of growth along **transit corridors** encourages transit use, which can help to expand and improve transit service by increasing the number of riders and users of the transit system. By increasing residential density along desired transportation and **transit corridors** such as 25 Ave, Okanagan Landing Rd, 27 St, 32 St, and 48 Ave, the City can work toward sustainable development by reducing reliance on single rider automobiles. Growth along transportation corridors will look like medium density apartment buildings, mixed-use buildings, standalone commercial buildings, and daily services integrated throughout.

3.3.4 Gentle Density Growth Neighbourhoods

A significant level of residential density can be achieved in existing neighbourhoods by embracing the principles of **gentle density. Gentle density** means adding attainable **missing middle housing** such as duplexes, fourplexes, heritage infill, townhouses, and small apartment buildings onto properties in Urban and Suburban Neighbourhoods. These small-scale and typically ground-oriented homes can help boost housing supply, offering flexibility, accessibility, and adaptability – without significantly altering the character of the neighbourhood.

Diagram still in progress.

*Figure 3.3 **Missing middle housing** (accessory dwelling units, infill, townhouse, small apartments) diagram*

3.3.4.1 Urban Neighbourhood

Urban Neighbourhoods are often the original neighbourhoods of Vernon and have established **streetscapes**, historical context, and a sense of identity. They provide transitions between Urban Centres, Village & Neighbourhood Centres, and Suburban Neighbourhoods in terms of location and scale. Often, Urban Neighbourhoods have original housing that may be decades old alongside newer infill developments. These neighbourhoods are well connected by transit or multi-use pathways to Centres and will accommodate higher levels of residential density and commercial activity than Suburban Neighbourhoods.

Some apartments may be suitable in these neighbourhoods on major roads, **transit corridors**, or prominent intersections, while most of the density will be in the form of infill housing such as duplexes or fourplexes, and townhomes. Small-scale and local commercial opportunities and community services will be encouraged in Urban Neighbourhoods to help meet the day-to-day needs of the residents.

Diagram still in progress.

Figure 3.4 Urban Neighbourhood with medium density (left) and Suburban Neighbourhood with low density (right)

3.3.4.2 Suburban Neighbourhood

Suburban Neighbourhoods are farther away from Downtown and Uptown and are largely car dependent. Growth may include **gentle density** or **missing middle housing**, home based businesses, and small-scale commercial development to support the daily needs of residents such as cafes, convenience stores, or food stores. Suburban neighbourhoods will be connected to Centres through multi-use pathways, collector and arterial roads, and transit that improves over time by responding to demand.

3.3.4.3 Resort Areas

Resort Areas draw tourists and year-round residents for the same reason – easy access to outdoor adventure and natural areas that make Vernon a desirable place to live, work, play, and visit. These areas will include a mix of housing types and tenures including short-term rentals. Commercial and community uses will be available to support the needs of the tourism sector and for year-round residents who value a unique lifestyle option.

3.3.5 Limited Growth Areas

3.3.5.1 Suburban Limited & Hillside Neighbourhoods

Suburban Limited Neighbourhoods are located outside of the **Urban Containment Boundary** and have been identified for limited growth due to constraints in expanding community water and/or sewer servicing. These neighbourhoods have the potential for increased growth in the future as community water and sewer capacity is expanded and transit frequency is improved.

> *Natural resources are protected through policies that enhance sensitive ecosystems, protect agricultural land, encourage actions to mitigate climate change, and grow the urban tree canopy.*

Hillside neighbourhoods are considered Suburban Limited, Resort, or Rural and are not suitable for intensive residential growth due to challenging topography, lack of community water and sewer services, and the presence of substantial **environmentally sensitive areas**. Existing Hillside **neighbourhood plans** will be honored for **gentle density** growth, recognizing that property owners have invested in subdivision plans, engineering, and installation of services. Expansion of existing plans and new plans will be discouraged and only considered where there is demonstrated public benefit. This could include substantial park and open space dedication, conservation of **environmentally sensitive areas**, off-site infrastructure improvements, affordable or rental housing, inclusion of commercial and daily services, or other benefits that align with Official Community Plan objectives.

3.3.5.2 Rural

Rural lands are often constrained by challenging topography, sensitive ecosystems, or proximity to **Agricultural Land Reserve**. Rural lands can help provide a necessary buffer between agriculture and urban residential uses to reduce conflicts due to farming activity that can produce noise, dust, and other nuisances. Limited growth in the forms of secondary suites or accessory dwelling units may be possible in these areas based on servicing requirements and lot size. Generally, new development proposals in Rural areas will be discouraged, recognizing that limited infrastructure exists, public investment in roads and transit is limited, and to protect the environmental and ecological value of these lands.

Diagram still in progress.
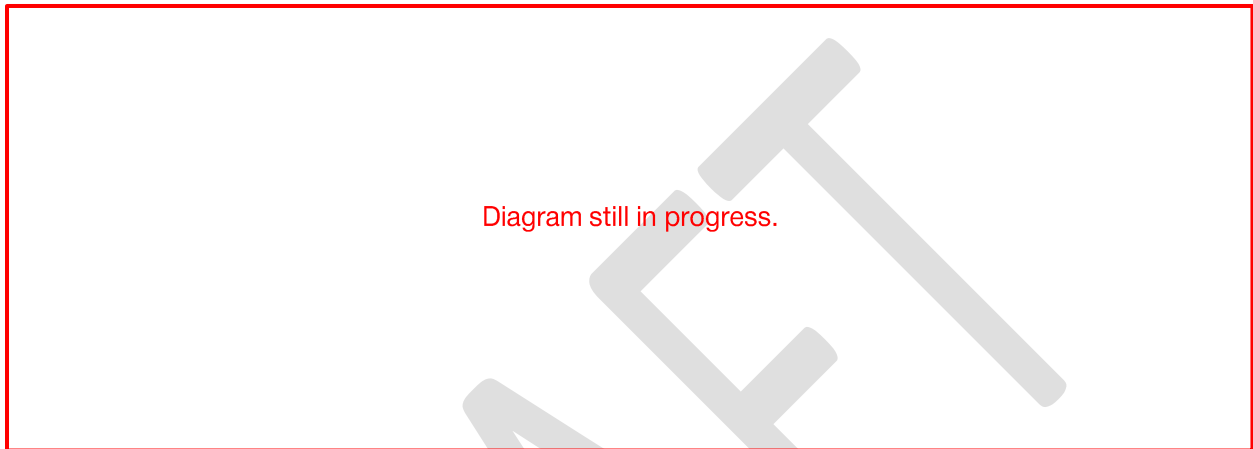
Figure 3.5 Diagram illustrating the relationship between urban and rural areas

3.3.6 Preservation Areas

3.3.6.1 Agricultural Land Reserve

Agricultural Land Reserve areas will be protected and preserved to support agriculture and local farmers by discouraging residential, commercial, or industrial encroachment into agricultural lands. Residential growth and other uses on agricultural lands will be limited by provincial regulations established by the Agricultural Land Commission. Agricultural areas will be serviced primarily with local roads that respect agricultural activities, with limited transit, and limited biking infrastructure.

3.3.6.2 Natural Areas

Parks, Open Spaces, and Natural Areas will be protected where feasible to promote regional habitat connectivity, including both North-South and East-West connections (Map 3.6).

3.4 Growth Areas Conceptual Diagram

This illustration is a bubble diagram that outlines a simple, schematic version of the OCP's **growth strategy**. It visually represents relationships between different areas and neighbourhoods within the City. It uses circles (the "bubbles") to represent areas and lines and arrows to show how those spaces connect and relate to each other. Bubbles are shown to highlight prominent areas such as Alexis Park, the Waterfront, Downtown, Uptown, Jubilee Hill, and Polson.

Figure 3.6 Growth bubble diagram

Chapter 4 – Citywide Policies

Vernon has values. Citywide policies turn these values into actions to shape our future.

TURTLE MOUNTAIN

Introduction

Section 471 of the *Local Government Act* allows municipalities to set out policies for a variety of items within their OCPs to guide the decisions and operations of the community. While these policies do not commit the community to proceed with any of the works mentioned in the OCP, all other bylaws and works undertaken by the community must be consistent with the OCP.

The following Citywide Policies are guided by the seven community values identified through public engagement. They cover city-wide land use planning topics such as environment and climate action, parks and recreation, the economy, infrastructure, and transportation. To better understand the steps necessary for implementing and achieving the seven community values, the following sections have been categorized with objectives, policies, actions, and targets. This provides clear direction for the intended objectives to be undertaken by all stakeholders – ranging from the community at large to city staff specifically – to achieve the OCP vision.

4.1 Housing

Housing is diverse, affordable, and guided by inclusive policies that address the needs of residents at every stage of life.

A healthy community is built on the foundation of having an adequate housing supply to meet the core needs of all residents. Throughout a person's life, their housing needs will shift across the housing spectrum with age, family size, mobility, and economic resources. Renting a room in a shared apartment as a young adult may transition into purchasing a starter townhome for a growing family. A person who requires emergency shelter or complex care for a portion of their life could transition into purchasing their first apartment. Later in life, a person may require housing that is accessible for mobility challenges. To meet the housing needs of community members in all stages of life, Vernon will support and assist property owners and developers to build a range of housing types, sizes, and tenures that address the housing types identified in the Housing Needs Report and across the housing spectrum.

A priority for the City is to shift the culture of how development applications are processed and what support and incentives the City can offer to property owners interested in adding housing density to their properties. The City recognizes that financial incentives, zoning incentives, and supportive policies are an important part of implementing OCP objectives that may not be achievable with the private sector alone.

The Citywide Housing policies below are broad objectives and policies that touch on all areas of the City and align with federal and provincial initiatives to build more homes, faster and to make it easier to own or rent a home. The action items in this section are identified to help create the conditions for housing development, including updating bylaws and streamlining development approval processes. The actions outlined in this OCP will help the City to achieve the recently announced Provincial Housing Target of providing 75% of the Housing Needs Estimate over the next 5 years, reported annually.

Specific housing policies that relate to Future Land Use Designations and geographical areas can be found in Chapter 5 - Land Use Policies.

4.1.1 Objective: Streamline processes for development applications to deliver more homes, faster.

Culture of Co-operation

4.1.1.1 **Policy:** Support the development community and foster an inclusive partnership by enhancing dialogue, sharing ideas, and opening up channels of communication.

4.1.1.2 **Policy:** Foster a "how can I help" attitude when responding to development inquiries, especially with first time and small-scale developers who may be unfamiliar with local government processes.

4.1.1.3 **Policy:** Prioritize reducing the time required for Property Information Requests to enhance service delivery and support timely transactions for all property stakeholders.

4.1.1.4 **Action:** Develop a formal and defined pre-application process for land use applications to help identify potential requirements early and to provide consistent direction to applicants.

Streamline Applications

4.1.1.5 **Action:** Review the Development Application Procedures Bylaw and Delegation of Authority Bylaw to streamline processes and provide clarity to applicants.

4.1.1.6 **Action:** Develop streamlined development approval processes for small-scale infill and single stair access apartments by implementing a program for pre-approved, pre-designed, shelf-ready designs.

4.1.1.7 **Policy:** Support the construction of standardized housing designs identified in the federal Housing Design Catalogue.

4.1.1.8 **Action:** Explore the potential for City land acquisitions to create land assemblies to offer "development ready" parcels to housing developers, especially for **affordable** or **special needs housing**.

4.1.1.9 **Policy:** Consider alternative road cross sections first before requiring land dedication for increased road width where housing development is likely to be impacted.

4.1.1.10 **Policy:** Discourage Traffic Impact Assessments or Studies on properties proposing housing projects that are anticipated to generate less than 100 trips/peak hour or are within a **transit oriented development area** to streamline housing approvals.

Business Systems

4.1.1.11 **Action:** Review current business software systems for improvements to streamline processes and collect data on new and existing housing supply.

4.1.1.12 **Action:** Implement and expand e-permitting across all application types including rezoning and development permits.

4.1.2 Objective: Embrace innovative solutions to increase the housing supply.

Construction Methods

4.1.2.1 **Policy:** Support non-traditional forms of construction including modular and panelized housing, modular apartments, tilt-up construction, and other fast-build housing types that provide reduced construction timelines and increased cost certainty.

4.1.2.2 **Policy:** Encourage innovative building forms such as single stair egress buildings that can respond to site specific challenges including small lot sizes and economic constraints.

Conserve Existing Buildings

4.1.2.3 **Policy:** Support the adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings into multi-dwelling and mixed-use buildings.

4.1.2.4 **Policy:** Encourage property owners to relocate or repurpose existing homes to reduce building material waste by removing common obstacles to building relocation.

4.1.2.5 **Policy:** Support Temporary Use Permits for holding properties to allow property owners to generate revenue while assembling land or preparing for redevelopment.

Public Lands for Homes

4.1.2.6 **Policy:** Support the use of surplus, underused, and vacant federal lands for housing development.

4.1.3 Objective: Prioritize affordable, attainable, accessible, and special needs housing to meet the core housing needs of the community.

Equitable Distribution

4.1.3.1 **Policy:** Support the equitable distribution of overnight shelters, supportive housing, and **special needs housing** across the City with a focus on locations that offer easy access to transit, employment, and essential amenities.

HARWOOD

Affordable, Attainable, Special Needs Housing

4.1.3.2 Policy: Encourage the development of **affordable housing**, rental housing, and **special needs housing** by considering regulatory flexibility. This could include reduced parking, additional height, or a relaxation of design guidelines.

4.1.3.3 Policy: Continue to support the provision of housing that addresses special needs of the community such as complex care, accessible housing, Indigenous housing, emergency shelters, and others by working with housing providers to understand their needs and provide incentives.

4.1.3.4 Policy: Collaborate with non-profit and non-market housing providers by building relationships, supporting engagement, and facilitating cooperation.

4.1.3.5 Policy: Support innovative seniors living projects such as those with an intergenerational housing model or a dementia-friendly village.

4.1.3.6 Policy: Encourage the inclusion of single-storey, accessible, and **adaptable units** that can be modified over time to meet the needs of residents with physical limitations or mobility tools.

Diverse Housing Tenures

4.1.3.7 Policy: Support alternative ownership options including co-operative housing, co-housing, attainable ownership, leased land, timeshares, and building stratifications that meet the general definition of attainable home ownership.

4.1.3.8 Policy: Support diverse rental housing tenures including market and affordable rentals, supportive housing, **special needs housing**, boarding houses, rent-to-own, and others.

Homelessness

4.1.3.9 Action: Work with other jurisdictions and municipalities to share information on best practices and lessons learned in reducing the time it takes to move individuals and families experiencing homelessness into more stable housing.

City-Owned Land

4.1.3.10 Action: Identify existing vacant and under-utilized City owned land that would be appropriate to be used for achieving **affordable** or **special needs housing** objectives.

4.1.3.11 Action: Develop a dedicated Land Enhancement Housing Team to spearhead a program for using city owned land for **affordable** or **special needs housing** development.

4.1.4 Objective: Achieve a balanced rental market of 3% to 5% vacancy.

Rental Housing Stock

4.1.4.1 Policy: Prohibit the stratification of existing rental housing developments with 5 or more units when the rental vacancy rate is below 4%.

4.1.4.2 Action: Develop regulatory incentives for rental housing within the Zoning Bylaw that could include a subzone designation, parking reductions, increased height, or others.

Tenant Protection & Mobile Home Parks

4.1.4.3 Policy: Ensure short-term rental accommodation does not negatively impact the long-term rental housing supply.

4.1.4.4 **Action:** Review existing bylaws and policies related to tenant protection and mobile home park redevelopments to modernize and improve assistance for tenants displaced by redevelopment.

4.1.4.5 **Policy:** Support the retention of mobile home parks as a source of rental housing and affordable ownership in the community.

4.1.5. Objective: Public benefit is realized through development.

Public Benefit Policy

4.1.5.1 **Policy:** Consider relaxations of development regulations or additional height for residential and mixed-use projects that provide a tangible public benefit to the residents of Vernon that may include the following:

- A high level of architectural design on the first 1 – 3 storeys to be **pedestrian oriented** and relate positively to the **streetscape**;
- A well-designed and functional public plaza or open space on site;
- Inclusion of community services such as daycares, schools, or health services;
- High efficiency design; or
- Inclusion and provision of a publicly accessible Car Share vehicle and parking space.

4.1.5.2 **Policy:** Consider relaxations of development regulations for residential projects that meet housing needs identified in the Housing Needs Report that may include:

- Purpose built rental housing;
- **Affordable housing;**
- Supportive housing; and
- Special needs housing.

4.1.6 Objective: Incentives encourage development that aligns with the Housing Needs Report.

Housing Incentives

4.1.6.1 **Action:** Develop a program for housing incentives including streamlined processes, financial incentives, or revised regulations to facilitate the delivery of housing. This may include reviewing current financial incentive programs such as the Rental Housing Incentive Grant Program or revising regulations in the Zoning Bylaw.

THE RISE

4.2 Environment & Climate Resilience

> *Natural resources are protected* through policies that enhance sensitive ecosystems, protect agricultural land, encourage actions to mitigate climate change, and grow the urban tree canopy.

Natural landscapes are integral to Vernon's identity, underpinning the health, economy, and overall livability of the community. Features such as lakes, wetlands, forests, and grasslands support a wide range of plant and animal species, including those at risk with limited habitat ranges. These landscapes provide vital ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration, soil stabilization, temperature regulation, and opportunities for recreation that enhance the health and well-being of residents. Preserving and restoring the natural environment not only strengthens resilience to climate change but also ensures that these irreplaceable resources remain accessible for future generations.

Although urbanization over the past century has altered areas of the natural environment, it is important to prioritize the protection and enhancement of land, water, and air resources to preserve local biodiversity for years to come. By adopting a comprehensive approach to planning and development, the City and community can move beyond minimizing impacts on sensitive ecosystems to actively restoring and enhancing these vital landscapes.

4.2.1 Objective: Protect and restore environmentally sensitive areas.

Vegetation Retention and Protection Tools

4.2.1.1 **Policy:** Encourage the retention of existing vegetation, planting of new vegetation, and removal of invasive species through development approval and major construction projects. In the Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area some vegetation loss may be necessary as recommended by a qualified professional to reduce fire risk.

4.2.1.2 **Policy**: Protect environmentally sensitive areas through tools such as:

- Dedicating land as a City park or natural space to prioritize sensitive features in balance with public use;

- Placing a covenant for conservation purposes with the City or a non-governmental organization eligible to hold conservation covenants; or

- Implementing adequate setbacks for adjacent developments to preserve the integrity of sensitive areas and minimize risks at the interface between natural spaces and development.

Riparian Health

4.2.1.3 **Policy:** Support the naturalization of the foreshore and of streams to mitigate flooding events and improve climate resilience.

4.2.1.4 **Action:** Restore **riparian** areas adjacent to streams, wetlands, and other waterbodies by removing retaining walls, culverts, structures, and other impediments that are detrimental to **riparian** function.

4.2.1.3 **Policy:** Collaborate with the Okanagan Basin Water Board, the Province, and other stakeholders to support initiatives to prevent the spread of invasive mussels into the North Okanagan.

No Net Loss

4.2.1.4 **Policy:** Require land use and development projects to have "no net loss" of natural ecosystems and their functions as determined through an environmental assessment for work proposed in a Terrestrial Ecosystem or Aquatic Ecosystem Development Permit Area.

4.2.1.5 **Policy:** Prioritize avoiding impacts to **environmentally sensitive areas** in the following order:
- Careful project siting and design prior to considering the mitigation of minor or temporary impacts through habitat restoration; then
- Where permanent habitat loss is unavoidable, acceptable, and compensable, on-site compensation may be considered; and lastly
- Off-site compensation only where it offers greater ecological benefits to the overall habitat type, species, or community to the discretion of the city.

Buffering and Connectivity

4.2.1.6 **Policy:** Encourage development to buffer along **environmentally sensitive areas** to reduce light and noise pollution that may negatively impact wildlife in an effort to preserve wildlife corridors and habitat links throughout the city.

Meet or Exceed

4.2.1.7 **Action:** Develop a policy which meets or exceeds requirements outlined under the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* to reduce the need for provincial oversight of the **riparian** development approval processes.

4.2.1.8 **Action:** Review and update the Environmental Management Areas Strategy to align with current best practices and regional standards for environmental permitting and protection.

Increase the Community Tree Canopy

4.2.1.9 **Action:** Develop an urban forestry strategy including an equity analysis to map neighbourhoods with the highest need for trees to distribute the benefits of the community tree canopy equitably.

4.2.1.10 **Policy:** Integrate tree policies across municipal departments to ensure that protection, planting, and maintenance of both new and existing trees are prioritized.

4.2.1.11 **Policy:** Encourage continuous boulevards to support a robust community tree canopy that provides shade for pedestrians.

4.2.1.12 **Policy:** Encourage new development to plant trees on private and public property to contribute to the community tree canopy

BX CREEK

4.2.1.13 **Policy:** Where tree planting is not feasible due to site constraints, encourage planting of alternatives such as low-maintenance and draught resistant shrubs, grasses, and plants.

4.2.1.14 **Action:** Work toward the creation of regulations for street tree installation, care standards, and maintenance periods.

4.2.2 Objective: Improve community climate resiliency.

Climate Action Plan Implementation

4.2.2.1 **Action:** Implement the Climate Action Plan.

4.2.2.2 **Action:** Review the Climate Action Plan on a 5-year cycle, striving to align the timing of future reviews with the Official Community Plan update process.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction

4.2.2.3 **Target:** Continuously reduce **greenhouse gas emissions**, primarily from buildings, transportation, and organic waste, to achieve targets of a 50% reduction in **greenhouse gas emissions** by 2030, 70% reduction by 2040, and a 100% reduction by 2050 based on 2017 levels.

4.2.2.4 **Policy:** Encourage the integrated development of walkable neighbourhoods and a sustainable transportation network to reduce **greenhouse gas emissions**.

Climate Education and Collaboration

4.2.2.5 **Policy:** Support equitable access for all community members to information and resources related to climate readiness.

4.2.2.6 **Policy:** Collaborate with regional partners to promote water conservation practices and ensure the long-term operation and quality of community water and wastewater systems.

4.2.2.7 **Policy:** Encourage using a climate change lens to review government activities including budgeting, procurement, asset management, and land use decisions.

4.2.2.8 **Policy:** Support City Council, management, and staff capacity for delivering climate-ready municipal operations and services.

Natural Asset Management

4.2.2.9 **Action:** Implement and maintain a natural asset management plan to ensure the community benefits of natural assets are reflected in planning and resource management decisions, and the need for built infrastructure is minimized.

Waste Management Practices

4.2.2.10 **Action:** Explore waste management practices to identify opportunities for waste diversion or reuse across the community, such as continuously improving the organic waste composting program.

Energy Efficiency

4.2.2.11 **Policy:** Consider energy efficiency in community planning, building design, and infrastructure. Support land uses, development plans, transportation and utility infrastructure, building forms, and energy alternatives that increase zero-carbon energy efficiency and conservation in a sustainable manner.

4.2.2.12 **Policy:** Support retrofitting existing buildings in the community to improve energy efficiency and resiliency to climate change impacts.

4.2.2.13 **Action:** Implement climate action principles in the construction and maintenance of municipal infrastructure and public assets.

4.2.3 Objective: Promote agricultural resilience and food security.

Local Food Production

4.2.3.1 **Policy:** Encourage opportunities to engage residents and businesses in local and regional agricultural processes, connecting agricultural lands, people, and products.

4.2.3.2 **Policy:** Support opportunities for local and regional food production, processing and sourcing and ancillary agricultural activities (farm stands, agritourism, secondary processing) that contribute to economic diversification, profitability, and resiliency while maintaining the agricultural capability of farmland.

4.2.3.3 **Policy:** Encourage opportunities for community gardens in all commercial and residential zones and in public places that are highly accessible to all ages and abilities regardless of social or financial status.

Buy Local Initiatives

4.2.3.4 **Policy:** Encourage the development of a year-round community farmers market that fosters economic growth by supporting local farmers, artisans, and small businesses while strengthening community connections.

4.3 Community Safety

Community is prepared for emergencies and is resilient to climate change with plans and services in place to keep the community safe and prepared for emergency events.

Emergency plans and services ensure community members can feel safe where they live, work, and play. When neighbourhoods are safe, families can thrive, kids can play outside, and local businesses can grow. Safety also brings people together and builds trust among neighbors. Community planning and building practices which incorporate resilience into decision making work hand-in-hand while maintaining the capacity for a timely and effective response to emergencies or disasters. It's not just about preventing crime and responding to natural disasters – it's also about making sure everyone has access to the support and services they need. A safe community gives everyone the chance to live a happy and healthy life.

4.3.1 Objective: Improve community resiliency in emergency events.

Asset Management and Advocacy

4.3.1.1 **Action:** Review public and private assets for vulnerabilities, particularly regarding climate-related hazards (flooding, landslides, storms), and integrate climate considerations into all infrastructure development and operations.

4.3.1.2 **Policy:** Advocate to senior governments, public agencies, and utility providers to invest in physical and technological upgrades that enhance infrastructure resilience against major hazards.

Communication and Capacity Building

4.3.1.3 **Policy:** Collaborate with the Regional District of North Okanagan, local First Nations, and senior levels of government to establish coordinated strategies for mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery to emergency events.

4.3.1.4 **Policy:** Prioritize the communication of accessible emergency preparedness information to empower community members and ensure their basic needs are met in emergency conditions.

Emergency Preparedness

4.3.1.5 **Policy:** Support the use of City facilities, buildings, and spaces as temporary emergency management sites, ensuring that design and renovations incorporate resilient features.

4.3.1.6 **Policy:** Prioritize emergency preparedness and climate resilience initiatives that address the needs of vulnerable groups including youth, seniors, people living with disabilities, and others.

4.3.2 Objective: Reduce risk to persons and property from major hazards.

Emergency Access and Egress

4.3.2.1 **Policy:** Prioritize the inclusion of emergency access and egress routes when planning infrastructure improvements, municipal projects, and the maintenance of recreational areas.

Emergency Management Integration

4.3.2.2 **Policy:** Support a centralized early detection and warning system; including improving communication methods for businesses and community members in the event of an emergency.

4.3.2.3 **Policy:** Embed emergency management objectives, risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery, into City plans, policies, bylaws, and construction projects.

FIRE STATION 1

4.4 Parks & Recreation

Active living, arts, and culture are celebrated in a vibrant community that invites residents and visitors to gather, engage, and enjoy shared experiences.

Public spaces such as parks, trails, libraries, museums, community arts centers, and recreation centers are crucial to creating a vibrant, healthy, and diverse community. These spaces serve as hubs for socializing, relaxation, recreation, and cultural activities, helping to strengthen connections among residents and enhancing the overall quality of life. Well-designed, safe spaces for recreation, gatherings, and special events not only foster community engagement but also support local businesses, attract investment, and encourage development.

The City envisions a well-connected and accessible park system that promotes healthy, active lifestyles, and enhances community well-being. To achieve this vision, the policies for parklands are based on guiding principles that include ensuring an equitable amount and distribution of parks in all neighbourhoods; providing a diverse range of park types including Active Parks and Natural Area Parks; expanding building and improving existing parks; acquiring new parklands to align with neighbourhood growth; providing trails for walking and cycling for everyday transportation; establishing funding for maintenance of existing and future parks; and collaborating with community groups to build community participation.

4.4.1 Objective: Enhance public access to natural areas.

Lake Access and Waterfront Trails

4.4.1.1 **Policy:** Require a 15 m to 30 m wide dedication of **riparian** areas along Okanagan Lake, Vernon Creek, and BX Creek, measured from the high water mark or top of bank, at the time of subdivision, OCP amendment, rezoning, development permit, or building permit, as determined by a Qualified Environmental Professional.

4.4.1.2 **Policy:** Where a linear park or trail is identified on Map 4.1, require up to a 10 m dedication at time of development to facilitate linear trails outside the **riparian** and **environmentally sensitive areas.**

4.4.1.3 **Action:** Prioritize public access to Okanagan Lake through strategic land acquisition practices in accordance with the Parks Acquisition Strategy.

4.4.2 Objective: Improve parks and recreational opportunities.

Recreation Links

4.4.2.1 **Action:** Review and update the Parks Master Plan to include all classes of parks.

4.4.2.2 **Policy:** Support park connectivity through the development of integrated active transportation networks and recreational trails (Map 4.1) to encourage accessibility for all users.

4.4.2.3 **Policy:** Collaborate with Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) and neighbouring municipalities to support the development, connectivity, and maintenance of regional parks and trails including the Grey Canal Trail and Okanagan Rail Trail.

4.4.2.4 **Policy:** Support the creation of linear parks, pathways, and mid-block pedestrian connections to connect neighbourhoods to one another.

Strategic Land Acquisition

4.4.2.5 **Action:** Develop a Park Acquisition Strategy including a **Development Cost Charge** program to ensure the equitable distribution of parks and amenities, particularly in areas experiencing growth.

4.4.2.6 **Policy:** Require the provision of fully serviced park land or cash-in-lieu of park land when three or more additional lots are being created through a subdivision. Cash-in-lieu may be considered where:

- the property is located within the **Focused Growth Area** (Map 3.4);
- the 5% park land dedication would be too small for a park;
- the parcel would not complement an existing park or trail system; or
- no additional parkland needs have been identified in the area.

4.4.2.7 **Action:** Implement a **Development Cost Charge** program for new development to acquire active park lands that cannot be obtained through the subdivision process; aiming for a range between 2.0 ha and 3.0 ha of park land per thousand people in population growth in order to provide active park space within the community.

4.4.2.8 **Policy:** Support alternative funding strategies where possible for parkland acquisition such as density bonusing, density transfer, or the issuance of charitable tax receipts.

4.4.2.9 **Action:** Work towards joint-use agreements with School District 22 for mutual community benefits such as increased usage of sport fields, courts, and various indoor facilities.

4.4.2.10 **Policy:** Consider park, trail, and recreation objectives before the disposition of surplus City lands including unused utility corridors and statutory rights-of-way.

4.4.2.11 **Policy:** Support the creation of linear parks along utility corridors, statutory rights-of-way and boulevards to achieve shared use objectives.

KIN BEACH
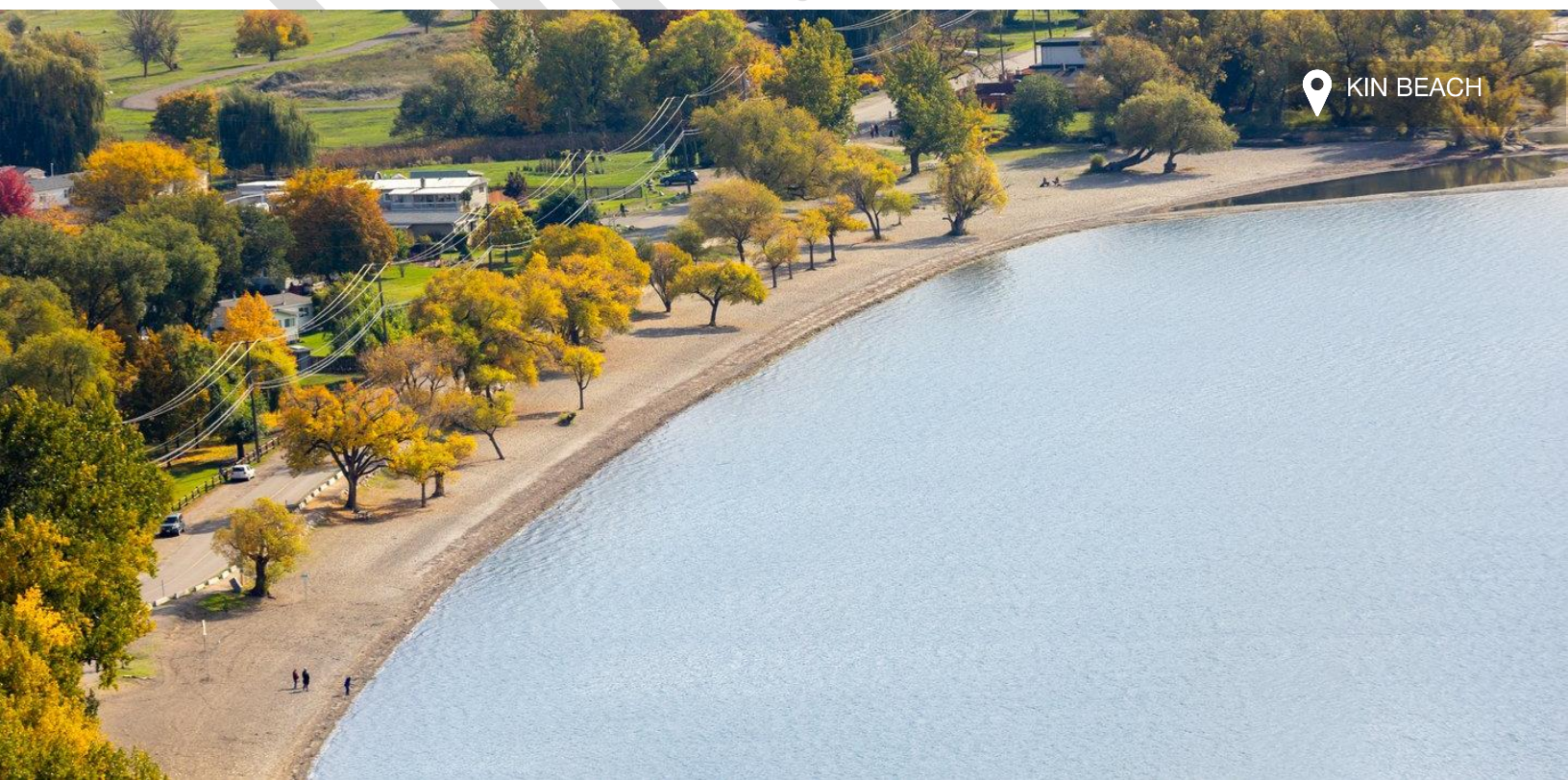
4.4.3 Objective: Improve access to recreational, arts, and cultural activities in the community.

Community Facilities

4.4.3.1 **Policy:** Support local neighbourhood community facilities in all neighbourhoods to ensure equitable distribution of facilities, while clustering major recreation facilities within the **Focused Growth Area** where users have access to transit and active transportation corridors.

4.4.3.2 **Policy:** Support improvements to signage in public buildings with clear maps, symbols, and landmarks to help with wayfinding and navigation; and place signage at lower levels so people who use mobility aids can see them more easily.

4.4.3.3 **Action:** Review accessibility options for barrier-free access to recreation, arts, and culture programs in community facilities.

4.4.3.4 **Policy:** Collaborate with community partners to create opportunities for graffiti art and youthful art installations.

Cultural Activities and Special Events

4.4.3.5 **Action:** Review current policies for funding special events, festivals, and the arts to ensure adequate support is available.

4.4.3.6 **Action:** Provide an easy and affordable permitting process for closing streets for block parties and street festivals with a kit that includes essentials.

4.4.3.7 **Action:** Identify and develop a cultural district strategy which may include expanded funding and space for cultural events, Indigenous-led programming, and artistic installations in public spaces.

4.5 Economy, Employment & Prosperity

The local economy thrives through policies that support and diversify business, tourism, and the agricultural industry, streamline regulatory processes, encourage new investments and locally owned enterprises.

Economic prosperity is critical to a healthy community. It ensures community members have access to quality employment opportunities close to home, entrepreneurs can start and grow businesses, and the community sees ongoing investment by both public and private enterprise to meet their evolving needs.

Vernon's prosperity will leverage public and private investment to retain and create jobs, develop new buildings for residents and businesses, and set up future generations for prosperity through sustainable practices and initiatives. Businesses and residents will continue to promote diversity, adaptability, and a future focused community where a circular economy continues to flourish. The ultimate goal is to build upon Vernon's history where entrepreneurs and investors can continue to flourish, and residents can find meaningful employment opportunities close to home.

4.5.1 Objective: Ample access to quality employment options and training opportunities.

Jobs Are Close to Home

4.5.1.1 **Policy:** Encourage the reduction of working-age residents who commute to other communities or provinces for work.

4.5.1.2 **Policy:** Support compact urban form by promoting increased residential density near employment centres and transit hubs where infrastructure already exists.

4.5.1.3 **Policy:** Encourage the addition of new mixed-use and commercial projects in most neighbourhoods and centres to increase the number of residents who can utilize and support nearby shops, food services, and institutional uses.

4.5.1.4 **Action:** Explore incentive opportunities allowed under the *Community Charter* to support commercial investment in the community.

Protecting Employment Lands

4.5.1.5 **Policy:** Prioritize and protect commercial and industrial land which will provide employment opportunities within the community and reduce transportation needs, while discouraging incompatible uses.

4.5.1.6 **Policy:** Encourage the redevelopment of commercial and industrial sites to include the same amount or more space (no net loss) in the new development.

4.5.1.7 **Action:** Develop an industrial lands inventory to ensure adequate industrial land is provided for continued employment opportunities.

Training Opportunities

4.5.1.8 **Policy:** Encourage the establishment of new post-secondary institutions and training facilities in the community.

4.5.1.9 **Policy:** Encourage and support the evolution of Okanagan College with the potential for expanded locations in Vernon.

4.5.2 Objective: Entrepreneurs can start and grow businesses here.

Entrepreneurial Activities

4.5.2.1 **Policy:** Encourage flexible commercial and industrial spaces with demising walls that can be easily altered to suit a range of tenants and evolving entrepreneurial activities.

4.5.2.2 **Policy:** Support the redevelopment of commercial and industrial properties that reflect the needs of existing, emerging, and establishing entrepreneurs within the community.

4.5.2.3 **Policy:** Support public and private investment into new, innovative, and emerging businesses.

4.5.2.4 **Action:** Review current Economic Development policies to identify areas for improvement or additional incentives that could attract private investment and support entrepreneurship.

4.5.2.5 **Action:** Review regulations and policies for the expansion and growth of a wide range of home-based businesses, recognizing that many entrepreneurial activities are incubated from the comforts of home.

Temporary Use Permits

4.5.2.6 **Policy:** Consider Temporary Use Permits for uses not permitted in the zone to support innovative, emerging, or evolving businesses to determine suitability prior to updating the Zoning Bylaw.

4.5.2.7 **Policy:** Support commercial leases and pilot projects on parks lands to increase revenue for the City and provide additional amenities for the public.

Public Market Strategy

4.5.2.8 **Action:** Develop a Public Market Strategy including policies related to collaboration amongst stakeholders, partnerships, and developing resources to achieve the full potential of Vernon's public markets.

4.5.3 Objective: The local economy is diverse and resilient.

Economic Resiliency

4.5.3.1 **Policy:** Support and nurture strategic partnerships with community economic development organizations to deliver programs and services that support entrepreneurs.

4.5.3.2 **Policy:** Collaborate with Vernon businesses on education for navigating business interruptions due to climate change, natural disasters, supply chain, and economic impacts.

4.5.3.3 **Policy:** Support business opportunities for a "greener" economy including alternate methods of energy generation and conservation such as solar initiatives or recycling building materials.

4.5.3.4 **Policy:** Discourage regulations that differentiate between office uses and other commercial uses to provide flexibility for changing business needs over time.

4.5.4 Objective: Ongoing investment by both public and private parties will meet the needs of an evolving community.

Public Investment Support and Incentives

4.5.4.1 **Policy**: Continue to support strategic public investments in community amenities and placemaking to stimulate private investment throughout the community, especially in Downtown, Uptown, Neighbourhood Centres, and Village Centres.

4.5.4.2 **Policy:** Support innovative approaches to accessing immigration programs to help fill employment gaps for local businesses such as partnerships with community, provincial, and federal partners to ensure new immigrants find pathways to employment in Vernon.

4.5.4.3 **Policy:** Encourage the development of healthcare and childcare facilities in all neighbourhoods and centres, recognizing that employee recruitment and retention are closely tied to access to community services.

4.5.4.4 **Policy:** Encourage larger businesses, employers, and residential subdivisions to consider including childcare provisions or daycares in new developments.

4.5.4.5 **Policy:** Collaborate with community partners to access funding to conduct a Child Care Needs Assessment to understand and address the needs in the community and to support economic development.

4.5.4.6 **Action:** Review the Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw to ensure current incentives are modernized and reflect Official Community Plan objectives.

4.5.5 Objective: Create a business friendly and encouraging City Hall.

Business Friendly City Hall

4.5.5.1 **Policy:** Encourage entrepreneurial activity by approaching the review of regulations and policies with a business-friendly lens.

4.5.5.2 **Policy:** Collaborate with neighbouring communities, Regional Districts, and the Okanagan Indian Band to identify areas of joint action on economic development projects which will support joint prosperity.

4.5.5.3 **Policy:** Foster a "how can I help" attitude when responding to inquiries in person, over the phone, via email, and on the website, endeavoring to respond to requests in an established timeframe.

4.5.5.4 **Action:** Build and maintain a library of community data and insights to provide investors, developers, and entrepreneurs to support investment decisions.

4.6 Culture, Equity, & Inclusion

Community and individual wellbeing are enhanced *through inclusive policies to address social inequalities in the community, relationship building with local indigenous nations, and working to advance truth and reconciliation.*

Community wellbeing starts with connection. Vernon is a city where neighbours lend a helping hand, people wave as you pass them on the street, and community members genuinely care about one another. Vernonites can continue to enhance the community-feel and neighbourly actions by working to address social inequities, building relationships with local Indigenous nations, and adopting inclusive policies. A healthy community is one where every voice is given an opportunity to be heard, difficult truths are acknowledged, reconciliation is practiced, and decisions are made equitably.

4.6.1 Objective: An equity lens is used to build an inclusive City.

Equity Analysis

4.6.1.1 **Action:** Undertake a City-wide equity analysis and develop strategies to inform decisions related to planning and resource allocation across neighbourhoods and centres.

4.6.1.2 **Policy:** Support the understanding of how systemic racism impacts the community and use these learnings to inform Official Community Plan implementation.

Inclusive and Equitable Decision Making

4.6.1.3 **Policy:** Incorporate an equity lens into land-use planning decisions and resource allocation in the community.

4.6.1.4 **Policy:** Encourage opportunities to implement actions identified in the Official Community Plan in a way that considers the needs of equity-seeking groups, those who are new to the community, and community members of all cultures and backgrounds.

4.6.1.5 **Policy:** Continue to encourage community members' involvement and participation in the planning and decision-making processes by collaborating with community organizations, agencies, committees, and volunteer groups.

4.6.1.6 **Policy:** Support community engagement in municipal decision making, with focus on including voices that are seldom heard, seniors, youth, and those will be most impacted by the decision.

4.6.1.7 **Policy:** Include the Okanagan Indian Band in referrals for land-use applications that are adjacent or abutting reserve lands.

Equitable Distribution of Community and Basic Services

4.6.1.8 **Policy:** Support community uses, and basic service uses throughout Urban Centres, Village Centres, and Neighbourhoods without requiring an amendment to the Official Community Plan Future Land Use Designation.

4.6.2 Objective: Vernon's relationships with Indigenous Nations is enhanced through mutual respect and learning.

Truth and Reconciliation

4.6.2.1 **Action:** Explore opportunities for independent and collective learning for local government officials and staff on the Calls to Action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the principles of the United Nations Declaration of Rights for Indigenous Peoples.

4.6.2.2 **Policy:** Support the implementation of the Calls to Action related to health inequities faced by indigenous children and youth.

4.6.2.3 **Policy:** Support community members on their individual and collective pathways to Truth and Reconciliation.

4.6.2.4 **Policy:** Collaborate with local indigenous communities to understand the significance of place names and opportunities for incorporation in City infrastructure and parks projects.

Social Issues

4.6.2.5 **Policy:** Collaborate with Syilx Okanagan people to support initiatives that address social issues rooted in the impacts of the residential school system such as housing, poverty reduction, transportation, and food security.

Archaeological Sites

4.6.2.6 **Policy:** Discourage development that involves ground-disturbance within 50 m of a known Archaeological Site; follow Provincial guidelines in areas with high potential.

4.6.2.7 **Policy:** Support education and awareness about the importance of Archaeological Sites and how to work in areas with high potential.

4.6.3 Objective: Youth and Seniors are recognized as important contributors to the community.

Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community Plan

4.6.3.1 **Policy:** Support the Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community Plan as a guiding document to plan and design for an inclusive community that supports people living with dementia and their care partners.

4.6.3.2 **Policy:** Encourage public consultation opportunities that are accessible and inclusive of older adults, people living with dementia, and supporting their communication and engagement needs.

4.6.3.3 **Policy:** Collaborate with partners such as the Vernon Seniors Action Network, the Alzheimer's Society of British Columbia, and other organizations serving people living with dementia.

4.6.3.4 **Policy:** Support educational opportunities for City staff, community service providers, and community members on age- and dementia-friendly practices to reduce stigma.

Youthful Vernon

4.6.3.5 **Policy:** Continue to support the Vernon Children's Charter by implementing the Youthful Vernon Strategy and creating a culture where the rights of young people are considered a part of daily civic operations.

4.6.3.6 **Policy:** Support a consultation process specifically created for and targeted to children and youth for planning public projects that would have an identifiable impact on children and youth.

4.6.3.7 **Policy:** Support and enhance youth engagement processes where youth have a meaningful and on-going role in providing input into City services, programs, and policy development.

4.6.3.8 **Policy:** Encourage youth climate education and career development.

4.6.3.9 **Action:** Review Zoning Bylaw regulations to facilitate the provision of childcare in all areas of the city by considering a subzone, or other regulatory flexibility.

4.6.3.10 **Policy:** Support National Child Day by encouraging community celebrations and recognition of youth engaged in the community.

4.6.3.11 **Policy:** Encourage youth friendly spaces and activity centres to be incorporated into private and City-led developments.

4.6.4 Objective: Cultural and historical buildings are preserved, protected, and shared.

Heritage Assets

4.6.4.1 **Action:** Develop a heritage inventory of heritage assets within the City, building upon the existing Heritage Register, that could be preserved or protected through municipal tools, grants, and incentives.

4.6.4.2 **Action:** Review current heritage policies and financial incentives including the Heritage Restoration Grant Program, the Heritage Retention Incentive Grant Program, and the Vernon Heritage Register for potential improvements to encourage the preservation or adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings on public and private property.

4.6.4.3 **Policy:** Support the preservation, restoration, or adaptive reuse of properties in accordance with the Canadian Standards for Historical Preservation.

Heritage Awareness

4.6.4.4 **Policy:** Collaborate with the Vernon Branch of the Okanagan Historical Society to promote heritage tours of noteworthy buildings, places, and public art.

4.7 Infrastructure & Transportation

Balanced growth is promoted by focusing development where infrastructure already exists, near urban services, vibrant community spaces, and multi-modal transportation networks.

Addressing infrastructure needs in a growing city is vital to ensuring the long-term health and wellbeing of individuals and the larger community. This can range from proactively addressing energy requirements, to sewer and water capacity increases, to ensuring adequate firefighting capabilities are maintained. By providing objectives and policies that align with the community goals of affordability, accessibility, diversity, and sustainability, Vernon can grow in a balanced and coordinated way.

Similarly, as Vernon grows a coordinated transportation network that supports multi-modal options will improve individual health and wellbeing and community and economic prosperity. Transportation plays a role in most aspects of people's lives and is essential to ensure equitable access to employment, education, shopping, and recreation. Vernon's Transportation Plan provides a vision for how people will move through the City along with identifying upcoming transportation improvement projects for the near and medium term. The primary goal of the Transportation Plan is to increase mode choices and reduce reliance on automobiles to support a sustainable and balanced system.

4.7.1 Objective: Infrastructure and services have the capacity to accommodate additional density and growth.

Energy and Telecommunications

4.7.1.1 **Policy**: Prioritize developing incentive programs, regulations, and opportunities for funding to support the undergrounding of new and existing powerlines in Urban Centres, Village Centres, and Urban Neighbourhoods.

4.7.1.2 **Policy:** Collaborate with BC Hydro and other energy and telecommunications providers to upgrade, expand, and create redundancy to the delivery of services to provide for increased density and development in the community.

4.7.1.3 **Policy:** Collaborate with BC Hydro and other energy providers to coordinate planning and development of infrastructure to ensure project efficiencies, to minimize costs and reduce public nuisance.

4.7.1.4 **Policy:** Encourage innovative ways to produce, supply, store, and conserve energy at the community, neighbourhood, and individual building levels.

Water and Sewer Capacity

4.7.1.5 **Policy:** Support Greater Vernon Water on a detailed water capacity study to address concerns regarding operational and environmental flow needs, irrigation and waterworks, transferring of water licenses, climate change impacts, and changes in water use trends.

4.7.1.6 **Policy:** Support Greater Vernon Water, Regional District of North Okanagan, and the Province in the expansion of water reservoirs that service Vernon neighbourhoods identified as Suburban Limited.

4.7.1.7 **Policy:** Collaborate with agencies and stakeholders to expand the delivery of sufficient quantities and efficient use of water for agricultural uses.

4.7.1.8 **Policy:** Discourage additional residential density adjacent to the Vernon Water Reclamation Centre to ensure nuisances from regular operations are minimized.

4.7.1.9 **Policy:** Proactively review sewer infrastructure in areas experiencing redevelopment for large-scale improvements that may be needed and to acquire land for sewer infrastructure.

4.7.1.10 **Policy**: Discourage expansion of private water and sewer utilities to service additional density in areas not serviced by community sewer and water.

Water Quality

4.7.1.11 **Policy:** Discourage locating stormwater outflows near source water intakes on Okanagan Lake to preserve water quality.

4.7.1.12 **Policy:** Discourage new private water licenses on Okanagan Lake or regional streams.

Firefighting Infrastructure

4.7.1.13 **Action:** Review and identify areas within the **Urban Containment Boundary** where hydrant spacing and fire flow is insufficient to support additional residential or commercial growth, and work to enhance firefighting capacity in these areas.

4.7.1.14 **Action:** Explore alternative locations in or near the Waterfront Village Centre for Firehall No. 2 that can accommodate the following:
- Three to four bays for engines;
- Living quarters for six firefighters; and
- Direct vehicle access onto a main roadway rather than a service road to minimize turns and stops.

Waste, Recycling, and Organics

4.7.1.15 **Policy:** Collaborate with partners, including the Regional District of North Okanagan, non-profit organizations, and the private sector to promote cost-effective and sustainable waste reduction and diversion initiatives and practices.

4.7.1.16 **Policy:** Encourage private development to accommodate composting and recycling facilities in multi-family, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial development to divert materials from the landfill.

4.7.1.17 **Action:** Review and recommend changes to regulations in the Solid Waste Bylaw to account for development that may not be suitable for individual garbage, recycling, and organics collection such as bareland or building strata developments on private roads, apartment buildings, or mixed-use projects.

4.7.1.18 **Policy**: Collaborate with innovative waste collection providers, including those that provide underground containers, to bring more options for waste management to Vernon.

Regional Compost Facility Operations (Biosolids)

4.7.1.19 **Policy**: Discourage development within 1000 m of the Regional Compost Facility (Biosolids) due to potential for noise, odour, health risks, and other nuisances, and to protect the integrity of the operation of the facility.

Stormwater Management

4.7.1.20 **Policy**: Support alternative stormwater management techniques on public and private projects such as absorbent landscaping, permeable pavements, and natural area preservation that more closely reflect natural drainage systems and predevelopment hydrological conditions.

4.7.1.21 **Policy**: Prioritize the protection of natural drainage ravines and overland flow areas by preventing the encroachment of new and existing development.

Funding Infrastructure Upgrades

4.7.1.22 **Policy**: Support the ongoing review and inventory of existing infrastructure to identify opportunities for renewal and improvement.

4.7.1.23 **Policy**: Support opportunities for existing properties to improve their local infrastructure through the use of Local Area Servicing Agreements.

4.7.1.24 **Action**: Explore revenue generating and funding methods to implement neighbourhood infrastructure such as sidewalks, street trees, boulevard plantings, stormwater management, and undergrounding of power lines in existing neighbourhoods.

Coordination of Infrastructure Upgrades

4.7.1.25 **Policy**: Coordinate infrastructure upgrades and system extensions with land use and density requirements to ensure cost-effective urban development, to minimize infrastructure life cycle costs, and to mitigate the financial impacts of lower density residential development.

4.7.1.26 **Policy**: Coordinate new infrastructure projects with renewal projects to improve efficiency, reduce overall costs, and minimize disruptions.

Development Cost Charges

4.7.1.27 **Action**: Complete the review and replacement of the **Development Cost Charges** Bylaw to ensure new development fairly funds growth-related infrastructure.

Capital Works Projects

4.7.1.28 **Policy**: Encourage use of the infrastructure levy as a tool to identify, construct, and complete significant rehabilitation and improvement projects as identified in the Rolling 5 Year Infrastructure Program.

4.7.2 Objective: The transportation network offers reliable, convenient, and sustainable transportation choices.

Transportation Plan

4.7.2.1 **Action:** Implement the Transportation Plan.

4.7.2.2 **Policy:** Encourage transportation investment and capital projects in Urban Centres, Village Centres, and Neighbourhood Centres.

Transportation Network

4.7.2.3 **Policy:** Prioritize a balanced transportation network by considering the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and drivers.

4.7.2.4 **Policy:** Discourage reliance on automobiles as redevelopment occurs by creating walkable streets, protected bike routes, and improved transit service, recognizing that streets and parking will become busier as the city grows.

4.7.2.5 **Policy:** Support a regional approach to the transportation network by considering links to nearby communities, University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus, and Kelowna International Airport.

4.7.2.6 **Policy:** Collaborate with the Regional District of North Okanagan, Ministry of Transportation and Transit, and BC Transit on strategic and operational plans.

Targeted Investments and Resources

4.7.2.7 **Policy:** Support investments in specialized maintenance equipment, such as smaller plows for bike lanes and multi-use paths, by integrating these needs into infrastructure planning and budgeting processes.

4.7.2.8 **Policy:** Consider lifecycle maintenance costs, staff time, and resource allocation in project budgets to ensure infrastructure remains safe, reliable, and cost-effective over time.

SOUTH VERNON

Transportation Safety

4.7.2.9   **Policy:** Consider the health, safety, and accessibility of all users in transportation network and infrastructure design.

4.7.2.10   **Policy:** Prioritize the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists within Urban Centres by exploring opportunities for advance walk signals, reducing right-hand-turns-on-red, or other safety improvements.

4.7.2.11   **Action:** Implement a regular transportation safety review and invest in safety improvements for existing transportation infrastructure.

4.7.2.12   **Policy:** Discourage new vehicle access onto streets with bike lanes or multi-use pathways and encourage consolidation of accesses where possible.

Highways Interface

4.7.2.13   **Policy:** Discourage new vehicle accesses directly onto or off of highways, and work to consolidate existing accesses as properties redevelop.

4.7.2.14   **Policy:** Collaborate with landowners and Ministry of Transportation and Transit to beautify the highway corridor with landscaping, street trees, signage, and art while ensuring operational needs are met.

4.7.2.15   **Policy:** Encourage mixed-use development along Highway 97 in Urban Centres that provide residential uses at the rear of properties and commercial uses closer to the road.

Accessibility of Transportation Modes

4.7.2.16   **Policy:** Support the pilot of a "Youth Ride Free" transit program to provide free or reduced transit fares for youth.

4.7.2.17   **Policy:** Prioritize accessibility in the design of public streets including accessible sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, safe ground treatment and paving, and adequate lighting.

4.7.2.18   **Policy:** Support accessibility audits for City-led developments and infrastructure projects, focusing on mobility, visual, and auditory accessibility.

4.7.2.19   **Policy:** Require new development to adhere to street cross-section design and classification when designing, funding, and constructing frontage improvements.

4.7.2.20   **Action:** Review the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw to improve the delivery of trails, sidewalks, and frontage improvements at the time of new development.

Impact of Road Corridors

4.7.2.21 **Policy:** Discourage new road alignments that would encroach upon **riparian** areas, **environmentally sensitive areas**, or habitat corridors.

4.7.2.22 **Policy:** Discourage new public or private roads on hillsides that would require large cuts, fills, or substantial retaining walls that are highly visible from the valley.

4.7.2.23 **Policy:** Discourage land dedications for road widenings by reviewing opportunities to improve cross-section designs first in order to preserve developable land for housing, buildings, or landscaping.

4.7.3 Objective: The parking supply supports local businesses, transportation options, and reduces development costs.

Parking Management

4.7.3.1 **Policy:** Encourage all public parking lots and parkades to be accessible to people with mobility challenges.

4.7.3.2 **Policy:** Encourage cues in parking areas to help people remember where they parked, such as designating areas through colour or icons.

4.7.3.3 **Action:** Review parking regulations regularly for all uses in the Zoning Bylaw to ensure the requirements are appropriate as enhanced transit service and increased density in **transit oriented development areas** result in lower parking demand.

4.7.3.4 **Policy:** Consider limiting or eliminating on-site parking requirements for specific developments, streets, land-use designations, or areas determined to be appropriate on a site or area-specific basis.

4.7.3.5 **Policy:** Encourage the phasing out of parking on arterial and community collector streets to increase their traffic carrying capacity and to provide better transit service.

4.7.3.6 **Action:** Develop a Curbside Management Strategy that includes the parking standards for the Downtown and the rates for on street and public parking.

4.7.3.7 **Policy**: Encourage the efficient use of the Downtown City-owned parkade through shared parking among monthly users, daily users, and the potential for shared parking with nearby developments.

4.7.3.8 **Action:** Explore the demand and potential funding models for a new or expanded multi-storey parkade Downtown to help eliminate the need for existing surface parking lots.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

4.7.3.9 **Policy:** Support parking reductions on a case-by-case basis where a private development has proposed **transportation demand management** initiatives including by not limited to:

- Transit Passes;
- Exceeding requirements for long-term bike parking or end-of-trip facilities;
- Car-Share vehicles or spaces; or
- Unbundled parking from housing units in residential strata projects.

4.7.3.10 **Action:** Develop a **Transportation Demand Management** for Development Policy that outlines criteria to require a **transportation demand management** plan for large sites.

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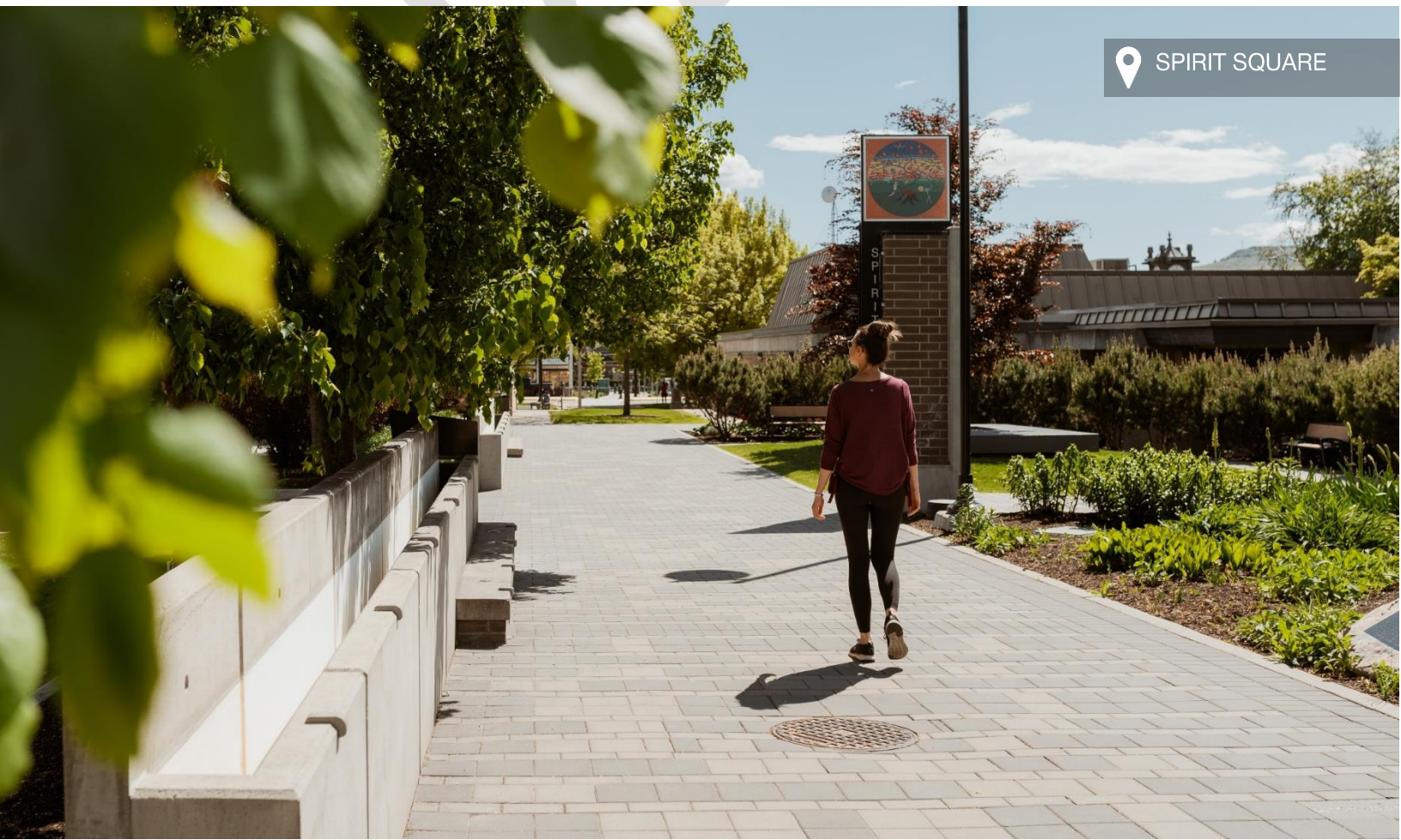
Chapter 5 – Land Use Policies

Vernon is diverse. Growth policies guide thoughtful land use across our community.

DOWNTOWN

Introduction

The land use policies support the **growth strategy** outlined in Chapter 3 – Growth Strategy by providing a framework of objectives and policies that guide growth and development in the community. Each area of the city and each parcel of land is identified with an Official Community Plan Land Use Designation (Map 3.2) such as Urban Centre, Suburban Neighbourhood, Industrial, and others. These designations outline how land is to be used by identifying the appropriate form, scale, and nature of development in each geographical area. The Land Use Designation Summary Table (Table 5.1) is an at-a-glance outline of the intended density, building types, target building heights, and complimentary uses for each designation, while more specific policies are included in the sections that follow the table.

Density refers to the theoretical capacity of a lot or area to accommodate certain quantity of dwellings or buildings within a standard measure of land area, on a site, or within a geographical area. For the Official Community Plan, it is generally described as follows:

Low Density residential areas are typically characterized by single detached housing, secondary suites, and accessory dwelling units with a lower number of units per hectare compared to other areas.

Medium Density residential areas generally include a mix of housing types including single detached housing, infill, townhouses, and smaller apartments with a moderate number of units per hectare.

High Density refers to areas with a high concentration of residential units within a relatively small area and typically features larger, taller, and higher buildings such as apartments, mixed-use, and high-rise.

While targeted density for each land use is defined by this plan, it is regulated through the zoning bylaw and target density may not be achievable on every property due to topography, size of site, location, sensitive ecosystems, or other site constraints.

Target Building Heights are the generally intended heights for buildings and structures in each Land Use Designation to achieve housing targets and foster the desired atmosphere, vibrancy, and livability of each centre and neighbourhood. Context sensitive height policies are provided for Village and Neighbourhood Centres, and Neighbourhoods that support taller buildings in strategic locations and encourage sensitive height transitions to the rest of the neighbourhood.

Maximum building heights may not be achievable on every property due to topography, size of site, location, sensitive ecosystems, or other site constraints.

Complimentary Uses are identified as uses that complement the Land Use Designation, although they may not be the primary purpose of that designation. These uses can add services, shops, and daily needs into neighbourhoods and centres to bring vitality and livability without compromising the nature of the community.

Building Type descriptions are provided to give a general sense of the types of buildings that are encouraged in each Land Use Designation to achieve the intended residential density and commercial and use intensity.

Accessory Dwelling: A self-contained living unit located on the same lot or in the same building as a primary dwelling such as a secondary suite or a carriage house.

Single Detached: A building containing one dwelling unit with access to ground level that may or may not include a secondary suite.

Infill: Can take various forms with up to four dwelling units per site in the form of a duplex, semi-detached, triplex, or fourplex.

Townhouse: Multiple dwelling units organized in a row, or above one another, with connected walls and individual entrances, typically at grade. These can also be attached to other buildings such as wrapping around parkades in mixed-use projects, apartments, or high-rises.

Single Stair Egress: Multiple dwelling units that are typically accessed from an internal corridor or hallway with a primary entrance and a single shared stairwell and elevator. These are ideally suited for new developments on one urban lot or on sites with constrained site area due to topographical or environmental challenges.

Apartment: A mostly residential building with dwelling units that are organized horizontally and vertically. The dwelling units are typically accessed from an internal corridor or hallway with a primary entrance, shared amenity spaces, and more than one shared stairwell and elevator. These are ideally suited for land assemblies and block style developments.

High-Rise: A building where dwelling units are oriented around a central core that includes stairwells and elevators, with narrow floor plates. A high-rise is typically situated on top of a multi-storey podium that could include townhouses, commercial units, and structured parking hidden from public view.

Mixed-Use: One or more buildings that include multiple uses such as commercial and residential, or institutional and residential. These are typically in apartment buildings and high-rises, with residential units on the upper floors and non-residential uses on the ground floor.

Commercial Building: A building or structure that is used for commercial purposes. These typically include offices, retail, or personal services, ideally located on a lot with housing.

Industrial Building: A building or structure that is used for industrial purposes. These are typically larger buildings in terms of width, depth, and height, and can accommodate multiple tenants with demising walls.

Agricultural Building: A building or structure that is used to support agriculture. These typically include greenhouses, livestock barns, and fruit packing or farm machinery storage buildings.

Institutional Building: A building that is used for community services or basic services. These vary in size and scale and typically include schools, daycares, libraries, religious assemblies, healthcare facilities, and government facilities.

Table 5.1: Land Use Designations Summary

Land Use Designation	Building Types	Target Building Heights	Complimentary Uses
Primary Growth Nodes: Highest density land uses.			
Urban Centre	• Mixed-Use • High-Rise • Apartment • Townhouse	• 4 to 16 storeys	• Restaurants, pubs, theatres, retail shops, galleries, offices, libraries, medical clinics, daycares, and others.
Secondary Growth Nodes: Second highest density land uses.			
Village & Neighbourhood Centre	• Mixed-Use • Apartment • Single Stair Egress • Townhouse • Infill	• 3 to 8 storeys	• Convenience stores, galleries, schools, day cares, personal services, parks, medical clinics, and others.
Gentle Density Neighbourhoods: Low to medium density land uses.			
Neighbourhood - Urban	• Apartment • Single Stair Egress • Townhouse • Infill • Single Detached • Accessory Dwelling	• 1 to 6 storeys	• Local retail shops, personal services, food stores, cafes, places of worship, daycares, pet stores, schools, home based businesses, parks, and others.
Neighbourhood - Resort Tourism	• Mixed-Use • Apartment • Townhouse • Infill • Single Detached • Accessory Dwelling	• 1 to 4 storeys	• Tourist accommodation, hotels, retail shops, restaurants, convenience stores, skating rinks, trails, personal services, conservation areas, parks, and others.
Neighbourhood - Suburban	• Apartment • Single Stair Egress • Townhouse • Infill • Single Detached • Accessory Dwelling	• 1 to 4 storeys	• Small scale commercial shops and services, convenience stores, parks, schools, daycares, home based businesses.
Limited Growth Areas: Low density land uses generally limited by available community servicing.			
Neighbourhood - Suburban Limited	• Infill • Single Detached • Accessory Dwelling	• 1 to 3 storeys	• Home based businesses, daycares, religious assemblies, parks, community gardens, and others.
Rural	• Single Detached • Accessory Dwelling	• 1 to 3 storeys	• Farming, agritourism, outdoor recreation, outdoor education

			centres, forests, and others.
Preservation Areas: Lowest density land uses.			
Agricultural Land Reserve	• Single Detached • Accessory Dwelling • Agricultural Buildings	• 1 to 3 storeys	• Active farm uses, farm retail sales, tasting rooms, production facilities, agritourism, greenhouses, and others.
Parks, Open Spaces, and Natural Areas	• Minimal permanent structures	• 1 to 2 storeys	• Outdoor recreation, bike paths, trails, conservation areas, forests, wetlands, beach accesses, and golf courses.
Employment Lands: Variety of density with land uses intended support local industry.			
Industrial	• Industrial	• 1 to 5 storeys	• Warehouse sales, indoor and outdoor sales, breweries, heavy equipment servicing, manufacturing, and others.
Institutional Lands: Variety of density with land uses intended to support community services.			
Community	• Institutional	• 1 to 6 storeys	• Daycares, schools, libraries, government offices, supportive housing, and others.

While the Official Community Plan outlines the general land use framework and identifies what is broadly supportable from a planning perspective, the Zoning Bylaw provides specific regulations for individual properties. As per the *Local Government Act*, any proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaw must align with the land use designations identified in the Official Community Plan.

The policies for each Land Use Designation have been broadly categorized into Live, Work, Play, and Move with specific geographical policies embedded into each section.

LIVE: how community members are housed and experience the community.

WORK: how community members work, and the economic vibrancy of the community.

PLAY: how community members participate in activities and interact with the environment.

MOVE: how community members move through the community from place to place.

COMMONAGE TRAIL

5.1 Urban Centres

Vernon's two Urban Centres (Map 3.2) are concentrated around **transit oriented development areas**, and present opportunities to achieve high-density housing balanced by a wide variety and intensity of commercial, institutional, and community uses and activities. Prioritizing people, pedestrians, and great public spaces through high-quality urban design of public and private sector development will ensure the Urban Centres evolve into attractive places for year-round residents and tourists alike.

The Downtown Urban Centre is a place to celebrate Vernon's arts and culture by preserving the historic feel while promoting revitalization and bringing more residents Downtown to live, work, play, and move. Lands within this designation are intended for the highest density development to support a vibrant and pedestrian friendly Urban Centre.

The Uptown Urban Centre (Village Green Mall Area) will embrace the City's Business District by placing a high priority on the integration of office-intensive commercial with high-density residential development. Collaboration between the City and landowners to form comprehensive development plans on large scale properties will ensure a complete and vibrant Urban Centre.

LIVE

5.1.1 Objective: Housing is diverse, plentiful, and activates Downtown and Uptown.

Diverse Housing Types

5.1.1.1 **Policy:** Support the development of a diverse range of building forms including:
- Mixed-Use
- High-Rise
- Apartment
- Townhouse

Figure 5.1 Urban Centre building forms

5.1.1.2 **Policy:** Support a balanced mix of housing types by encouraging developments to include a range of unit sizes in each project including 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom homes.

5.1.1.3 **Policy:** Encourage building heights between 4 and 16 storeys to accommodate the highest residential density and highest intensity of commercial uses, with consideration for additional height that aligns with the Public Benefit Policy in Chapter 4 - Citywide Policies.

5.1.2 Objective: Land and resources are used efficiently and purposefully in Urban Centres.

Land Assemblies

5.1.2.1 **Policy:** Encourage property owners and developers to assemble multiple lots into land assemblies to deliver block style apartment buildings on major roads and near current and future multi-use pathways.

5.1.2.2 **Policy:** Support single stair egress apartments where land assemblies are not feasible or site-specific challenges present constraints related to size, topography, flood plain, or historical or archaeological significance.

Vacant and Underutilized Lands

5.1.2.3 **Policy:** Encourage the addition of housing units or redevelopment on underutilized lands such as religious assembly properties, civic properties, and surface parking lots.

5.1.2.4 **Policy:** Discourage new surface parking lots Downtown and Uptown for residential and mixed-use developments except where necessary for accessible parking, visitor and commercial parking, and loading stalls.

5.1.3 Objective: Complete communities are achieved through collaboration.

Large Properties

5.1.3.1 **Policy:** Consider redevelopment of the Village Green Mall site, only when initiated by the property owners through an Area Redevelopment Plan, with the goal of delivering a comprehensive, mixed-use community that integrates housing, employment, and recreation.

5.1.3.2 **Policy:** Support the development or redevelopment of large parcels of land in collaboration with landowners to ensure alignment with Official Community Plan objectives and public benefit.

5.1.4 Objective: Preserve the historic culture and feel of the Downtown Urban Centre while promoting revitalization.

Heritage Retention Downtown

5.1.4.1 **Policy**: Encourage Downtown shops and businesses to invest in façade upkeep, upgrades, and pedestrian friendly signage through municipal financial incentives and grants, and support expansions of residential uses on 2nd floor or higher of existing commercial heritage buildings.

5.1.4.2 **Policy:** Encourage the preservation and integration of historical facades or materials to be incorporated into new developments as architectural elements.

5.1.4.3 **Policy:** Encourage development along 32 Ave that preserves existing heritage buildings by adding additional residential or commercial units on the rear of properties, and support variances to height, parking, or setbacks to facilitate the development.

5.1.4.4 **Policy:** Support the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings for multi-family, commercial, or mixed-use through Heritage Revitalization Agreements or other tools.

5.1.5 Objective: Urban Centres are Vernon's primary hubs of commercial activities.

Mixed-Use Development

5.1.5.1 **Policy:** Encourage mixed-use and high-density developments that increase the number of residents living in Urban Centres to support businesses and assist with employee recruitment and retention.

5.1.5.2 **Policy:** Encourage commercial frontages at grade along Anderson Way and 27 St to maintain street-level activity and vibrancy.

5.1.5.3 **Policy:** Discourage new development of big box stores and vehicular-oriented uses such as drive throughs, gas stations, and service centres in Urban Centres.

Urban Centre Businesses

5.1.5.4 **Policy:** Encourage businesses to relocate or open new locations in Urban Centres to bring more employees Downtown and Uptown to promote economic activity.

5.1.5.5 **Policy:** Encourage office-intensive industries and headquarters to be located in Urban Centres.

DOWNTOWN

5.1.6 Objective: Investment in commercial properties is attractive and desirable.

Public and Private Investment

5.1.6.1 **Policy**: Prioritize public investment in Downtown and Uptown including infrastructure, parks, public spaces, and Public-Private Partnerships for community amenities that entice private development.

5.1.6.2 **Policy:** Collaborate with the Downtown Vernon Association to market and promote Downtown investment and business opportunities.

5.1.7 Objective: Make Urban Centres places for people.

Streets for People

5.1.7.1 **Policy:** Encourage active commercial uses at street level in Urban Centres and direct office uses to be on the 2nd floor or above.

5.1.7.2 **Policy:** Encourage public events and programs on Downtown and Uptown streets to help activate the public realm such as parklets, patio programs, street festivals, cultural events, busking, street vending, and markets.

5.1.8 Objective: Establish and improve 48 Ave for multi-use connections.

Uptown 48 Ave Corridor

5.1.8.1 **Policy:** Promote the mixed-use environment of 48 Ave through **pedestrian oriented** design, activation of the public realm, multi-use paths, and varied active commercial uses.

5.1.8.2 **Policy:** Consider opportunities to construct a pedestrian bridge across 27 St to connect the Village Green Mall site to residential and commercial amenities within the 48 Ave corridor area at such time as redevelopment is initiated by the property owners.

5.1.8.3 **Policy:** Support the continuation of 48 Ave into the Village Green Mall site as a primary multi-use corridor at such time as redevelopment is initiated by the property owners.

5.1.9 Objective: Strengthen 30 Ave as Downtown's main street for vibrancy.

Main Street

5.1.9.1 **Policy:** Encourage smaller format retail storefronts for small shops and businesses on 30 Ave to fit the historical and architectural rhythm of the street.

5.1.9.2 **Policy:** Support a consistent street wall on 30 Ave with uniform setbacks, no spacing between buildings, and a consistent building height of 2 – 3 storeys at the street with taller portions of buildings setback farther from the street.

5.1.9.3 **Policy:** Continue to support the outdoor commercial use program on 30 Ave that allows for outdoor patios and activity to spill out onto the Main Street.

5.1.9.4 **Poli**cy: Support opportunities for pedestrian-only streets, seasonally or permanently, including 30 Ave, 31 Ave, and others as they are identified through the Transportation Plan.

Diagram still in progress.

*Figure 5.2 **Streetscape** diagram illustrating a street wall, building stepbacks, and street design*

5.1.10 Objective: Attract the investment and development of a Downtown hotel.

Shop and Stay Downtown

5.1.10.1 **Policy:** Encourage and support hotel development Downtown by enabling mixed hotel-residential projects through regulatory flexibility.

5.1.10.2 **Policy:** Consider specific regulations for hotel developments Downtown that may allow additional height or density, recognizing the need to support back-of-house and event spaces.

5.1.11 Objective: Establish a Public Food Market Downtown.

Public Market Strategy

5.1.11.1 **Policy:** Support the creation of a Downtown Public Food Market by evaluating potential sites using criteria developed in the Public Market Strategy (Chapter 4 – Economy).

5.1.12 Objective: Community spaces are integrated into new developments.

Public Places and Spaces

5.1.12.1 **Policy:** Encourage new developments to include publicly accessible open space on site, particularly at prominent corners to create pedestrian plazas.

5.1.12.2 **Policy:** Encourage the design of public places and spaces to be age- and dementia-friendly by incorporating objectives from the Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community Plan including prioritizing accessibility, providing lighting, benches, quiet spaces for refuge, signs, and landmark buildings to help people navigate Downtown and Uptown.

Common Amenity Spaces

5.1.12.3 **Policy:** Encourage increased common amenity space for residential and mixed-use projects where there is limited public park and open space available nearby, especially along Anderson Way.

5.1.13 Objective: Preserve and enhance streams and trees.

Streams & Trees

5.1.13.1 **Policy:** Encourage the preservation of significant trees and the removal of hazardous trees or invasive species when identified at the pre-development stage.

5.1.13.2 **Policy**: Support the preservation of the natural environment and require restoration of **riparian** areas by working to daylight Vernon Creek and BX Creek as opportunities arise.

ORL VERNON BRANCH

5.1.14 Objective: Prioritize the safe movement of pedestrians.

Pedestrian Priority

5.1.14.1 **Policy:** Support high-quality **streetscapes** with emphasis on the pedestrian first, followed by bicycles, and transit users, to enhance walkability and reduce car dependence.

5.1.14.2 **Policy:** Encourage design strategies to convert existing auto-dominated spaces to become more **pedestrian oriented** including establishing crosswalks, differing paving patterns, and shade trees.

5.1.14.3 **Policy:** Consider upgrading signalized intersections with advance walk signals and restrict right-turns-on-red to improve pedestrian safety.

5.1.15 Objective: Enhance options to walk, bike, roll, or take transit in Urban Centres.

Wayfinding

5.1.15.1 **Policy:** Support distinct and identifiable architecture that creates signature buildings with clearly marked intersections to make wayfinding easier.

5.1.15.2 **Policy:** Encourage site planning and building design that includes creative signage, public art, or identifiable landscaping to assist people with navigating Downtown and Uptown.

Transit

5.1.15.3 **Policy:** Support the upgrading of transit stops or the integration of transit stops and bus pull outs into building designs as necessary at time of redevelopment.

Streetscapes

5.1.15.4 **Policy:** Encourage new developments in Urban Centres to underground existing power lines on public and private property as a function of frontage improvements to improve firefighting access and lane circulation.

5.1.15.5 **Policy:** Encourage enhanced **streetscapes** on prominent streets as a function of development including wider sidewalks, benches, lighting, and space for planting trees in soil cells.

5.1.15.6 **Policy:** Support initiatives to make laneways more visually interesting, useable, and safe.

HIGHWAY 97

5.2 Village & Neighbourhood Centres

The Official Community Plan designates three secondary growth nodes as Village and Neighbourhood Centres (Map 3.2) to provide a mix of housing, employment, shops, parks, and services within a walkable, urban, environment. The goal of these Centres is to be secondary hubs of activity, more modest than the Urban Centres, with enough day-to-day services that owning a vehicle becomes a choice, rather than a requirement.

Alexis Park is a connected neighbourhood that benefits from established transportation corridors, multiple indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities, and schooling. It is envisioned to grow to accommodate additional residential density in a variety of built forms and has several transportation projects planned to expand the multi-modal network of options for moving about the community.

Jubilee Hill is earmarked for increased residential density that is vital to support the operations and expansion of the Vernon Jubilee Regional Hospital. Growth in this area is envisioned to be in the form of apartments, single stair egress buildings, and mixed-use developments while building stronger pedestrian connections to the hospital. Short term accommodation and innovative ownership models will assist in providing support for patients, doctors, and hospital staff.

Waterfront Village Centre is envisioned to be a bustling hub that attracts tourists and year-round residents to experience Okanagan Lake with a waterfront pathway, small scale commercial opportunities, tourist accommodation and residential housing, and a grand pedestrian boulevard along Lakeshore Dr. New development and growth in this area will respect the existing constraints of airport operational height limits (Map 3.5), protected wetlands, and developed and natural parks.

LIVE

5.2.1 Objective: Housing is diverse, attainable, and meets the needs of the community.

Diverse Housing Types

5.2.1.1 **Policy:** Support the development of a diverse range of building forms including:
- Mixed-Use
- Apartment
- Single Stair Egress
- Townhouse
- Infill

Figure 5.3 Village & Neighbourhood Centre building forms

5.2.1.2 **Policy:** Support a balanced mix of housing types in Alexis Park, Jubilee Hill, and Waterfront Village Centre by encouraging developments to include a range of unit sizes in each project including 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom homes.

5.2.1.3 **Policy:** Encourage ground-oriented units facing public streets and parks where a front door facing the street or park contributes to a sense of independence, autonomy, and integration within the community.

5.2.2 Objective: Building heights are context sensitive.

Building Heights

5.2.2.1 **Policy**: Consider buildings up to 8 storeys in height that are located within 200 m of major roads, **transit corridors**, multi-use paths, or key intersections where they support transit use, enhance the public realm, and transition sensitively to adjacent lower density areas.

5.2.2.2 **Policy**: Support a sensitive height transition of buildings from major roads to local streets and generally discourage buildings greater than 4 storeys that are on local streets or mid-block.

5.2.2.3 **Policy**: For the Waterfront Village Centre, require building heights that respect the operational height limits of the Vernon Regional Airport (Map 3.5).
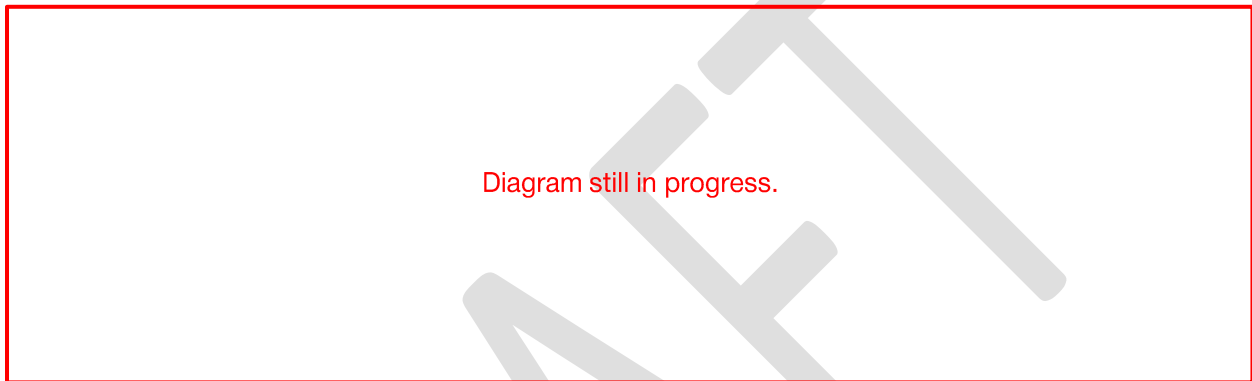
Diagram still in progress.

Figure 5.4 Sensitive building height transition from Major Streets to Local Roads

5.2.3 Objective: Land is used efficiently in Village and Neighbourhood Centres.

Vacant and Underutilized Lands

5.2.3.1 **Policy:** Encourage the addition of housing units or redevelopment on underutilized lands such as religious assembly properties, civic properties, and surface parking lots.

5.2.3.2 **Policy**: Discourage surface parking lots in Village and Neighbourhood Centres in new residential and mixed-use developments except where necessary for accessible parking, visitor and commercial parking, and loading stalls.

Land Assemblies

5.2.3.3 **Policy:** Encourage property owners and developers to assemble multiple lots into land assemblies to deliver block style apartment buildings on major roads and near current and future multi-use pathways.

5.2.3.4 **Policy:** Support single stair egress apartments where land assemblies are not feasible or site-specific challenges present constraints related to size, topography, flood plain, or historical or archaeological significance.

5.2.4 Objective: Complete communities are achieved through collaboration.

Large Properties

5.2.4.1 **Policy:** Consider redevelopment of the Vernon Square Shopping Centre site, only when initiated by the property owners through an Area Redevelopment Plan, with the goal of delivering a comprehensive, mixed-use community that integrates housing, employment, and recreation.

5.2.4.2 **Policy**: Support development or redevelopment of large parcels of land in collaboration with landowners to ensure alignment with Official Community Plan objectives and public benefit.

5.2.5 Objective: Village and Neighbourhood Centres are Vernon's secondary hubs for commercial activities.

Mixed-Use Development

5.2.5.1 **Policy:** Encourage mixed-use and medium to high-density developments that increase the number of residents living in close proximity to commercial businesses to assist with employee recruitment and retention.

5.2.5.2 **Policy:** Support the integration of commercial units on residential streets through expanded Home-Based Business opportunities, mixed-use projects, or standalone developments.

5.2.6 Objective: Establish Village and Neighbourhood Centres places for people by activating spaces, improving streetscapes, and providing amenities.

Activate Streets

5.2.6.1 **Policy:** Encourage active commercial uses at street level with frequent storefronts and wider sidewalks for outdoor dining and displays to spill out on the following streets:
- Jubilee Hill Neighbourhood Centre: 16 Ave, 33 St, 34 St;
- Waterfront Village Centre: Okanagan Landing Rd, Lakeshore Rd; and
- Alexis Park Neighbourhood Centre: 32 Ave, 43 Ave, Alexis Park Dr.

Streets for People

5.2.6.2 **Policy:** Encourage public events and programs on streets to help activate the public realm such as parklets, patio programs, cultural events, food trucks, and block parties.

Public Investment

5.2.6.3 **Policy:** Prioritize public investment in Village and Neighbourhood Centres including infrastructure, parks and public spaces, and Public-Private Partnerships for community amenities that entice private development.

ALEXIS PARK

5.2.7 Objective: Jubilee Hill growth supports Vernon Jubilee Hospital as a regional facility.

Partners with Interior Health

5.2.7.1 **Policy:** Encourage the development of workforce housing featuring 1 and 2 bedrooms in Jubilee Hill.

5.2.7.2 **Policy:** Support mixed-use development that includes accommodation for stays of 1 – 90 days to support visiting healthcare workers, patients, and families in the Jubilee Hill Neighbourhood Centre.

5.2.7.3 **Policy:** Support the continued growth of Vernon Jubilee Hospital, respecting the context of the surrounding neighbourhood.

5.2.7.4 **Policy:** Collaborate with Interior Health to provide land uses in the surrounding area to support a growing hospital campus that will provide services for the north Okanagan region and beyond.

5.2.7.5 **Policy:** Collaborate with Interior Health and Ministry of Transportation and Transit on opportunities to construct a pedestrian bridge across Highway 97 to connect Jubilee Hill Neighbourhood Centre to Vernon Jubilee Hospital.

5.2.8 Objective: Enhance Lakeshore Rd as the focus of the Waterfront Village Centre's pedestrian-oriented area.

Lakeshore Rd Streetscape

5.2.8.1 **Policy:** Encourage a consistent street wall of two storeys along Lakeshore Rd with consistent setbacks to the sidewalk, while respecting the height limitations of Vernon Regional Airport.

5.2.8.2 **Policy:** Encourage small and frequent commercial storefronts along Lakeshore Rd to maximize the number of different businesses that will attract tourists and residents to the waterfront.

5.2.8.3 **Policy:** Encourage tourist-oriented accommodation within the Waterfront Village Centre, especially along Lakeshore Dr and Okanagan Landing Rd.

5.2.9 Objective: Community spaces and public places are integrated into new developments.

Public Places and Spaces

5.2.9.1 **Policy:** Encourage new developments to include publicly accessible open space on site, particularly at corners to create pedestrian plazas.

Community Togetherness

5.2.9.2 **Policy:** Support community gardens on under-utilized lands and on holding properties to support food resiliency and community togetherness.

Compatible Uses to Vernon Regional Airport

5.2.9.3 **Policy**: Support land uses and building heights that are complimentary to the Vernon Regional Airport such as natural parks, developed parks, campsites, and low-rise buildings.

5.2.9.4 **Policy:** Regularly review the *Vernon Regional Airport Master Plan (2016)* to ensure current and projected future needs are being met.

5.2.10 Objective: Enhance connections to the natural environment.

Tree Canopy

5.2.10.1 **Policy:** Encourage the preservation of significant trees and the removal of hazardous trees or invasive species when identified at the pre-development stage.

Lake Access

5.2.10.2 **Policy:** Encourage building spacing to allow for pedestrian connections on-site from the street to the lakefront in the Waterfront Village Centre.

5.2.11 Objective: Prioritize the safe movement of pedestrians.

Pedestrian Priority

5.2.11.1 **Policy:** Support high-quality **streetscapes** with emphasis on the pedestrian first, followed by bicycles, and transit users, to enhance walkability and reduce car dependence.

5.2.11.2 **Policy:** Encourage construction of sidewalks and frontage improvements including street trees on developments with 5 or more units.

5.2.12 Objective: Enhance options to walk, bike, roll, or take transit.

Wayfinding

5.2.12.1 **Policy:** Support distinct and identifiable architecture that creates signature buildings with clearly marked intersections to make wayfinding easier.

5.2.12.2 **Policy:** Encourage site planning and building design that includes creative signage, public art, or identifiable landscaping to assist people with navigating Village and Neighbourhood Centres.

WATERFRONT

Transit

5.2.12.3 **Policy:** Support the upgrading of transit stops or the integration of transit stops and bus pull outs into building designs as necessary at time of rezoning or building permit.

Streetscapes

5.2.12.4 **Policy:** Encourage enhanced **streetscapes** on prominent streets as a function of development including wider sidewalks, benches, lighting, and space for planting trees in soil cells.

5.2.12.5 **Policy:** Encourage new apartment and mixed-use developments to underground existing power lines on public and private property as a function of frontage improvements to improve firefighting access and lane circulation.

Parking

5.2.12.6 **Policy:** Discourage surface parking lots as standalone uses or as temporary uses.

5.2.12.7 **Policy:** Consider parking reductions for properties that have a high-water table rather than supporting surface parking.

5.2.12.8 **Policy:** Monitor parking demand in the neighbourhood around Vernon Jubilee Hospital to ensure hospital parking does not impact the availability of on-street parking for residents.

Highway Interface

5.2.12.9 **Policy:** Encourage mixed-use development along Highway 97 in Jubilee Hill that provides residential uses at the rear of properties and commercial uses closer to the road.

5.2.12.10 **Policy:** Discourage new development of big box stores and vehicular-oriented uses such as drive throughs, gas stations, and service centres along the highway in Jubilee Hill.

JUBILEE HILL

5.3 Neighbourhoods - Urban, Suburban, & Resort Tourism

The Urban Neighbourhood, Suburban Neighbourhood, and Resort Tourism Neighbourhood Land Use Designations are intended to support low and medium density housing following the principles of **gentle density** where new housing units contribute to the experience of existing neighbourhoods. **Gentle density** neighbourhoods will embrace most kinds of ground-oriented housing including carriage houses, duplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, and some apartment buildings in strategic locations. These neighbourhoods will encourage small scale commercial uses, expanded home based businesses, and community services integrated throughout them.

Urban Neighbourhoods are more closely connected to Urban, Village, and Neighbourhood Centres through proximity and multi-modal transportation links. For this reason, the Urban Neighbourhood can support lower and higher density forms of housing such as townhouses and apartments in strategic locations where additional residents have good access to transit, bike routes, and are walkable.

Suburban Neighbourhoods on the outer edges of the **Urban Containment Boundary** and are less connected to Urban, Village, and Neighbourhood Centres and are more car dependent with less transportation options. For this reason, they will typically support lower density forms of housing with lower heights such infill, townhouses, and single stair egress apartments in strategic locations.

Resort Tourism Neighbourhoods have existing **neighbourhood plans** (Map 5.1) in place that promote tourist-oriented accommodation with flexible ownership models, building forms that range from cottages to small apartments, and commercial, service, and recreational nodes. The existing **neighbourhood plans** for Predator Ridge, Kristall - Sparkling Hill, and Okanagan Hills will continue to be honored for development, while new and expanding plans are discouraged and will be reviewed with for alignment with Official Community Plan objectives and policies.

LIVE

5.3.1 Objective: Housing is abundant, affordable, and diverse.

Diverse Housing Types

5.3.1.1 **Policy:** Support an array of ground-oriented building forms including but not limited to:

- Accessory Dwelling
- Single Detached
- Infill
- Townhouse
- Single Stair Egress
- Apartment

Figure 5.5: Neighbourhoods building forms.

5.3.1.2 **Policy:** Encourage ground-oriented units facing public streets where a front door facing the street contributes to a sense of independence, autonomy, and integration within the community.

5.3.1.3 **Policy:** Encourage secondary suites in townhouses, infills, and single detached housing to provide diversity of tenures and unit sizes in neighbourhoods.

Land Assemblies

5.3.1.4 **Policy:** Encourage property owners and developers to assemble multiple lots into land assemblies to deliver block style apartment buildings on major roads and near current and future multi-use pathways.

5.3.1.5 **Policy:** Support single stair egress apartments where land assemblies are not feasible or site-specific challenges present constraints related to size, topography, flood plain, or historical or archaeological significance.

5.3.2 Objective: Building heights are context sensitive.

Building Heights – Urban Neighbourhood

5.3.2.1 **Policy:** Consider buildings up to 6 storeys in height in Urban Neighbourhoods that are located within 200 m of major roads, **transit corridors**, multi-use paths, or key intersections where they support transit use, enhance the public realm, and transition sensitively to adjacent lower density areas.

5.3.2.2 **Policy:** Support a sensitive height transition of buildings from major roads to local streets and generally discourage buildings greater than 3 storeys that are on local streets or mid-block.

Diagram still in progress.

Figure 5.6 Sensitive building height transition from Major Streets to Local Roads in Neighbourhoods

Building Heights – Suburban Neighbourhoods

5.3.2.3 **Policy:** Consider buildings up to 4 storeys in height in Suburban Neighbourhoods that are located within 200 m of major roads, **transit corridors**, multi-use paths, or key intersections where they support transit use, enhance the public realm, and transition sensitively to adjacent lower density areas.

5.3.2.4 **Policy:** Support a sensitive height transition of buildings from major roads to local streets and generally discourage buildings greater than 3 storeys in height that are on local streets or mid-block.

Building Heights – Resort Tourism Neighbourhoods

5.3.2.5 **Policy:** Honour existing resort **neighbourhood plans** including Predator Ridge, Kristall - Sparkling Hill, and Okanagan Hills (Schedule 2 – Existing Neighbourhood Plans) that identify specific heights in specific areas. Where the **neighbourhood plan** does not specify a specific height, encourage heights of 4 storeys or less with spacing between buildings to allow the natural landscape to shine through.

5.3.3 Objective: Resort Tourism areas provide short term rental options and are integrated into hillsides.

Tourist and Short-Term Accommodation

5.3.3.1 **Policy:** Support mixed-use development that includes accommodation for stays of 1 – 90 days in Resort Tourism Neighbourhoods to support tourism.

5.3.3.2 **Policy:** Support developments that offer unique lifestyle opportunities suitable for resort-style living and tourism.

Hillside Development

5.3.3.3 **Policy:** Support integrating buildings into slopes by using buildings to retain land on properties with 30% slopes or greater.

5.3.3.4 **Policy:** Discourage retaining walls greater than 1.2 m in height or spaced less than 1.2 m apart for the construction of new roads and infrastructure.

5.3.3.5 **Policy:** Encourage site planning that protects natural features including ravines, overland drainage channels, rock outcrops, steep slopes, and forested areas.

5.3.3.6 **Policy:** Honour existing **neighbourhood plans** including Predator Ridge, Kristall – Sparkling Hill, and Okanagan Hills (Schedule 2 – Existing Neighbourhood Plans) that outline development patterns for land use, building form, height, and servicing and discourage new or expanding plans.

5.3.3.7 **Policy:** Consider support for new and expanding hillside **neighbourhood plans** that provide a significant tangible public benefit that includes wildfire mitigation and most of the following:
- Dedication of parkland to the City;
- Conservation and restoration of the **environmentally sensitive areas**;
- Commercial and daily services such as daycares, food stores, or personal services;
- Rental, **affordable**, or **special needs housing** as identified in the Housing Needs Report;
- Improved or expanded community water and sewer;
- Improved or expanded transit infrastructure;
- Proven financial viability of long-term life-cycle costs of infrastructure; and
- Alignment with Official Community Plan objectives

5.3.4 Objective: Preserve and enhance historic buildings and properties.

Heritage Retention

5.3.4.1 **Policy:** Encourage the retention of historical facades or materials to be incorporated into new developments.

5.3.4.2 **Policy:** Support regulatory flexibility on existing heritage properties to facilitate the addition of additional residential units on the property while preserving the existing heritage building.

Adaptive Re-Use

5.3.4.3 **Policy:** Support the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings into multi-family, commercial, or mixed-use through Heritage Revitalization Agreements or other tools.

WORK

5.3.5 Objective: Neighbourhood commercial opportunities are close to home.

Integration of Neighbourhood Commercial

5.3.5.1 **Policy:** Support small-scale commercial uses throughout neighbourhoods for day-to-day services such as convenience stores, restaurants, pet stores, daycares, and retail shops; especially on Arterial and Collector roads such as 25 Ave, and 27 St.

5.3.5.2 **Policy:** Encourage home-based businesses including expanded home-based businesses that support and incubate entrepreneurial activities and allow people to work from home.

5.3.5.3 **Policy:** Support the conversion of portions of existing residences into commercial uses provided they do not have a negative impact on the peaceful enjoyment of neighbouring properties.

5.3.5.4 **Policy:** Support businesses that cater to tourist needs such as bike rentals, swimsuit stores, non-motorized watercraft, dining, and indoor recreation in Resort Tourism Neighbourhoods.

PLAY

5.3.6 Objective: Community spaces and places are integrated into new developments.

Public Places and Spaces

5.3.6.1 **Policy:** Encourage new developments to include publicly accessible open space on site, particularly at corners to create pedestrian plazas.

Community Togetherness

5.3.6.2 **Policy:** Support community gardens on under-utilized lands and on holding properties to support food resiliency.

5.3.6.3 **Policy:** Support temporary road closures to facilitate neighbourhood block parties and activities that foster community togetherness, social connections, and walkable spaces.

5.3.6.4 **Policy:** Encourage neighbourhoods to form Neighbourhood Associations to work together to improve neighbourhood interactions, identify specific needs of the neighbourhood, and work with the City to deliver amenities.

5.3.7 Objective: Preserve and enhance the natural features in neighbourhoods.

Streams and Trees

5.3.7.1 **Policy:** Encourage the preservation of significant trees and the removal of hazardous trees or invasive species when identified at the pre-development stage.

5.7.3.2 **Policy:** Support the preservation of the natural environment and require restoration of **riparian** areas by working to daylight Vernon Creek and BX Creek as opportunities arise.

MOVE

5.3.8 Objective: Prioritize the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists.

Pedestrian Priority

5.3.8.1 **Policy:** Prioritize construction of sidewalks and frontage improvements including street trees on developments with 5 or more units.

5.3.8.2 **Policy:** Discourage new development of vehicle-oriented uses or drive throughs within Urban and Resort Tourism Neighbourhoods.

Transit

5.3.8.3 **Policy:** Support the upgrading of transit stops or the integration of transit stops and bus pull outs into building designs as a function of redevelopment.

Streetscape

5.3.8.4 **Policy:** Encourage new apartment and mixed-use developments to underground existing power lines on public and private property as a function of frontage improvements, to improve firefighting access and lane circulation.

EAST HILL

5.4 Limited Growth Areas – Suburban Limited & Rural

Some areas of Vernon are not suitable for medium or high residential density due to sensitive ecosystems, challenges with topography, limited community sewer and water availability, or proximity to the **Agricultural Land Reserve.** These areas will support limited growth primarily in the way of secondary suites, accessory dwelling units such as carriage houses, and some duplex housing. By promoting low site coverage and low demand on urban services, these areas can continue to contribute to the resilience and environmental sustainability of the city as a whole. Due to the distances from Centres, little to no transit, and limited multi-modal infrastructure, these areas will most likely remain car dependent.

Suburban Limited Neighbourhoods have been identified as having limited capacity for community sewer and water, may be located outside of a 10-minute fire response time, and have little to no transit. Should improvements in infrastructure or transit occur over time, these neighbourhoods could shift to become Suburban Neighbourhoods that support **gentle density**.

Existing **neighbourhood plans** located in Suburban Limited and Rural Designations including Foothills, East Bella Vista, and Bella Vista West (Schedule 2 – Existing Neighbourhood Plans) will continue to be honored for development, while new and expanding plans are discourage and will be reviewed with for alignment with Official Community Plan objectives and policies.

Rural areas are important preservation areas to provide a buffer between urban residential uses and **Agricultural Land Reserve** and to preserve natural ecosystems and features. In order to protect the **Agricultural Land Reserve** and active farming activities, intensive residential density is strongly discouraged in rural areas, however, secondary suites and accessory dwelling units are encouraged where lot size and servicing can support them.

LIVE

5.4.1 Objective: Housing is low density, accessible, and serviced appropriately.

Housing Types

5.4.1.1 **Policy:** Support low density building forms, where properties are sufficiently serviced with community water and sewer, including but not limited to:
- Accessory Dwelling
- Single Detached
- Infill
- Townhouses

Figure 5.7 Limited Growth Areas building forms

5.4.1.2 **Policy:** Encourage ground-oriented units facing public streets where a front door facing the street contributes to a sense of independence, autonomy, and integration within the community.

Rural Subdivisions

5.4.1.3 **Policy:** Discourage subdivision applications on Rural properties that would result in the creation of new lots that are less than 4 ha (25 ac).

Building Heights

5.4.1.4 **Policy:** Support development that is sensitive to existing street patterns in terms of height, setbacks, and spaces between buildings.

Housing Tenures

5.4.1.5 **Policy:** Support secondary suites and accessory dwelling units on properties that are connected to community sewer and water and only support secondary suites and accessory dwelling units on properties greater than 1 ha where there is no connection to community sewer or water.

Hillside Development

5.4.1.6 **Policy:** Honour existing **neighbourhood plans** (East Bella Vista, Foothills, Bella Vista West) that outline development patterns for land use, building form, height, and servicing and discourage new or expanding plans.

5.4.1.7 **Policy:** Consider support for new and expanding hillside **neighbourhood plans** that provide a significant tangible public benefit that includes wildfire mitigation and most of the following:
- Dedication of parkland to the City;
- Conservation and restoration of the **environmentally sensitive areas**;
- Commercial and daily services such as daycares, food stores, or personal services;
- Rental, **affordable**, or **special needs housing** as identified in the Housing Needs Report;
- Improved or expanded community water and sewer;
- Improved or expanded transit infrastructure;
- Proven financial viability of long-term life-cycle costs of infrastructure; and
- Alignment with Official Community Plan objectives.

5.4.2 Objective: Protect land used for active farming from the impacts of adjacent development.

Urban-Rural Interface

5.4.2.1 **Policy:** Encourage land uses that are compatible with active farming on properties adjacent to agricultural lands, such as urban agriculture or passive recreation, and discourage intensive residential development that may be subject to noise, dust, and other irritants produced by active farming.

BELLA VISTA

5.4.2.2 **Policy:** Ensure that development on properties adjacent to land in the **Agricultural Land Reserve** limits negative impacts on adjacent farm operations by including appropriate buffers, setbacks, and site planning.

5.4.2.3 **Policy:** Discourage intensive residential development that can only be accessed through a local or rural road that travels through the **Agricultural Land Reserve**.

WORK

5.4.3 Objective: Entrepreneurial activities give people the opportunity to work from home on Rural and Suburban Limited properties.

Home Based Businesses

5.4.3.1 **Policy:** Encourage home-based businesses including expanded home-based businesses that support entrepreneurial activities and allow people to work from home.

5.4.3.2 **Policy:** Support vehicle-oriented uses as home-based businesses in rural areas where it will not negatively impact agricultural uses or **environmentally sensitive areas**.

5.4.3.3 **Policy:** Support limited parking areas to reduce site coverage and retain soil quality for farm retail sales and farm stands in rural areas.

5.4.3.4 **Policy:** Support the development of educational businesses on rural lands that teach children, youth, and adults about the environment, conservation, farming and agriculture, history, or Indigenous culture and worldview.

5.4.3.5 **Policy:** Support agritourism activities on rural properties.

PLAY

5.4.4 Objective: Community and individual wellbeing are enhanced through social interaction.

Community Togetherness

5.4.4.1 **Policy:** Support community gardens on under-utilized lands and rural properties to support food resiliency.

5.4.4.2 **Policy:** Support temporary road closures to facilitate neighbourhood block parties and activities that foster community togetherness, social connections, and walkable spaces.

FOOTHILLS

5.4.4.3 **Policy**: Encourage neighbourhoods to form Neighbourhood Associations to work together to improve neighbourhood interactions, identify specific needs of the neighbourhood, and work with the City to deliver amenities.

MOVE

5.4.5 Objective: Transportation options prioritize the health and safety of its citizens.

Transportation Safety

5.4.5.1 **Policy:** Support the provision of wider multi-use shoulders where they can be safely accommodated within the road right-of-way.

5.4.5.2 **Policy:** Encourage private property owners to maintain boulevards, ditches, and road shoulders to ensure that vegetation growth along rural roadways does not impede traffic sight lines.

Transit

5.4.5.3 **Policy:** Encourage transit stop improvements as a function of redevelopment in Suburban Limited and Rural areas with bus pullouts as necessary.

5.5 Agricultural Land Reserve

Areas within the **Agricultural Land Reserve** (ALR) will continue to be protected for long-term agricultural uses. Agricultural lands are a valuable resource in BC and represent only a small fraction of the land base yet hold the greatest agricultural capacity. Protecting the ALR ensures food security, supports our local economy, and has environmental benefits such as flood and fire control. Growth within the ALR will be restricted by provincial and federal regulations including (but not limited to) the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act.*

LIVE

5.5.1 Objective: Support continued protection of agricultural lands for food production, farming, and value-added agricultural uses.

Housing

5.5.1.1 **Policy**: Support secondary suites and accessory dwelling units on properties that are connected to community sewer and water; only support secondary suites and accessory dwelling units on properties greater than 1 ha where there is no connection to community sewer or water.

*Figure 5.8 **Agricultural Land Reserve** building forms*

5.5.1.2 **Policy**: Encourage new dwellings on properties in the **Agricultural Land Reserve** to be located near the front lot line and to cluster all accessory residential uses such as swimming pools, tennis courts, and garages near the dwelling (farm home plating principles).

Diagram still in progress.

Figure 5.9 Example of clustered residential uses (farm home plating) on agricultural land.

Protecting the Agricultural Land Reserve

5.5.1.3 **Policy**: Support the integrity of the **Agricultural Land Reserve** by maintaining the existing boundaries and supporting the continued designation of agricultural land for agricultural purposes regardless of soil types and capabilities.

5.5.1.4 **Policy**: Discourage land uses within the **Agricultural Land Reserve** that do not conform to the policies and regulations of the relevant provincial and federal legislation.

5.5.1.5 **Policy:** Encourage locating structures on less productive soils where feasible.

5.5.1.6 **Policy:** Discourage subdivision applications adjacent to the **Agricultural Land Reserve** that would result in the creation of new lots that are less than 4 ha (25 ac).

5.5.1.7 **Policy:** Discourage **Agricultural Land Reserve** exclusion applications, except where an application:

- Is part of a comprehensive OCP amendment application;
- Demonstrates a civic need that cannot be provided elsewhere;
- Is consistent with other OCP objectives and policies; and
- Does not require the extension of municipal services.

Urban-Rural-Agricultural Interface

5.5.1.8 **Policy:** Discourage intensive residential developments adjacent to agricultural lands that may be subject to noise, dust, odour or other nuisances due to active farming practices.

5.5.1.9 **Policy:** Support landscape or vegetative buffers between agricultural lands and other uses in alignment with the Ministry of Agriculture's *Guide to Edge Planning (2015)*.

5.5.1.10 **Policy:** Discourage intensive residential development that can only be accessed through a local or rural road that travels through the **Agricultural Land Reserve**

WORK

5.5.2 Objective: Support community agriculture, innovative forms of farming, and associated businesses.

Farming Economy

5.5.2.1 **Policy**: Support home-based businesses in accordance with provincial regulations that allow people to work from home.

5.5.2.2 **Policy:** Support agritourism activities on agricultural properties.

5.5.2.3 **Policy:** Support community gardens on agricultural properties to support food resiliency.

5.5.2.4 **Policy:** Support limited parking areas to reduce site coverage and retain soil quality for farm retail sales and farm stands on agricultural properties.

5.5.3 Objective: Foster community connection to agriculture.

Community Connections

5.5.3.1 **Policy:** Support the development of educational initiatives on agricultural lands outside of the **Agricultural Land Reserve** that teach children, youth, and adults about the environment, conservation, farming and agriculture, history, or Indigenous culture and worldview.

5.5.4 Objective: Reduce traffic that passes through the Agricultural Land Reserve.

5.5.4.1 **Policy:** Discourage land uses that can only be accessed through a local or rural road that travels through the **Agricultural Land Reserve**.

TURTLE MOUNTAIN

5.6 Industrial

Industrial-designated land provides a benefit to Vernon by providing employment, incubating innovation, and supporting our thriving economy into the future. Industrial uses can create conflict when located near residential uses or other intensive commercial uses due to a high potential for noise, odour, dust, and other irritants. To protect these employment lands from being eroded due to conflicts, it is imperative to discourage the encroachment of other land uses on industrial land, and that development adjacent to industrial sites is aware of the high potential for nuisance. Growth on these lands will typically look like industrial buildings such as warehouses, vehicle-oriented uses such as service depots, and surface parking lots that can accommodate large vehicles.

LIVE

5.6.1 Objective: Work to reduce potential conflicts with industrial activities.

Residential Development

5.6.1.1 **Policy:** Discourage intensive residential development adjacent to industrial lands that may be subject to noise, dust, and other irritants produced by industrial activity.

5.6.1.2 **Policy**: Encourage security/operator dwelling units within industrial developments to enhance security.

Figure 5.10 Industrial building forms (typical).

WORK

5.6.2 Objective: Encourage the economic viability of our industrial land base.

Protecting Employment Lands

5.6.2.1 **Policy**: Discourage the removal of industrial employment lands from the Industrial Land Use Designation to preserve employment opportunities long term.

5.6.2.2 **Policy**: Encourage employment-intensive industrial uses in the Kalamalka Lake Rd and Okanagan Landing industrial areas.

5.6.2.3 **Policy**: Discourage the encroachment of uses that are incompatible with industrial activity on land designated for industrial uses.

5.6.2.4 **Policy:** Encourage land uses that are compatible with industrial activities on properties adjacent to industrial lands, such as vehicle-oriented uses or indoor sales.

Flexible Spaces

5.6.2.5 **Policy**: Encourage flexible industrial spaces with demising walls that can be easily altered to accommodate a range of tenants that can be adapted over time.

<div align="center">

PLAY

</div>

5.6.3 Objective: Enhance employee wellness in industrial land uses.

Employee Wellness

5.6.3.1 **Policy**: Encourage outdoor shade structures or trees for employee amenity areas.

5.6.3.2 **Policy:** Encourage enhanced long-term bicycle storage and end-of-trip facilities for employees to provide options for transportation.

<div align="center">

MOVE

</div>

5.6.4 Objective: Direct vehicle-oriented uses onto industrial lands.

Parking & Vehicles

5.6.4.1 **Policy:** Encourage parking lot designs to be functional for the size of vehicles that will be using them, and incorporate landscaping, trees, and shade structures where feasible.

5.6.4.2 **Policy:** Support proposals for vehicle-oriented uses on Industrial lands.

MIDDLETON MOUNTAIN

5.7 Community and Parks, Open Spaces, & Natural Areas

Parks, Open Spaces, Natural Areas, and Community uses are essential to supporting physical health, mental well-being, social connections, and environmental stewardship of the community. The Parks, Open Spaces, and Natural Areas land designation includes City-owned parks, sports fields, and trails; Provincial parks; and privately-owned natural areas and golf courses. The policies in this section supplement the overarching parks strategies identified in Chapter 4 – Parks & Recreation, and growth is intended to be limited to temporary structures that preserve the land for generations to come. The Community designation is an overlaid designation that indicates the property is being used for civic uses such as schools, developed parks, government buildings, and recreation centres.

LIVE

5.7.1 Encourage the incorporation of community services within other land uses.

Community Services Conversions

5.7.1.1 **Policy:** Support community services within homes as home-based businesses or by converting a portion or all of an existing dwelling into a community service such as daycares, community halls, or housing care centres.

Figure 5.11 Community building form (home daycare).

5.7.1.2 **Policy:** Support the adaptive re-use of heritage homes into community services, especially educational or cultural services that enhance awareness of heritage and indigenous culture.

5.7.1.3 **Policy:** Support the development of community services on underutilized and vacant properties including civic properties, religious assemblies, and surface parking lots.

CIVIC MEMORIAL PARK

5.7.2 Encourage the provision of community services throughout all neighbourhoods.

Equitable Distribution of Community Services

5.7.2.1 **Policy:** Encourage community services throughout all neighbourhoods including daycares, libraries, cultural facilities, educational activities, supportive housing, parks and outdoor recreation facilities by allowing these uses without requiring an amendment to the Official Community Plan Land Use Designation.

5.7.3 Objective: Support the existing park inventory.

Park Access and Design

5.7.3.1 **Policy:** Consider repurposing portions of underutilized streets to create public amenity spaces by changing select areas from vehicle use to parks. This could include expanded boulevard space, planting more trees, or creating functional green spaces or trails in laneways.

5.7.3.2 **Policy:** Consider improvements to or expansions of existing parks where neighbourhoods are experiencing increased density and development to meet future needs of the neighbourhood.

5.7.3.3 **Policy:** Prioritize **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** principles when evaluating park location, design, and use.

5.7.3.4 **Policy:** Encourage the design of parks and public spaces to support year-round use and accessibility, offering a variety of recreational opportunities regardless of the season or weather.

5.7.3.5 **Policy:** Encourage plazas to be flexible and multi-purpose to support a variety of uses including cultural activities, events, skate and scooter friendly places, and informal sports.

5.7.3.6 **Policy:** Support improved accessibility in parks by ensuring that washrooms provide access to potable water, change tables, and nursing areas for all parent types.

Preservation of Existing Parks and Open Spaces

5.7.3.7 **Policy:** Prioritize the protection of natural features including rock outcrops, grasslands, forests, steep slopes, **riparian** areas, and habitat corridors.

5.7.3.8 **Policy:** Encourage the preservation of existing off-leash dog parks and work toward creating new dog parks in neighbourhoods that do not have one, particularly in urban areas where redevelopment is expected to include apartment buildings and high-rises.

5.7.3.9 **Policy:** Support commercial opportunities that increase vibrancy of active parks.

Climate Resilience

5.7.3.10 **Policy:** Encourage parks to be integrated with other infrastructure systems to increase climate resilience and long-term usability of City assets including storm detention ponds and utility lots.

5.7.3.11 **Policy:** Provide more shade trees or structures, such as sails, to facilitate sun protection in public spaces.

MOVE

5.7.4 Objective: Support accessibility and connectivity throughout the community.

Community Connections

5.7.4.1 **Policy:** Encourage community services providers to consider the accessibility of their facilities for a variety of ages and physical abilities.

5.7.4.2 **Policy:** Support transportation connections that make it easier for people to reach parks and community spaces.

Chapter 6 - Development Permit Areas

Vernon is developing. Development Permit Areas ensure our growth is safe and balanced.

📍 OUTBACK LAKESIDE RESORT

Introduction

The *Local Government Act* (LGA) provides municipalities with the authority to designate Development Permit Areas (DPA) for one or more of the following purposes outlined in LGA Section 488(1), including:

- Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity;

- Protection of development from hazardous conditions;

- Revitalization of an area in which commercial use is permitted;

- Establishment of objectives for the form and character of intensive residential development; and

- Establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multi-family residential development.

This section provides justification and objectives for establishing DPAs under the LGA. Official Community Plan Maps 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 define the geographic areas that are subject to DPAs. Appendix B details the regulatory guidelines for natural environment and hazardous condition DPAs and Appendix C details the guidelines for the form and character DPA, including any permit exemptions.

If a property is within a DPA, any alteration or improvement to the land, such as subdivision, vegetation removal, land clearing, or construction, may require an approved Development Permit before work can occur. Development Permits are not Building Permits, if construction is planned for the site, a Building Permit is also required.

Where land is subject to more than one DPA, a single Development Permit application is required. The Development Permit application will be subject to the requirements of all applicable DPAs.

Table 6.1: Development Permit Area Local Government Act Relationship

Development Permit Area	No.	Local Government Act – Section 488(1)
Terrestrial Ecosystem	1	(a) Natural Environment (b) Hazardous Conditions
Aquatic Ecosystem	2	(a) Natural Environment (b) Hazardous Conditions
Hillside Development	3	(a) Natural Environment (b) Hazardous Conditions (f) Commercial, Industrial, and Multi-Family Form and Character
Wildfire Hazard	4	(a) Natural Environment (b) Hazardous Conditions
Flood Hazard	5	(b) Hazardous Conditions
Form and Character	6	(f) Commercial, Industrial, Multi-Family Form and Character (h) Promote Energy Conservation

6.1 DPA 1 – Terrestrial Ecosystem

Purpose

The purpose of the Terrestrial Ecosystem DPA (Map 6.1) is to protect the natural environment, its ecosystems, and biological diversity within the community, pursuant to Sections 488(1)(a)(b) of the LGA.

Justification

The Terrestrial Ecosystem DPA seeks to protect land-based **environmentally sensitive areas** (ESAs) which facilitate natural ecological processes, increase community climate resiliency, and provide habitat for a variety of wildlife including rare and endangered species with limited habitat ranges. ESAs include areas such as mature forests and woodlands, rocky outcrops, and sensitive grasslands. The Terrestrial Ecosystem DPA range was identified through a combination of regional Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory Projects undertaken from 2002-2013, the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Project undertaken in 2014, and refined through the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Mapping Study undertaken as part of the OCP update process in 2025.

Development can contribute to the degradation of natural areas through the loss of trees, vegetation, and wildlife. As a result, ESAs with a value of Very High, High, or Moderate have been incorporated into the Terrestrial Ecosystem DPA to capture areas where a site visit by a Qualified Environmental Professional is necessary to minimize the impacts that new and redeveloped sites may pose on land-based **environmentally sensitive areas**.

Objectives

- To identify and protect land-based **environmentally sensitive areas**.

- To prioritize avoidance of negative impacts to **environmentally sensitive areas** over mitigation and compensation.

- To promote and support land use that prioritizes the conservation of rare and at-risk ecosystems.

- To protect the ecological characteristics and socioeconomic benefits prevalent in all **environmentally sensitive areas**.

- To preserve **environmentally sensitive areas** in mostly natural condition while accommodating land use that meets larger community needs.

- To carefully plan land development and new subdivisions in ways that protect and connect **environmentally sensitive areas**.

- To protect **environmentally sensitive areas** by establishing buffer zones.

- To identify viable habitat corridors that connect core conservation areas and critical habitats.

6.2 DPA 2 – Aquatic Ecosystem

Purpose

The purpose of the Aquatic Ecosystem DPA (Map 6.1) is to protect the natural environment, its ecosystems, and biological diversity within the community, pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the LGA, the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*, and the *Water Sustainability Act*.

Justification

The Aquatic Ecosystem DPA seeks to protect water-based **environmentally sensitive areas** (ESAs) which facilitate natural ecological processes, increase climate resiliency, provide habitat for a variety of wildlife, and provide ecosystem services including water quality improvements, flood prevention, and erosion control. Water-based ESAs include streams, lakes, and wetlands, which alongside their **riparian** areas, link water to land by creating and directly influencing fish habitat. The Aquatic Ecosystem DPA range was identified through a combination of municipal and provincial mapping data.

Development can contribute to the degradation of aquatic ecosystems through the loss of trees, vegetation, and wildlife. As a result, the Aquatic Ecosystem DPA layer identifies areas where a site visit by a Qualified Environmental Professional is necessary to both align with provincial legislative requirements and minimize the impact that new and redeveloped sites may pose on water-based **environmentally sensitive areas**.

Objectives

- To identify and protect water-based **environmentally sensitive areas**.

- To protect natural features, functions, and conditions that support fish life processes.

- To prioritize avoidance of negative impacts to water-based **environmentally sensitive areas** over mitigation and compensation.

- To protect, restore, and enhance **riparian** and wetland ecosystems to maintain their ecosystem functions and capacity for housing wildlife.

- To protect, restore, and enhance habitat corridors to maintain ecological integrity, biodiversity, and sustainable ecosystem functioning across the landscape.

- To safeguard ecological characteristics and socioeconomic benefits prevalent in all **environmentally sensitive areas**.

- To protect development from water-related natural hazards such as flooding.

6.3 DPA 3 – Hillside Development

Purpose

The purpose of the Hillside Development DPA (Map 6.2) is to protect development from hazardous conditions, protect the natural environment, and establish objectives for the form and character of development pursuant to Sections 488(1)(a)(b)(f) of the LGA.

Justification

Many of the remaining undeveloped lands in Vernon are on steep slopes and hillsides, including future phases of existing hillside communities. The Hillside Development DPA seeks to protect hillside development from hazardous conditions, including consideration for drainage patterns, slope stability, and environmental impacts. It also seeks to ensure development is sensitively integrated into hillsides to maintain the vibrancy of our unique landscapes.

Residential and commercial developments located on hillsides can be disruptive to the landscape, because of this retaining significant portions of land undisturbed and concentrating development on less sensitive or less slopes areas is strongly encouraged. As a result, areas with slopes of 30% or greater have been incorporated into the Hillside Development DPA to capture areas where geotechnical expertise is necessary to ensure safe and concentrated development can occur while minimizing impact to our surrounding landscapes.

Objectives

- To complement the scenic character of Vernon by integrating development with the unique natural features and hillside landforms.

- To promote development that respects the terrain, vegetation, drainage courses and natural constraints of the site.

- To achieve sensitive hillside neighbourhoods that limits visual impacts and promotes a high standard of design.

- To enhance the livability of hillside neighbourhoods through public trail connections, and parks.

- To minimize the risk of erosion, landslip, or rockfall hazards.

- To preserve steep slope areas to protect natural vegetation and sensitive ecosystems.

- To support complete communities with mixed development densities and a variety of housing opportunities.

- To minimize infrastructure maintenance requirements and costs thereby enhancing the financial sustainability of proposed development.

6.4 DPA 4 – Wildfire Hazard

Purpose

The purpose of the Wildfire Hazard DPA (Map 6.2) is to protect development from hazardous conditions and protect the natural environment pursuant to Sections 488(1)(a)(b) of the LGA.

Justification

While wildfire plays a natural role in the forest and grassland ecosystems in the Okanagan Valley, development along the urban-natural interface increases exposure to wildfire risks. The notable rise in wildfire events over the past decade underscores the threat to community safety and well-being. The Wildfire Hazard DPA seeks to alleviate the strain placed on first responders, risks to community safety, and potential for property damage during wildfire events by reducing the opportunity and risk of wildfire. As a result, the Wildfire Hazard DPA applies to all areas within Fire Interface Area 2 and 3 where additional preventative measures are necessary to minimize wildfire risk for new developments and large additions.

Objectives

- To minimize the risk to people, property, and natural areas from wildfire hazards.

- To promote development that reduces wildfire hazards while addressing environmental issues, such as through the inclusion of natural trails as firebreaks.

- To support development that adheres to with the Vernon Community Wildfire Plan and BC **FireSmart** guidelines.

6.5 DPA 5 – Flood Hazard

Purpose

The purpose of the Flood Hazard DPA (Map 6.2) is to protect development from hazardous conditions pursuant to Section 488(1)(b) of the LGA.

Justification

Key water features, including streams and lakes, make some areas of Vernon susceptible to potential flooding hazards during extreme weather events. The Flood Hazard DPA recognizes this risk and seeks to protect the community from potential flood hazards that may threaten people or property. The Flood Hazard DPA was identified through a combination of regional Floodplain Mapping undertaken by the Okanagan Basin Waterboard in 2020 and detailed flood mapping and risk analysis studies undertaken by the City from 2020-2022.

The Flood Hazard DPA works in conjunction with the Floodplain Management Bylaw, which provides the detailed requirements for development activities within floodplain areas. As a result, the Flood Hazard DPA applies to all properties where any portion thereof is overlapped by the floodplain, where additional considerations may be needed to ensure the safety of people and structures during a flood event.

Objectives

- To minimize the risk to people and property from flood hazards and mitigate increasing the impacts of flooding within already developed areas.

- To encourage safety in the construction, location, and manner of development.

- To avoid increasing the hazard to or vulnerability of others on the floodplain.

- To promote a natural floodplain regime.

6.6 DPA 6 – Form and Character

Purpose

The purpose of the Form and Character DPA (Map 6.3) is to establish objectives to guide the form and character of intensive residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial, and to establish objectives to promote energy conservation and reduce **greenhouse gas emissions** pursuant to Sections 488(1) of the *Local Government Act.*

Justification

Vernon is a growing community experiencing and planning for growth, new development, and redevelopment of existing areas throughout the city. Recognizing this, the Form and Character DPA seeks to ensure inclusive, efficient, attainable, and climate resilient design that will strengthen placemaking and wayfinding within the community. This includes considering how new development can positively contribute to the public realm, promote a wide variety of housing types, and encourage designs that complement Vernon's community character.

The Form and Character DPA works in conjunction with the Form and Character Design Guidelines (Appendix C) that provide direction for site planning, street-facing design, massing and scale, landscaping, materials, and site connectivity. The Form and Character DPA applies to all areas of the city for intensive residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial development.

Objectives

- To clearly communicate the design expectations for intensive residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial projects.

- To facilitate the fair and consistent application of design objectives.

- To foster balanced design by encouraging energy efficient, contextual, attractive, and functional development.

- To encourage inclusive design that creates a safe, inviting, and accessible public realm.

Chapter 7 - Implementation

Vernon has a plan for the future. Implementation will bring our plan to life.

POLSON PARK

Introduction

Bringing the OCP to life requires more than putting words on paper – it means ongoing commitment and action. The implementation framework helps keep things on track by making sure we are regularly checking in on progress, reporting on what is working, and adjusting when needed to stay aligned with Vernon's vision, goals, and priorities. It's about making the OCP part of how the city does things every day through planning, budgeting, and decision-making so that our big-picture goals are connected to real results in the community.

7.1 Implementation Framework

The OCP is a living document that can grow and evolve along with the community. As new trends emerge or community priorities shift, the city can update the plan to keep it relevant and responsive at Council's discretion.

When proposed changes align with the overall vision and guiding principles of the OCP, Council may choose to make an amendment. If the changes are more significant or do not fit with the current direction of the plan, a more in-depth review may be needed to ensure the OCP continues to reflect what the community wants for its future. To keep things current, a full review of the OCP is generally planned every five years, including opportunities for community participation and consultation to ensure the plan is reflective of our needs. This process also includes a review of how the **growth strategy** is working and its impact on the community.

7.2 Implementation Actions

This table below highlights action items for the City to undertake that are identified throughout the Official Community Plan. While the table below provides direction for implementing and evaluating OCP performance, it does not necessarily commit the City to enacting the policies as envisioned under the plan. Final decisions on timing and priorities will be made by Council through the annual strategic planning and budgeting process.

The action items are prioritized on a scale of 1 to 3 based on their importance and urgency, alignment with values and objectives in the OCP, resource allocation, and feasibility. The action items that are anticipated to have the greatest positive impact on OCP objectives have been ranked as top priority, while other actions that may require additional resources or planning have been ranked as a 2nd or 3rd priority. In addition, the actions are categorized into short term (within 5 years), long term (6+ year), and ongoing (throughout OCP lifespan) timelines to guide plan implementation.

Table 7.1: Official Community Plan Action Item Summary

Section	Action Item	Action Type	Timeline	Priority
Section 4.1 – Housing				
4.1.1.4	Develop a formal and defined pre-application process for land use applications to help identify potential requirements early and to provide consistent direction to applicants.	• Process Improvement	• Short Term	1
4.1.1.5	Review the Development Application Procedures Bylaw and Delegation of Authority Bylaw to streamline processes and provide clarity to applicants.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1
4.1.1.6	Develop streamlined development approval processes for small-scale infill and single stair access apartments by implementing a program for pre-approved, pre-designed, shelf-ready designs	• Process Improvement	• Short Term	3
4.1.1.8	Explore the potential for City land acquisitions to create land assemblies to offer "development ready" parcels to housing developers, especially for affordable or special needs housing.	• Program	• Short Term & Ongoing	2
4.1.1.11	Review current business software systems for improvements to streamline processes and collect data on new and existing housing supply.	• Process Improvement	• Short Term	1
4.1.1.12	Implement and expand e-permitting across all application types including rezoning and development permits.	• Process Improvement	• Short Term	2

4.1.3.9	Work with other jurisdictions and municipalities to share information on best practices and lessons learned in reducing the time it takes to move individuals and families experiencing homelessness into more stable housing.	• Strategy	• Ongoing	1
4.1.3.10	Identify existing vacant and under-utilized City owned land that would be appropriate to be used for achieving affordable or special needs housing objectives.	• Inventory	• Short Term	2
4.1.3.11	Develop a dedicated Land Enhancement Housing Team to spearhead a program for using city owned land for affordable or special needs housing development.	• Program	• Ongoing	3
4.1.4.2	Develop regulatory incentives for rental housing within the Zoning Bylaw that could include a subzone designation, parking reductions, increased height, or others.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1
4.1.4.4	Review existing bylaws and policies related to tenant protection and mobile home park redevelopments to modernize and improve assistance for tenants displaced by redevelopment.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	3
4.1.6.1	Develop a program for housing incentives including streamlined processes, financial incentives, or revised regulations to facilitate the delivery of housing. This may include reviewing current financial incentive programs such as the Rental Housing Incentive Grant Program or revising regulations in the Zoning Bylaw.	• Program	• Short Term	1
Section 4.2 – Environment & Climate Resilience				
4.2.1.4	Restore riparian areas adjacent to streams, wetlands, and other waterbodies by removing retaining walls, culverts, structures, and other impediments that are detrimental to riparian function.	• Program	• Ongoing	1
4.2.1.7	Develop a policy which meets or exceeds requirements outlined under the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation to reduce the need for provincial oversight of the riparian development approval processes.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	2

4.2.1.8	Review and update the Environmental Management Areas Strategy to align with current best practices and regional standards for environmental permitting and protection.	• Strategy	• Short Term	1
4.2.1.9	Develop an urban forestry strategy including an equity analysis to map neighbourhoods with the highest need for trees to distribute the benefits of the community tree canopy equitably.	• Strategy	• Long Term	2
4.2.1.14	Work toward the creation of regulations for street tree installation, care standards, and maintenance periods.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	2
4.2.2.1	Implement the Climate Action Plan.	• Implement Existing Plan	• Ongoing	1
4.2.2.2	Review the Climate Action Plan on a 5-year cycle, striving to align the timing of future reviews with the Official Community Plan update process.	• Implement Existing Plan	• Ongoing	2
4.2.2.9	Implement and maintain a natural asset management plan to ensure the community benefits of natural assets are reflected in planning and resource management decisions, and the need for built infrastructure is minimized.	• Strategy	• Short Term	2
4.2.2.13	Implement climate action principles in the construction and maintenance of municipal infrastructure and public assets.	• Implement Existing Plan	• Short Term	2
Section 4.3 – Community Safety				
4.3.1.1	Review public and private assets for vulnerabilities, particularly regarding climate-related hazards (flooding, landslides, storms), and integrate climate considerations into all infrastructure development and operations.	• Inventory	• Ongoing	2
Section 4.4 – Parks & Recreation				
4.4.1.3	Prioritize public access to Okanagan Lake through strategic land acquisition practices in accordance with the Parks Acquisition Strategy.	• Strategy	• Short Term	1
4.4.2.1	Review and update the Parks Master Plan to include all classes of parks.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short-Term	1

4.4.2.5	Develop a Park Acquisition Strategy including a Development Cost Charge program to ensure the equitable distribution of parks and amenities, particularly in areas experiencing growth.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1
4.4.2.7	Implement a Development Cost Charge program for new development to acquire active park lands that cannot be obtained through the subdivision process; aiming for a range between 2.0 ha and 3.0 ha of park land per thousand people in population growth in order to provide active park space within the community.	• Program	• Short Term	1
4.4.2.9	Work towards joint-use agreements with School District 22 for mutual community benefits such as increased usage of sport fields, courts, and various indoor facilities.	• Strategy/Program	• Long Term	3
4.4.3.3	Review accessibility options for barrier-free access to recreation, arts, and culture programs in community facilities.	• Process Improvement	• Ongoing	2
4.4.3.5	Review current policies for funding special events, festivals, and the arts to ensure adequate support is available.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	2
4.4.3.6	Provide an easy and affordable permitting process for closing streets for block parties and street festivals with a kit that includes essentials.	• Process Improvement	• Short Term	2
4.4.3.7	Identify and develop a cultural district strategy which may include expanded funding and space for cultural events, Indigenous-led programming, and artistic installations in public spaces.	• Strategy/Program	• Short Term	2
Section 4.5 – Economy, Employment & Prosperity				
4.5.1.4	Explore incentive opportunities allowed under the Community Charter to support commercial investment in the community.	• Strategy/Program	• Short Term	2
4.5.1.7	Develop an industrial lands inventory to ensure adequate industrial land is provided for continued employment opportunities.	• Inventory	• Short Term	3
4.5.2.4	Review current Economic Development policies to identify areas for improvement or additional incentives that could attract private investment and support entrepreneurship.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1

4.5.2.5	Review regulations and policies for the expansion and growth of a wide range of home-based businesses, recognizing that many entrepreneurial activities are incubated from the comforts of home.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1
4.5.2.8	Develop a Public Market Strategy including policies related to collaboration amongst stakeholders, partnerships, and developing resources to achieve the full potential of Vernon's public markets.	• Strategy/Program	• Short Term	3
4.5.4.6	Review the Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw to ensure current incentives are modernized and reflect Official Community Plan objectives.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1
4.5.5.4	Build and maintain a library of community data and insights to provide investors, developers, and entrepreneurs to support investment decisions.	• Inventory	• Ongoing	1
Section 4.6 – Culture, Equity & Inclusion				
4.6.1.1	Undertake a City-wide equity analysis and develop strategies to inform decisions related to planning and resource allocation across neighbourhoods and centres.	• Strategy/Program	• Long Term	3
4.6.2.1	Explore opportunities for independent and collective learning for local government officials and staff on the Calls to Action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the principles of the United Nations Declaration of Rights for Indigenous Peoples.	• Strategy/Program	• Ongoing	1
4.6.3.9	Review Zoning Bylaw regulations to facilitate the provision of childcare in all areas of the city by considering a subzone, or other regulatory flexibility.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1
4.6.4.1	Develop a heritage inventory of heritage assets within the City, building upon the existing Heritage Register, that could be preserved or protected through municipal tools, grants, and incentives.	• Inventory	• Long Term	1
4.6.4.2	Review current heritage policies and financial incentives including the Heritage Restoration Grant Program, the Heritage Retention Incentive Grant Program, and the Vernon Heritage Register for potential improvements to encourage the preservation or adaptive re-use of existing heritage buildings on public and private property.	• Strategy/Program	• Long Term	1

Section 4.7 - Infrastructure & Transportation				
4.7.1.13	Review and identify areas within the Urban Containment Boundary where hydrant spacing and fire flow is insufficient to support additional residential or commercial growth, and work to enhance firefighting capacity in these areas.	• Strategy/Program	• Short Term	2
4.7.1.14	Explore alternative locations in or near the Waterfront Village Centre for Firehall No. 2.	• Strategy/Program	• Long Term	2
4.7.1.17	Review and recommend changes to regulations in the Solid Waste Bylaw to account for development that may not be suitable for individual garbage, recycling, and organics collection such as bareland or building strata developments on private roads, apartment buildings, or mixed-use projects.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	2
4.7.1.24	Explore revenue generating and funding methods to implement neighbourhood infrastructure such as sidewalks, street trees, boulevard plantings, stormwater management, and undergrounding of power lines in existing neighbourhoods.	• Strategy/Program	• Long Term	1
4.7.1.27	Complete the review and replacement of the Development Cost Charges Bylaw to ensure new development fairly funds growth-related infrastructure.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	1
4.7.2.1	Implement the Transportation Plan.	• Implement Existing Plan	• Ongoing	1
4.7.2.11	Implement a regular transportation safety review and invest in safety improvements for existing transportation infrastructure.	• Inventory	• Ongoing	1
4.7.2.20	Review the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw to improve the delivery of trails, sidewalks, and frontage improvements at the time of new development.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	2
4.7.3.3	Review parking regulations regularly for all uses in the Zoning Bylaw to ensure the requirements are appropriate as enhanced transit service and increased density in transit oriented development areas result in lower parking demand.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Ongoing	2

4.7.3.6	Develop a Curbside Management Strategy that includes the parking standards for the Downtown and the rates for on street and public parking.	• Strategy	• Ongoing	2
4.7.3.8	Explore the demand and potential funding models for a new or expanded multi-storey parkade Downtown to help eliminate the need for existing surface parking lots.	• Strategy	• Long Term	1
4.7.3.10	Develop a Transportation Demand Management for Development Policy that outlines criteria to require a transportation demand management plan for large sites.	• Bylaw/Policy Update	• Short Term	3

Appendix A: Regional Growth Statement Summary Table

Appendix A – Regional Growth Statement Summary Table

Section	RDNO Regional Growth Strategy Goal	Applicable OCP Section
Urban Containment & Rural Protection		
UC-1	Focus development into growth areas	• 3.3 – Growth Strategy
UC-2	Protect rural lands	• 3.3 – Growth Strategy
Agriculture and Food Systems		
AG-1	Water is managed sustainably so all reasonable needs, including agriculture, are met in a balanced manner	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience
AG-2	Maintain and diversify the agricultural land base	• 5.5 – Limited Growth Areas • 5.6 – Agricultural Land Reserve
AG-3	Support a robust and diverse agricultural economic sector	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience • 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
AG-4	Encourage a healthy, accessible and resilient food system	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience
Water Stewardship		
WS-1	Protection of our groundwater	• 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
WS-2	Protection and conservation of water resources	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience
WS-3	Consider the true cost of water	• 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
Environment and Natural Lands		
ENV-1	Protect our watersheds	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience
ENV-2	Protect our parks, natural areas and open spaces	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience • 4.5 – Parks & Recreation
ENV-3	Reduce and prevent pollution	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience • 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
Economic Development		

ED-1	Promote a regional approach to economic development	• 4.7 – Economy, Employment & Prosperity
ED-2	Encourage a sustainable, resilient and diverse regional economy	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience • 4.7 – Economy, Employment & Prosperity
Transportation and Infrastructure		
TI-1	Manage regional transportation corridors	• 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
TI-2	Support integrated regional transportation planning	• 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
TI-3	Create effective, efficient and sustainable infrastructure	• 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
Housing		
H-1	Support and encourage a variety of housing options to meet the housing needs of all residents in the region	• 4.2 - Housing
Governance and Service Delivery		
GS-1	Support regional governance based upon a foundation of regional cooperation	• 2.4 – Partnerships & Relationships
GS-2	Pursue efficient, effective and fiscally responsible service delivery	• 4.8 – Infrastructure & Transportation
Energy, Emissions & Climate Adaptation		
EE-1	Reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2020 and 25% by 2030	• 4.3 – Environment & Climate Resilience
CA-1	Strengthen resilient and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters	• 4.4 – Community Safety

Appendix B: Environmental Development Permit Area Guidelines

Appendix B – Environmental Development Permit Area Guidelines

Introduction

Chapter 6 of the OCP provides justification and objectives for establishing Development Permit Areas (DPAs) under the *Local Government Act*. Schedules 5 to 7, which form part of the Official Community Plan, define the geographic areas that apply to the DPAs.

This appendix details the regulatory guidelines for DPAs 1 – 5, including exemptions. The regulatory guidelines for DPA 6 – Form and Character can be found in Appendix C.

The City may require the following to support development approval consideration in any Development Permit Area in accordance with Section 484 of the *Local Government Act*:

a. Archaeological Impact Assessment;

b. Construction Management Plan;

c. Demand for Local Community Services Study;

d. Environmental Impact Assessment;

e. Environmental Management Plan;

f. Functional Servicing Report;

g. Geotechnical Study;

h. Habitat Assessment;

i. Parking Demand Analysis;

j. Shadow Study;

k. Site Access and Servicing Plan;

l. Stormwater Management Study;

m. Traffic Impact Assessment;

n. Transportation Demand Measures;

o. Tree Inventory and Assessment;

p. Wildfire Hazard Assessment; and

q. Other studies as deemed necessary.

DPA 1 – Terrestrial Ecosystem Guidelines

1.1 Application

A Development Permit is required prior to any proposed development in DPA 1 – Terrestrial Ecosystem of the Official Community Plan, excluding:

1. Renovations for which the building footprint is not extended beyond 50 m^2 and environmentally sensitive areas (ESA) are protected from any new disturbance.
2. Properties for which a Development Permit has already been registered on title identifying the ESA, the conditions of the permit have been met, and the existing permit protects the entire identified ESA.
3. Properties for which a covenant has been registered on title which effectively protects the entire ESA, and all of the conditions of the covenant have been met, and the proposed development will not affect any portion of the ESA.
4. Normal farm practices in accordance with the *Farm Practices Protection Act*.
5. Actions necessary to prevent immediate threats to life and property.
6. Works undertaken by the City of Vernon, Regional District of North Okanagan, Federal or Provincial Government, or their authorized agents where appropriate measures have been undertaken to satisfy the applicable development permit area guidelines.

1.2 Criteria

Where disturbance within a Terrestrial Ecosystem Development Permit Area cannot be avoided, the following information must be provided to support the DPA 1 Development Permit application in order to ensure habitat protection, connectivity, and functionality through mitigation, compensation, and restoration of project impacts:

Context

1.2.1 A detailed environmental assessment of the property, signed and sealed by a Qualified Environmental Professional working within their scope of practice, including:
  a) Consideration for alignment with relevant provincial and federal legislation including the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* and *Species at Risk Act*;
  b) The identification and assessment of sensitive ecosystems on site, including a list of species found or expected to be found on or adjacent to the site with specific attention to those that are endangered, threatened, or of special concern, and corridors to accommodate known movement of species;
  c) The identification of any separate approval processes that may be required to facilitate development (ie. *Water Sustainability Act* instream works);
  d) An assessment of the potential impacts on natural features and functions including the methods used and appropriate mitigation or compensation measures;
  e) Recommended measures to protect the ESA prior to site disturbance, during the construction process, and post construction; and
  f) Site plans at an appropriate scale, indicating the project location (including building footprints and limits of disturbance), site features, and activities in relation to the ESA.

1.2.2 A restoration plan and associated cost estimate for environmental monitoring and restoration works, prioritizing vegetation that is native to British Columbia, which meets or exceeds the landscaping requirements specified in any relevant municipal bylaws.

1.2.3 Where disturbance cannot be mitigated, the principle of net gain will be followed. A Qualified Environmental Professional must demonstrate how an increase to the quality and quantity of functional habitat within the ESA will be achieved, such that any areas restored will be of better ecological value and shall be contiguous with the original ESA.

1.2.4 To protect the ESA the following will be required:

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a) Development should be located in the least environmentally sensitive areas on site, such as previously disturbed areas, to minimize environmental impacts.

b) Development activity should be minimized during sensitive breeding or nesting windows, as determined by a Qualified Environmental Professional and following the Province of BC's *Develop with Care Environmental Guidelines*.

c) Fencing, including erosion and sediment control measures, shall be installed prior to site disturbance to sufficiently identify the ESA and protect it from encroachment.

d) Consideration for wildlife corridor connectivity and buffers between development and ESAs shall be prioritized to facilitate habitat linkages.

e) Identification of tree stands and individual trees with environmental value, including mechanism for protection during and post development shall be provided.

f) The registration of a Section 219 covenant on the title shall be considered as necessary to ensure long-term protection of the ESA.

1.2.5   Varying or relaxing other bylaw requirements (ie. building setbacks or height) may be considered to facilitate safeguarding an ESA, particularly where the relaxation can facilitate development on the remainder of the lot while avoiding ESA disturbance.

DPA 2 – Aquatic Ecosystem Guidelines

2.1 Application

A Development Permit is required prior to any proposed development in DPA 2 – Aquatic Ecosystem of the Official Community Plan, excluding:

1. Non-structural renovations for which the building footprint is not altered and the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA) is protected from any new disturbance.

2. Properties for which a Development Permit has already been registered on title reflecting the extent of proposed disturbance, the conditions of the permit have been met, and the existing permit protects the entire identified SPEA.

3. Development proposed wherein a property has a covenant registered under the Land Title Act which effectively protects the entire SPEA, and all of the conditions of the covenant have been met, and the proposed development will not affect any portion of the SPEA.

4. Actions necessary to prevent immediate threats to life and property.

5. Normal farm practices in accordance with the *Farm Practices Protection Act*.

6. Works undertaken by the City of Vernon, Regional District of North Okanagan, Federal or Provincial Government, or their authorized agents where appropriate measures have been undertaken to satisfy the applicable development permit area guidelines.

2.2 Criteria

Where disturbance within an aquatic ecosystem cannot be avoided, the following information must be provided to support the DPA 2 Development Permit application in order to ensure habitat protection, connectivity, and functionality through mitigation, compensation, and restoration of the impact:

Context

2.2.1   A *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* assessment completed by a Qualified Environmental Professional and approved by the Province.

2.2.2   A restoration plan and associated cost estimate for environmental monitoring and restoration works, prioritizing vegetation that is native to British Columbia, which meets or exceeds the landscaping requirements specified in any relevant municipal bylaws.

2.2.3   Where disturbance cannot be mitigated, the principle of net gain will be followed. A Qualified Environmental Professional must demonstrate how an increase to the quality and quantity of functional habitat within the riparian area will be achieved, such that any areas restored will be of better ecological value and shall be contiguous with the original riparian area.

DPA 3 - Hillside Development Guidelines

3.1 Application

A Development Permit is required prior to any proposed development in DPA 3 – Hillside Development of the Official Community Plan, excluding:

1. Development that is consistent with the lot grading plan approved at the time of subdivision.

2. Lot consolidation, road dedication, or a boundary adjustment subdivision where a new building footprint is not proposed.

3. Development where the proposed building envelope is outside of the steep slope area and construction or grading will not impact the steep slope area.

4. Building alterations which are limited to the addition, replacement, or alteration of doors, windows, trim, or roofs and would not impact existing the existing building footprint, landscaping, or lot access.

5. Actions necessary to prevent immediate threats to life and property.

6. Works undertaken by the City of Vernon, Regional District of North Okanagan, Federal or Provincial Government, or their authorized agents where appropriate measures have been undertaken to satisfy the applicable development permit area guidelines.

3.2 Criteria

Where disturbance on a slope of greater than thirty percent (30%) cannot be avoided, the following information must be provided to support the DPA 3 Development Permit application in order to ensure safe development that meets the form and character of the community:

Context

3.2.1   Alternative building layout opportunities, including cluster development, sensitive building orientation, and shared access shall be incorporated where appropriate to minimize visual impact and preserve natural character of the hillside.

3.2.2   Alternative lot layout opportunities, including staggered lots, strategic road placement, sensitive lot layout, and appropriate landscaping shall be incorporated where appropriate to reduce building massing.

3.2.3   Buildings shall be set into the hillside and stepped up or down the slope to mimic the natural topography of the surrounding area.

3.2.4   Significant natural features and landforms, including ridgelines, shall be retained or enhanced to reduce visual impacts.

Site Design

3.2.5   Slopes of thirty-percent (30%) or greater shall be preserved as undisturbed areas unless it is clearly demonstrated they cannot be avoided through development.

3.2.6   A Geotechnical Report prepared by a qualified geotechnical engineer will be required for any development within the DPA. The report is required to assess slope stability, rock fall hazards, building setbacks, associated safety recommendations and mitigation measures.

3.2.7   Wire mesh, shot-concrete and other forms of visually intrusive mechanical stabilization is not permitted unless required by a qualified geotechnical engineer and approved by the City.

3.2.8   On street-parking shall be restricted where alternative road standards would allow for narrow roads with less encroachment into the hillside. Parking areas off the main travel surface may be considered on a site-specific basis.

3.2.9   Cut and fill excavation shall be minimized to preserve natural topography, reduce visual impacts, and prevent site scarring.

3.2.10 Altered slopes shall appear natural with varied contours and vegetation. Sharp angles should be avoided to align with natural topography where applicable.

3.2.11 Retaining walls utilizing native building materials (i.e. earth berms, rock forms, or stone) should be prioritized to minimize the visual impact of cuts.

3.2.12 Retaining wall height and length shall be minimized. Stepped or terraced walls with landscaping is encouraged for areas where steep cuts are required.

Hillside Form and Character

3.2.13 Building masses that reinforce the sensitivity of the natural topography shall be incorporated into project design.

3.2.14 Required parking shall be incorporated into the natural landscape to minimize the requirement for lot grading (i.e. avoid large flat parking areas) where feasible.

3.2.15 Building siting shall be staggered and screened with mature vegetation to minimize a "wall effect" of development on the surrounding area.

DPA 4 – Wildfire Hazard Guidelines

4.1 Application

A Development Permit is required prior to any proposed development in DPA 4 – Wildfire Hazard of the Official Community Plan, excluding:

1. Development that demonstrates compliance with the FireSmart BC guidelines and the Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan.

2. Construction or alterations to accessory buildings or structures where the building footprint is no larger than 10 m^2 in area.

3. Activities covered by an existing registered covenant on title for wildfire hazard reduction, provided all covenant conditions have been met and remain unaffected.

4.2 Criteria

Where development within Wildfire Interface Area 2 or 3 cannot be avoided, the following information must be provided to support the DPA 4 Development Permit application in order to ensure safe development that meets the form and character of the community:

Context

4.2.1   A report from a registered professional forester or a professional engineer with experience in fire safety shall be required to indicate that the susceptibility to wildfire has not increased.

Site Design

4.2.2   Modifications to site vegetation may be required to reduce wildfire hazard, the following FireSmart BC Guidelines shall be taken into consideration in relation to the proposed building or structure:

a) Immediate Zone (0m – 1.5m) – Clear of vegetation and combustible material.
b) Intermediate Zone (1.5m – 10m) – Preferably landscaped using fire-resistant vegetation and non-combustible materials.
c) Extended Zone (10m – 30m) – Selectively remove coniferous trees to maintain a minimum of three meters of horizontal space between tree crowns.

4.2.3   Coniferous evergreen vegetation within 10 meters of a building should be removed. If retention is necessary, implement the following measures:

a) Prune limbs so they are at least 2 meters above the ground and a minimum of three meters away from the nearest building or attachment (ie. balcony); and
b) Prioritize the retention of fire-resistant plants and trees.

Form and Character

4.2.4   Construction materials should conform to the following guidelines based on the BC Building Code to mitigate wildfire risks:

a) Exterior wall finishes comprised of non-combustible or ignition resistant siding material (stucco, metal siding, brick, concrete, or heavy timber).
b) Roofing conforming to Class A, B, or C fire resistance standards; acceptable roofing materials include but are not limited to, composite shingles, concrete or clay tile, metal roofing, or treated wood shake roofing.
c) Double-paned or tempered windows to reduce potential for fire and burning debris to enter a building.

d) External vents and soffits screened with 3mm metal mesh or be comprised of ember-resistant material.
e) Balconies, decks, and patios constructed with a continuous, ignition resistant or non-combustible top surface.
f) Manufactured homes skirted with a fire-resistant material suitable that conform to the exterior wall finish requirements described above.

DPA 5 – Flood Hazard Guidelines

5.1 Application

A Development Permit is required prior to any proposed development in DPA 5 – Flood Hazard of the Official Community Plan, excluding:

1. Development outside of the Floodway or Floodplain Setback area, that meets the Flood Protection Requirements or General Exemption criteria in Sections 7 and 8 of the Floodplain Management Bylaw.

2. Public works and services and maintenance activities carried out by, or on behalf of the City.

3. Minor alterations or repairs to existing roads, paths or driveways, provided that there is no further disturbance of land or vegetation.

4. Planting of vegetation, habitat creation, restoration or enhancement works or removal of trees or vegetation in accordance with City and provincial enactments.

5.2 Criteria

Where the Flood Hazard DPA applies, the following information must be provided to support the DPA 5 Development Permit application in order to ensure safe development that meets the form and character of the community:

Context

5.2.1 Development shall be constructed in a location and manner that will maximize the safety of residents and property.

5.2.2 Development shall not increase the risk, hazard to, or vulnerability of other properties or structures.

Site Design

5.2.3 Maintain and restore vegetation along all creek banks and Floodplain Setback areas to minimize erosion and protect slope stability.

5.2.4 Preserve natural floodplain regimes through siting that allows normal creek processes, including erosion, channel migration, and anticipated flooding, to occur. Where appropriate this may include action such as grading to deflect flood water and allow for floodways or pooling of floodwater.

Form and Character

5.2.5 In connection with renovations to any permanent structure, where reasonable shall:

    a) Reduce flood hazard to the existing permanent structure by raising the habitable area to Flood Construction Levels; and

    b) Reduce or eliminate the potential for flood damage by using construction methods that allow for occasional wetting and drying.

Appendix C: Form and Character Development Permit Area Guidelines

Content still in progress.

Appendix D: Glossary of Terms

Appendix D – Glossary of Terms

The following terms are used frequently throughout the Official Community Plan (OCP). These definitions are provided for reference and to assist with interpretation.

Adaptable Unit refers to a housing unit designed and constructed with features that can be easily modified to accommodate accessibility needs including mobility tools, allowing occupants to "age in place" and remain in their homes as their needs change. Features include wider doorways, reinforced bathroom walls, and easy to reach doorknobs and cupboard handles.

Affordable Housing refers to housing that costs no more than 30% of a household's monthly income before tax and includes a variety of tenure forms such as ownership, cooperative, and rental housing for low to moderate income individuals and families.

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a provincial designation in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use. Farming is encouraged and non-agricultural uses are restricted by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach that uses urban planning and architectural design to reduce crime and fear of crime. Strategies include natural surveillance ("eyes on the street"), activating public spaces, maintaining landscaping and lighting, and orienting buildings to allow for clear sightlines at entrances.

Development Cost Charge (DCC) is a means of financing growth-related infrastructure such as roads, sewer, water, parks, and others. A DCC is a one-time charge, payable by the developer, for new lots created through subdivision, or new and expanding buildings at the time of approval.

Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) refers to land which has specific and identified environmental values requiring a higher level of protection. ESAs serve key ecological functions in the community, promoting habitat connectivity and biodiversity conservation.

FireSmart refers to a set of principles established by FireSmart Canada to help minimize the negative impacts of wildfire by increasing community resilience through measures such as the use of non-combustible building materials or thinning and spacing of vegetation around buildings.

Focused Growth Area refers to an area within the **Urban Containment Boundary** where properties are currently serviced with community sewer and water, are within a 10 minute fire response time, have access to transit, and medium to high density growth is focused.

Gentle Density is an approach to increasing density in existing neighbourhoods by building smaller, more affordable homes in a way that is compatible with the existing neighbourhood. It includes accessory dwelling units such as carriage houses and infills such as duplexes and fourplexes.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission refers to the release of gases into the atmosphere which trap heat and contribute to climate change. GHGs include water vapor (H_2O), carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O) and other gases which increase primarily due to human activities such as the use of fossil fuels.

Growth Strategy refers to vision and outline for how Vernon will manage future growth by focusing on increasing density where infrastructure already exists and reducing development pressure on the natural environment and agricultural lands through the allocation of land uses.

Missing Middle Housing refers to a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types, typically with front door entrances at the street level, which are compatible in scale and form with single-family homes. They are intended to fill the gap in terms of size and affordability between single detached dwellings and block style apartment buildings.

Neighbourhood Plan refers to a plan prepared for a specific sub-area of the city, which is adopted by bylaw. A Neighbourhood Plan should align with the goals and objectives of the OCP.

Pedestrian Oriented refers to urban planning and architectural design that prioritizes safe, accessible, and enjoyable environments for people walking. This includes streetscape design, the interaction between buildings and streets, site planning for pedestrians, and others.

Riparian refers to the areas bordering on streams, lakes, and wetlands that link water to land and provide natural habitat for wildlife and water flow.

Streetscape refers to the visual environment, identity, and atmosphere of a street, created through various elements such as buildings, sidewalks, trees, lighting, street furniture, and open spaces.

Special Needs Housing refers to housing designed or modified to accommodate individuals with physical, mental, or developmental challenges, as well as those with other special requirements, and may include support services on site.

Transit Oriented Development Area (TODA) refers to mixed-use areas within 400 m of identified transit exchanges where the City must adhere to minimum building heights and densities and must not implement minimum parking requirements for residential uses, as governed by the *Local Government Act*.

Transit Corridors refer to main roads with bus routes that are designed to facilitate efficient, reliable, and high-frequency transit services that connect medium and high density residential areas with employment centres, commercial areas, and other key destinations.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a set of strategies aimed at optimizing the existing transportation network by encouraging a shift away from single-occupancy vehicle trips and toward more sustainable modes like public transit, cycling, carpooling, and car-sharing. TDM can assist with reducing congestion and greenhouse gas emissions while giving people more choices.

Urban Containment Boundary is a defined area where urban growth is permitted to help build complete communities, promote walkability, reduce climate impacts, prevent urban sprawl, and protect rural and agricultural areas.
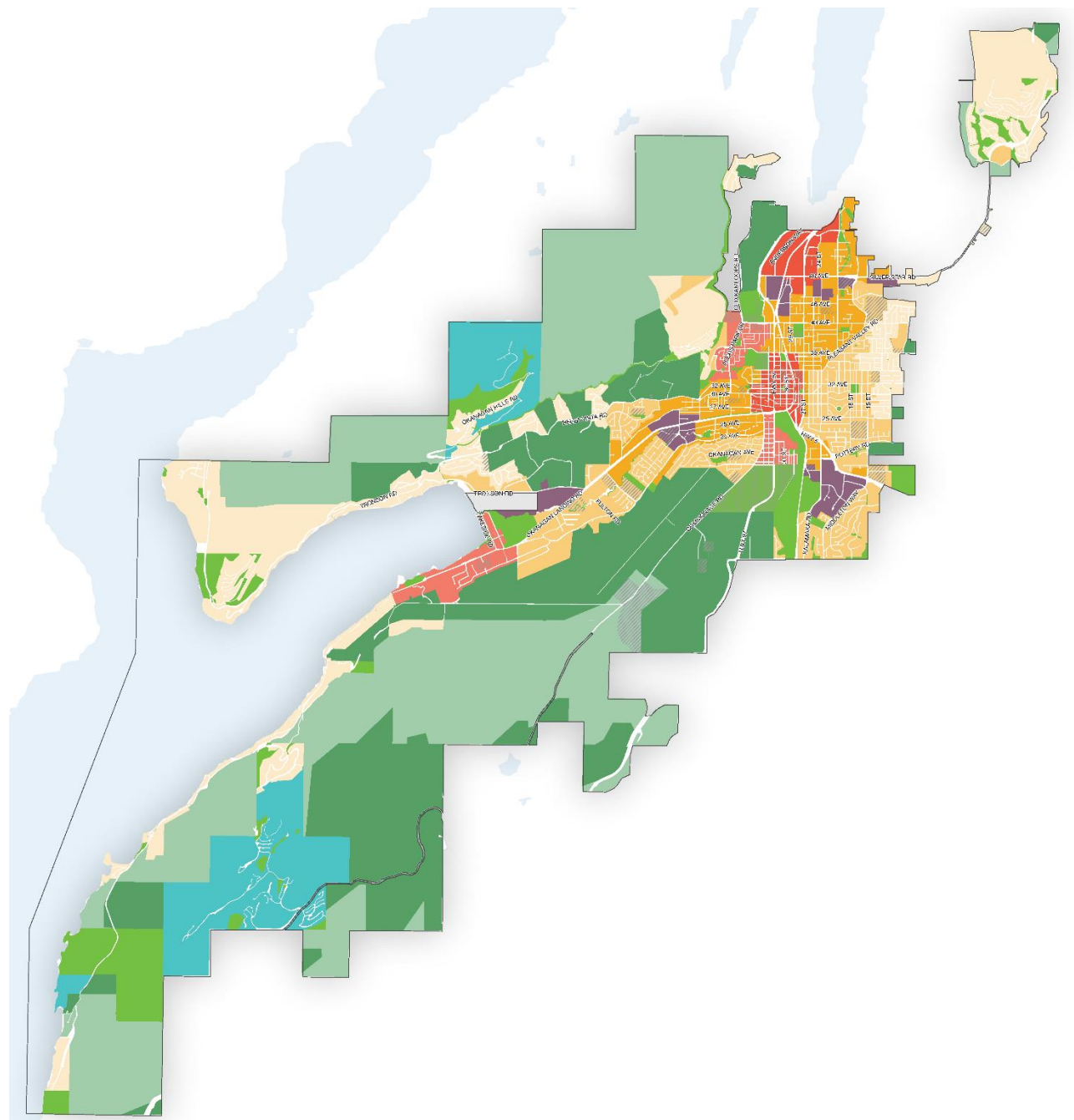
Maps

Map 3.1 – Vernon Neighbourhoods

Map still in progress.

Map 3.2 – Land Use Designations

Land Use

▨ Neighbourhood - Urban	⬛ Community	▨ Parks, Open Spaces, and Natural Areas	▨ Industrial
▨ Neighbourhood - Suburban	▨ Urban Centre	▨ ALR	▨ Resort Tourism
▨ Neighbourhood - Suburban Limited	▨ Village Centre	▨ Rural	

Map 3.3 – Urban Containment Boundary

Map still in progress.

Map 3.4 – Focused Growth Area

Map still in progress.

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Map 3.5 – Vernon Regional Airport Operational Height Limitation Area

Map still in progress.

Map 3.6 – Habitat Corridors

Map still in progress.

Map 4.1 – Linear Trails and Pathways

Map still in progress.

Map 5.1 – Existing Neighbourhood Plans

Map still in progress.

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Map 6.1 – Natural Environment Development Permit Areas (DPA 1 – Terrestrial Ecosystem, DPA 2 – Aquatic Ecosystem)

Map still in progress.

Map 6.2 – Hazardous Conditions Development Permit Areas (DPA 3 – Hillside Development, DPA 4 – Wildfire Hazard, DPA 5 – Flood Hazard)

Map still in progress.

Map 6.3 – Form and Character Development Permit Area (DPA 6)

Map still in progress.