

Town of Fort Frances

Official Plan

Council Adopted: January 13, 2025



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Prepared for:

Town of Fort Frances

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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

BY-LAW 04-25

Being a by-law to Adopt an Official Plan for the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances and to repeal By-Law No. 63-11.

WHEREAS the Town of Fort Frances has engaged upon public consultation and has held the required statutory public open house and public meeting to enable the adoption of an Official Plan;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Fort Frances has submitted the draft plan to the Province for review and has responded to the various Ministries' comments;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances deems it expedient to adopt the Official Plan and submit to the Minister for approval;

NOW THEREFORE the Council for the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances, in accordance with Section 17(23) of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990, as amended, **HEREBY ENACTS** as follows:

1. **THAT** the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan December 2024, consisting of the attached text and Schedules (maps), is hereby adopted.
2. **THAT** the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to make application to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the approval of the Town of Fort Frances (December 2024).
3. **THAT** the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan (December 2024) hereby supersedes the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan, enacted on November 14, 2011, and approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on December 3, 2012.
4. **THAT** the Town of Fort Frances By-Law No. 63/11 is hereby repealed.
5. **THAT** this By-Law shall take effect and come into force upon third and final reading thereof, and upon final approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

READ THREE TIMES and finally passed in open Council this 10th day of January 2025.

This by-law shall come into force and take effect on the final passing thereof.

PASSED and **ENACTED** this 10th day of January 2025.


C. Greig, Interim Clerk


A. Hallikas, Mayor

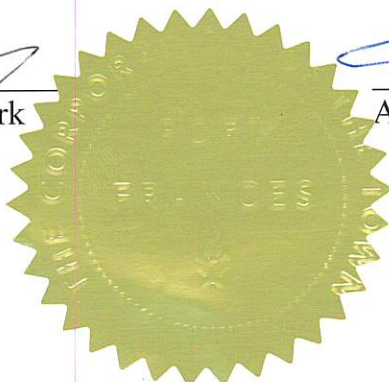


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Territorial Acknowledgment

We respect and truly acknowledge that we are on treaty three territory, the traditional land of the Anishinaabe and the Métis Nation. We give gratitude and honour to the Ancestors, Elders and all Anishinaabe and Métis People for sharing their resources and knowledge.



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Official Plan

The Town of Fort Frances Official Plan establishes a vision, guiding principles, and policies to guide future growth and development and land use decisions in the Town for the next 25 years, to the year 2046. It is the intent that the Official Plan helps the community achieve its long-term vision by implementing a range of local and provincial policies, plans, and strategies, as well as guide physical and economic growth while protecting social, cultural, and natural heritage resources. The Official Plan sets out community-related goals, encourage private-sector investment, to enable the Town to access funding from various levels of government and to help guide decision-making for long-range capital investments.

While this Official Plan provides a 25-year vision for the Town, it is intended that it be a living document and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act. The Plan may be amended to reflect legislative changes, changing local circumstances, and new priorities as they emerge. The policies of the Official Plan are implemented in the Town's Zoning By-law, which will be updated in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act to ensure that it is in conformity with the policies of this Plan.

1.2 Community Context

The Town of Fort Frances is located in the Rainy River District in Northwestern Ontario, between the Ontario-Manitoba border and Thunder Bay. Situated on the northern shoreline of the Rainy River, the Town is connected to the City of International Falls, Minnesota, USA by the Fort Frances-International Falls International Bridge, marking it as the main gateway to Northwestern Ontario from the United States. Ontario Highways 11 and 71 run through the Town and provide connections to Devlin, Emo, Rainy River, Atikokan, and Thunder Bay, as well as nearby Indigenous communities including Couchiching First Nation and Mitaanijigamiing First Nation.

The population centre of Fort Frances has a land area of approximately 7.29 km² (729 hectares) and is the fourth largest municipality in the region after Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Dryden (2021 Census). Fort Frances and the Rainy River District are characterized by a beautiful natural environment, in particular Rainy River, Rainy Lake and the Rainy Lake Islands, which are comprised of approximately 2,200 islands; about 2,000 of which are located on the Canadian side of the border.

The Town has largely developed along the northern shoreline of Rainy River and east of Oakwood Road. Land use in Fort Frances is primarily residential, with existing commercial, recreational, and institutional uses located throughout the Town. There are also existing and former industrial and light industrial lands dispersed throughout the built-up area, including the former Fort Frances Paper and Pulp Mill (previously operated by Resolute Forest Products), former Shevlin Woodyard, and the Canadian National Railway Company Train Yard.

With the closure of the Mill in recent years, the Town is poised to attract new development and industry, as a significant contributor to the future growth of the municipality. As the Town of Fort Frances continues to develop, leveraging the Town's natural and recreational assets will be pivotal to progress economic vitality and community development.

1.3 Planning Context for the Official Plan

Under the Planning Act, the Town of Fort Frances is required to have an Official Plan, which is to be reviewed and updated ten (10) years after initial adoption and not less than every five (5) years thereafter, pursuant to Section 26 of the Planning Act. The Official Plan is intended to be a living document and may be amended by the Town to reflect changing circumstances or priorities. An Official Plan is adopted by Town Council under the provisions of the Planning Act and must be approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH). As such, the Fort Frances Official Plan must be consistent with matters of Provincial interest. The key provincial documents which provide guidance include the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, and the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

1.3.1 Conformity with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

The Provincial Planning Statement is issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act. It provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and promotes the provincial policy-led planning system.

All municipal official plans and planning decisions must be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement. The Fort Frances Official Plan has been prepared to meet the requirements of, and is considered to be consistent with, the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.

1.3.2 Conformity with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011

The Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011 provides a broad 25-year land use vision for the communities in Ontario's North to the year 2036. The Plan's vision is based on positioning the northern economy to meet the challenges of the 21st century which will provide diverse opportunities to work, live and participate in the new economy of the north. Delivering the vision



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will involve the combined efforts of government and diverse partners across Northern Ontario. The guiding principles for the Growth Plan are as follows:

1. Creating a highly productive region, with a diverse, globally competitive economy that offers a range of career opportunities for all residents.
2. Developing a highly educated and skilled workforce to support an evolving knowledge-based economy and excellence in the trades.
3. Partnering with Indigenous peoples and communities to increase educational and employment opportunities.
4. Delivering a complete network of transportation, energy, communications, social and learning infrastructure, to support strong, vibrant communities.
5. Demonstrating leadership in sustainable growth and environmental management.
6. Establishing innovative partnerships to maximize resources and ensure the Growth Plan achieves its ambitious vision and is fiscally sustainable.

The Official Plan policies for the Fort Frances Official Plan conform with the general vision provided in the Growth Plan.

1.4 How to Use this Official Plan

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 includes definitions of numerous significant terms used in its policies. These definitions will apply when reading this Plan where the same terms are used, for instance in reference to “development”, “adjacent lands”, or “sensitive land uses”, among others. Where this Plan employs a different meaning for a term defined in the Provincial Planning Statement, this will be specifically identified in the text of the Plan.

The Official Plan and its Schedules must be read as a whole, as more than one section or Schedule may apply to a particular area or matter.

The text of this Official Plan is set out in paragraphs of explanation and numbered and lettered policies. The paragraphs of explanation are to provide further information that establish context for and will assist in the interpretation of the policies, and help clarify the general intent of the Plan. The paragraphs of explanation are followed by the Town’s goals as they relate to a particular policy issue, followed by a series of policies that represents commitments to specific actions. The policies also provide for protection of the Town’s resources by establishing planning requirements, programs, standards, and criteria for reviewing development proposals.

The use of “shall” in the policies indicates that a statement is binding or that there is a mandatory requirement. The use of “may”, “should” or “would” in the policies indicates that a statement is advisory, not binding, and that details will need to be resolved through the development review process. The use of “should” in policies indicates a Council commitment that the Town is obligated to carry out. The policies are to be implemented through a variety of mechanisms, including the Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

Schedules A-1 and A-2 of this Plan illustrates the land use designations for all lands within the municipal boundary of the Town, including the Settlement Area and Rural Areas, which are subject to the policies in the Land Use Designations Section of this Plan.

In certain circumstances, Special Policy Overlays are also established in order to provide further policy direction to address site-specific planning issues which affect the designated areas. These Special Policy Overlays are illustrated in **Schedule B** of this Plan.

Schedules C and D contain designations and information with respect to the specific location of areas and features as they relate to the policies in other Sections of this Plan.

1.5 Plan Organization

The policies of this Plan (**Section 2.0 through 12.0**) provide guidance and direction for the development and growth of the Town to the year 2046, and should be considered in their entirety when making decisions. The Official Plan is structured as follows:

- a) **Section 1 – Introduction**, describes the purpose and effect, the context under which the Plan was prepared, and the duration and structure of the Plan.
- b) **Section 2 – Vision and Guiding Principles**, establishes the vision, guiding principles, and basis for which the land use policies and Schedules of this Plan have been prepared.
- c) **Section 3 – Growth Management**, identifies the Town’s Settlement Area boundary, as well as land supply and population, housing, and employment projections to the year 2046.
- d) **Section 4 – General Land Use Policies**, sets out the general functional policies to guide and direct growth and development of the municipality, which apply to all land use designations unless otherwise indicated in this Plan.
- e) **Section 5 – Land Use Designations**, establishes the land use designations and applicable policies in this Plan, and which together constitute the general land use plan for the Town of Fort Frances as shown on **Schedules A-1 and A-2**.



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- f) **Section 6 – Special Policy Overlays**, sets out policies for specific areas of the Town that require unique planning approaches as shown on **Schedule B** of this Plan.
- g) **Section 7 – Infrastructure**, includes policies related to public and private infrastructure, including roads, utilities, water and sanitary servicing, and transportation, including public and active transportation.
- h) **Section 8 – The Environment**, includes policies related to the natural environment, recognizing Fort Frances' location on Rainy River and Rainy Lake and surrounding woodlands as shown on **Schedules C** and **D**.
- i) **Section 9 – Implementation**, describes the approaches, tools, and mechanisms which the Town of Fort Frances will use to direct, manage, and control development on a day-to-day basis. It provides further details on the powers which the municipality will exercise over growth, development and change to help it achieve its vision.
- j) **Section 10 – Interpretation**, explains how to interpret the land use designation boundaries.
- k) **Section 11 – Definitions**, explains the planning terminology used in the Official Plan to ensure harmony with planning terminology used in the Planning Act, Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, and Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011.
- l) **Section 12 – Schedules**, form part of the Official Plan. The Schedules should be interpreted with the applicable policies in this Plan.

2.0 Vision & Guiding Principles

This Section of the Plan establishes the vision and guiding principles that will guide the Town of Fort Frances over the course of the planning horizon to 2046.

2.1 Vision Statement

Fort Frances will be a complete, sustainable, and accessible Northern community that is home to a range of housing options, services, and opportunities for residents of all ages. As the hub of Rainy River District, Fort Frances will grow and evolve as a welcoming, family-oriented town, providing a promising place to live and work. The Town will continue to celebrate its scenic location along the Rainy River and Rainy Lake and will maintain and enhance its natural areas and recreational resources.

2.2 Guiding Principles

Complete communities meet their residents' daily needs by providing access to a diverse mix of employment opportunities and services, a range of housing options including affordable housing, functional infrastructure, and parks and open space. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, multi-modal travel, including active transportation, is also an important component of a complete community. The Town of Fort Frances aspires to be a complete, sustainable, and accessible community and shall:

- a) Promote a logical, orderly, attractive and cost-effective development and land use pattern in the Town.
- b) Facilitate social inclusion, improved access to housing, employment and commerce, job opportunities and social services.
- c) Provide a policy framework for creating healthy, safe, vibrant, mixed-use neighbourhoods in the Town.
- d) Encourage an adequate supply and diverse range of different housing types, as well as options for affordable and supportive housing that meet the housing needs for all residents.
- e) Recognize the importance of retaining and attracting youth and young professionals, supporting families, and building a community which allows people to age-in-place.
- f) Seek out and promote partnerships with institutions, Indigenous communities, and agencies, which engage citizens of all ages in strengthening community foundations in the Town.
- g) Enhance and create a culture of health and wellness in the community by encouraging sport and public recreation opportunities.



Section 2.0 Vision & Guiding Principles

- h) Encourage arts and culture events and activities for all ages, with emphasis placed on supporting youth-driven arts and culture.
- i) Attract and maintain a full range of medical and wellness services, and maintain and enhance facilities, services, and programs which support residents of all ages and abilities.
- j) Make efficient use of infrastructure by encouraging compact, mixed use, walkable, and connected neighbourhoods.
- k) Encourage planning and design which contributes to an accessible, barrier-free, and safe environment.
- l) Promote a vibrant downtown and maintain and develop welcoming and attractive public places that foster community building and interaction.
- m) Encourage the development of places of employment, including facilitating the expansion of existing businesses, such as home occupations and home businesses, as well as attracting new businesses and industry to the Town.
- n) Provide opportunities for the remediation and adaptive re-use of brownfield sites (properties that may be contaminated) and greyfield sites (previously developed properties that are underutilized, derelict or vacant but not contaminated).
- o) Promote a transportation system which is accessible to all residents, including but not limited to, youth, young families, and senior citizens.
- p) Encourage opportunities for active transportation (AT) such as cycling, walking, jogging, in-line skating, skateboarding, or cross-country skiing, throughout the community.
- q) Celebrate and encourage the protection of the cultural and built heritage values and resources within the Town.
- r) Protect and enhance the natural environment by implementing a planning policy framework which maintains and protects natural heritage features, areas, and corridors.
- s) Support the consideration and implementation of new programs and technologies which contribute to maintaining and improving air, land and water quality.
- t) Promote and implement programs which maintain and improve the quality of water, (properties that may be contaminated) and promotion of water resource conservation, specifically Rainy Lake and Rainy River, both of which are sources of the Town's drinking water.
- u) Consider the potential impacts of climate change and encourage residents, businesses, and organizations to take measures to adapt to climate change.

- v) Direct the development of land away from areas of known or potential natural hazards, such as floodplains, unstable slopes, and wildland fire hazard areas, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be implemented.
- w) Continue to invest in infrastructure and services that ensure that natural hazards to public safety are appropriately addressed.
- x) Promote emergency preparedness among residents, businesses, and organizations.



3.0 Growth Management

Growth in Fort Frances shall be managed by directing future development to the Town's Settlement Area, in order to optimize the use of existing infrastructure, creating a compact community, and protecting the natural environment.

By 2046, the Town is projected to reach a population of 8,213 persons, 3,795 households, and an employment base of 4,171 jobs, which represent increases of 359 persons, 157 households, and 54 jobs in employment areas from 2021. The Town's Settlement Area includes a sufficient supply of vacant designated lands to meet the projections for residential and employment growth to the year 2046.

3.1 Objectives

The Town's growth management objectives are as follows:

- a) Foster the creation of complete, healthy, and vibrant communities and enhance the quality of life for all residents by directing the majority of growth and development to the settlement areas to conserve and protect the Town's diverse natural environment.
- b) Promote development patterns in the Settlement Area that efficiently uses land, resources, infrastructure, and public services and facilities, through compact urban forms, a mix of land uses and appropriate densities.
- c) Identify and encourage opportunities for intensification, infill and redevelopment in appropriate locations and of a scale and character of development that is compatible with the community.
- d) Encourage economic development opportunities through the identification and protection of employment areas, through providing an appropriate range and mix of uses to meet long-term needs, and through attracting new businesses to Fort Frances.
- e) Encourage the provision of a broad range of housing types and affordability to meet the needs of the existing and future residents of the Town.
- f) Provide a settlement structure for directing and managing growth and development in the Town over a 25-year planning horizon.

3.2 Settlement Area

Within the planning horizon of this Plan, most urban growth shall take place within the Settlement Area boundary as shown on **Schedule A-1** and **A-2** of this Plan. Most of the lands within the Town of Fort Frances comprises the Settlement Area and represents where the

highest level of public services and utilities are presently available and where urban development shall occur.

- a) All development within the Settlement Area shall be connected to a municipal sewage and water system where such services are available, and connection to those services does not necessitate a pre-mature or uneconomical expansion of services.
- b) All development in the Settlement Area shall also be located on a year-round maintained public road.
- c) The expansion of the Settlement Area may only occur if it is justified through a comprehensive review as outlined in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. However, adjustment of the settlement area boundary may be considered outside of a comprehensive review where there would be no net increase in land within the boundary, in accordance with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.

3.3 Rural Area

Lands beyond the Settlement Area as identified on **Schedules A-1** and **A-2** comprise the rural part of the Town. Rural areas of the Town will be serviced by means of private individual water and sewage systems.



4.0 General Land Use Policies

This Section of the Official Plan addresses general land use policies applicable across Fort Frances, and must be read along with policies that apply to the specific land use designations in **Section 5.0 Land Use Designations** of this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan.

4.1 Accessory Uses

- a) Wherever a use is permitted in a land use designation, it is intended that uses, buildings or structures incidental, accessory, and essential to that use shall also be permitted.

4.2 Archaeology, Built and Cultural Heritage Resources

4.2.1 Objectives

- a) The Town of Fort Frances shall encourage the conservation, protection and enhancement of the Town's cultural heritage resources, including lands, archaeological sites, important views and vistas, and buildings and structures of historic, cultural and architectural value.
- b) The Town shall encourage growth and development which promotes the protection and sympathetic treatment and use of heritage resources.
- c) The Town shall also encourage the protection and awareness of the rich heritage of the Town's Downtown, as well as the various ethnic cultures and neighbourhoods.
- d) The Town recognizes the social and economic benefits of supporting arts and cultural initiatives.

4.2.2 Built and Cultural Heritage Resources

- a) All new development permitted by the land use policies and designations of this Plan shall have regard for cultural heritage resources and shall, wherever possible, incorporate these resources into any new development plans. In addition, all new development will be planned in a manner that preserves and enhances the context in which cultural heritage resources are situated. Cultural heritage resources include, but are not limited to, archaeological sites, cemeteries and burials, buildings and structural remains of historical and architectural value, and human-made rural, village, and districts or cultural landscapes.

- b) The Ontario Heritage Act and its provisions will be utilized to conserve, protect and enhance the heritage of the Town through a designation by by-law of individual properties, conservation districts and/or landscapes, and archaeological sites.
- c) The Town shall have regard for the conservation of all significant cultural heritage resources during the undertaking of municipal public works or environmental assessment projects. When necessary, satisfactory measures and/or heritage impact assessments will be required to mitigate any adverse impact to significant resources as outlined by the heritage conservation policies contained within this Plan. Council shall have regard for cultural heritage resources in the undertaking of municipal public works. When necessary, Council will require satisfactory measures to mitigate any negative impacts on significant heritage resources.
- d) Council shall encourage local utility companies to place equipment and devices in locations which do not detract from the visual character of cultural heritage resources and which do not have a negative impact on the architectural integrity of those resources. Council shall seek the acquisition of easements on properties with heritage significance in order to assure the preservation of these properties in perpetuity.
- e) Council shall ensure that each municipally-owned heritage resource which is sold, leased or transferred to another owner or lessee is subject to a heritage easement agreement which will guarantee its preservation, maintenance and use in a manner which respects its heritage significance and when appropriate, is subject to a heritage restoration agreement, which shall require that certain restoration works be carried out by the new owner or lessee to a standard acceptable to the Municipal Heritage Committee or other accepted heritage property standard. Council shall ensure that secondary planning studies identify cultural heritage resources, which may exist in the area under study and propose means to protect and enhance any significant heritage resources.
- f) The Town shall maintain a municipal register of properties, districts, and landscapes, and other resources of cultural heritage interest or value, including any properties designated under Parts IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act. Non-designated properties that Council believes to be of cultural heritage value or interest may also be included on the municipal heritage register.
- g) Where development or site alteration is proposed that may impact a significant cultural heritage resource, or on a property adjacent to or fronting a protected heritage property, the Town shall require an applicant to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment. The Heritage Impact Assessment shall be conducted by a qualified professional with expertise in the conservation of cultural heritage resources to:
 - i. Identify the positive and adverse impacts on the cultural heritage resource that may be expected to occur as a result of the proposed development;



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- ii. Describe alternative development approaches, mitigation measures, and conservation methods that may be required to prevent, minimize or mitigate the adverse impacts; and
 - iii. Where a property has not previously been evaluated, a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report may need to be completed prior to a Heritage Impact Assessment.
- h) Where a property has not previously been evaluated, a Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report may need to be completed prior to a Heritage Impact Assessment.
- i) Council shall conserve cultural heritage resources when considering the establishment of new areas for mineral aggregate extraction or new operations. When necessary, Council shall require the mitigation of any negative impacts on cultural heritage interest or value through the use of Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports, Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Archaeological Assessments.
- j) The Town may engage with Indigenous communities when dealing with relevant activities that may be of interest and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage resources.

4.2.3 Archaeological Resources

The Town of Fort Frances recognizes its location in close proximity to a number of Indigenous community lands and along Rainy River and Rainy Lake. As such, there may be significant potential for archaeological resources in the area.

Areas of archaeological potential are determined through the use of provincial screening criteria, or potential mapping. Provincial screening criteria include the consideration of factors such as proximity to known archaeological sites, burial sites or cemeteries, present or past water sources, well-drained sandy soil, elevated topography, distinctive landforms, resource extraction areas and historic transportation routes or other places of past human settlement. Records of known archaeological sites are maintained by the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism (MCM).

- a) Where a development proposal or site alteration is proposed on lands containing archaeological resources or is within an area considered to have archaeological potential, the Town shall require an applicant to undertake an archaeological assessment to determine the nature and extent of any archaeological resources on the site. The Archaeological Assessment shall be conducted by an archaeologist licensed under the Ontario Heritage Act, and will be in compliance with guidelines set out by the MCM as well as licensing requirements developed under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Archaeological Assessment will be submitted to the Town and the MCM for approval and registration.

- b) Alterations to known archaeological sites shall only be performed by licensed archaeologists, as per provisions under Section 48 the Ontario Heritage Act, as amended. Any significant archaeological resource or site identified may be preserved on site, to ensure that the integrity of the resource is maintained, and/or may it be systematically removed through excavation by a licensed archaeologist. The Town may require a Marine Archaeological Assessment to be conducted by a licensed marine archaeologist pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act if partially or fully submerged marine features such as ships, boats, vessels, artifacts from the contents of boats, old piers, docks, wharfs, fords, fishing traps, dwellings, aircraft and other items of cultural heritage value may be impacted by shoreline and waterfront developments. The assessment must be consistent with the guidelines set out by the MCM, as well as licensing requirements developed under the Ontario Heritage Act.
- c) Council recognizes that archaeological potential will be determined for individual development applications and building permits through the use of the screening criteria established by the MCM for identifying archaeological potential, or qualified mapping developed based on the known archaeological record within the Town. Archaeological potential criteria include: proximity to waterbodies or watercourses, current or ancient shorelines, rolling topography, unusual landforms, and any locally known significant heritage areas such as portage routes or other places of past human settlement.
- d) Council shall enter into a municipal/provincial data sharing agreement in order to obtain data and maps of registered/known archaeological sites located within the Town. In addition, data and maps of any designated or locally significant heritage buildings or structures, mapped areas of archaeological potential and/or cultural landscapes located within the Town shall be maintained as it becomes available for use planning review.
- e) Council will regularly update municipal archaeological resource mapping under the provisions of a municipal/provincial data sharing agreement, as new archaeological sites are identified from land development and on the Provincial archaeological sites database.
- f) Council, with the advice of the MCM, may undertake the preparation of an Archaeological Management Plan. The Archaeological Management Plan will identify and map known archaeological sites registered with the Provincial Archaeological Sites Database, as well as areas within the Town identified as having archaeological potential. The Archaeological Management Plan may also outline policies, programs and strategies to protect archaeological sites.
- g) The Town shall ensure adequate archaeological assessment and consult appropriate government agencies, including the MCM and the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement (MPBSDP), when an identified historic human cemetery, marked or unmarked human burial is affected by land use development. The provisions under the Ontario Heritage Act and the Funeral, Burial and Cremation



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Services Act shall apply. Development shall be guided by this legislation and corresponding direction from the MPBSDP.

