

we ♥ the outdoors, we ♥ our city
trails, we ♥ affordable living ♥ we
♥ nice people, we ♥ our dog park, we
♥ affordable housing, we ♥ our size,

WE ♥ FSJ

building tomorrow together



2045 Official Community Plan
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

we ♥ the northern lights, we ♥ quiet,
we ♥ community, we ♥ public spaces
we ♥ winter, we ♥ our neighbours,
we ♥ community events, we ♥ our
pump track, we ♥ good wages, we ♥
our spray park, we ♥ family fun,
we ♥ parks, we ♥ 100 street, we ♥
our pool, we ♥ supporting local.



About the Project

The City of Fort St. John launched the Let's Talk Official Community Plan (OCP) engagement initiative in September 2024. Over the past year, we've connected with thousands of residents through 11 community events, two public surveys, and multiple updates to Council during public meetings.

This draft OCP reflects what we heard through extensive public engagement and builds on recent long-term and strategic plans. A key priority for this update was to make the plan more accessible and easier to understand. To achieve this, we have simplified policy sections, used clear and straightforward language, and incorporated plenty of visuals to make the document more engaging and user-friendly.

Summary of Key Changes

INTRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY VISION

The Introduction, Community Context, Setting the Stage, Growing Together, and Building a Resilient Fort St. John sections from the current Official Community Plan (*Bylaw No. 2388, 2017*) were streamlined into an Introduction and Vision section. This new section explains how the OCP works and how to use the plan, provides a history of Fort St. John, and updates the community profile.

REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

The Peace River Regional District (PRRD) adopted a *Regional Growth Strategy (RGS)* on July 17, 2025. In accordance with the Local Government Act, each member municipality must include a regional context statement that identifies the relationship between the OCP and the RGS and how the municipality will resolve any inconsistencies over time. A regional context statement and table demonstrating that the OCP policies as proposed align with the RGS can be found in the Regional Context Statement section of the draft OCP.

HOUSING POLICY

Section 473.1 of the Local Government Act requires that the current housing needs report should inform OCP housing policy and that land designated for residential use must accommodate the municipality's anticipated 20 year housing needs. The updated housing policy section uses projected population growth and demographic trends to inform anticipated housing needs. Based on the provincial Housing Needs Report Method, this section clearly states Fort St. John's new housing unit requirements over 5-year and 20-year horizons. Further, this section includes housing targets for specific community needs and policies to achieve these targets.



LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The land use designations are redesigned as category boxes with brief descriptions and bulleted lists for each land use. The land use designation descriptions, and corresponding Land Use map (Schedule B of the draft OCP), categorize and define the types of activities and the development form and character permitted in specific areas of the city.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS (DPA)

Development Permit Areas are areas in a municipality where local government requires additional approvals before land development can occur. The following changes have been proposed for the DPAs:

- Introducing Development Constraints and Environmental Protection DPAs to protect sensitive ecosystems and to provide additional requirements for development of areas with slope stability concerns and wildfire risk.
- Renaming the Major Corridor DPA to Highway and Service Corridor DPA, removing the Gateway DPAs, and adjusting DPAs along the Alaska Highway.
- Adjusting General Commercial DPAs adjacent to and surrounding 100 Street and 100 Avenue.
- Clarifying that a form and character development permit is not required for the development of four or less residential units.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREAS

With exception to Swanson Lumber Road Area, the current Urban Development Areas have been removed and replaced with general policies for neighbourhood planning. A new land use designation was created for Parkwood Southlands, to make clearer the development standards for this neighbourhood plan. The neighbourhood plans for Parkwood Southlands and The Station have been appended to Appendix 2 of the draft OCP.

Schedules

The draft OCP Schedules (maps) include:

- Schedule B Land Use
- Schedule C Form and Character Development Permit Areas
- Schedule D Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas
- Schedule E Agriculture Land Reserve
- Schedule F Transportation
- Schedule G Parks, Natural Areas, and Trails Network
- Schedule H Water Servicing
- Schedule I Sanitary Sewer Servicing
- Schedule J Stormwater Servicing

GOALS

The draft Official Community Plan (OCP) outlines 11 strategic goals that reflect our community's vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable future. Developed based on community input, each goal is supported by a set of policies designed to guide decision-making and action across key areas.

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To grow our economy by building on our strengths and developing new opportunities.

2. COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

For Fort St. John to be a healthy and vibrant community where residents have a high quality of life.

3. HOUSING

For there to be a wide range of housing options in the City, meeting the needs of citizens.

4. ACCESSIBILITY

For all Fort St. John residents to be able to access and enjoy our City.

5. PARKS AND RECREATION

To continue to improve the City's trail, park, and recreation amenities, benefiting the quality of life for all Fort St. John citizens.

6. AGRICULTURE

To advance and support urban agriculture in Fort St. John, recognizing its vital role improving food affordability, strengthening food security, and fostering long-term sustainability.

7. ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE

To celebrate Fort St. John's culture and heritage through the arts, in collaboration with communities across Northeast BC.

8. INDIGENOUS INCLUSION AND PARTNERSHIPS

To have respectful, growing, and mutually prosperous relationships with First Nations and Métis governments and Indigenous neighbours.

9. PROTECTING LANDS AND LIVELIHOODS

To protect what we've built from extreme weather events.

10. TRANSPORTATION

To provide an effective transportation network for all modes of transportation that connects the community and surrounding areas, gives priority to the safety and health of transit users and improves all mobility options.

11. MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

To provide services and infrastructure that meet the needs of our community while prioritizing long-term fiscal sustainability.

We'd ❤️ to hear from you!



Scan the QR Code to find the draft OCP and leave your comments at letstalk.fortstjohn.ca

We invite you to review the draft and share your thoughts. City staff will be available to discuss the plan at the Moose FM Block Party on Saturday, September 6, and at the Fort St. John Farmer's Market on Saturday, September 13 & 20. **DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS:** Monday September 22, 2025.

Contact information: planning@fortstjohn.ca • 250 787 8039

let's talk
OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN