WE ♥ FSJ

building tomorrow together

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

we ♥ the outdoors, we ♥ our city volunteers, we ♥ our dog park, we we ♥ our convenient lifestyles, we we ♥ soccer, we ♥ family, we ♥ snow, we ♥ community, we ♥ public spaces, we ♥ community events, we ♥ our economic diversity, we ♥ family fun, supporting local, we ♥ festival plaza, canadian oil & gas, we ♥ adventure, pomeroy sport centre, we ♥ our city, skating, we ♥ winterfest, we ♥ the ♥ family fun, we ♥ agriculture, we hard, we ♥ the crystal cup, we ♥ the ♥ snowmobiling, we ♥ pickleball, in the north, we ♥ great food, we ♥

trails, we ♥ affordable living, we ♥ ♥ affordable housing, we ♥ our size, ♥ short commutes, we ♥ camping, we ♥ the northern lights, we ♥ quiet, we ♥ winter, we ♥ our neighbours, pump track, we ♥ good wages, we ♥ we ♥ parks, we ♥ 100 street, we ♥ we ♥ the community garden, we ♥ we ♥ hockey, we ♥ hiking, we ♥ the we ♥ welcoming newcomers, we ♥ alaska highway, we ♥ our pool, we ♥ adventure, we ♥ working & playing library, we ♥ music in the park, we we ♥ movies in the park, we ♥ life recreation, we ♥ living here!

Happy Canada Day

CITY OF FORT ST. JOHN

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

BYLAW NO. 2616, 2025

A Bylaw to establish a new Official Community Plan for the City of Fort St. John.

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Fort St. John wishes to adopt an Official Community Plan, pursuant to section 472 of the *Local Government Act*, to guide decisions on planning and land use management;

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the City of Fort St. John, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

Citation/Title

1. This Bylaw may be cited as the "City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025".

City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan

2. The schedule attached to and forming part of this bylaw (Schedule A), including its respective schedules and maps, is adopted as the City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan and applies to all areas of the City.

Repeal

3. The City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017, and all its amendments, are hereby repealed.

Regional Context Statement accepted by the Peace River Regional District on November 6, 2025.

READ a FIRST time on October 27, 2025

READ a SECOND time on October 27, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING held on December 8, 2025

READ a THIRD time on December 8, 2025

ADOPTED on December 8, 2025

Lilia Hansen	Bonnie McCue
Mayor	Corporate Officer

we ♥ our community

Territorial Acknowledgement

Fort St. John is part of Treaty 8 territory and acknowledges the long-standing presence of the elders and ancestors of Treaty 8. The City of Fort St. John extends recognition and respect for the BC Treaty 8 First Nations and their lands.

In Appreciation

Council sincerely thanks everyone who took the time to share their feedback and contribute to developing our Official Community Plan (OCP). Your valuable knowledge, thoughtful insights, and meaningful input have played a vital role in shaping a brighter future for Fort St. John. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to our community.

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POOL

INTRODUCTION & VISION

How the OCP works

SHAPED BY COMMUNITY INPUT, REGIONAL TRENDS, AND IN ALIGNMENT WITH PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

PURPOSE

The Official Community Plan (OCP) outlines Fort St. John's vision, goals, and policies to guide long-term growth and community well-being. Shaped by community input, regional trends, and aligned with provincial legislation, the OCP supports City Council and staff in making informed decisions on bylaws, services, and programs. It includes policies focused on key areas such as housing, infrastructure improvements, and economic development. To ensure financial sustainability, the City's financial plan is reviewed in conjunction with the OCP prior to adoption.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

To remain relevant and responsive to the needs of our growing community, the OCP is reviewed and updated at least every five years. Each update is informed by meaningful engagement with residents, First Nations, the Peace River Regional District (PRRD), and other stakeholders, alongside best planning practices.

To ensure transparency, accountability, and measurable progress, the City will monitor its advancement toward OCP goals on an ongoing basis and report annually to Council. Implementation is guided by a structured process to evaluate and adjust actions as needed, ensuring the plan remains aligned with community priorities.

Implementation Guidelines

1. Consider establishing an OCP implementation group that meets at least twice per year to review progress and set priorities.
2. Regularly review and update the Zoning Bylaw and other land use and development bylaws to maintain alignment with the OCP.
3. Monitor progress toward OCP goals using performance indicators that reflect the plan's policies and targets.
4. Consider incorporating OCP policies into the City's five-year financial plan.
5. Provide an annual progress report to Council outlining actions taken to implement OCP goals and policies.

How to use the plan

RESIDENTS
Residents and future "Fort St. John'ers"

DEVELOPERS AND INVESTORS
The City welcomes bold, transformative change

CITY COUNCIL AND STAFF
All work conducted by City staff must be consistent with the OCP

GENERAL PUBLIC

Residents and future "Fort St. John'ers" can explore the OCP to see where the City is headed and how it will shape the future look and feel of our downtown, neighbourhoods, and recreational areas. Policy sections such as Community Well-Being and Arts, Culture, and Heritage aim to inspire individuals and organizations to take part in building a brighter and more vibrant tomorrow, together.

DEVELOPERS AND INVESTORS

The OCP illustrates to developers and investors how the City plans to meet future housing demand, our priorities for economic development, and areas that require more careful attention to development form and character and the environment. Sufficient land is designated for future industrial and commercial development, and the City continues to improve its municipal infrastructure and plan for future growth. One of the key objectives of this OCP update is to streamline policy and make it clear that the City welcomes bold, transformative change that enhances our community, boosts our economy, and makes Fort St. John a destination and desirable place to live.

CITY COUNCIL AND STAFF

Once adopted, City Council must consider the OCP's vision and direction when adopting bylaws, considering new municipal policies, and advancing new programs. All work conducted by staff, especially when reviewing development applications, must be consistent with the OCP. As the community grows and changes, there may be instances where OCP land use designations or policies require amendments. When considering amendments to the OCP, City Council and staff must take due diligence to ensure that the amendments do not impact the plan's intent or conflict with other OCP policies. They also must provide opportunities for affected community members, organizations, and authorities to provide input.

“Fort St. John is a flourishing community where nature lives, businesses prosper, families are active, and diversity is celebrated.”

WE ARE Fort St. John – where the people make the city. We're not just a dot on the map along the Alaska Highway – we are the first major city northbound, the unofficial greeters of the true North, and we do it with grit, grace, and probably a snowplow or two.

WHAT MAKES FORT ST. JOHN

Fort St. John is known as the "Energetic City," and there's good reason for that. With our large oil, natural gas, forestry, and agriculture resources and a population 9 years younger than the province's average, what else would we be called?

We're not your typical BC city, and honestly, we're happy not to be. Here, community doesn't just mean waving at your neighbour. It means pulling them out of a ditch, volunteering at a fundraiser, throwing a neighbourhood block party, and showing up to the arena, whether it's minor hockey night or a town hall.

Fort St. John is a place where people make the city. Newcomers become friends fast, people build bright futures for themselves and their families, and long-time residents hold stories of a city that keeps growing. We're proud of our community and would love to share it with you.

So, if you ask what makes us Fort St. John, the answer is simple.

It's *us.* The people who work hard, play harder, and call this northern frontier home.

INDUSTRY

Yes, we're an energy city. Oil, gas, hydro... you name it, we power it. However, we are so much more than that. Fort St. John is also located in one of Canada's farthest north agricultural zones that produces impressive harvests of wheat, barley, and canola. Fort St. John's forestry, construction, retail, food services, and tourism industries also play a significant role in our local economy.

NORTHERN OUTDOORS

Are you seeking outdoor adventure? We've got you covered on that front, too. Whether you enjoy snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking, fishing, hunting, or a bit of everything, the Peace River Valley is nature at its best.

HISTORY OF FORT ST. JOHN

PRE-CONTACT

The Dane-zaa peoples have inhabited northeast British Columbia for millennia, with archaeological evidence at Tse'KWa (Charlie Lake Cave) dating their presence back over 10,500 years. Traditional hunting practices were communal. Moose were surrounded, while bison were driven into fenced enclosures called pounds. Spring burns were used to create grazing habitat for bison. The Dane-zaa moved seasonally through areas including Montney, Dawson Creek, Grande Prairie, Teepee Creek, Dunvegan, and Clearhills. Montney, known as Gat Tah Kwą̂ or "Spruce Among House", was a culturally significant summer gathering site for celebration, courtship, political discussion, and traditional activities like drumming and dancing. The dancing grounds were called Suunéch'ii Kéch'iige, meaning "The Place Where Happiness Dwells."

In the 1600s, the Tsuut'ina (Sarsi) separated from the Dane-zaa, moving south to become plains bison hunters and allies of the Blackfoot Confederacy, while the Dane-zaa remained subarctic hunters. By the late 1700s, European expansion pushed the Cree into the Peace Region, leading to conflict with the Dane-zaa. A peace agreement was eventually reached at what became known as Peace Point, and the river dividing their territories was named the Peace (Unchagah) River. The Cree introduced horses and rifles to the Dane-zaa before European settlers arrived.

Iroquois and Saulteau peoples also migrated into the Peace Region in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Iroquois arrived by 1819, serving as guides for traders and explorers. The Saulteau, descendants of the Ojibway from east of Lake Superior, began migrating west in the 1800s after displacement by the federal government. Led by a spiritual leader, they settled near Moberly Lake, drawn by visions of the sacred Twin Sisters mountains.

CONTACT

Alexander Mackenzie travelled up the Peace River seeking fur trading opportunities and a route to the Pacific Ocean. When he reached the Fort St. John area in 1793, he announced that it would be a great place to establish a fur trading post as it was within 40 kilometres of five rivers flowing into the Peace River: Moberly, Halfway, South Pine, Beatton (North Pine), and Kiskatinaw. In 1794, the Northwest Company established Rocky Mountain Fort at the confluence of the Pine and Peace Rivers. Rocky Mountain Fort is recognized as the first European settlement in what is now mainland British Columbia. Though closed in 1805, it was re-established near the Beatton River as Fort d'Épinette in 1806. Following the 1821 merger with the Northwest Company, the Hudson's Bay Company renamed it Fort St. John. The Fort closed again in 1823 as a cost-cutting measure.

By then, fur traders had introduced a steady supply of European goods such as ammunition, tools, and other items, significantly altering the Dane-zaa's traditional hunting practices and way of life. When John McLean visited abandoned Fort St. John a few years later, he reported widespread starvation among the Dane-zaa.

In 1858, 35 years after its closure, Fort St. John was reopened on the south bank of the Peace River, later relocating north to the area now known as "Old Fort." In 1923, C.M. Finch built a store at what is now 100th Street and 100th Avenue, the centre of our downtown. As river travel declined, the Fort was once more moved in 1925 by Frank Beatton to Fish Creek to better serve the growing settler population. Fort St. John was established as a town in 1958 and officially incorporated as a city in 1975.

TREATY 8

Treaty 8 was initially signed in 1899, covering approximately 840,000 square kilometres across northern Alberta, northeastern British Columbia, northwestern Saskatchewan, and part of the Northwest Territories. The Fort St. John Beaver Band, ancestors of the Doig River First Nation and the Blueberry River First Nations, adhered to Treaty 8 in 1900. Signatories of Treaty 8 retained rights to hunt, trap, and fish throughout Treaty territory. They were to be provided with reserve lands for farming and economic activities, along with resources and training for establishing farming settlements. In return, the Crown was permitted to take up land for settlement and resource development from time to time. Following the Treaty 8 signing, there was an influx of Western settlers to the region. Records show that in 1912 Canada offered quarter sections in the Peace River Block to settlers who cleared 12 hectares and paid $10. During the 1930s Dust Bowl and following the completion of the Alaska Highway in 1942, the region saw a significant influx of settlers. In 1944, under pressure from the Department of Indian Affairs, the Fort St. John Beaver Band surrendered the Montney reserve lands. These lands were subsequently allocated to returning World War II veterans. In exchange, the Band was granted three smaller reserves located near their traditional trapping territories along the Doig, Blueberry, and Beatton rivers. These lands represented only one-third the size of the original Montney reserve at approximately 2,500 hectares. The Fort St. John Beaver Band also surrendered their mineral rights to the Montney reserve lands to the Crown in trust. This allowed the government to lease the lands to oil and gas companies, collect royalties, and theoretically provide the Fort St. John Beaver Band with financial returns. The region's first oil well, Pacific Atlantic Fort St. John No. 1, was drilled in 1951. The first gas well in the Montney formation was drilled in 1962. Increased western settlement and industrial development resulted in further impacts on First Nations' ability to exercise their treaty and Aboriginal rights. The reserves at Blueberry River and Doig River became permanent, year-round settlements. By 1977, the Fort St. John Beaver Band split into two separate communities, the Doig River First Nation and Blueberry River First Nations.

PRESENT DAY

In 2021, the City of Fort St. John worked collaboratively with Doig River First Nation to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the development of the first urban reserve in Northeast BC, Naache Commons. An urban reserve is land purchased by a First Nation within a city and transferred to reserve status through the federal Additions to Reserve (ATR) process. Naache Commons, a 3.3-hectare parcel, is envisioned as a mixed-use site with commercial space, residential development, and a gas station in a growing part of the city. The Doig River First Nation has three parcels comprising 8.5 hectares of ATR lands within the city. Prophet River First Nation has also signed an MOU with the City to develop urban reserve land. Other First Nation governments in the area have expressed interest in pursuing urban reserves, and the City looks forward to supporting their creation. Halfway River First Nation and Blueberry River First Nations also have offices in the city.

Naache Commons development

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Community Profile

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

15-Year Census Population Growth as of 2021 **21,465** +23.3%

Average Annual Growth Rate **1.6%**

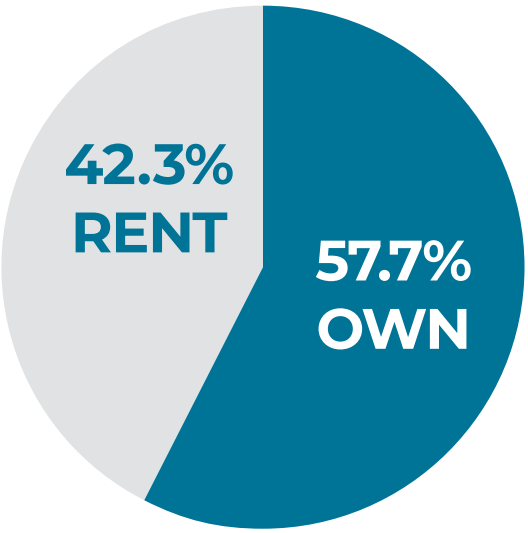
Our Median Age **32**

BC Median Age **43**

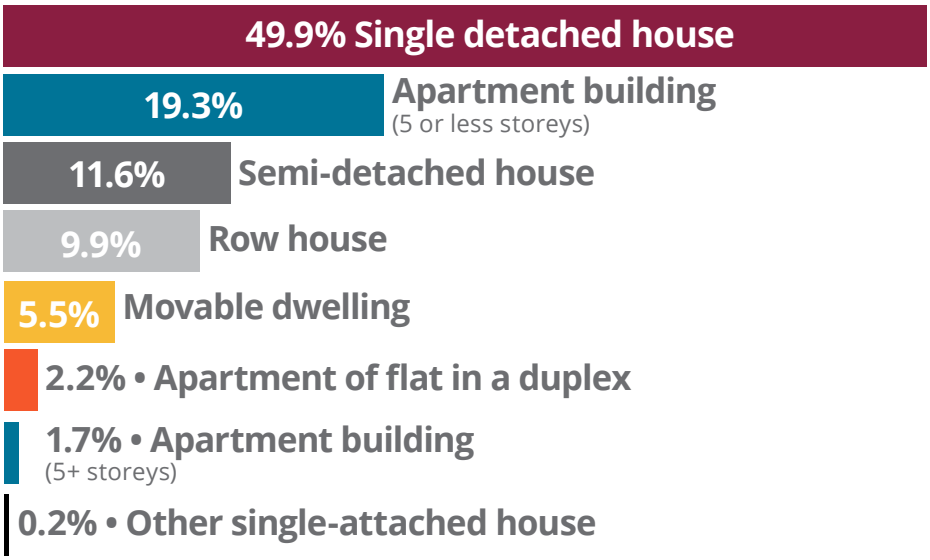
Average Monthly Shelter Costs

RENTER	OWNER
$1,239	**$1,600**

Housing Tenure



Housing Typologies



Average Total Household Income

$114,900

Employment Rate

Our Rate **69.2%**

BC Rate **57.9%**

Top Employment Sectors

1. Construction (1,580)
2. Retail Trade (1,505)
3. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (1,350)
4. Accommodation and Food Services (1,135)
5. Health Care and Social Assistance (1,010)

Key Demographic Projections

Employment Projections

The Northeast region is projected to generate 11,200 job openings by 2034. Of these, 79% are due to employee replacement and 21% from new job creation. Employment demand is projected to grow at an average annual rate of 0.6% and the region's unemployment rate is consistently lower than the provincial rate. In 2021, the three primary employment industries were construction (12.8%), retail trade (12.1%), and mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (10.9%).

Population Projection

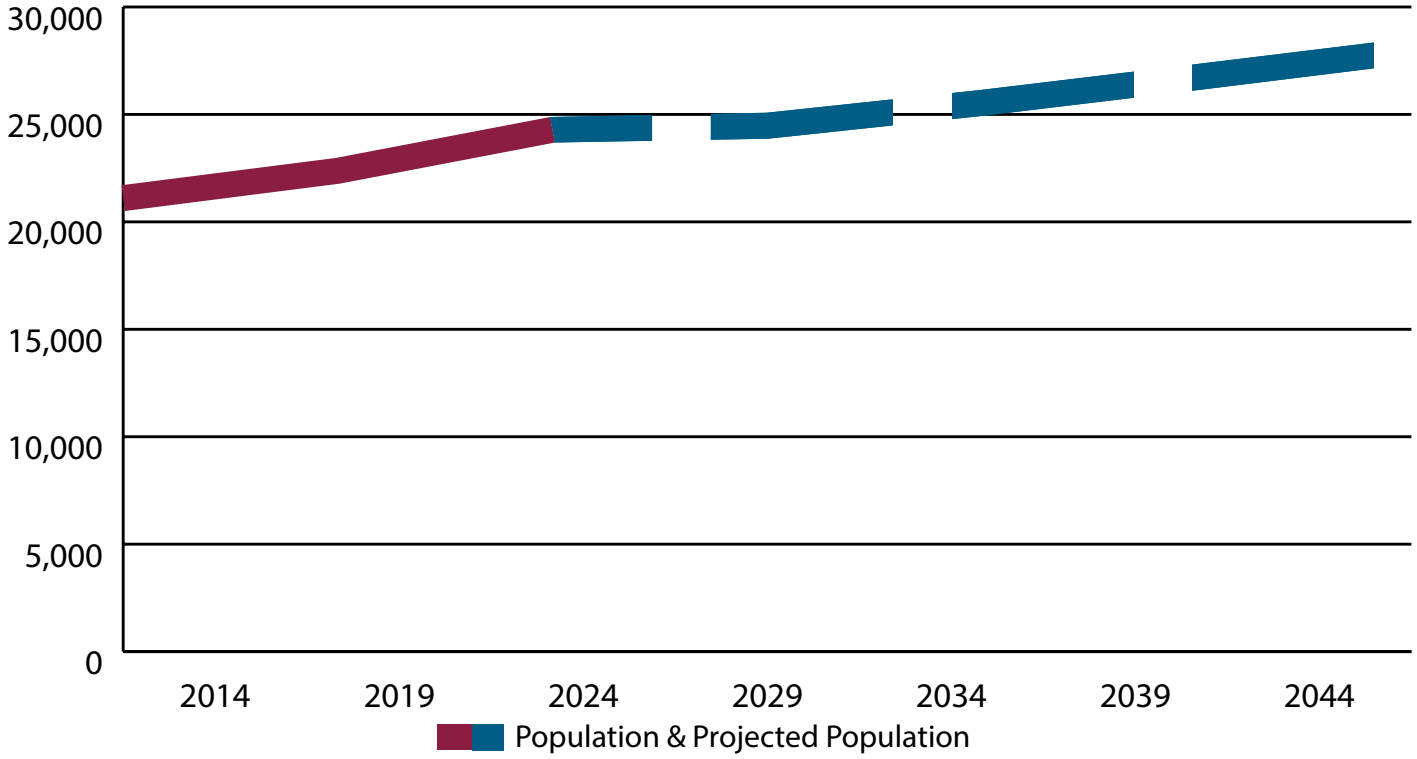


Figure 1: Fort St. John Projected Population

According to BC Stats, Fort St. John is anticipated to experience moderate population growth between 2024 and 2044, increasing from 24,266 people in 2024 to 29,554 people by 2044. The population growth rate was estimated at 5.7% between 2019 and 2024. Projections indicate a decline to 3.7% between 2024 and 2029, followed by further decreases to 1.7% by 2034, 1.2% by 2039, and 0.6% by 2044. Based on these figures, the average annual population growth rate between 2024 and 2044 is projected to be approximately 1.8%. The projected population growth rate declines are primarily attributed to the federal 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan.

Age Projections

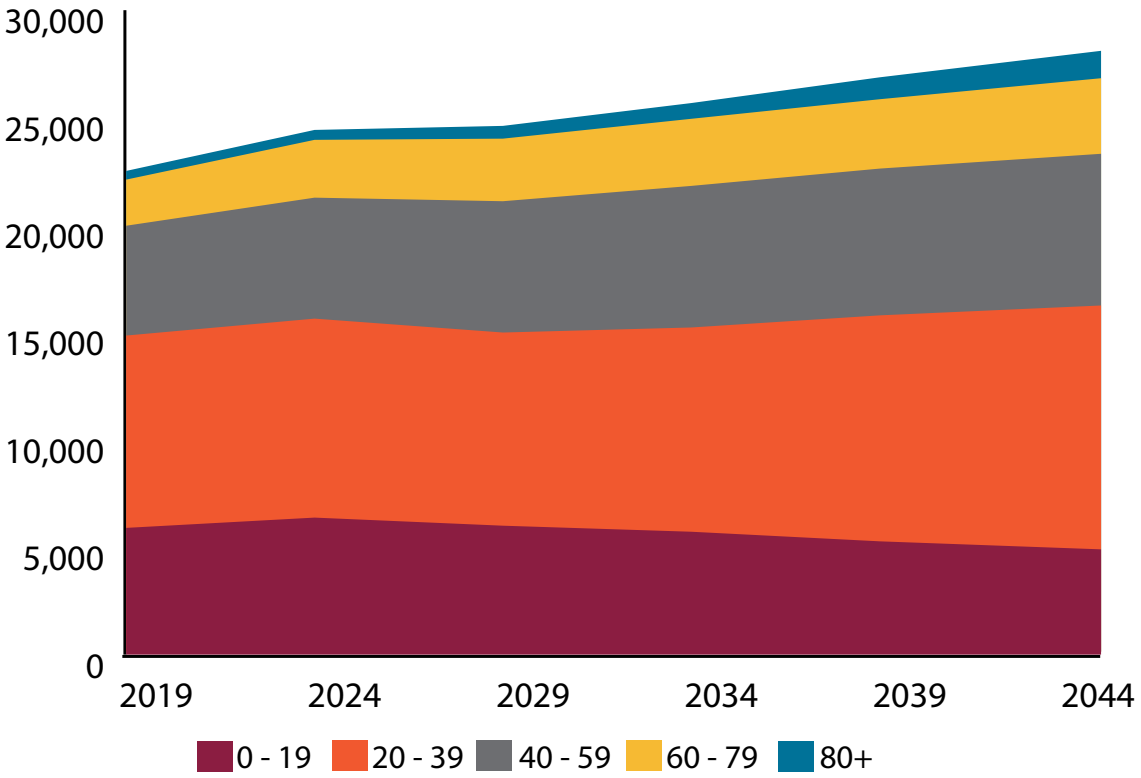


Figure 2: Fort St. John Projected Age Distribution

In 2021, the median age in Fort St. John was 32, 11 years younger than the provincial median age. Projection data shows that those aged 60 and older are anticipated to see the largest growth, from 13% of the total population to over 17% by 2044, or 4% growth over 20 years. The largest age group, 20-39, is anticipated to grow steadily by 2% over the next 20 years. The only age group expected to experience a decline as a share of the population is children and youth ages 0 to 19. The median age is expected to rise from 32 in 2019 to 36 in 2044, reflecting a gradual aging trend. This demographic shift is likely to increase demand for housing that meets the needs of older residents.

REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

ESTABLISHED IN 1967, THE PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT (PRRD) COMPRISES SEVEN INCORPORATED MUNICIPALITIES AND FOUR ELECTORAL AREAS.

Spanning 119,200 square kilometres, the PRRD is the largest regional district in BC by land area and ranks as the 13th most populous, with approximately 61,532 residents. Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, and Tumbler Ridge all experienced population growth from 2016 - 2021, while the remaining eight member municipalities and electoral areas experienced population decline over the same period. The PRRD Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) anticipates that 90% of population growth will occur predominately in the two urban centres, Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. Under the medium and high population growth projections, the regional population may increase by 5,000 (0.3%) to 19,000 (~1.1%) residents by 2046. Under the low population growth projection, the regional population may decrease by 6,000 residents by 2046. As stated in the Community Profile section, Fort St. John is anticipated to experience a population increase of 5,288 (1.8%) residents over the next 20 years, consistent with projected population growth in the PRRD urban centres.

Primary resources, including agriculture, energy, forestry and mining, predominantly drive the regional economy. Employment sectors expected to grow over the next 20 years include health care and social assistance; educational services; arts, entertainment and recreation; and utilities. As one of the main economic hubs in the PRRD, the City of Fort St. John is included in regional employment forecasts.

The PRRD adopted a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in July 2025 to guide long-term regional growth and development through coordinated, region-wide planning. 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 City will resolve any inconsistencies over time. Table 1 includes the nine RGS policy goals and how the OCP policies align with the RGS.

Table 1 REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY CONSISTENCY

Regional Growth Strategy Goals	OCP Consistency with RGS Goals	OCP Policy and Mapping
Community Building Support compact, complete urban communities, maintain rural character and offer choice and affordability in housing.	• Residential land use prioritizes higher density growth in the downtown and surrounding areas and a new designation, Rural Residential, has been added to maintain the rural form and character of properties near city boundaries and agricultural activity. • Housing policy is informed by the current Housing Needs Report.	Housing Schedule B – Land Use
Economic Strength Encourage a diverse, resilient and prosperous economy that builds on regional strengths.	• Economic Development policies prioritize building on our economic strengths while encouraging new economic growth opportunities and initiatives that boost local businesses.	Economic Development
Agriculture and Food Support agriculture and protect farmlands in the PRRD.	• Agriculture policy recommends updates to land use policy to encourage compatible development adjacent to Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land and establishment of buffers and setback distances to reduce conflict. • The ALR exclusion policy provides direction on specific conditions where the City would consider an exclusion application. • Agriculture policy prioritizes strengthening of local food security and support of sustainable food systems by: o exploring the creation of an Urban Agriculture Plan; and, o supporting agricultural business operations.	Agriculture Schedule E: Agricultural Land Reserve
Living Well Foster safe, healthy communities that support a high quality of life for all.	• The Accessibility and Community Well-Being policies encourage initiatives that make Fort St. John more inclusive, inviting, and accessible for all ages and abilities. • Policies in Arts, Culture, and Heritage, as well as Parks and Recreation, support initiatives that celebrate our heritage, expand the presence of art throughout the community in collaboration with local groups, and enhance recreational services and spaces for residents and visitors.	Community Well-Being Accessibility Arts, Culture, and Heritage Parks and Recreation

Regional Growth Strategy Goals	OCP Consistency with RGS Goals	OCP Policy and Mapping
Infrastructure and Services Provide efficient, sustainable and cost-effective services that contribute to regional wellbeing and health.	• Municipal Services and Infrastructure policy prioritizes delivery of services to meet the needs of our growing community while ensuring cost-effectiveness.	Municipal Services and Infrastructure Schedule H: Water Servicing Schedule I: Sanitary Sewer Servicing
Ecosystem Health Protect the air, water and lands on which we all depend.	• One of the objectives of the Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas is to protect areas that contain environmentally sensitive ecosystems. • Protecting Land and Livelihoods policy encourages use of green infrastructure to reduce the volume of storm water entering the City's storm drainage systems.	Protecting Land and Livelihoods Schedule D: Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas
Transportation and Mobility Collaborate with partners to provide an accessible, safe and efficient transportation system for people and goods.	• The Transportation section encourages collaboration with the PRRD and Ministry of Transportation and Transit on roadway planning and highway connection improvements to and from Fort St. John.	Transportation Schedule F: Transportation
Climate Resilience Adapt and ensure the PRRD is prepared for a changing climate.	• Targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) and policies to achieve those targets are provided. • The Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas aim to safeguard development from hazards such as wildfires and steep slopes, while conserving the natural environment. • Many of the Protecting Lands and Livelihoods policies speak to future-proofing the city from extreme weather events.	Protecting Land and Livelihoods Schedule D: Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas

Regional Collaboration Coordinate and collaborate with residents, PRRD member municipalities, rural communities, other levels of government and First Nations to achieve shared goals and address common issues.	• Various policies speak to the need for collaboration across key social, economic, and environmental aspects of the city and region. More specifically to: o respect Treaty 8 territory and rights and support urban reserve development; o improve highway connections to and from Fort St. John in collaboration with PRRD and MoTT; o collaborate with the PRRD, surrounding municipalities, regional First Nations, and other partners on emergency planning and response; and, o coordinate with the PRRD to connect city trails with regional trails.	Indigenous Inclusion and Partnerships Transportation Protecting Land and Livelihoods Parks and Recreation

SUBWAY

1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

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

1. Economic Development

In a municipal context, economic development is how the City strengthens its economic base and enhances the quality of life for Fort St. John residents. This involves supporting local businesses, attracting new investment, improving services that increase employment and workforce retention, and positioning Fort St. John as a hub of innovation and opportunity. Economic development is interconnected with other sections of this OCP because a vibrant, attractive, and active community encourages people to stay for the long term.

With low business tax rates, affordable land, and a range of development incentives, Fort St. John is well-positioned to attract investment and grow its economy over the next 20 years.

90%
BC's natural gas

80%
BC's grain production

36%
BC's hydroelectric power

ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS OF FORT ST. JOHN AND THE REGION

Natural Gas Production

Over 90% of BC's natural gas production comes from the Montney Basin, which is centred around Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. The abundance of natural gas in the area provides significant opportunities for energy exports and hydrogen energy investment.

Streamlined Development Process

To support business growth and construction, OCP and Zoning Bylaw amendments average less than three months for approval. Development application fees are competitively low, reducing time and cost for securing land.

High Household Incomes and Affordable Housing

Fort St. John has the second-highest household income in BC and ranks seventh in Canada, while housing prices are approximately 33% of the Metro Vancouver average. This makes the city an appealing destination for families and professionals.

Strong Agricultural and Energy Outputs

The Peace River Region produces 80% of BC's grain and generates 36% of the province's hydroelectric power, supporting provincial food security and energy production.

Policies

1.1 Implement the Economic Development Strategy and monitor for required updates.

1.2 Prioritize initiatives that support the well-being of local businesses.

1.3 Promote tourism and local artisans through initiatives led by the Economic Development Department that support the creative economy and enhance Fort St. John's identity.

1.4 Prioritize visual enhancements at city entrances, in particular along the Alaska Highway.

1.5 Seek opportunities for mutually beneficial economic development projects with First Nation and Métis governments.

1.6 Promote the importance of existing energy industries to Fort St. John's local economy, while encouraging investment in emerging energies for long-term economic stability.

1.7 Promote Fort St. John as a regional workforce and business hub in northeast BC.

1.8 Prioritize remediation and development of vacant and brownfield lots in the downtown.

1.9 Utilize financial tools such as tax exemptions to incentivize the development of city-owned vacant lots.

1.10 Explore opportunities to support downtown businesses on economic development initiatives, including marketing, business improvement programs, and strategies to attract and retain new commercial enterprises.

1.11 Develop a Curbside Patio Program for the downtown area to make public spaces livelier and more vibrant and to support local businesses.

1.12 Identify opportunities to support organizations with employee recruitment in key sectors, such as healthcare and skilled trades.

2 COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

GOAL

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

2. Community Well-Being

Community Well-Being is a measure of how a city enhances its residents' physical, mental, social, and economic health. This is achieved through urban design and strategies aimed at improving citizens' overall quality of life. During the OCP update, we heard that improvements made to city parks, in particular the Toboggan Hill Off-Leash Dog Park and Kin Park, positively impacted Fort St. John'ers. People appreciated the year-round community events that the City holds, from Music in the Park, a summer concert series, to the High on Ice Winter Festival, a signature Fort St. John winter event. They also enjoyed the low or no-cost family activities the City offers, such as the Sunday Free Skate and Free Community Swim, which local organizations sponsor. Overall, people felt that there were plenty of employment opportunities and that it is easier to get ahead financially in Fort St. John compared to other areas of the province. However, we also heard that some of our services need improvement, and it can be challenging to meet new people. To that end, the City will continue to work towards providing a welcoming, affordable community that offers a variety of options for work and play.

Policies

2.1 Support initiatives that bring people together from diverse backgrounds and foster social connections.

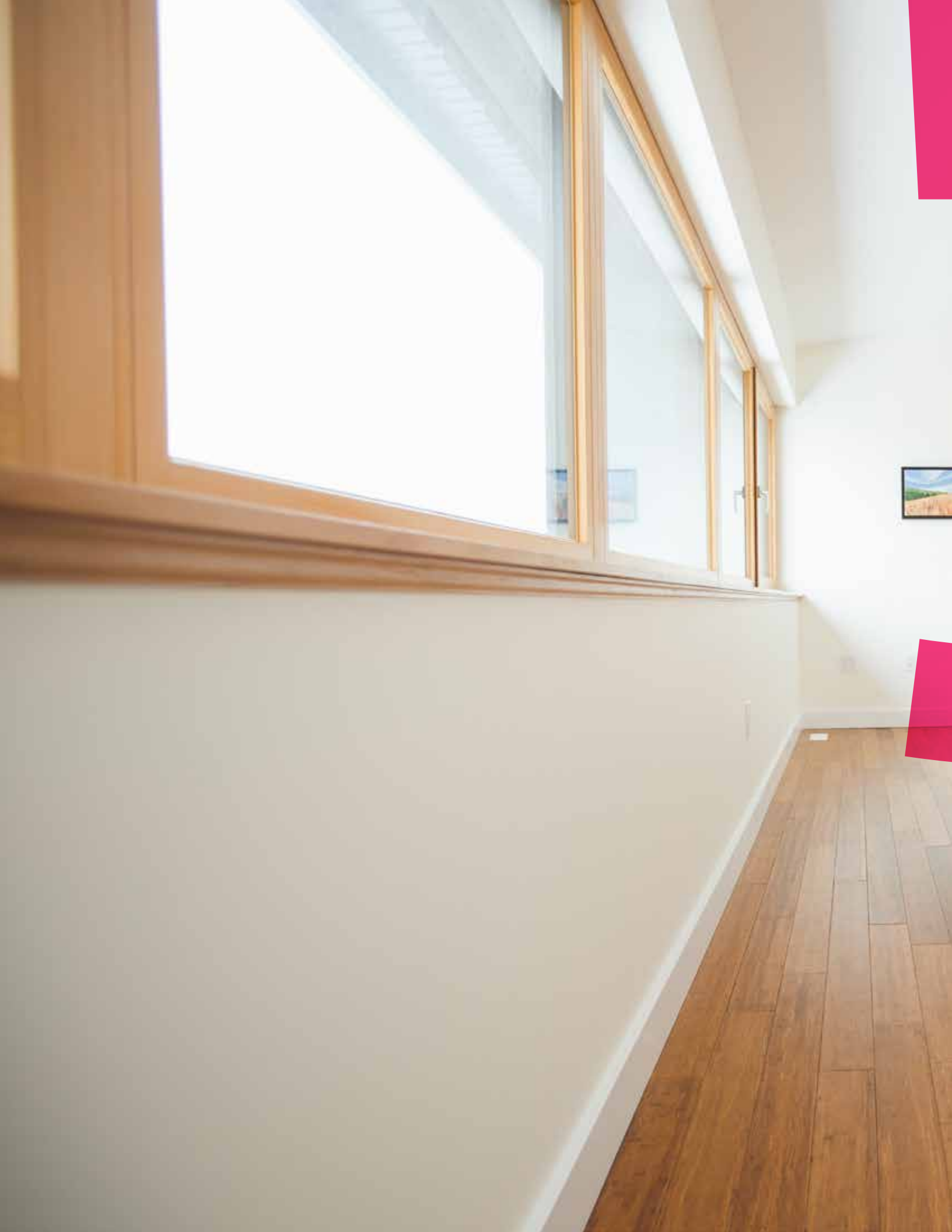
2.2 Support initiatives by non-profit community and youth organizations that improve the quality of life in Fort St. John.

2.3 Find creative ways to welcome newcomers to Fort St. John and help them become involved in the community.

2.4 Provide opportunities for Fort St. John residents to lead healthy, active lifestyles.

2.5 Advocate on behalf of citizens to the province for improved healthcare services.

2.6 Partner with the Provincial government, Fort St. John RCMP, and community groups to enhance public safety and address key social challenges.



3 HOUSING

GOAL

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

3. Housing

Between 2024 and 2044, the City of Fort St. John is expected to experience moderate population growth, increasing from approximately 24,266 to 29,554 residents. With an approximate annual growth rate of 1.8%, this steady increase will continue to shape housing needs across the community. Key demographic trends, including a youthful median age, a growing senior population, and employment opportunities in construction, retail, and resource extraction, will influence the types and quantities of housing required. View the Community Profile section for detailed demographic projections.

Most new households will be led by individuals aged 25–44, driving demand for larger housing units such as two-, three-, and four-bedroom homes. At the same time, the aging population will require more accessible and adaptable housing options, including opportunities to downsize or relocate from surrounding areas into the city. These demographic shifts underscore the importance of a housing strategy that is responsive, inclusive, and forward-looking.

The City aims to ensure that Fort St. John can accommodate its evolving population with diverse housing options that support livability, affordability, and long-term sustainability.

Affordable Homeownership

Ownership affordability is defined as housing costs no greater than 30% of 70% of median household income. The median household income for Fort St. John in 2021 was $71,400. Based on this and several assumptions regarding down payments, interest rates, mortgage terms, insurance, and additional costs, it was determined that median-income households could afford row housing, apartments, and manufactured homes, but single-detached, duplex, triplex, or fourplex homes may be unattainable.

5- and 20-year Housing Unit Demand

The provincial government requires local governments to determine their 5- and 20-year housing unit needs using the Housing Needs Report (HNR) Method. The HNR Method consists of six components, which are added together to provide the total number of housing units required in a community. The six components include:

1. Supply of units to reduce extreme core housing need (those paying more than 50% of income for housing)
2. Supply of units to reduce homelessness
3. Supply of units to address suppressed household formation
4. Supply of units needed to meet household growth over the next 5 or 20 years
5. Supply of units needed to meet at least a 3% vacancy rate; and
6. Supply of units needed to meet local demand.

Housing Targets

The Housing Needs Report (HNR) presents projections for the number of housing units required to meet both overall demand and specific community needs. The following tables, drawn from the HNR, offer a snapshot of anticipated housing demand in Fort St. John, based on BC Stats Population Projections.

Understanding Housing Targets and Overlapping Needs

The projected demand for future housing types outlined in this section is not mutually exclusive. A single housing unit may fulfill multiple needs simultaneously. For example, a one-bedroom rental unit could also be considered affordable for very low-income households and suitable for seniors. The existing housing stock may also meet some of the identified housing needs. For instance, if an existing unit accommodates and supports an adult requiring housing with supports, that unit would contribute toward meeting the target for supportive housing.

Housing Units by Tenure

	Current Unmet Need	Within 5 Years	Between 5 and 20 Years	20 Year Need
Affordable Rental Housing	410	105	387	492
Rental Housing	—	308	1,380	1,688
Ownership Housing	110	430	2,078	2,508

Housing Units by Population and Support Needs

	Current Unmet Need	Within 5 Years	Between 5 and 20 Years	20 Year Need
Accessible Housing for People with Mobility Disabilities	1,208	99	288	387
Housing for Families	—	355	1,497	1,852
Housing for Seniors	—	209	374	583
Supportive Housing for Adults with Cognitive Disabilities	57 - 69	5 - 6	14 - 16	19 - 22
Supportive Housing for Individuals with Severe Mental Illness and Addictions	78 - 195	6 - 16	19 - 46	25 - 62
Supportive Housing for People Experiencing Homelessness	74	23	308	331

FORT ST. JOHN WILL REQUIRE 1,031 NEW HOUSING UNITS IN 5 YEARS AND 3,923 NEW HOUSING UNITS OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS.

Policies

3.1 Support and facilitate housing development that meets the needs identified in the Housing Needs Report, including 1,031 new housing units over the next 5 years and 3,923 units over the next 20 years.

3.2 Prioritize mixed-use and apartment/condominium housing in the downtown core and infill housing in the surrounding residential areas.

3.3 Update the Development Approval Procedures Bylaw, delegating issuance of minor development variance permits to staff.

3.4 Refer to the current Housing Needs Report when approving residential development applications and updating policy to meet 5-year and 20-year housing unit demand.

3.5 Update the Development Cost Charge (DCC) Bylaw and consider adoption of an Amenity Cost Charge Bylaw.

3.6 Support non-profit housing organizations, Northern Health, and local businesses in providing affordable rental housing for healthcare staff near medical facilities.

3.7 Consider development cost charge waivers and reductions, established in separate bylaw from the DCC Bylaw, for non-for-profit rental housing or for-profit affordable rental housing.

3.8 Establish partnerships with BC Housing and other housing-focused organizations to provide housing options for vulnerable populations, which may include shelters, accessible housing, supportive housing, or affordable housing.

3.9 Advocate to the Province for additional funding streams to support community-led co-operative housing, supportive housing, and shelter housing projects.

3.10 Encourage all new housing development and renovations to incorporate universal design principles.

3.11 Establish partnerships with BC Housing and other housing-focused organizations to provide independent and supportive housing options for seniors.

3.12 Recommend that seniors housing is in proximity to amenities and services, including medical facilities.

3.13 Increase opportunities to accommodate supportive housing through OCP policy and zoning regulations. For example, allow for assisted living, seniors independent living, supportive housing, and respite housing in the Institutional land use and zoning.

3.14 Encourage the use of programs supporting seniors independent living and aging in place, including funding for home renovations to improve accessibility.

3.15 Partner with BC Builds, non-profit housing providers, and local businesses to deliver middle-income family housing projects.

3.16 Review the Zoning Bylaw to determine if any development requirements impede the development of two-, three-, and four-bedroom homes.

3.17 Explore affordable housing tenures in Small Scale Residential and Mixed Residential areas, such as fee-simple townhouses or fee-simple detached suites.

3.18 Encourage multi-family residential development in proximity to transportation infrastructure, such as transit stops.

4 ACCESSIBILITY

GOAL

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

4. Accessibility

An accessible community ensures that trails, streets, businesses, public spaces, buildings, sidewalks, and homes are usable by all residents, regardless of age or ability. Central to this goal is the concept of universal design, which is an approach that incorporates inclusive strategies to create environments that are inherently accessible to everyone. As Fort St. John continues to grow, the City is committed to applying universal design principles in planning and development, while also improving awareness and understanding of accessibility challenges and solutions.

Policies

4.1 Partner with the Peace River Regional District, the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, and other member communities to ensure we are meeting the requirements of the *Accessible BC Act*.

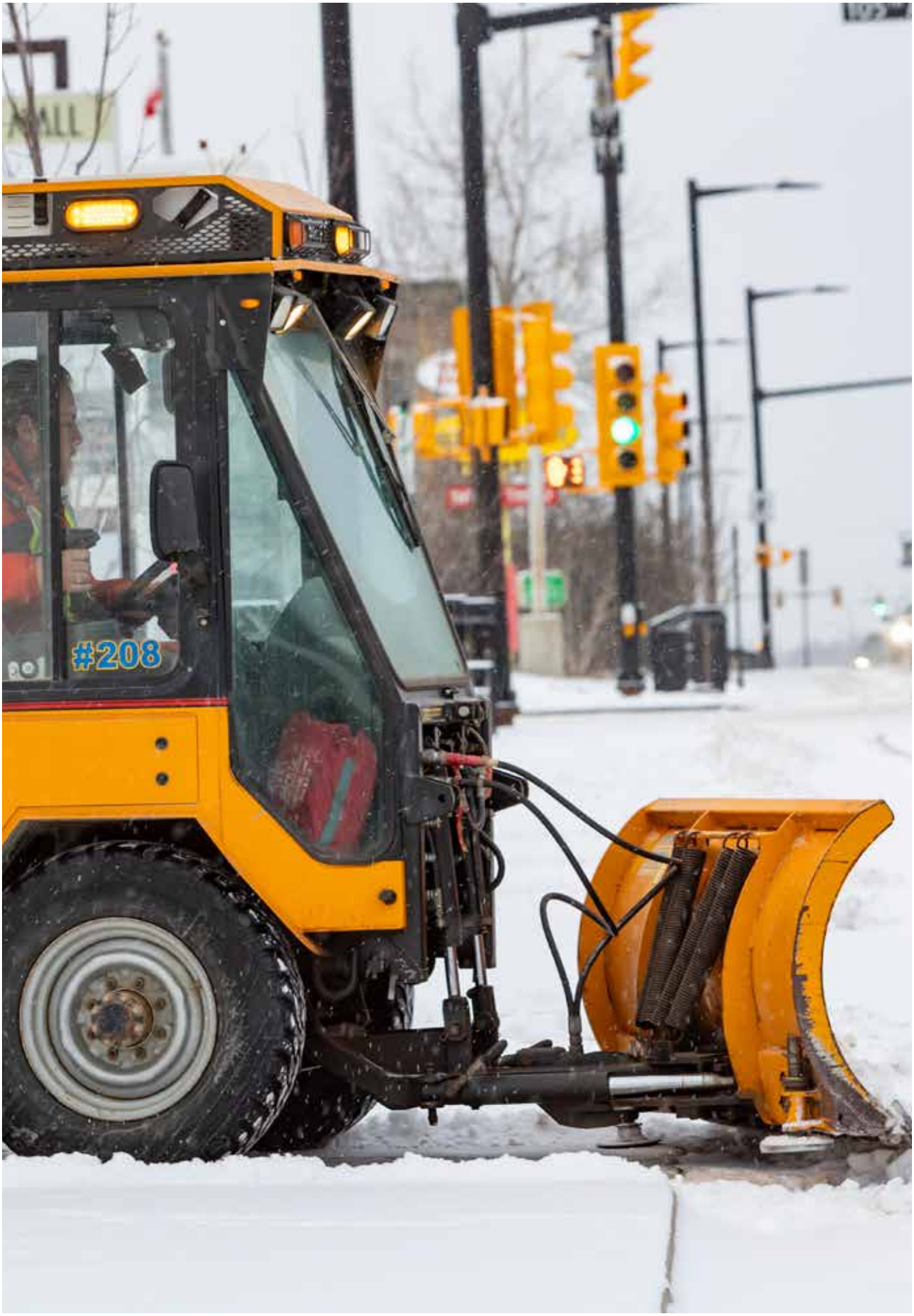
4.2 Encourage universal design for new housing developments. This could be achieved through the development of universal design guidelines for various housing typologies.

4.3 Update the Age-Friendly Assessment and Action Plan.

4.4 Consider educational opportunities for staff and the public to increase knowledge and skills on barriers to accessibility and how to design programs, policies, and places to remove these barriers.

4.5 Continue to refer municipal policies related to accessibility to the Northeast BC Collaborative Accessibility Committee for review and comment.

4.6 Incorporate universal design principles into long-term planning for municipal operations and for accessibility improvements to parks and the public realm.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5 PARKS AND RECREATION

GOAL

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

5. Parks and Recreation

The City is committed to enhancing active lifestyles by providing well-maintained and conveniently located green spaces, trails, and recreational facilities for exercise and play. Fort St. John has over 260 hectares of outdoor spaces encompassing more than 29 parks and public green spaces, 17 sports fields, 15 ball diamonds, two soccer pitches, a community forest, 38 kilometres of paved trails, and 92 kilometres of sidewalks. Recreational facilities include the North Peace Leisure Pool (owned by the PRRD), Fort St. John Curling Club, Kids Arena Fieldhouse, North Peace Arena, and Pomeroy Sport Centre. With only three indoor Olympic-sized long-track speed skating ovals in Canada, we're proud to have one right here at the Pomeroy Sport Centre.

Policies

5.1 Support the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Plan 2023 Update actions.

5.2 Develop strategies that keep people active during the winter months.

5.3 Continue to provide parks and recreation services and improvements that citizens enjoy, such as park upgrades and family-friendly, no or low-cost recreation activities at city facilities.

5.4 Coordinate with the Peace River Regional District to connect city trails with regional trails.

5.5 Continue to provide neighbourhood and community parks within walking distance (400 to 800 metres) of residential neighbourhoods.

5.6 Improve amenities within city parks and along trails.

5.7 Improve signage and maps for city parks and trails.

5.8 Explore an equitable user pay system for the use of recreational programs or facilities.

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6

AGRICULTURE

GOAL

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

6. Agriculture

Fort St. John is situated in the agriculturally productive Peace River region, providing the city with an opportunity to boost its economy through agri-processing and to enhance food security. There are 743,857 hectares of farmland in the region, accounting for 32.5% of British Columbia's total farmland. In 2021, there were 1,409 reporting farms with a combined operating revenue of $234.7 million. The region is primarily known for beef, grain, and oilseed production, including wheat, barley, canola, and forage seeds. River valley areas also support vegetable crops such as peas, cabbage, and sweet corn.

The 2014 and 2016 boundary expansions incorporated 650 hectares of Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land within the city, primarily used for crops and pasture. ALR lands are provincially protected for agricultural use under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and overseen by the Agricultural Land Commission. This policy section outlines how the City can support food security and agri-business by enabling urban agriculture and supporting secondary agricultural activities.

Policies

6.1 Update land use policy to encourage compatible development adjacent to Agricultural Land Reserve land and establish buffer and setback distances to reduce conflict. In designing development standards, the Province's Guide to Edge Planning should be used as a guiding document.

6.2 Agricultural Land Reserve exclusion applications will only be considered by the City of Fort St. John when:

- complete development plans that meet the general intent of OCP land policy and direction are provided; and,
- there is clear demonstration that there are no other appropriate lands available within the city for development.

6.3 Explore the creation of an Urban Agriculture Plan to strengthen local food security and support sustainable food systems, including initiatives such as edible gardening, greenhouse development, composting, and other food production methods suited to urban environments.

6.4 Promote existing food security and nutritional food offerings in our community, such as edible gardens at city facilities, the community garden, and the Fort St. John Farmers Market.

6.5 Explore opportunities for new and expanded agricultural business operations, such as the processing of agricultural products, industrial packaging, craft-scale agriculture (brewpubs, honey production, local produce), commercial greenhouses and agri-tech innovation.

6.6 Collaborate with the Agricultural Land Reserve regarding agricultural lands within the city's boundaries.

7 ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE

GOAL

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

7. Arts, Culture, and Heritage

The City recognizes that arts and culture are essential to a vibrant, connected, and thriving community. The arts spark creativity, foster belonging, and boost tourism and economic growth. The City proudly supports local artists and grassroots organizations whose work brings energy, identity, and life to Fort St. John. Arts and culture facilities in the city include the North Peace Cultural Centre and Fort St. John North Peace Museum. The Fort St. John Arts Council actively supports and develops arts and culture offerings for our community.

Policies

7.1 Increase the accessibility and variety of arts and culture opportunities, in collaboration with community partners and neighbouring municipalities.

7.2 Increase public awareness of Fort St. John's history and heritage.

7.3 Develop a Public Art Policy that:

- guides enhancing city parks, facilities, and public spaces with public art;
- is created in collaboration with the community; and that,
- identifies opportunities for art to benefit economic development and local tourism, as well as celebrate Fort St. John's culture.

7.4 Support implementing arts and culture recommendations from the Community Arts & Culture Framework and Economic Development Strategy.

7.5 Increase youth-focused and intergenerational arts and culture offerings.

8 INDIGENOUS INCLUSION AND PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL

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

8. Indigenous Inclusion and Partnerships

The City of Fort St. John is located on the traditional territory of the Dane-zaa people. As a regional hub serving diverse communities, the City recognizes the importance of meaningful inclusion and collaboration with neighbouring First Nations, Métis communities, and all Indigenous peoples. The City is committed to building respectful, mutually beneficial partnerships grounded in trust, recognition, and shared goals with neighbouring First Nations, Indigenous organizations, and residents, both now and into the future.

Policies

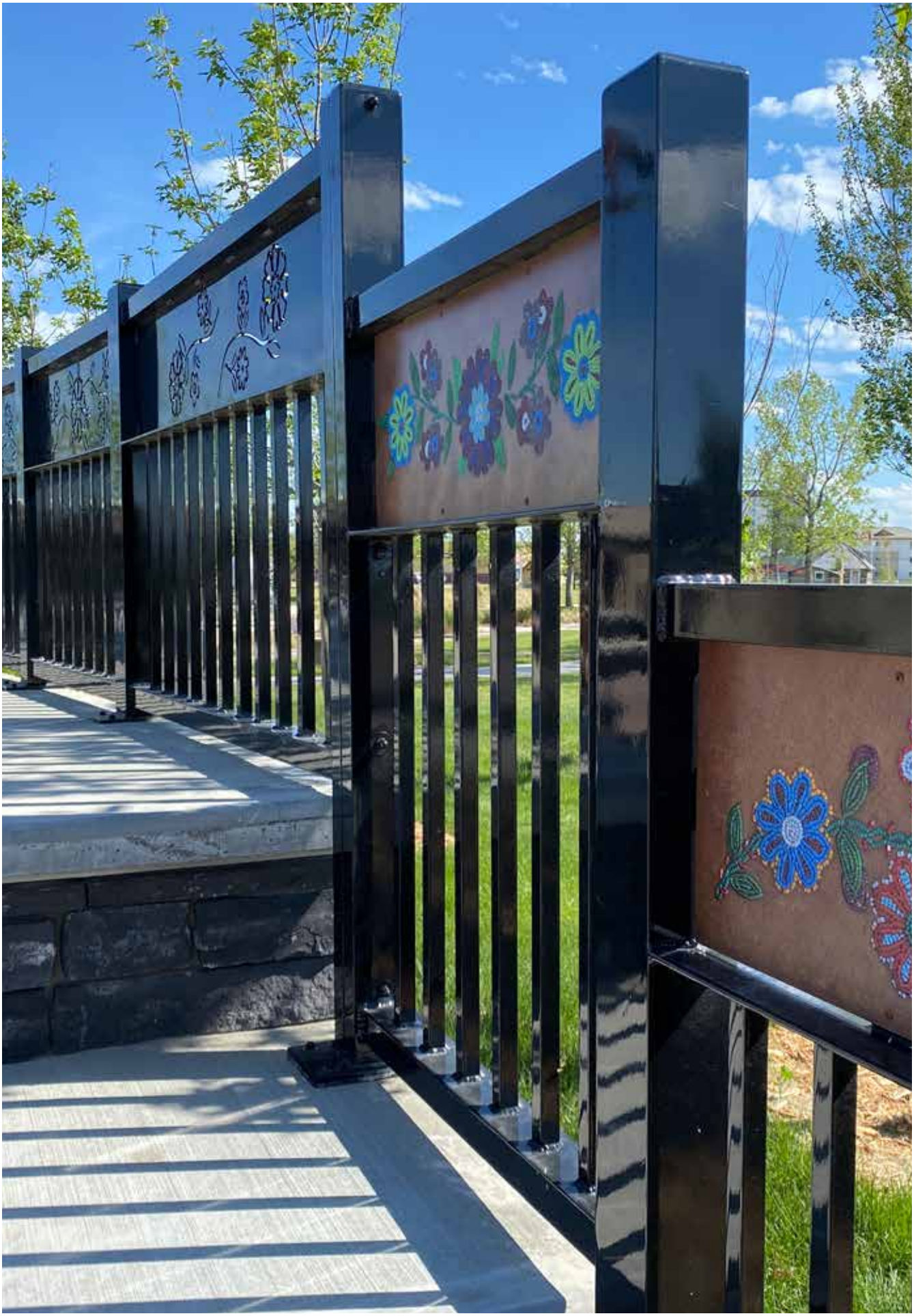
8.1 Support awareness and recognition of First Nation and Métis communities and the importance of respecting treaty rights.

8.2 Acknowledge and respect First Nation and Métis communities and their role in our community's history and development.

8.3 Work in partnership with local First Nation and Métis communities for the betterment of Fort St. John and the strengthening of communities within the greater regional community.

8.4 Continue to work with First Nation communities on urban reserve development through a proactive and transparent planning framework and process.

8.5 Seek opportunities to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples within City procedures and strategies.



MOORE

9 PROTECTING LAND AND LIVELIHOODS

GOAL

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

9. Protecting Land and Livelihoods

Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent around the world, and more locally in Northeast BC. The 2023 Donnie Creek wildfire, the largest fire recorded in BC's history, was 158 kilometres north of Fort St. John. Discovered in early May 2023 and reaching an astounding 619,072 hectares, the fire smouldered underground during the winter and wasn't declared out until August 2024. In May 2025, the city experienced a forest fire much closer to home: the Fish Creek Wildfire, which burned 56 hectares of land. Fort St. John is expected to have longer, hotter summers, which may stress our water supply, water quality, livestock, and crop yields during the summer months. During the spring and fall, there is expected to be an increase in the frequency and intensity of rain events, with potential impacts on critical infrastructure.

The City continues to take measures to future-proof our community from hazardous conditions and improve emergency response. *The City of Fort St John Emergency Measures Bylaw* provides a framework for the City's emergency program to provide a comprehensive emergency program that prepares for, responds to, and recovers from natural or man-made emergencies or disasters. This includes ensuring a trained team, outlining roles and responsibilities, and creating a written emergency response plan.

In May 2025, it was announced that the City will receive $4.2 million in provincial funding for infrastructure improvements related to Bouffioux Coulee. The funding will support upgrades to the outfall infrastructure, a flood risk reduction project, and a broader stormwater management initiative.

Bouffioux Coulee is an important part of the City's stormwater system, but has experienced ongoing erosion and slope stability issues. To address these concerns and safeguard future development, this OCP update introduces new Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas (DPAs). The DPAs require professional assessments of areas that may be subject to slope instability, wildfires, or that contain environmentally sensitive features before any development can proceed.

Policies

9.1 Ensure that development activities do not occur in areas with hazardous conditions unless the hazard(s) have been sufficiently addressed and mitigated.

9.2 Regularly update the City's Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Analysis, and continue to incorporate risk reduction and resilience measures into City processes.

9.3 Collaborate with the Peace River Regional District, surrounding municipalities, regional First Nations and other partners on emergency planning and response.

9.4 Take proactive measures to future-proof critical infrastructure from extreme weather.

9.5 Using 2007 as a baseline, reduce City of Fort St. John corporate GHG emissions by:

a. 40% by 2030

b. 60% by 2040

c. 80% by 2050

9.6 Encourage industry to utilize the City's wastewater reclamation facility to reduce the use of potable water for industrial uses.

9.7 Encourage new development to be energy and water-efficient, reducing resource consumption.

9.8 Consider green infrastructure such as rain gardens and bioswales to reduce the volume of storm water entering the City's storm drainage systems.

9.9 Continue planting street trees downtown to mitigate the urban heat island effect.

9.10 Research subdivision and street designs that would reduce the financial and energy costs of snow removal.

9.11 Consider lower-emission options when City equipment reaches the end of its life and requires replacement.

9.12 Work with BC Hydro to leverage programs and funding for energy efficiency opportunities.

10 TRANSPORTATION

GOAL

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.

10. Transportation

An effective transportation network, where people, goods, and services can move easily within the City and connect to regional transportation corridors, is essential for economic development, community well-being, and accessibility. Fort St. John is a compact community with an average commute time of just 16 minutes. While personal vehicles remain the primary mode of transportation, bus ridership has increased by 77.5% from 2016 to 2023. As the community grows, the City is committed to expanding and improving its transportation network to support increased mobility choices. Making it easier for residents to walk, cycle, or take transit reduces congestion and contributes to a healthier, happier city.

Policies

10.1 Update the Transportation Master Plan.

10.2 Improve connectivity of multi-use trails along the Alaska Highway.

10.3 Continue to improve road network connectivity and circulation within the city.

10.4 Continue to improve pedestrian crossings and accessibility features.

10.5 Advocate to BC Transit for increased regular bus service.

10.6 Explore strategies for parking management in residential and commercial areas.

10.7 Continue to improve intersection operation and safety.

10.8 Work with the Peace River Regional District and Ministry of Transportation and Transit to improve highway connections to and from Fort St. John.

10.9 Planning for new neighbourhoods and commercial areas within the city should consider reliable access for emergency response, including contingency routes where practical.

11 MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL

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

11. Municipal Services and Infrastructure

The City is responsible for designing, maintaining, and managing its municipal infrastructure and facility assets. These include systems for water treatment, storage, and distribution; stormwater retention, detention, and outfalls; sanitary sewer collection and treatment; and solid waste collection.

Other infrastructure assets include roads, sidewalks, trails, streetlights, traffic signals, public amenities, irrigation systems for public spaces, and vehicle fleets. Major civic facilities include Fort St. John Fire Station #1, the Fort St. John RCMP Detachment, Fort St. John City Hall, and our recreation facilities.

There are no known existing or potential areas of sand or gravel deposits suitable for aggregate extraction within City of Fort St. John boundaries. The City owns a 10-hectare aggregate extraction site in the District of Taylor. Summary information on the City's water, sewer, and stormwater systems is described below, along with planned major infrastructure projects.

Water Supply

Fort St. John's water system has five shallow wells located in Taylor on the Peace River. All wells are currently mounded and periodically submerged during the freshet. The wells are pumped to the High Lift Pump Station and then pumped through 11 kilometres of pipeline to the City of Fort St. John's water treatment facility. The current capacity is 11,664 cubic metres per day. The City plans to increase the capacity of this system to 13,824 cubic metres per day with a radial collector well at the High Lift Pump Station on the Peace River.

Water Distribution System

Two treated water reservoirs supply the City with extra water during peak demands and store water when excess demand is not required.

- The 6.8 million litres reservoir is located at 106 Avenue & 106 Street. It has an average turnover of 18 hours.
- The 36.4 million litres reservoir is located at Northern Lights Drive & 112 Avenue. It has an average turnover of 4 days.

Sanitary Sewer System

Within the city's boundaries, sewage is collected from buildings through underground pipes. The sewage flows by gravity and pump stations to treatment lagoons on the north and

south sides of the City. The south lagoons discharge to the Peace River on a continuous basis, whereas the north lagoons discharge to the Beatton River on a seasonal basis. The north and south lagoons are reaching capacity and will require further assessment and management strategies within the next five years.

Stormwater

Rainwater and snowmelt are collected in ditches and gutters and then enter the pipe network through catch basins and ditch inlets. The water flows by gravity to the north and south, exiting the pipe network into ditches, then into creeks and eventually into the Peace River and Beatton River.

Wastewater Station

The City has a screening and grit removal facility in its wastewater collection system. The facility consists of two screens: a coarse screen and a fine screen, as well as a grit chamber with centrifugal flow to better enhance the quality of wastewater treatment.

Water Recovery Facility

In 2016, the City received a $5 million grant from the federal Gas Tax Fund to construct the $9.5 million Water Recovery Facility, which also included the construction of a new screening facility and distribution kiosk. The Facility takes effluent that has already gone through the City's treatment process and further treats it through a series of filters and screens before it is chlorinated and available for industrial and agricultural uses.

Planned major infrastructure improvements include:

- Replacement and future expansion of the water reservoir located at 106 Ave & 106 St.
- Higher capacity radial collector well on the Peace River and high lift station upgrades.
- Construction of a new sanitary sewer main in the Mathews Park neighbourhood.
- Improvements to water quality treatment at the Water Recovery Facility for unrestricted use.
- Sewer outfall improvements.
- Upgrades to Surerus Park.

Policies

11.1 Ensure community infrastructure is well-maintained to meet the needs of current and future generations.

11.2 Develop alternative servicing options for lands that are not readily serviceable.

11.3 Continue improving the level and quality of infrastructure and services.

11.4 Develop and implement a City-wide asset management program for public utilities and services.

11.5 Maintain high-quality emergency services, including fire protection, policing, and bylaw enforcement, for all residents as the city grows. Infrastructure planning for growth areas will consider the capacity of emergency services and supporting infrastructure to meet future needs.

FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

This section explains the different land use designations throughout the city and should be used with Schedule B - Land Use.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) organizes areas of the city based on the types of activities intended for each, such as residential, commercial, or industrial, to help guide where various kinds of development should take place.

The Zoning Bylaw provides specific development regulations, including Development Permit Area guidelines.

12. Land Use Designations

Small Scale Residential

Purpose & Description

Small Scale Residential is infill development within single-detached and duplex neighbourhoods. All properties have front-yard open space, providing green space for families during the warm summer months and cost-effective snow storage in the sunny, cold winters. Most neighbourhoods are within walking distance of a community park or neighbourhood park.

Uses

- Residential
- Home occupation

Built Form/Height

- Maximum of 3 storeys
- Maximum of 4 dwelling units per lot
- Single-detached dwelling
- Duplex dwelling
- Detached suite
- Secondary suite

Mixed Residential

Purpose & Description

This land use aims to foster social connection and create more vibrant neighbourhoods with a mix of housing types and tenures. Mixed residential is primarily located in walkable areas close to amenities and services. The Multiple Family Residential Development Permit Area provides form and character guidance for the development of more than four units on a property.

Uses

- Residential
- Home occupation

Built Form/Height

- Maximum of 4 storeys
- Apartment
- Duplex dwelling
- Triplex
- Fourplex
- Townhouse

Manufactured Home Park

Purpose & Description

Fort St. John has two existing manufactured home parks, Peace Country Mobile Home Park and Southridge Estates. These parks provide affordable rental and ownership options for residents.

Uses

- Manufactured home park
- Home occupation

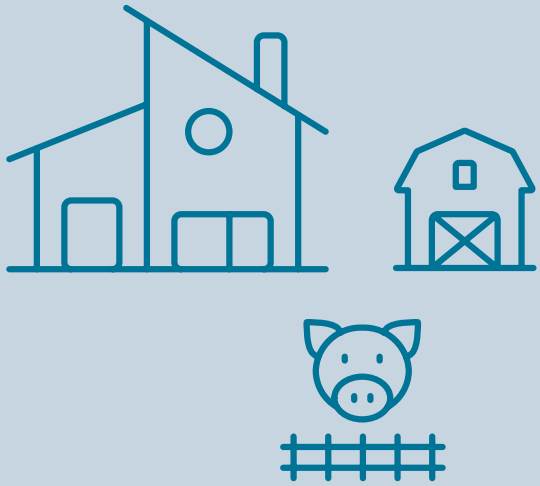
Built Form/Height

- Maximum height of 10.5 metres
- Manufactured home
- Modular home

Rural Residential

Purpose & Description

Rural residential lands are large lot properties with lower density forms of housing, such as single-detached dwellings. They are compatible with agricultural uses and support a rural lifestyle. Many of these properties were incorporated within city boundaries during the 2014 and 2016 expansions. As these properties are typically located at the city boundaries, there are challenges associated with extending municipal servicing to these areas. In the upcoming years, the City will determine alternative servicing options for these properties.



Uses

- Agriculture, including Agri-tourism
- Bed and Breakfast
- Residential
- Home occupation

Built Form/Height

- Maximum of 3 storeys
- Single-detached dwelling
- Detached suite
- Caretaker suite
- Secondary suite
- Farm use structures

Downtown

Purpose & Description

The Downtown is envisioned as a compact mix of commercial, civic, institutional, and higher density housing. The 100 Street Corridor Plan and the Business Facade Improvement Program are two key initiatives that the City has undertaken to make the downtown a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly destination with shopping and restaurant options. The Downtown Development Permit Area provides guidance for the form and character of this area.

Uses

- Pedestrian-oriented commercial retail and services
- Mixed-use
- Residential
- Theatres, cafés, restaurants, bars, and other entertainment venues

Built Form/Height

- Maximum of 10 storeys
- Attractive storefronts with on-street or rear parking
- Ground-oriented walk ups
- Mixed-use development with street grade commercial and residential above
- Apartments and condominiums 4 storeys and greater with underground parking

General Commercial

Purpose & Description

General commercial is intended for businesses that serve the local public within the city. This is the predominant commercial land use in the city, with businesses ranging from major retailers to small, family-run businesses. The General Commercial Development Permit Area provides guidance for the form and character of this area.

Uses

- General commercial
- Mixed-use
- Caretaker suite

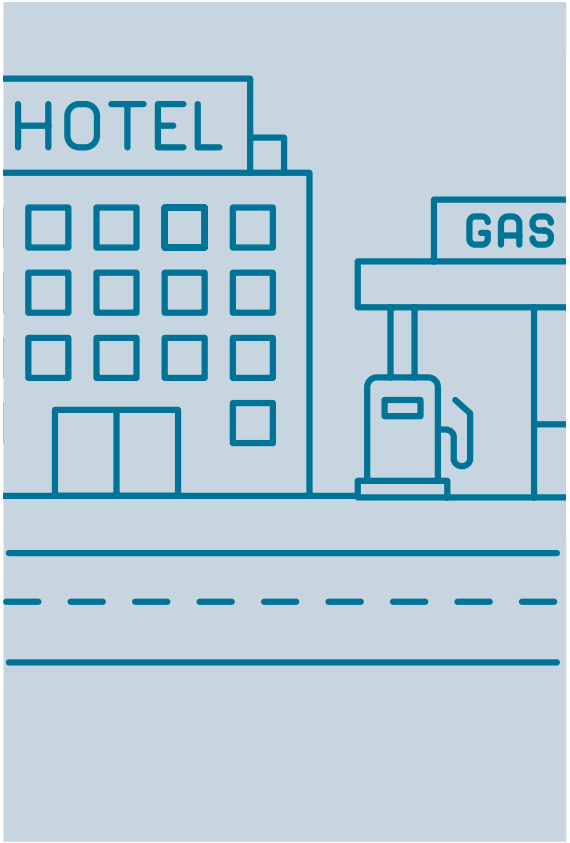
Built Form/Height

- Maximum height of 21.0 metres
- Single or multi-storey commercial development
- Multi-storey mixed-use development

Highway and Service Corridor

Purpose & Description

Fort St. John strives to have an inviting and visually appealing highway corridor that is easily accessible by the travelling public and industrial sectors. Commercial development fronting onto the Alaska Highway should have highly visible, vibrant facades that advertise goods and services. Service oriented lands are typically larger properties that can accommodate equipment and material storage, located within two blocks of the Alaska Highway. The Highway and Service Corridor Development Permit Area provides guidance for the form and character of this area.



Uses

- Services for Alaska Highway travellers such as hotels, restaurants, gas stations, and retail
- Large scale retailers
- Heavy equipment, vehicle, and tire sales and servicing
- Oilfield sales and services
- Commercial storage
- Service station
- Caretaker suite

Built Form/Height

- Maximum height of 21.0 metres
- Mix of building types and storage facilities

Industrial

Purpose & Description

Industrial activity in Fort St. John supports the key economic drivers of our region - the energy, forestry, and agricultural sectors. Most light industrial lands are located south of the Alaska Highway, with some properties located along Northern Lights Drive near the Alaska Highway. These lands are typically used for production, manufacturing, and servicing. Heavy industrial lands are located east of Northern Lights Drive. Heavy industrial lands allow for tank farms, rail yards, and natural resource development and processing.

Uses

- Warehousing
- Manufacturing
- Processing facilities
- Oilfield sales and services
- Data centres
- Transportation
- Industrial storage
- Other industrial uses

Built Form/Height

- Maximum height of 15.0 metres for principal buildings in Light Industrial zones
- Offices and industrial facilities

Institutional

Purpose & Description

Institutional lands in Fort St. John provide services to the community. These include uses related to community services, government operations, and emergency response. The Multiple Family Residential Development Permit Area provides form and character guidance for the development of more than four units on a property within the Institutional land use designation. As required by the *Local Government Act*, the City consulted with School District 60, which confirmed there are no actual or anticipated needs for school facilities and support services for the duration of this OCP.

Uses

- Schools
- Libraries
- Hospital and health services facilities
- Government services
- Senior's housing
- Supportive housing
- Emergency and protective services
- Cemeteries

Built Form/Height

- Maximum of 10 storeys
- Institutional buildings are generally large structures containing institutional service centres

Agriculture

Purpose & Description

Agricultural lands are predominately located at the city's periphery and were incorporated during the 2014 and 2016 boundary expansions. They are large-lot properties that are typically used for forage crops. Storage, packing, and processing of farm products are encouraged agricultural activities as they support the local economy and promote food security.

Uses

- Agriculture
- Residential complying with Agricultural Land Reserve regulations
- Non-farm uses approved by the Agricultural Land Commission

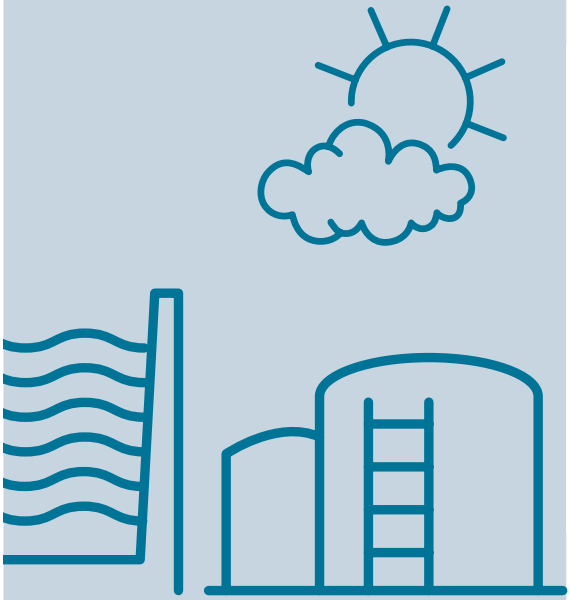
Built Form/Height

- Maximum principal residence height of 15.0 metres
- Farm use structures and residential dwelling(s)

Public Utility

Purpose & Description

This land use is intended for municipal systems or works that provide for public consumption, benefit, convenience, or use, such as water or steam, sewage disposal, public transportation, irrigation, drainage, fuel, heat, and waste management.



Uses

- City utility facilities such as water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants and water reservoirs

Built Form/Height

- Varies depending on facility purpose

Parks, Natural Areas, and Trails

Purpose & Description

This land use provides amenity space for Fort St. John residents and protects valuable natural areas within the city. City parks offer varied recreational opportunities for residents and areas such as Fish Creek enhance the appeal and vibrancy of Fort St. John.

Uses

- Parks and open space
- Gardens
- Natural conservation areas
- Recreation facilities such as sports complexes

Built Form/Height

- Maximum height of 10.0 metres

Parkwood Southlands

Purpose & Description

Parkwood Southlands is an 88.3 hectare planned neighbourhood in Fort St. John's northwest. The vision for this area is to create a complete community with a range of housing types, a commercial village centre, and parks and recreational areas. The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan is included as Schedule L in Appendix 2 of this plan. The Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area provides guidance for the form and character of this area.

Uses

- Residential
- Commercial
- Parkland
- Institutional
- Mixed-use

Built Form/Height

- Maximum of 6 storeys
- Apartment
- Mixed-use
- Multiple Dwelling Housing
- Townhouse
- Institutional
- Commercial

Swanson Lumber Road Area

Purpose & Description

The Swanson Lumber Road Area is approximately 205 hectares of land that was incorporated within city boundaries in 2016. The land is relatively flat and in proximity to the Alaska Highway, CN main rail and North Peace Regional Airport. The surrounding area is largely heavy industrial lands. Approximately 60% of the Swanson Lumber Road Area is comprised of ALR land and requires endorsement from the ALC Executive Committee for phased exclusion from the ALR. When the land was within the PRRD, the area was approved ALR exclusion for Medium Density Residential development (ALC Resolution #1105/2009). The City continues to work with landowners and the ALC to move forward with a land use plan that balances current and future needs of the City, landowners, and ALC.

Uses

- Agriculture, including a market garden
- Bed and Breakfast
- Residential
- Home occupation

Built Form/Height

- Maximum principal building height of 10.0 metres
- Single-detached dwelling
- Detached suite
- Caretaker suite
- Secondary suite
- Farm use structures

13. Development Approval Information

Pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, the City of Fort St. John designates all lands within its boundaries as the development approval information area. This means that, for certain development applications, the City may require applicants to provide additional information to help assess the potential impacts of the proposed project, such as effects on the environment, infrastructure, or nearby land uses. The specific types of information that may be requested, and the circumstances in which they are required, are set out in the City's Development Approval Procedures Bylaw.

13.1 Unless explicitly exempted, development approval information is required for:

a. amendments to the Zoning Bylaw;

b. the issuance of a Development Permit; and,

c. the issuance of a Temporary Use Permit

14. Development Permit Areas

Section 488 of the *Local Government Act* enables local governments to designate Development Permit Areas (DPAs). In establishing a DPA, the OCP must describe the special conditions or objectives that justify the designation. All DPAs designated within the city are described in this section. The guidelines that applicants must address when applying for a development permit can be found in the Zoning Bylaw. When development activities occur within a DPA, a development permit must be issued prior to commencement of land development, unless explicitly exempted in the Zoning Bylaw. Where there are overlapping DPAs on a property, a single development permit that addresses all guidelines is required. In addition to addressing the Development Permit Area guidelines found in the Zoning Bylaw, applicants must also refer to requirements in the Fees and Charges for Various Municipal Services Bylaw and the Development Approval Procedures Bylaw.

14.1 Designation and mapping

Pursuant to Section 488 of the *Local Government Act*, the City of Fort St. John has designated Development Permit Areas for:

a. form and character for lands shown on Schedule C;

b. environmental protection areas for lands shown on Schedule D; and,

c. hazardous conditions for lands shown on Schedule D.

14.2 Development Permit Area Guidelines and Exemptions

The guidelines for each development permit area are as set out in the Zoning Bylaw. Exemptions to DPA requirements are detailed in the Zoning Bylaw. This includes general DPA exemptions and DPA-specific exemptions.

14.3 Downtown Development Permit Area

AREA

Lands designated on Schedule C.

PURPOSE

The Downtown Development Permit Area (DPA) regulates the form and character of commercial and residential development in downtown Fort St. John.

JUSTIFICATION

- Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted.
- The form and character of intensive residential development.
- The form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development.

OBJECTIVES

- Development that contributes to the downtown's identity and sense of place.
- To create a vibrant, compact, walkable, and mixed-use downtown with a high quality of urban design.

14.4 General Commercial Development Permit Area

AREA

Lands designated on Schedule C.

PURPOSE

The General Commercial Development Permit Area (DPA) regulates the form and character of commercial development serving residents within Fort St. John. The General Commercial Development Permit Area is primarily located along 100 Street and 100 Avenue outside of the downtown area.

JUSTIFICATION

- Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted.
- The form and character of commercial, industrial or multi-family residential development.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that safe and efficient access is provided.
- Ensure that new commercial development fronting on and in proximity to the city's major collector roads meets a consistently high standard of visual quality.

14.5 Highway and Service Corridor Development Permit Area

AREA

Lands designated on Schedule C.

PURPOSE

The Highway and Service Corridor Development Permit Area (DPA) regulates the form and character of commercial development within two blocks of the Alaska Highway. This area often forms the first impression of Fort St. John for the travelling public and a continuing impression for citizens who regularly drive along the Alaska Highway.

JUSTIFICATION

- Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted.
- The form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development.
- Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems, and biological diversity.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve greenspaces along the Alaska Highway to create a more visually appealing travel corridor.
- Improve the appearance of highway and service corridor businesses.
- Ensure safe and efficient access.

14.6 Multiple Family Residential Development Permit Area

AREA

Lands designated on Schedule C.

PURPOSE

The Multiple Family Residential Development Permit Area (DPA) regulates the form and character of residential development greater than four (4) units. Multi-family developments are a more compact, affordable form of development, and can benefit sense of community through shared spaces and interactions with neighbours.

JUSTIFICATION

- The form and character of intensive residential development.
- The form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that multiple family developments are attractive and compatible with the surrounding area through siting, design, and exterior finishes.
- Emphasize building and open space designs that enhance pedestrian activity, accessibility, and safety.
- Ensure that multiple family developments provide amenities that enhance residents' living experience.

14.7 Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area

AREA

Lands designated on Schedule C.

PURPOSE

To create a complete and comprehensively planned neighbourhood in northwest Fort St. John.

JUSTIFICATION

- The form and character of intensive residential development.
- The form and character of commercial or multiple family residential development.
- To promote energy conservation.
- To promote water conservation.
- To promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

OBJECTIVES

- Ensure that residential and commercial development is visually appealing and compatible with the surrounding area.
- Create an attractive and vibrant village centre.
- Implement winter city design principles.
- Ensure connected, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.

14.8 Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas

AREA

The Developmental Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas apply to all lands identified on Schedule D as being subject to:

- Wildfire hazard
- Steep slopes
- Environmentally sensitive areas

PURPOSE

To safeguard development from hazardous conditions such as wildfire risk and steep slopes, while conserving the natural environment, including its ecosystems and biological diversity.

JUSTIFICATION

- Protection of development from hazardous conditions.
- Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve slope stability in Fish Creek and Bouffioux Coulee.
- Protect areas that contain environmentally sensitive ecosystems
- Minimize risk to property and people from wildfire hazards.

15. Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood plans provide a planning framework to guide growth and change at the neighbourhood scale. They are adopted as part of the OCP, must be consistent with the OCP's broader goals and policies and are developed by the municipality in collaboration with community members. Neighbourhood plans should highlight the unique characteristics of the area and provide a vision for its development. They should clearly explain the proposed land uses, transportation network, servicing, and infrastructure design and investments required to establish the neighbourhood. Any development of parcels over two hectares in size that are not consistent with the Official Community Plan will be required to undergo a neighbourhood planning process. This is to ensure a comprehensive planning approach for major developments in the city. Existing neighbourhood plans can be found under Appendix 2.

Plan Considerations

15.1 Development of the neighbourhood plan must consider the overall intent of the OCP, as well as future land uses, goals, and policies.

15.2 The neighbourhood plan should consider all municipal policies that affect the subject area for the neighbourhood plan.

15.3 The neighbourhood plan should consider the financial feasibility of the proposed development.

15.4 Future land use design should incorporate flexibility to reflect changes in economic conditions and community needs. Where policies must be adhered to, the neighbourhood plan will use "shall" statements, and where policies are strongly recommended, "should" statements will be used.

15.5 The neighbourhood plan should include information on the desired form and character, land use descriptions with proposed building typologies, density, setbacks, and frontages.

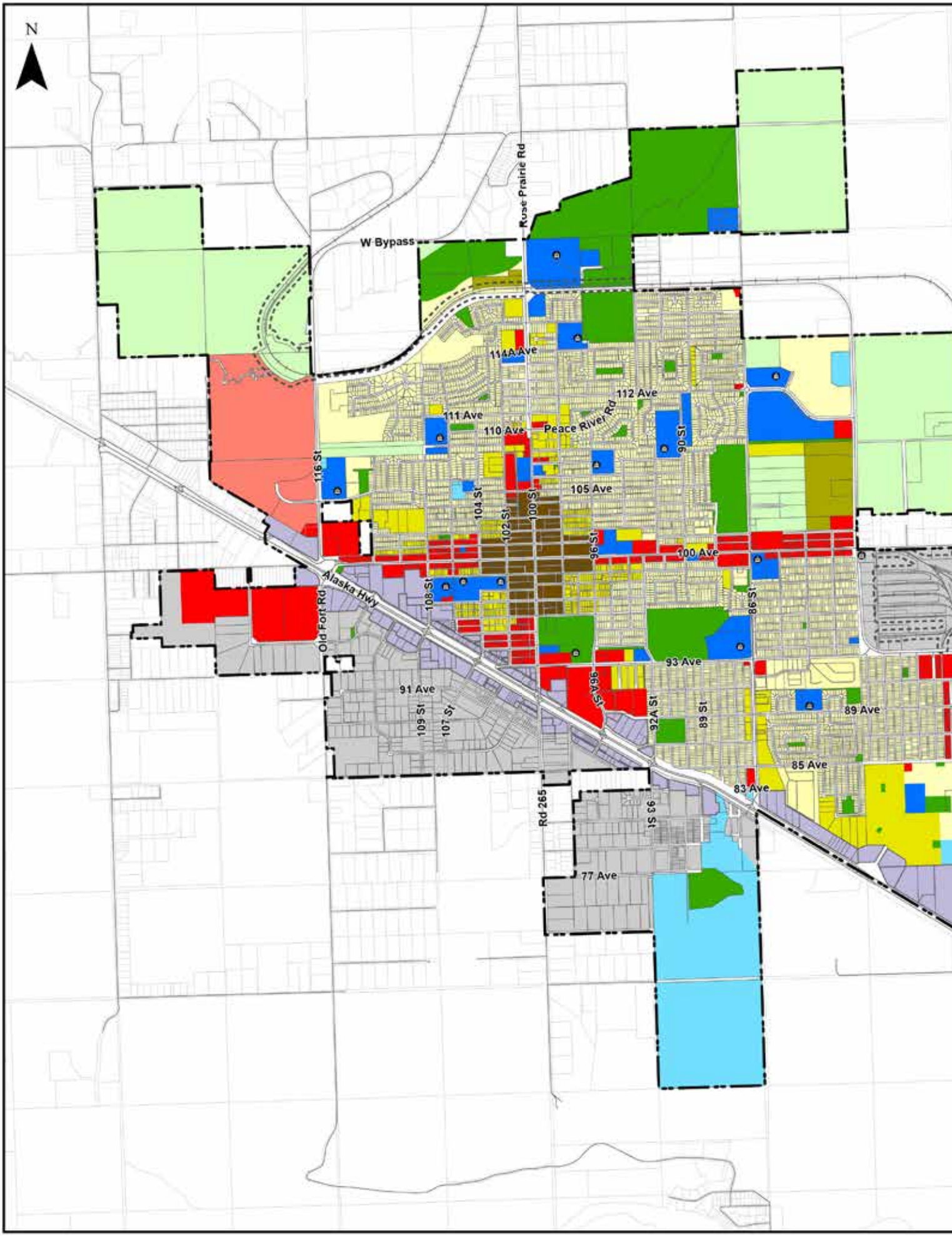
15.6 The neighbourhood plan mapping schedules should include where relevant: future land uses, water servicing, sanitary servicing, stormwater management, transportation and circulation, and landscape design.

15.7 Where a proposed neighbourhood plan contains land within the Agricultural Land Reserve, endorsement is required from the Agricultural Land Commission for non-adhering land uses.

15.8 The neighbourhood plan should clearly outline the developer's responsibilities for infrastructure and servicing as well as the development application requirements.

15.9 The neighbourhood plan should include an implementation plan that provides an actionable list of initiatives the municipality can take to advance the neighbourhood plan. A new land use designation should be created for the neighbourhood plan as part of the OCP amendment process.

APPENDIX 1
MAPS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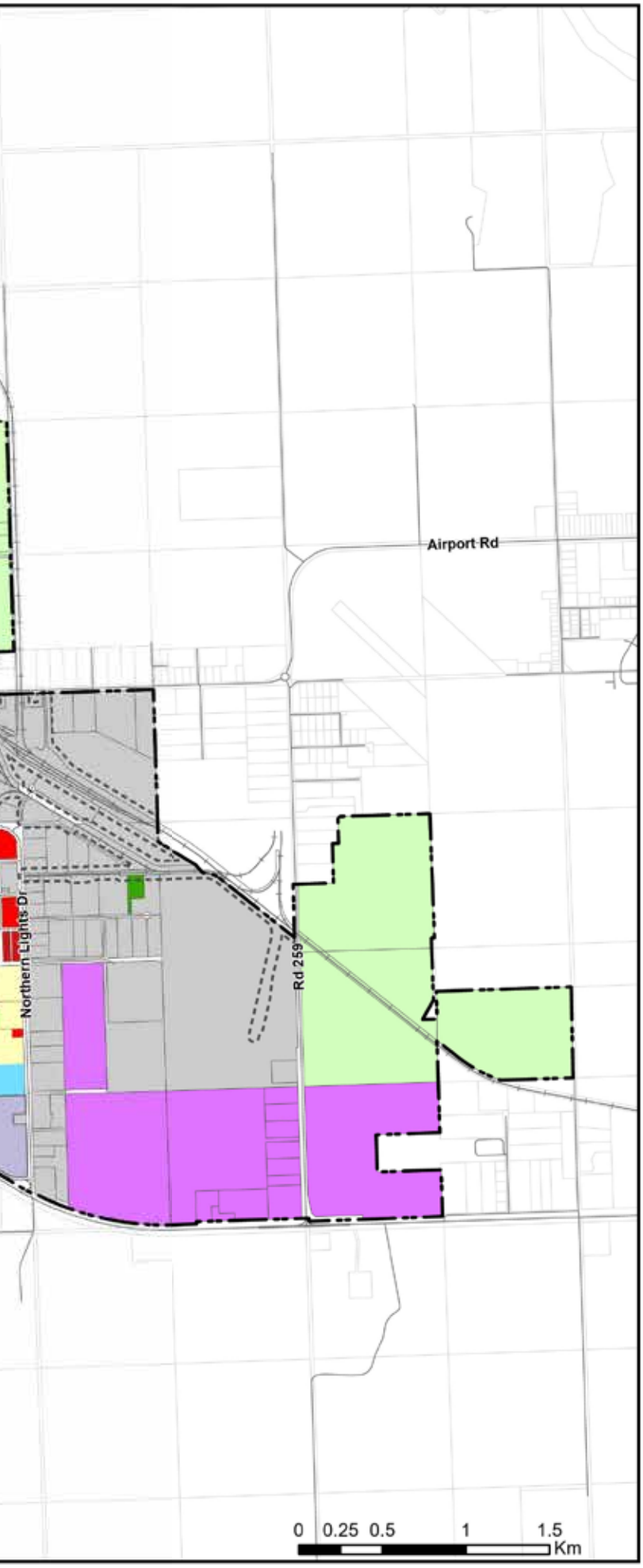


FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

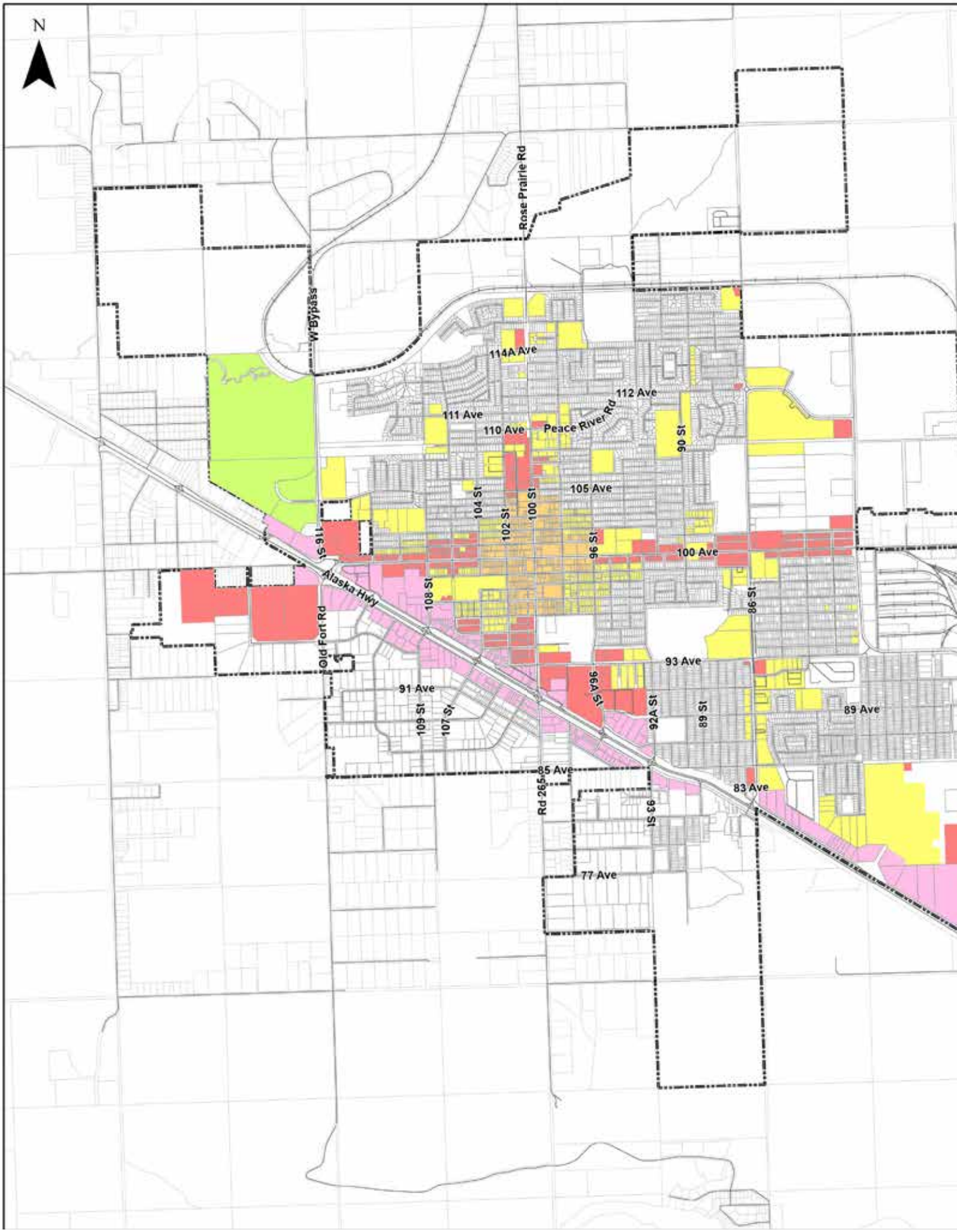
City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025
Land Use

Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Railway Buffer **(Recommended Building Setback in Proximity to Railway Operations)**
- Railway
- Parcels
- Existing Schools

Land Use Designation

- Agriculture
- Mixed Residential
- Small Scale Residential
- Rural Residential
- Manufactured Home Park
- General Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Public Utility
- Highway and Service Corridor
- Parks, Natural Areas and Trails
- Parkwood Southlands
- Swanson Lumber Road Area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FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

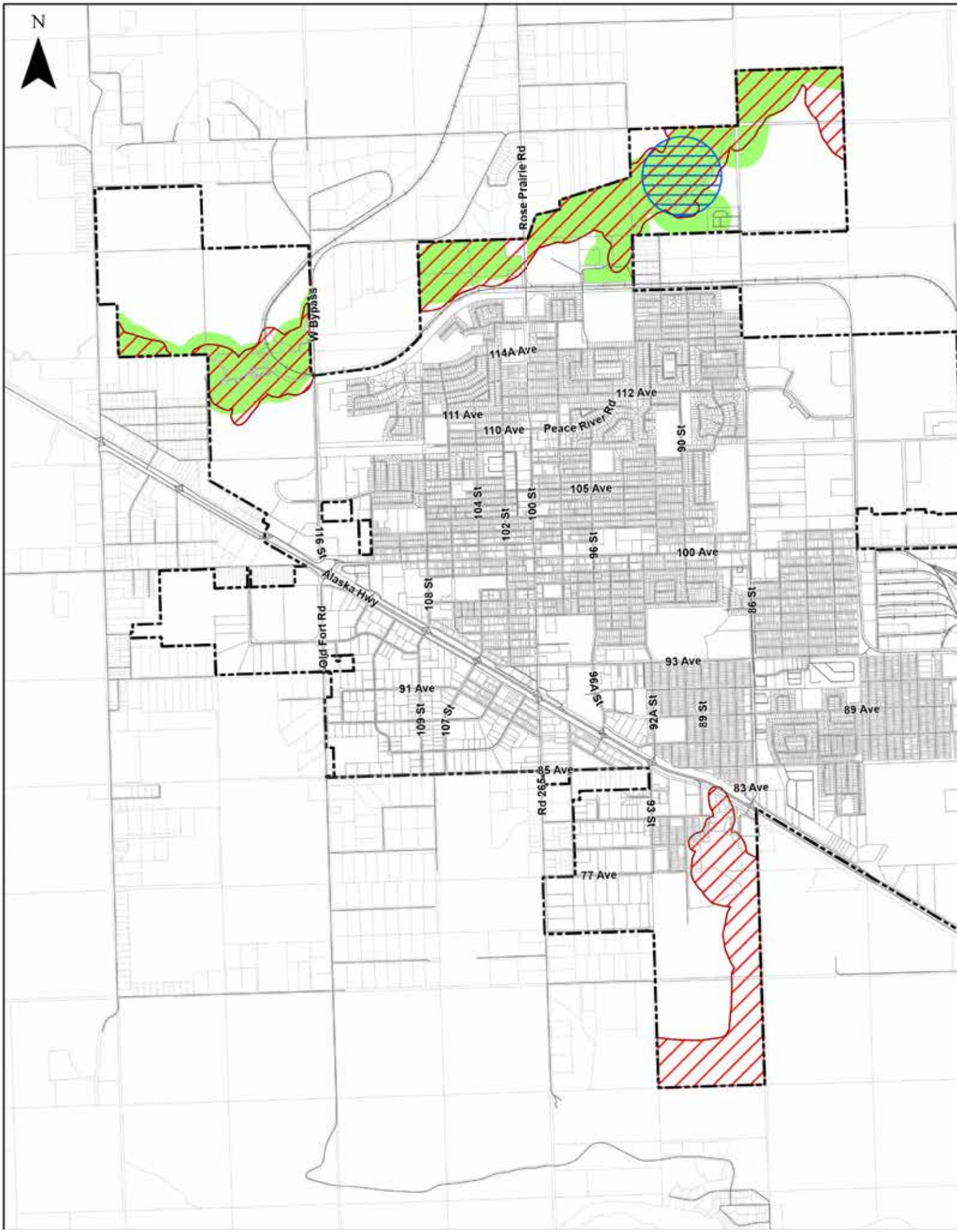
City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025 **Form and Character Development Permit Areas**

Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Lots

Form and Character Development Permit Areas

- Downtown Development Permit Area
- General Commercial Development Permit Area
- Highway and Service Corridor Development Permit area
- Multiple Family Residential Development Permit Area
- Parkwood Southlands Development Permit Area
- Railway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FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025

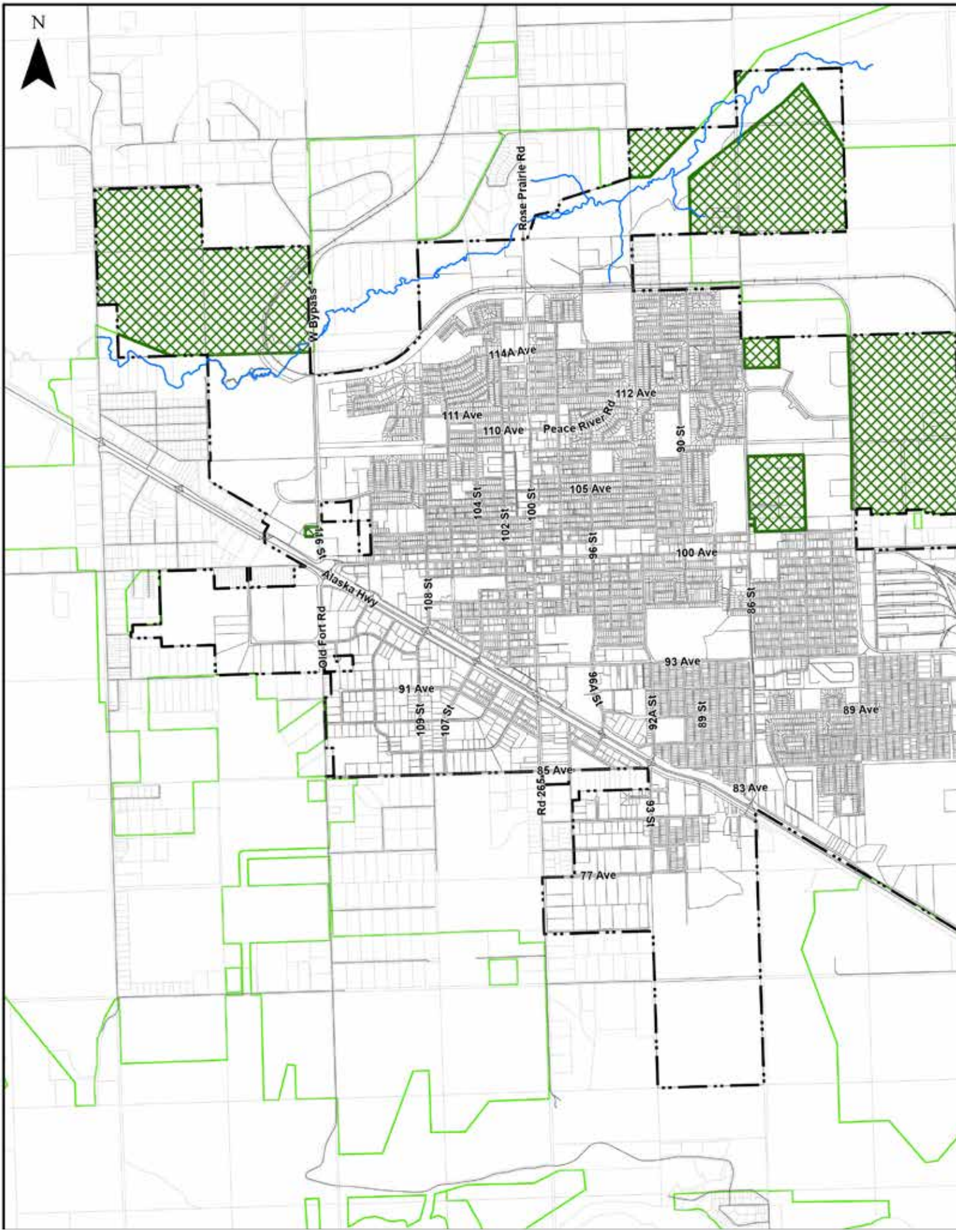
Development Constraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas

Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Lots
- Railway
- Development Permit Area Limits

Development Contraints and Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas

- Wildfire Hazard
- Slope Stability
- Fish Creek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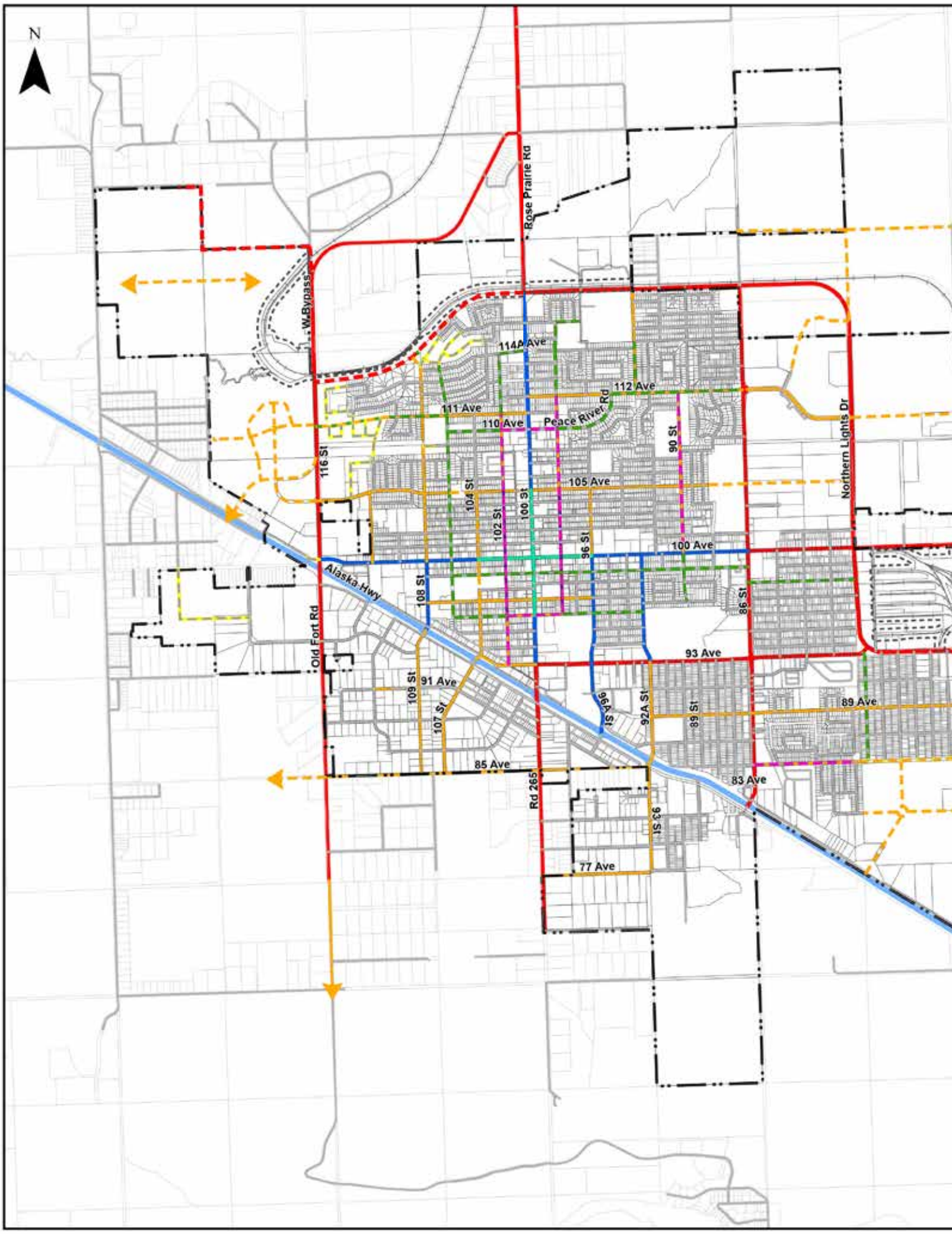
FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

City of Fort St. John
Official Community Plan
Bylaw No. 2616, 2025
Agricultural Land Reserve

Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcels
- Agricultural Land Reserve (Outside Municipal Boundary)
- Agricultural Land Reserve (Within Municipal Boundary)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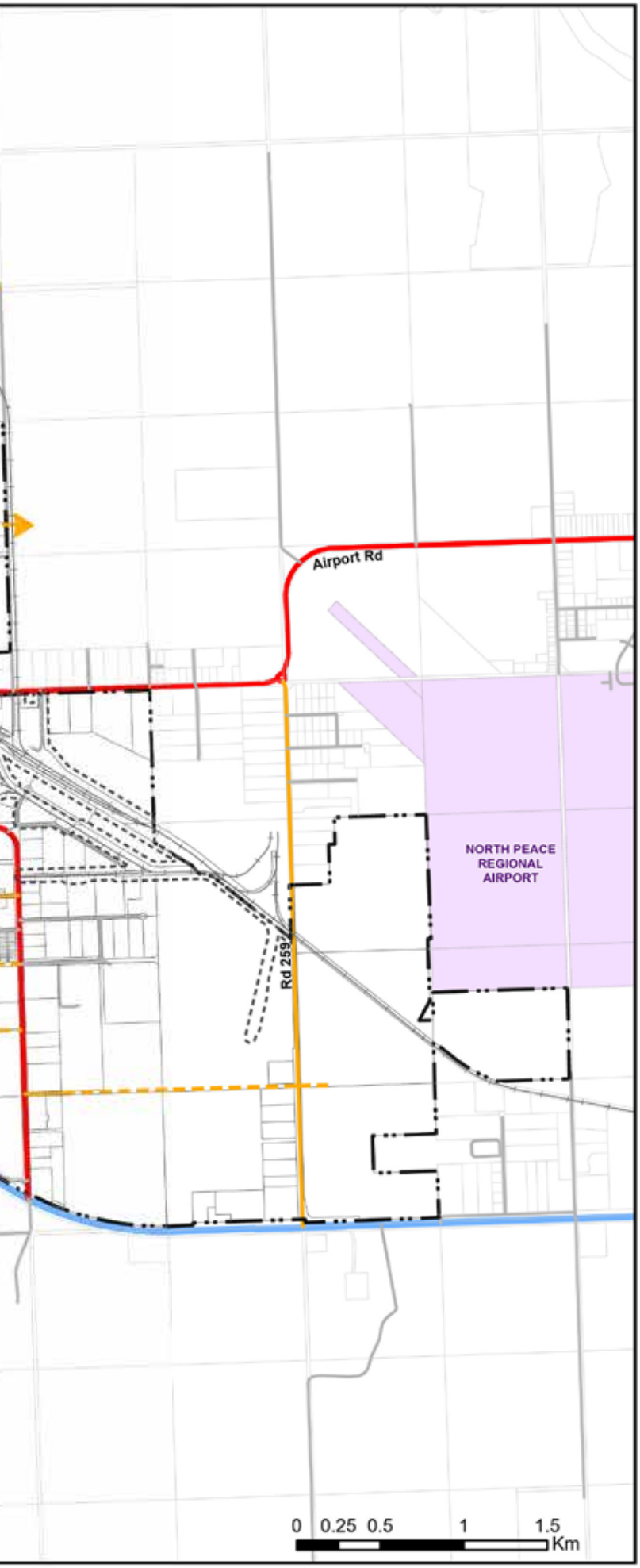


FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025
Transportation

Legend

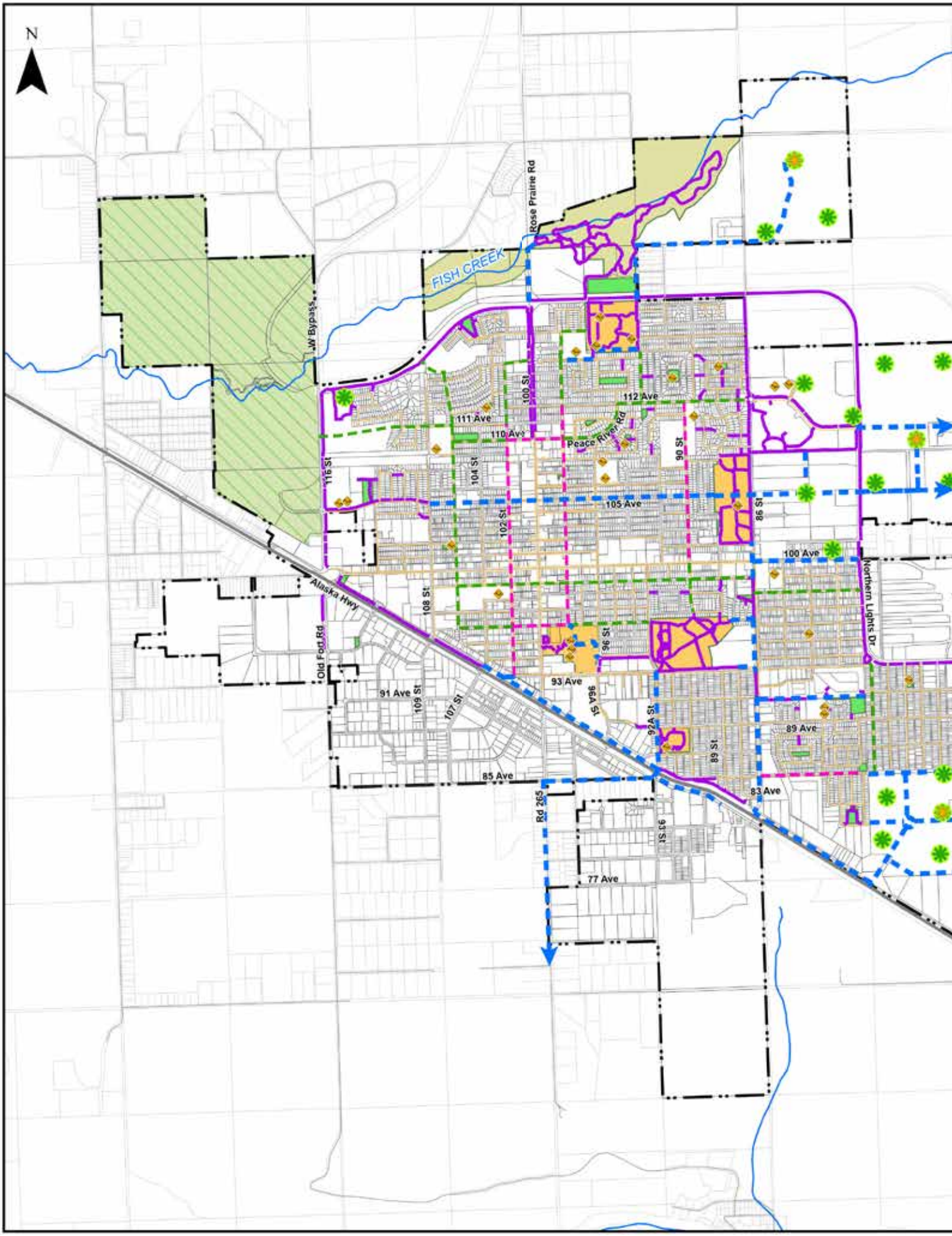
- Municipal Boundary
- RailwayBuffer (Recommended Building Setback in Proximity to Railway Operations)
- Railway
- Future Dedicated Bicycle Route
- Future Shared Travel Lane

Future Road

- Future Arterial
- Future Major Collector
- Future Minor Collector
- Future Local

Existing Road

- Highway
- Highway Ramp
- Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Downtown Major Collector
- Downtown Minor Collector
- Local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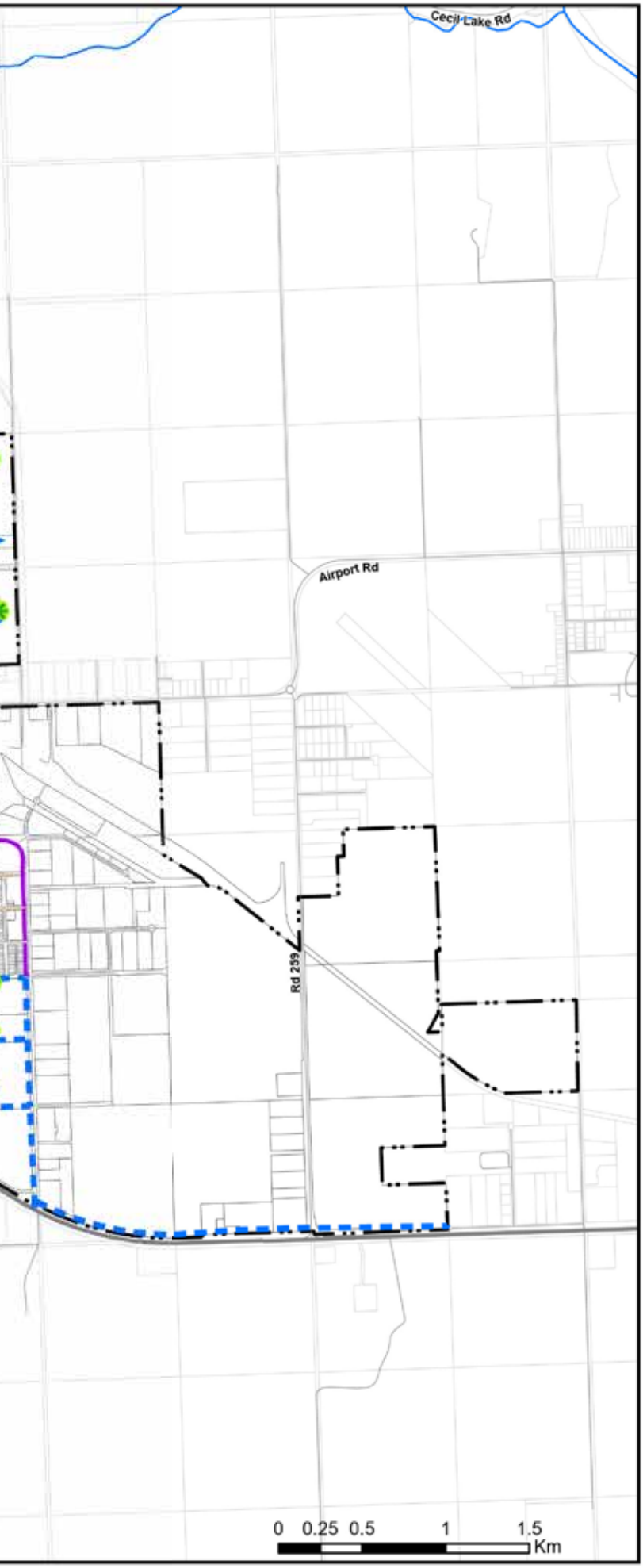


FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025 **Parks, Natural Areas, and Trails Network**

Legend

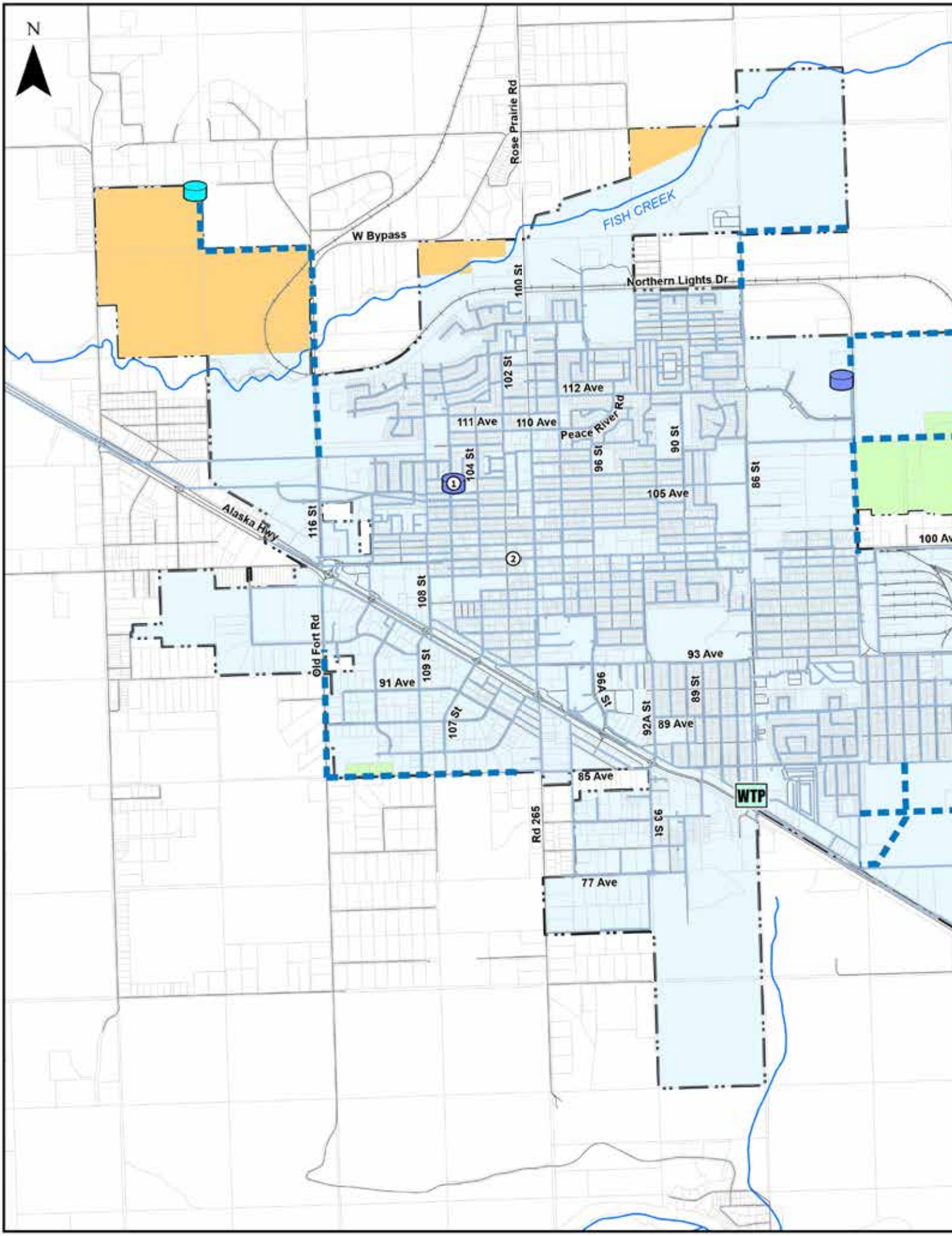
- Playgrounds
- Sidewalks
- Road
- Alaska Highway
- Watercourse
- Parcels
- Municipal Boundary

Future Parks, Natural Areas, and Trails

- Proposed Community Park
- Proposed Neighbourhood Park
- Future Dedicated Bicycle Route
- Future Shared Travel Lane
- Proposed Trail
- Parks and Trails (To be established at time of subdivision)

Existing Parks, Natural Areas, and Trails

- Community Parks
- Neighbourhood Parks
- Natural Areas
- Trails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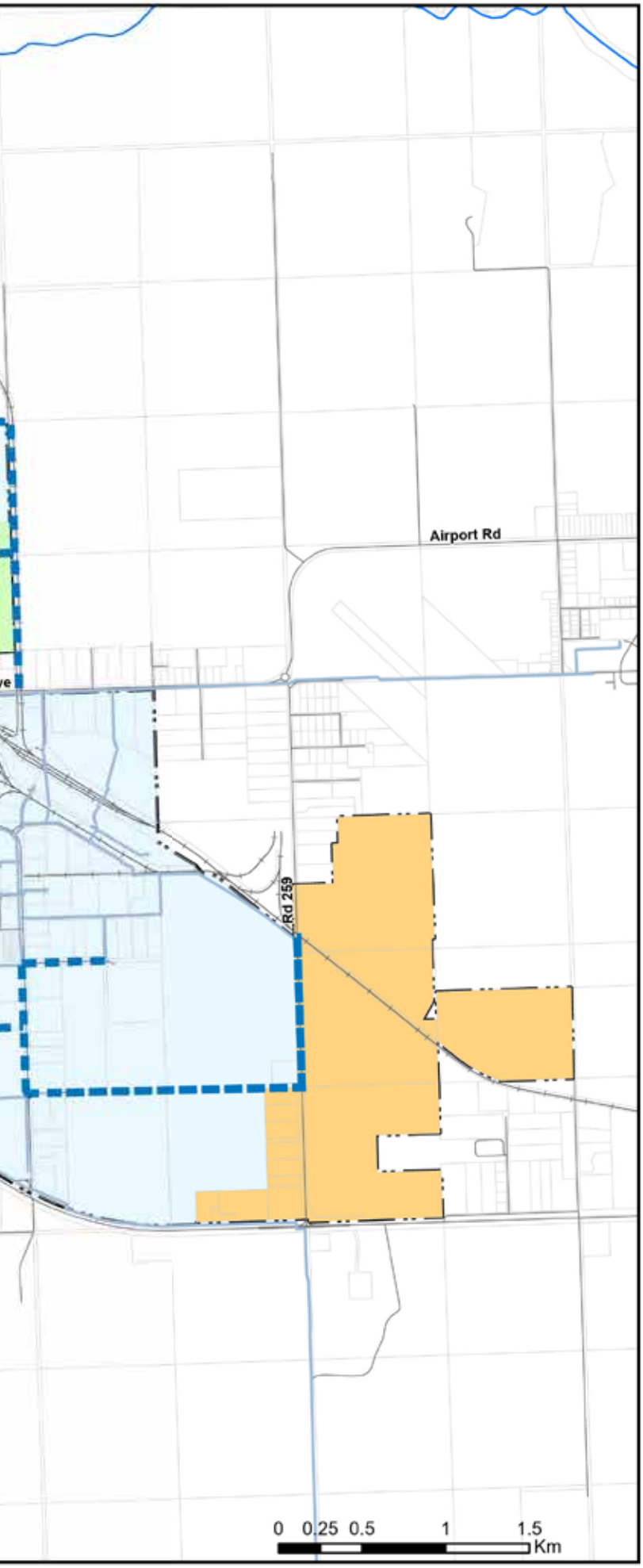


FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025
Water Servicing

Legend

Municipal Boundary

Parcel Lot

Road

Watercourse

Proposed Major Infrastructure Improvement

① 106 St Replacement and Expansion of Water Reservoir

② 100 Ave Water Main Upgrade - 96 ST - 104 ST

Future Water System Infrastructure

Future Water Main

Future Reservoir

WTP **Existing Water Treatment Plant (Upgrades will be required)**

Existing Water System Infrastructure

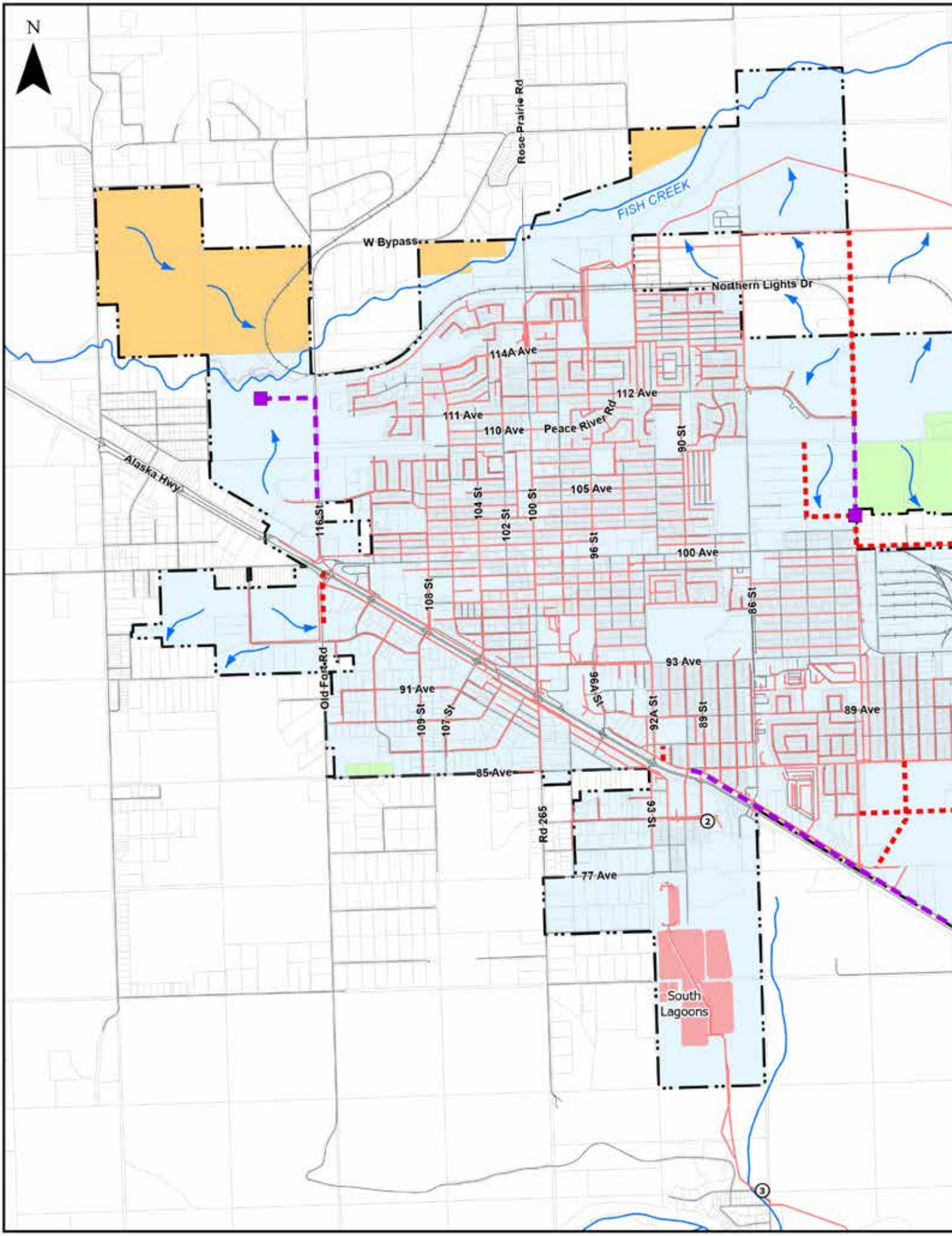
Existing Water Main Lines

Existing Reservoir

Water Servicing Area

Alternative Water Servicing Area

Alternative Water Servicing Area for Building Permit Only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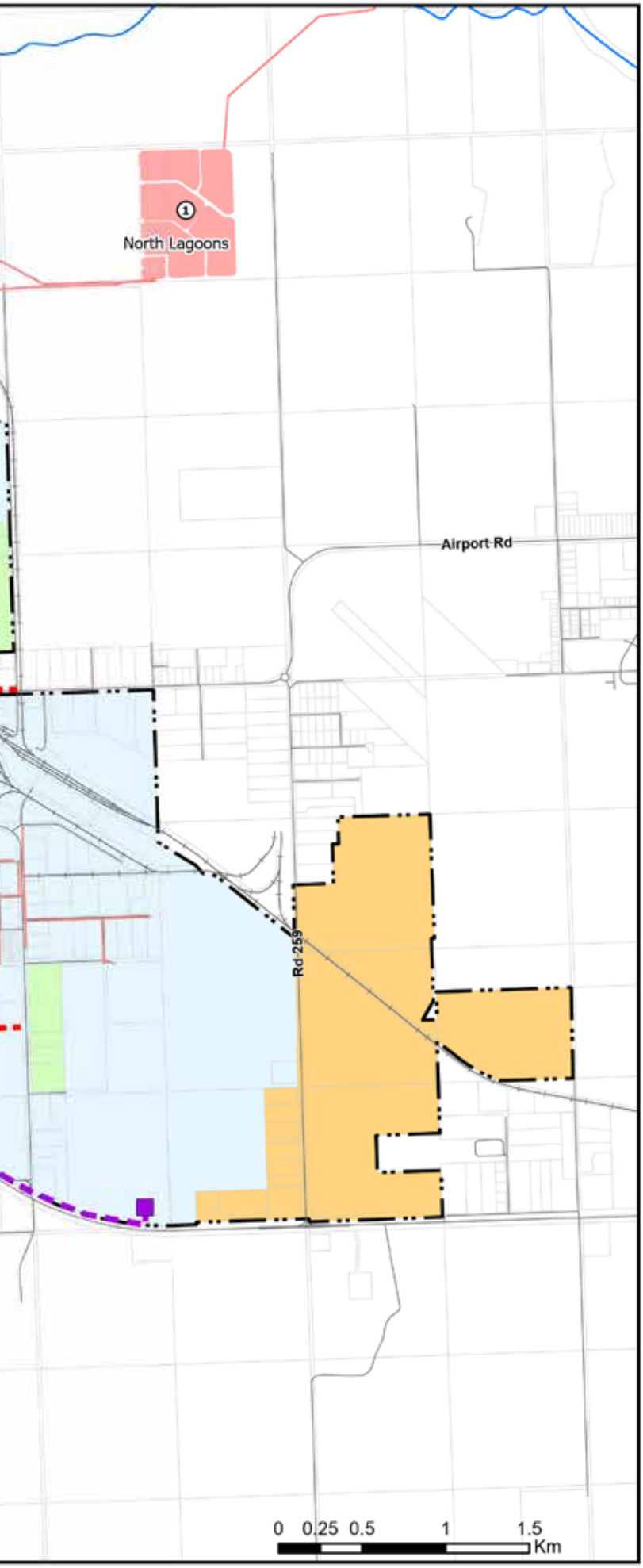
South Lagoons



FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025
Sanitary Sewer Servicing

Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Lot
- Road
- Watercourse

Proposed Major Infrastructure Improvement

- 1 North Lagoons Upgrade
- 2 Resource Recovery Centre Upgrades
- 3 Sewer Outfall Infrastructure Improvements

Future Sanitary Sewer System Infrastructure

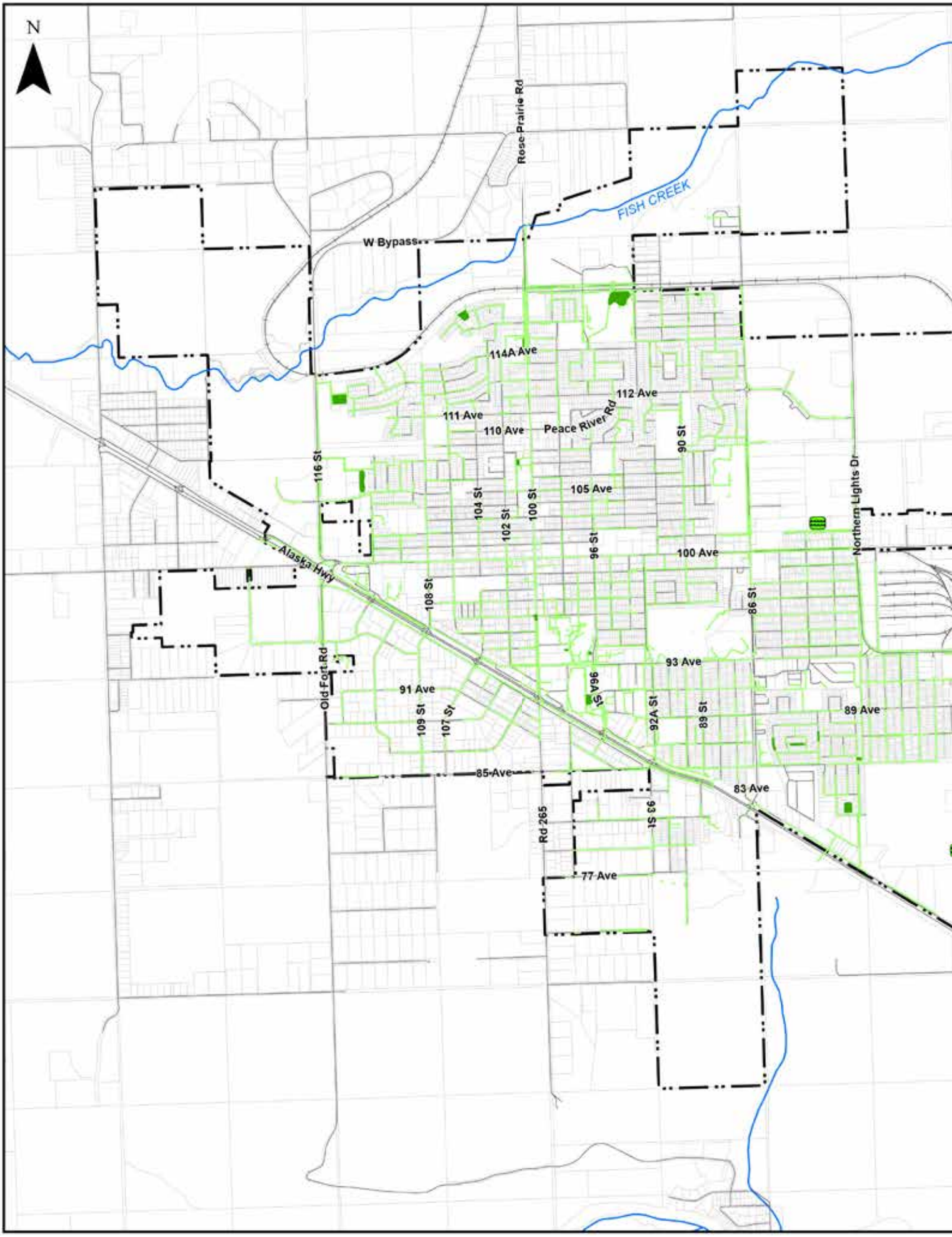
- Future Gravity Main
- Future Pressure Main
- Future Lift Station
- Gravity Flow Direction / Future Gravity Flow Direction (Existing Topography)

Existing Sanitary Sewer System Infrastructure

- Existing Sanitary Main
- Sewer Lagoons

Servicing Areas

- Servicing Area
- Alternative Servicing Area
- Alternative Servicing Area for Building Permit Only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FORT ST. JOHN
The Energetic City

City of Fort St. John Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2616, 2025
Stormwater Servicing

Legend

- Railway
- Road Class
- Watercourse
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Lot
- Road
- Existing Stormwater Management Infrastructure
- Existing Stormwater System Infrastructure
- Future Stormwater Pond

APPENDIX 2 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

The Station Neighbourhood Plan

Adopted by Council July 10, 2023 under Official Community Plan Bylaw 2388, 2017

1. APPLICATION AREA & SITE CONTEXT

The Station is a mixed-use community to be developed in the southeastern portion of the City of Fort St. John, British Columbia. The proposed development concept aligns with the vision and goals for efficient growth management in the City and provides policy framework requirements to facilitate the proposed development. It includes details on land uses, parks, transportation and mobility, infrastructure and servicing, and implementation considerations.

The Station is located in the southeast portion of the City as shown in *Figure 1: Amendment Area Location – The Station*. The development parcel is bound by:

- The future extension of 85 Avenue to the north;
- Northern Lights Drive to the east;
- Existing Highway Commercial uses to the south;
- The Alaska Highway (Highway 97) to the south-west; and
- Existing residential uses to the west.

Figure 1: Amendment Area Location – The Station

2. NEIGHBOURHOOD VISION

The purpose of The Station Neighbourhood Plan is to create a mix of uses and amenities that will benefit the community of Fort St. John both in the short- and long-term. The variety of proposed uses include a mix of residential housing types with supporting commercial uses. The land use design proposes increasing density approaching the highway commercial area to the southwest and creates connectivity and access to services. A detailed concept is provided in *Figure 2: Concept Plan* with a detailed breakdown of the land uses, densities, and projected population in the table below.

		Density	Area		Estimated			
Type	**Typography**	per ha	Sq.M.	Ha	**Dwellings**	**Population***		
Highway Commercial		n/a	59,723	5.97				Phase 1
Medium Density Residential	Apartment, duplex, 3plex, 4plex, and townhome	55	54,591	5.46	300	721	4,632	Phase 2
High Density Residential	Townhomes, apartments	155	105,134	10.51	1630	3,911		
Medium Density Residential	Apartment, duplex, 3plex, 4plex, and townhome	55	103,405	10.34	569	1,365		
Low Density Residential	Single family, duplexes	38	136,492	13.65	519	1,245		
Neighbourhood Commercial		n/a	5,942	0.59				
Institutional (2.43 ha)			24,281	2.43				
Park (5% of NCP Area: 3.02 ha)			30,171	3.02				
Public Utility (Storm Pond)			47,836	4.78				
Roads (est. %)			35,843	3.58				
		Totals:	603,418	60.34	**3,017**	**7,241**		

Summary by Typography	**Ha**	**Percent**	**Dwellings**	**Population**
Highway Commercial	5.97	9.9%		
Neighbourhood Commercial	0.59	1.0%		
High Density Residential	10.51	17.4%	1,630	3,911
Medium Density Residential	15.80	26.2%	869	2,086
Low Density Residential	13.65	22.6%	519	1,245
Institutional (2.43 ha)	2.43	4.0%		
Park (5% of NCP Area: 3.02 ha)	3.02	5.0%		
Public Utility (Storm Pond)	4.78	7.9%		
Roads (est. %)	3.58	5.9%		
Totals	60.34	100%	**3,017**	**7,241**

Summary by Use	**Ha**	**Percent**
Commercial	6.57	9.9%
Residential	42.98	71.2%
Other	10.80	17.9%

Residential Density	**Est. Units**	**Units/Ha**
Est. Dwellings	3,000	70

* *Population estimates are based on 2.4 residents per dwelling average per 2021 Census*

Table 1: Land Use Breakdown

The proposed land use mix will improve the City's housing variety by providing a mix of residential housing types. These include:

- Traditional single detached and semi-detached housing adjacent to similar density existing neighbourhoods to the north;
- Townhouses/row-houses; and
- Multi-family developments.

A five-to-six acre (2.02-2.43 ha) area of Institutional use is proposed centrally within The Station and adjacent to a park area to provide an Elementary School for approximately 400 students.

Further, a variety of commercial uses are anticipated including:

- A Highway Commercial area, located in the southwest portion of the Neighbourhood Plan, adjacent to the Alaska Highway providing ease of access and synergistic proximity to higher density residential areas; and
- Neighbourhood Commercial areas located within lower density residential areas to service both the existing residential area to the north and the new residential areas within The Station. These commercial areas are located on Collector Roads to facilitate multi-modal access through the mobility-network

Supporting infrastructure for roads, water, sewer and stormwater will extend existing City services at the cost of the developer, in a phased approach.

The completion of a new Alaska Highway intersection is required, connecting the southwest commercial area to the remainder of the development, to provide access from the Highway to the residential areas to the north.

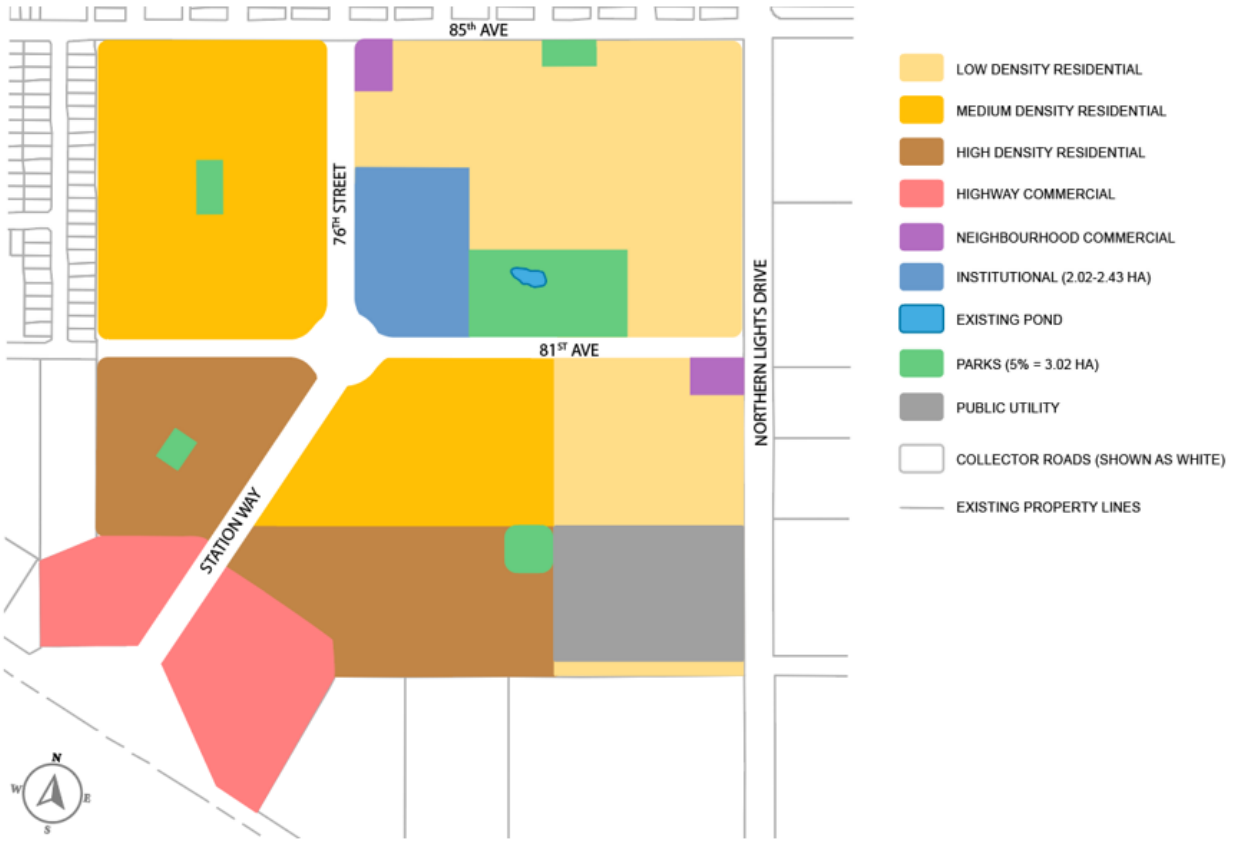


Figure 2: Concept Plan

This range of land uses creates a balanced community, a variety of housing options, and additional flexibility to develop the site to meet the needs of a growing city

- Site specific planning considerations such as building typology, percentage of parcel, density, average lot dimensions, lot and block layout will be in line with this Neighbourhood Plan and will be consistent with Zoning Bylaw No. 2470, 2019. Future design stages will detail necessary considerations including landscaping, parking, garbage collection, and utility requirements.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH HOUSING NEEDS AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The potential population provided by The Station is estimated by applying the 2.4 average occupancy rate from the 2021 Census to the estimated units for each residential land use area in the proposed development based on maximum densities per hectare for each proposed area.

Summary of Population by Residential Land Use Area
(Summarized from Table 1: Land Use Breakdown)

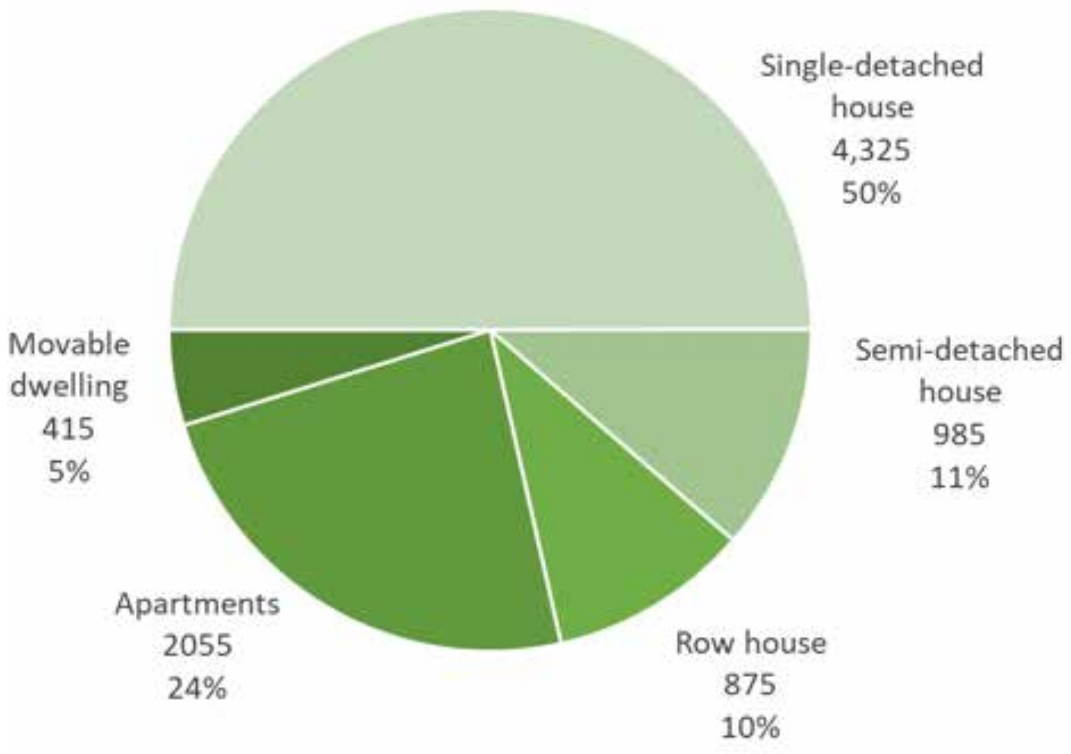
Proposed Zoning	Area in Ha	Density per Ha	Est. Units	Est. Pop. @ 2.4 occupancy
High Density	10.51	155	1,630	3,911
Medium Density	15.80	55	869	2,086
Low Density	13.65	38	519	1,245
Total Estimated Units & Population:			**3,017**	**7,241**

The proposed residential land-use designations within The Station will host a higher total average density than the 23 units per hectare noted as the average for the City as noted in the Fort St. John 50 Year Growth Study (December 2015).

In the 2021 Fort St. John Statistics Canada Census (summarized in the below noted chart, the majority of the housing in Fort St. John was noted to be single detached and semi-detached dwellings representing 61% of total housing stock.

The Station Neighbourhood Plan will improve housing variety in the market by providing a significant amount of high density housing stock with a broad range of housing variety.

Fort St. John 2021 Census Data - Housing by Type



Data source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021

4. GENERAL NEIGHBOURHOOD OBJECTIVES

It is proposed that The Station Neighbourhood Plan allows for the creation of a new neighbourhood that supports the values and growth needs of the city. This neighbourhood plan was created with the following objectives in mind:

- Create a comprehensively planned neighbourhood, focused on walkability and access to surrounding residential and commercial areas and the new intersection on the southwest corner of the parcel.
- Develop a neighbourhood with strong design standards, offering a range of housing opportunities, facilities, and services that will foster a high quality of life, in keeping with the residential, commercial, environmental, and sustainability policies of the *Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017*.
- Develop a Neighbourhood with a mix of residential densities and unit types that will serve a broad spectrum of Fort St. John's projected housing needs including increasing housing variety for the city.
- Provide a range of neighbourhood commercial and service uses to support the day to day needs of local residents and create local employment opportunities.

Policies:

- Development within The Station development will generally align with the uses areas and boundaries shown in *Figure 2: Concept Plan*.
- All development will integrate winter design, solar orientation, pedestrian-scale elements, and snow storage in future design considerations.
- Buildings, site furnishings and pedestrian connections will be accessible and accommodating to a variety of demographics including seniors.

5. RESIDENTIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

General Residential

The Station Neighbourhood Plan includes a variety of residential land uses to offer diversity of housing choices and foster inclusive communities to provide the broadest mix of housing options.

The residential areas will: be flexible to accommodate both short- and longer-term needs of the City; respond to changing demographic needs over time; and accommodate changing market conditions.

Residential areas will be comprehensively planned with an integrated mobility network of roads and path connections to existing networks. Building orientation and parking will consider winter design and solar orientation to maximize sun exposure and natural snow melt.

The Station seeks to meet many of the goals and objectives set out in the Housing Strategy Report, including: to maintain a mix of tenures, price points and housing types to foster development while providing attainable and inclusive housing options for citizens; to diversify the housing stock in Fort St. John; and to foster densification within the existing boundary while diversifying the housing stock.

Objective: Encourage and support more diverse housing options that respond to needs as they change over time, including accessibility and inclusive housing.

Policies

- Minimum lot sizes, setbacks, parking and landscaping will align with *Zoning Bylaw, Bylaw No. 2470, 2019*.
- Number of overall units will generally align with *Table 1: Land Use Breakdown*.
- Residential areas will seek to integrate multi-modal trails into the design to accommodate pedestrian and green space access for residents.

Low Density Residential

Low density residential development includes single detached housing and duplexes. This form of development will be in the northern and eastern area of The Station development to meet the Housing Strategy policy 'the development of new housing that integrates with the character of existing neighbourhoods', and to place low density residential development in proximity to the existing Low Density Residential land uses to the north.

Policies:

- Density will not exceed 38 units per hectare.

Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential areas will include common amenity areas and greenspace to enhance livability, and pedestrian connections linking to the broader mobility network identified in *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails, and Park Network*

Policies:

- Areas for snow storage will be located in areas with maximum sun exposure identified and will be integrated with stormwater management.
- Medium density areas will incorporate Multiple-Family Development Permit Area requirements.
- Density will not exceed 55 units per hectare.

High Density Residential

High Density Residential areas will include a mix of multi-family apartments and seniors housing where individual dwelling units within these buildings will vary in size. These sites will be larger, and each will be comprehensively designed to incorporate a variety of living needs and demographics.

The High Density Residential areas as indicated on *Figure 2: Concept Plan* are located in proximity to the Highway Commercial area to facilitate a supporting population for the commercial businesses and employment opportunities for residents of the area. The High Density Residential area creates a built-form transition for the Highway Commercial area transition to Medium Density Residential areas to the north and to Low Density Residential area to the east.

Policies:

- Number of overall units will generally align with Table 1: Land Use Breakdown.
- High-Density Residential development sites will provide common amenity space in the form of greenspace or parks. This common amenity space will be part of the strata development.
- Areas for snow storage will be located in areas with maximum sun exposure identified and will be integrated with stormwater management.
- High-density residential areas will incorporate Multiple-Family Development Permit Area requirements.
- Underground parking will be considered to facilitate a more efficient use of the land.
- Density will not exceed 155 units per hectare.

6. COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Highway Commercial

Highway Commercial uses will be moderate-to-large scale, ground-oriented and connected to the community with a strong pedestrian network. Parking areas will be shared for the whole site with landscaping and other measures to break up the parking and maintain a pedestrian-scale focus to the site.

The commercial uses in this plan area will be oriented to the extension of 76 Street with sufficient parking to accommodate the travelling public. This area will include land use and transportation linkages and transitioning to adjacent High Density Residential areas to enhance connectivity for daily needs of local residents. Multi-modal linkages will be accommodated to encourage both local and broader community usability.

7. COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Policies:

- Commercial uses will be moderate to large in scale and connected by a strong pedestrian mobility network augmented with a mix of hard and soft landscaping.
- Highway Commercial areas will incorporate requirements for Commercial Development Permit Area and Major Corridor Development Permit Area.
- Elements that enhance the winter experience will be incorporated in the design of commercial areas.
- Public seating and pedestrian-scale lighting will be incorporated in the future design of commercial areas.
- Design and layout of the commercial area integrate the principles of the Winter City Design Guidelines to facilitate snow removal and storage, pedestrian lighting and street crossings, landmark features, and parking lot design.

Neighbourhood Commercial

Neighbourhood Commercial areas will be small-scale, ground oriented and connected to the community pedestrian network. Parking areas will be shared for the whole site with landscaping and other measures to break up the parking and maintain a pedestrian-scale focus to the site.

The commercial uses in these smaller areas will be oriented to the Collector Roads with sufficient parking to accommodate the travelling public. The sites will include land use and transportation linkages and transitioning to adjacent residential areas to promote walkability and services access. Multi-modal linkages will be accommodated to encourage both local and broader community usability.

Policies:

- Commercial uses will be small and local in scale and connected by a strong pedestrian mobility network augmented with a mix of hard and soft landscaping.
- Public seating and pedestrian-scale lighting will be incorporated in the design of commercial areas.
- Neighbourhood Commercial areas will incorporate General Commercial Development Permit Area requirements.
- Design and layout of the Neighbourhood Commercial areas will integrate the principles of the Winter City Design Guidelines to facilitate snow removal and storage, pedestrian lighting and street crossings, landmark features, and parking lot design.

7. PARKS AND TRAILS

The Station development will incorporate a multi-modal trail system and in-community park spaces to meet location and objective criteria of the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2388, 2017 including location of parks within 400m radius or 5-minute walk of all dwelling units per radius indication lines shown on *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails & Park Network*. These spaces will act as gathering spaces and as a pedestrian connector enhancing the overall mobility structure.

The Station development proposes the required 5% of parkland dedication to be connected with multi-modal trails and located throughout the community (3.02 ha). The central park area is large enough for a variety of recreational pursuits and smaller neighbourhood parks are to be provided per the *Zoning Bylaw No. 2470, 2019* (minimum neighbourhood park size of 0.8 ha). Central locations make these parks easily accessible by the whole community and pathway connections facilitate access by existing residents outside as well as new residents within this Neighbourhood Plan.

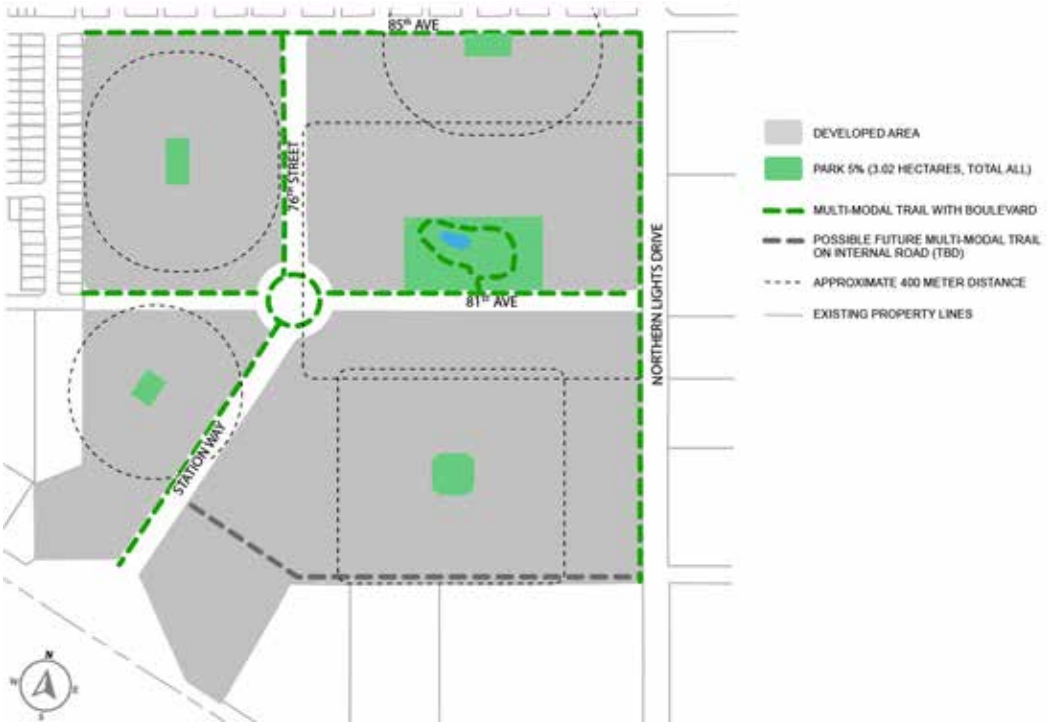


Figure 3: Mobility, Trails and Park Network

Policies:

- Design and layout of parks and trails will integrate the principles of the Winter City Design Guidelines to facilitate pedestrian lighting, wind shelter, solar access, and vegetation selections.
- Public seating and pedestrian-scale lighting will be incorporated in the design of parks and open spaces.
- Parks and greenspace will be integrated with the overall mobility network.

8. ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

The mixed-use community of The Station will be connected by a variety of mobility options including roadways, pathways, and sidewalks, as shown on *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails & Park Network*. This network is a modified grid which balances access and movement for a variety of transportation modes such as vehicular, cycling, and walking.

The Station proposes the extension of two existing roads as Collector Roads being 76 Street via Station Way and 81 Avenue to provide a variety of access points to the existing road network thereby integrating The Station development with the surrounding areas and city at large as shown on *Figure 4: Collector Roads and Connections*.

The location of proposed sidewalks and multi-modal pathways along roads are identified in green on *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails and Park Network*. The cross-sections of these roads are to be designed to meet *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* requirements.

Hard and soft landscaping will be integrated with road design based on stormwater needs, safety and sightlines, as well as walkability principles.

For larger sites, the internal road network will extend and enhance the multi-modal mobile.

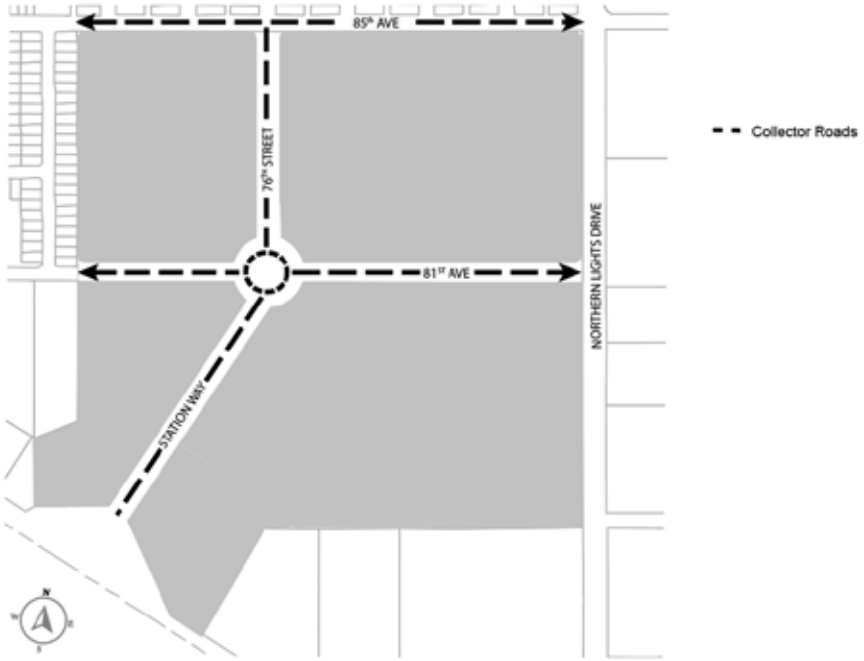


Figure 4: Collector Roads and Connections

Policies:

- Roads, sidewalks and pathways will generally follow the location and alignment with the mobility network in *Figure 3: Mobility, Trails and Park Network* and *Figure 4: Collector Roads and Connections*
- Collector Roads will be designed as per *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* requirements.

9. INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

Infrastructure to support The Station community will be achieved by extending existing services in the city that are located at several locations adjacent to the site. New infrastructure will connect to existing services as follows:

Water - Connecting to existing services to the north on 85 Avenue, 79 Street to the west, and Stampede Avenue to the south and implementing closed loops throughout as noted on *Figure 5: Water Servicing Map*.

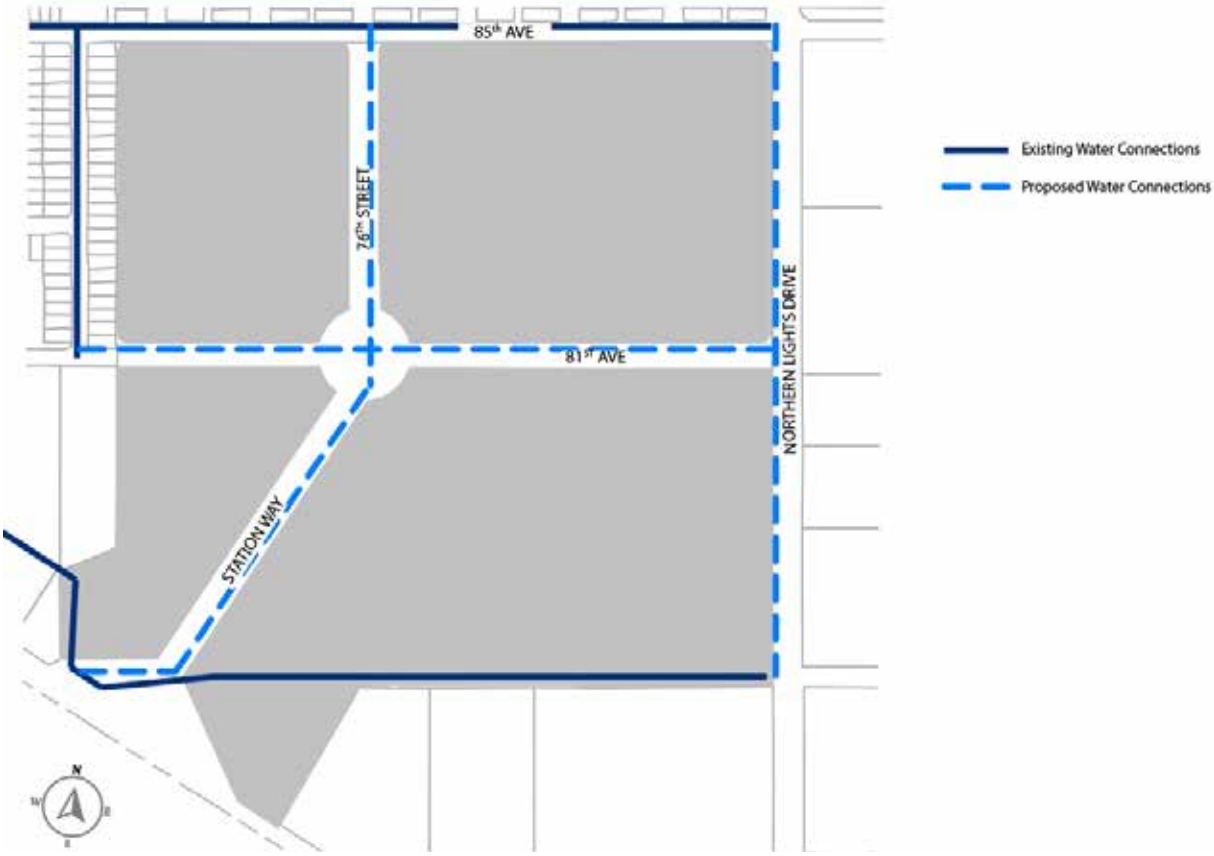


Figure 5: Water Servicing Map

Sanitary - Connecting to existing services to the north on 85 Avenue, and to 79 Street to the west. Proposed collection mains are shown below on *Figure 6: Sanitary Servicing Map*.

Figure 6: Sanitary Servicing Map

Storm Water - Connecting to existing services on 79 Street to the west, 85 Avenue to the north, providing a storm management facility, and storm water pond as noted on *Figure 7: Storm Sewer Servicing Map*. The site generally slopes from the northwest to the southeast and the proposed storm water management system is designed to utilize the typography.

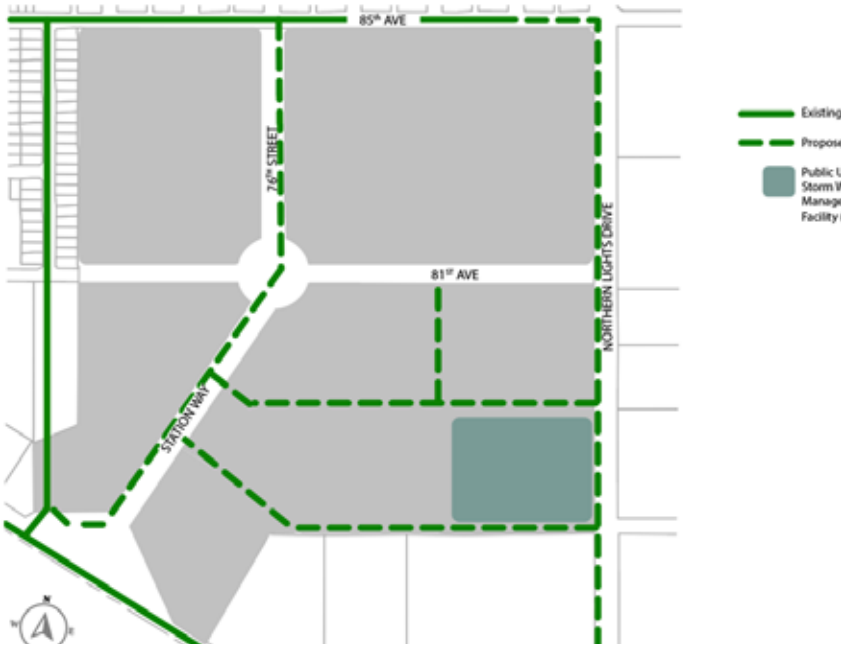


Figure 7: Storm Sewer Servicing Map

The exact alignment, size, and location of services will be determined at future subdivision stages to be completed as per *Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw* requirements.

Other services, such as garbage collection, emergency services, utility vehicle access, and snow removal will be considered at appropriate future subdivision and/or design stages.

Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan

Adopted by Council October 9, 2018 under Official Community Plan Bylaw 2388, 2017. Minor revisions have been made to this neighbourhood plan as part of the Official Community Plan update.

1. APPLICATION AREA & SITE CONTEXT

The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan Area is located in northwest Fort St. John (see Figure 1) within the jurisdiction of the City of Fort St. John. It is bound by Fish Creek to the north, 116 Street (West Bypass Road) to the east, Alaska Highway to the south, and Blackberry Street to the west. The western and a portion of the southern limits of the Amendment Area share a jurisdictional boundary with the Peace River Regional District (PRRD).

The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan Area consists of two parcels of land, totaling approximately 88.3 hectares (218.2 acres) in area. The existing land use is for agricultural activities, primarily crop cultivation.

Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan Location

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

The land is generally flat and gently sloping centrally toward the Fish Creek Coulee. Currently it is actively farmed, with the exception of the wide, vegetated valley area along Fish Creek. South of Fish Creek, the site generally drains south to north towards the coulee. There is also a drainage ditch running along 116 Street (West Bypass Road) that drains from south to north.

There are raised railway tracks at the northeast portion of the plan area that enter the site from the east side to cross Fish Creek. There is one known buried pipeline owned by NorthRiver Midstream Operations GP Inc. that parallels the west side of 116 Street. This pipeline is no longer in use and was partially removed during Parkwood Southlands Stage 1 Phase 1 construction.

3. NEIGHBOURHOOD VISION

Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood represents the opportunity to shift the traditional patterns of how cities are developed.

Historically neighbourhoods that were focused around a town square and offered a mix of services, met many of the daily needs of the residents. By having a wide variety of residential and retail opportunities within these neighbourhoods, people tended to walk more and community was created through intentional connections and chance meetings throughout the day; residents knew their neighbours, looked out for them, and supported each other.

These types of neighbourhoods show us that a wide range of housing types and densities can, and must, include a variety of housing options, such as for singles, new families, empty nesters, and the elderly, all supporting each other in close proximity.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD PRINCIPLES

Council acknowledges it will be intentional in the creation of new neighbourhoods by incorporating the following time tested community building fundamentals:

- Putting the health and wellbeing of residents and neighbours front and centre by creating a walkable, cycling friendly, socially connected neighbourhood where citizens can gather, find fresh food, places to play and create, and can easily access a commercial village centre and the broader city amenities.
- Creating a versatile mix of land-uses and densities that are economically viable and enduring in the local economy.
- Encouraging unique architectural form and character that respects the public realm, view corridors, and existing single-family residential form and character.
- Enhancing the protection and preservation of the site's natural features.
- Supporting an active residential population through accessible pedestrian-oriented streets, connective trail networks that celebrate biodiversity, and high-quality parks that offer natural places of respite and calm.
- Demonstrating the importance of sustainability through building design, public realm design, transportation and mobility and servicing choices.
- Designing a neighbourhood that will adapt throughout all four seasons (such as, winter city design).
- Valuing a community that welcomes and supports a range of socio-economic backgrounds, ages, and cultures through a diversity of housing, activities and commercial amenities.
- Providing a wide variety of housing opportunities, tenures, and sizes, to ensure that a wide range of options are available to serve local demand.
- Planning for community facilities that are available to all Fort St. John residents.

- Promoting architecture and landscapes that offers inspiring and sustainable places for those who live, work, and visit.
- Crafting identifiable neighbourhood architectural character through the design of homes and commercial buildings that are reflective of our neighbourhood values.

5. OBJECTIVES

The objectives used to create this Neighbourhood Plan are:

- Create a complete and comprehensively planned neighbourhood, focused on the natural areas and open space of the Fish Creek Coulee.
- Develop a neighbourhood with exceptional design standards, offering a range of housing opportunities, facilities and services that will foster a high quality of life, in keeping with the residential, commercial, environmental and sustainability policies of this plan.
- Develop a neighbourhood with a mix of residential densities and unit types that will serve a broad spectrum of Fort St. John's projected housing needs.
- Provide a range of neighbourhood commercial and service uses to support the day to day needs of local residents, and create local employment opportunities.

6. CONTEXT FOR LAND USE AREAS

The Plan Area integrates parks, open space, clustered residential neighbourhoods, and dynamic mixed-use residential/commercial areas.

The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan provides a guiding framework for the future development of this area, and is further defined by the Comprehensive Development Parkwood Southlands CD-01 Zone in the Zoning Bylaw. As shown in Table 1, Parkwood Southlands is comprised of four sub-zones, with an overall residential unit range of 1,600 – 3,400 units, or 18.1 – 38.5 residential units per hectare (ha). To view the development standards for this neighbourhood plan, please refer to the Zoning Bylaw.

SUB-Zone	MINIMUM RESIDENTIAL UNITS	MAXIMUM RESIDENTIAL UNITS	TOTAL AREA (HA)
A	1400	2,350	+/- 34.27
B	0	375	+/- 14.04
C	200	675	+/- 20.53
D	0	0	+/- 19.44
Total	1600	3,400	+/- 88.28

Table 1: Comprehensive Development Parkwood Southlands CD-01 Zone Residential Units

7. PARKS AND TRAILS

Parks and open space should provide important neighbourhood gathering areas and strengthen the health and well-being of a connected neighbourhood. The concept for the neighbourhood green spaces and parks places a high value on the integration of natural areas, trails, pathways and both passive and active parks in the overall neighbourhood plan. Approximately 20.5 ha (50.6 ac) of land is allocated for park and natural areas. The trail system, connecting neighbourhoods to natural areas and a “green corridor” consisting of a multi-use pathway and associated landscapes will be established at the time of subdivision.

8. PUBLIC PARKS

The Parkwood Southlands Neighbourhood Plan Master Development Agreement (MDA), a comprehensive agreement between the developer and City of Fort St. John for multi-phase development of Parkwood Southlands, identifies four areas for public park dedication and community greenways. The parkland dedication and greenways will be established at the time of subdivision.

9. SERVICING, INFRASTRUCTURE & ROADS

The plan foresees a new connection to the Alaska Highway in order to alleviate traffic congestion from the 100 Avenue and Alaska Highway intersection.

The entire Parkwood site is naturally divided into north and south (Southlands) areas by Fish Creek. Water, sanitary, and drainage services will generally be divided into north and south (Southlands) servicing areas.

Key pieces of infrastructure such as a new reservoir and pump station will need to be located in the north portion due to topography and would serve the entire site. Similarly, a sanitary lift station for the north side of Fish Creek is needed to take advantage of the natural topography.

Storm water from both the north and south (Southlands) areas will naturally drain to the creek.

Figure 2: Water Supply System

Figure 3: Sanitary Sewer System

10. WINTER CITY DESIGN

Winter design strategies will be utilized through the design development stages of the community. These strategies will consider the following:

- Layout and street patterns to maximize windbreaks and sun exposure
- Plant material selection that is specifically appropriate to this community and provides year round interest
- Providing year-round pedestrian comfort and adequate space for snow storage
- Encouraging a colour pallet for the community that enlivens the winter landscape
- Using lighting creatively to create visual interest in commercial, park and walkway areas
- Create outdoor spaces, especially in the commercial and mixed use area that can be weather protected
- Providing year round, but especially winter access to trails and the coulee to encourage cross country skiing and other winter sports and active living in the neighbourhood
- Providing special infrastructure needed for a winter city, including consideration of spaces to park and store vehicles and sports equipment

Note: *The above wording has been copied directly and/or paraphrased from the Parkwood Neighbourhood Plan Official Community Plan Application: Technical Report REV 1, March 2017, and Parkwood Neighbourhood Southlands Plan Official Community Plan Amendment Revision 1 – December 2017.*

we ♥ the outdoors, we ♥ our city trails, we ♥ affordable living, we ♥ volunteers, we ♥ our dog park, we ♥ affordable housing, we ♥ our size, we ♥ a convenient lifestyle, we ♥ short commutes, we ♥ camping, we ♥ festival plaza, we ♥ family, 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.