- h) If human remains are encountered, all activities must cease immediately and the local police as well as the Registrar of the Funeral, Burial Services and Cremations Act must be notified. In situations where human remains are associated with archaeological resources, MCM should also be notified to ensure that the site is not subject to unlicensed alterations which would be a contravention of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- i) When development has the potential to impact a known or suspected cemetery or burial site, Council shall require an Archaeological Assessment by a licensed consultant archaeologist. Provisions under both the Ontario Heritage Act and the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act shall apply. Development shall be guided by this legislation and corresponding direction from the MPBSDP.
- j) The Town shall engage with Indigenous communities and consider each community's interest when identifying, protecting and managing archaeological resources.
- k) It is the policy of the Town to generally keep confidential the existence and location of archaeological sites and resources to protect against vandalism, disturbance, and the inappropriate removal of artifacts or cultural heritage resources.

4.2.4 Arts and Culture

- a) The Town will support initiatives which enhance, expand and support existing and new arts and cultural activities in Fort Frances.
- b) The Town encourages and supports the display of art in public places as a means of enhancing the public realm, enriching the visual experience of residents and visitors, and promoting Fort Frances' culture.
- c) The rehabilitation of heritage buildings and the retrofitting of existing building stock should be encouraged.

4.3 Brownfield Development

Brownfield sites are defined in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 as undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant. The Town supports brownfield redevelopment and has identified several potential sites throughout the Town.

- a) The objectives of this Plan support the redevelopment of brownfields, which represents an economic development opportunity to rehabilitate and redevelop underutilized serviced land. Left in a derelict state, brownfields may adversely impact the

attractiveness of the surrounding area for investment and degrade the areas in which they are located.

- b) Encourage the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites, particularly in proximity to La Verendrye Parkway.

4.3.1 Policies

- a) Council shall explore a variety of incentive programs designed to overcome the impediments to brownfield redevelopment, which may be implemented through a Community Improvement Plan.
- b) The Town shall provide municipal leadership and work with developers and entrepreneurs to find new opportunities and partnerships in addressing the redevelopment of brownfields.
- c) The Town shall monitor and maintain an inventory of brownfield sites and shall identify priorities for redevelopment. Efforts will be focused on revitalizing priority sites listed in the inventory.

4.4 Development in the Vicinity of Fort Frances Municipal Airport

The Fort Frances Municipal Airport is licensed by the Federal Government and as such the essential operations for the functioning of an airport are permitted in accordance with Federal regulation. Federal zoning as set out in the Fort Frances Airport Zoning Regulations (SOR/96-133) applies to the airport, imposing height limitations on buildings and structures in the surrounding areas.

Airports must be appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated to prevent adverse effects from noise.

It is the policy of this Plan that:

- a) The Fort Frances Municipal Airport is federally licensed and therefore any development on the airport lands that is an airport-related use will not require an amendment to this Plan. Airport-related uses include airport-related commercial and industrial (e.g., aircraft sales and service manufacturing, maintenance, shipping, and storage), research establishments, commercial flight schools including associated temporary accommodation, business offices, and small-scale accessory uses.
- b) All activities at the site of the Fort Frances Municipal Airport which are not essential operations for the functioning of an airport must comply with the applicable policies of this Official Plan and the provisions of the Town's Zoning By-law.



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- c) All proposals for new buildings and structures within the federally-regulated area, shall be regulated by the Fort Frances Airport Zoning Regulations SOR/96-133, as amended.
- d) New residential development and other sensitive land uses will not be permitted in areas subject to Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) / Noise Protection Forecast (NEP) levels above 30 NEF/NEP.
- e) Redevelopment of existing residential uses and other sensitive land uses may be considered above 30 NEF/NEP, if it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the long-term function of the airport.
- f) New development in areas below 30 NEF/NEP, but in close proximity to airports may be required to address noise and vibration and/or land use compatibility as established in this Plan.
- g) New development permitted within the airport lands and other areas above the 30 NEF/NEP may be subject to a noise analysis to identify noise reduction features and other mitigation measures in accordance with the policies and guidelines of Transport Canada Aviation.

4.5 Food Trucks

Mobile food trucks are generally permitted to operate throughout the Town, and their operation may be regulated through the Town's Zoning By-law and Business Licensing By-law. These regulations will have regard for appropriate parking areas, safe access for pedestrians, the mitigation of conflicts between pedestrians and customers and vehicles, and areas where food trucks may be prohibited.

4.6 Home Industries

Home industries include the conduct of occupations or trades such as a carpentry shop, craft shop, metal working shop, plumbing shop, electrical shop, or a welding shop undertaken in whole or in part of a building permitted as an accessory to a residential use.

- a) Home industries shall be permitted within a detached building accessory to a residential use provided that they are not offensive or create a nuisance as a result of noise, hours of operation, odour, traffic generation or other means.
- b) The Zoning By-law shall specify performance standards to regulate the use and size of development. The outside storage of goods related to a home industry shall be prohibited.

4.7 Home Occupations

Home occupations, also referred to as home professions and home-based businesses, may be permitted in all areas where residential uses are permitted, provided that:

- a) The use is accessory to the principal residential use and occurs entirely within the confines of the dwelling unit or in a structure or building accessory to the principal residential use;
- b) The use is compatible with surrounding uses;
- c) Home-occupations of an industrial nature, or home industries are only permitted in a building or structure accessory to a single-detached dwelling, and where it conforms with other relevant regulations; and
- d) The use conforms with regulations and provisions in the Zoning By-law.

4.8 Housing

This Plan supports the development and provision of a range and mix of housing sizes, types and tenures to accommodate market and non-market needs. This includes but is not limited to single-detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, additional residential units, multi-unit dwellings, dwelling units with large and small floor areas, and dwellings developed for rental tenure, private ownership, land-lease communities, co-operative housing, and other socialized housing.

The Town will maintain an adequate land supply to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment. This land supply must include land with servicing capacity to provide at least a three-year supply of residential lands ready for development.

4.8.1 Residential Density Targets

- a) A variety of housing types shall be encouraged in Fort Frances to meet the demands of the present and future residents of the Town. The mix of housing in the Town shall be targeted as follows:

Dwelling Type	Percent	Density Units/Net ha
Low Density	65 %	12 – 16 units/ha
Medium Density	20 %	17 – 39 units/ha
High Density	15 %	40 or more units/ha



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4.8.2 Additional Residential Units

- a) An additional residential unit is a self-contained dwelling unit in addition to the principal dwelling unit on a lot, and are also commonly known as 'secondary units', 'basement apartments', or 'accessory units'. In accordance with the Planning Act, up to two (2) additional residential units may be permitted on a lot, in addition to the principal dwelling unit of single-detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings and townhouse rowhouse dwellings, on properties serviced by municipal water and wastewater services, provided the following criteria are met: A maximum of two (2) additional residential units are permitted on a lot containing a single-detached, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling, for a maximum of three (3) residential units on a lot; in accordance with the following:
 - i. Two (2) additional residential units (in addition to the primary dwelling unit) are permitted within a dwelling provided no buildings or structures ancillary to the primary building contain additional residential units; and
 - ii. Only one (1) additional residential unit may be permitted in an ancillary building;
- b) The floor area of an additional residential unit is equal to, or less than, the gross floor area of the principal unit with minimal modification to the building's bulk or massing.
- c) One (1) off-street parking space is provided exclusively for each additional dwelling unit. The parking space(s) must be located on the same lot as the additional residential unit.
- d) The outdoor private amenity area is adequate for the amenity and leisure needs of all occupants of the principal unit and additional residential unit(s).
- e) The buildings and structures on the lot meet the requirements and provisions of the Town's Zoning By-law, the Building Code, and Fire Code.
- f) A lot may have both one additional residential unit and a Garden Suite, provided the additional residential unit is not within an ancillary building.
- g) The lot must have adequate water and sewer capacity to accommodate the additional residential units.
- h) A garden suite could be considered an additional residential unit, and would also be regulated by the Town's Temporary Use By-law and the policies contained in this section of the Plan.

4.8.3 Affordable Housing

- a) The Town shall seek to work and collaborate with the appropriate housing agencies and service providers such as the District of Rainy River Services Board (RRDSSAB) to establish affordable housing targets for ensure that a sufficient supply of housing is provided which is affordable to low and moderate income households.

- b) The Town supports the provision and development of purpose-built rental housing, as well as non-market housing such as community housing, co-operative housing, land-lease communities, and community land trusts.
- c) The Town shall consider alternative requirements for residential lot standards and required floor space in the Zoning By-law which would support the provision of affordable housing.
- d) To ensure adequate supply of affordable and supportive housing, and the provision of a range and mix of housing sizes, types and tenures, the Town may consider creating a Housing Strategy to identify a local definition of affordable housing and an affordable housing target for the Town. A Housing Strategy should include directions for creating and maintaining an inventory of built and proposed housing units in the Town, which may consider the following:
 - i. Number of additional residential units;
 - ii. Number of dwellings according to size and number of bedrooms;
 - iii. Number of dwellings according to tenure, such as freehold ownership, condominium ownership, purpose-built rental, co-operative ownership, or other socialized housing;
 - iv. The type of housing, such as single-detached, semi-detached, townhouse, duplex, triplex, multiplex, or multi-residential; and
 - v. The cost, value, rent, or affordability of the dwellings.

4.8.4 Group Homes

Group homes administered by the Ministry of Health (MOH) under Provincial legislation shall be permitted on any lands where residential uses are permitted. The Zoning By-law shall set out parking requirements for group homes.

4.8.5 Live / Work Opportunities

Medium-density and high-density residential units designed for live/work may be permitted subject to Site Plan Approval and provision of sufficient parking. Live/work development is encouraged to locate on collector and arterial roads and/or in an area planned for intensification.

4.9 Intensification

Intensification refers to the development of a property, site, or area at a higher density than currently exists through redevelopment, development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas, infill development, and the expansion or conversion of existing buildings. Intensification is encouraged throughout the Town's existing built up areas to make



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efficient use of existing land, infrastructure, public service utilities, and to support a denser urban form. Intensification in residential areas should address (notwithstanding the requirements for a severance, site plan or plan of subdivision):

- a) Land use and neighbourhood character compatibility;
- b) Lot pattern and configuration;
- c) Accessibility;
- d) Parking requirements;
- e) The potential for additional traffic and traffic maneuverability;
- f) Natural and built heritage conservation/protection, including natural hazards;
- g) The available capacity of municipal infrastructure; and
- h) Residential intensification targets identified in this Plan.

4.9.1 Intensification Targets

Intensification means the development of a property, site, or area at a higher density than what currently exists. This can be achieved through redevelopment (including the reuse of brownfield and greyfield sites), development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas, infill development, and the expansion, conversion and/or adaptive re-use of existing buildings.

It is expected that intensification will play an important role in accommodating future growth in the Town, more notably with the redevelopment potential of the former Fort Frances Mill lands and the Shevlin Woodyard.

- a) It is anticipated that a minimum of 15% of all new lots/units created shall be through residential intensification in the Town's Settlement Area.
- b) Notwithstanding Policy a) above, the Town shall support achieving a higher rate of intensification in order to maximize the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services.

4.10 Land-locked Parcels

- a) The creation of new parcels that do not have access to public roads and/or public right of way is not permitted.
- b) Existing lots of record that do not have access to an existing public road are encouraged to be assembled with adjacent parcels that have access to a public road.

- c) Limited development of land-locked parcels may be permitted provided that an access easement is secured to a public road.
- d) Parcels that have direct access only to an unbuilt public road Right of Way shall require the road to be constructed and adequate municipal services before development can commence.

4.11 Land Use Compatibility

Major facilities and sensitive land uses shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise, and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.

For the purposes of this Plan, a sensitive land use is generally considered to be a residence, school, daycare, hospital, senior citizens home or other land uses, such as outdoor recreational activities, where humans or the natural environment may be adversely affected by emissions from industrial facilities. A major facility may include airports, manufacturing uses, transportation infrastructure and corridors, rail facilities, sewage treatment facilities, waste management systems, oil and gas pipelines, industries, energy generation facilities and transmission systems, and resource extraction activities.

4.11.1 Policies

- a) Land use conflicts shall be avoided, or if avoidance is not possible, minimized. Potential adverse effects from odour, noise, and other contaminants, shall be mitigated in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.
- b) The location of residential or other sensitive land uses and major facilities in proximity to one another will be avoided. If avoidance is not possible, sensitive land uses are only permitted if:
 - i. There is an identified need for the proposed use;
 - ii. Alternative locations for the proposed use have been evaluated and there are no reasonable alternative locations;
 - iii. Adverse effects to the proposed sensitive land use are minimized and mitigated; and
 - iv. Potential impacts to industrial, manufacturing or other uses are minimized and mitigated.



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- c) To ensure the compatibility of adjacent land uses, minimum separation distances, and required screening and/or attenuation measures may be established in the Zoning By-law in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.
- d) Employment uses with low adverse impacts such as office uses, retail, or light manufacturing shall be encouraged to be located between heavy industrial uses and sensitive land uses in order to mitigate potential land use conflicts.
- e) New development adjacent to the Fort Frances Municipal Airport shall be undertaken in accordance with the policies in **Section 4.4 Development in the Vicinity of Fort Frances Municipal Airport** of this Plan.

4.12 Parking

- a) New development should ensure there is adequate off-street parking and loading facilities to support the use.
- b) Where land uses have different peak times for required parking, such uses may be permitted to share parking. For instance, a medical office use that is open during the day may share parking with a restaurant use open in the evenings and/or a facility that is predominantly used on weekends. The Zoning By-law may set out provisions for shared parking for certain uses.
- c) The Zoning By-law shall set requirements for bicycle parking for new developments.

4.13 Public Uses

- a) Notwithstanding any other policy in this Plan, public utilities, including electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, shall be permitted in all land use designations.
- b) Where a public utility is proposed on lands containing a natural heritage feature as identified on **Schedule C** to this Plan, an Environmental Impact Study may be required.
- c) Secondary uses, such as active and passive recreation, agriculture, community gardens, and other utilities and uses such as parking lots and outdoor storage that are accessory to adjacent land uses, may be developed on hydro corridor lands, where compatible with surrounding land uses and in consultation with the relevant agency or authority. However, a proponent should be aware of the primacy of the electricity transmission and distribution facilities and that secondary uses require technical approval from the Fort Frances Power Corporation.

4.14 Shipping Containers

Shipping containers, also known as seacans or storage containers, are large mobile containers used in the transportation of goods that may be repurposed as a building material, for instance as a shed, permanent storage structure, or dwelling. The policies in this Plan regulating shipping containers apply only to their use as a semi-permanent or permanent building or structure and not to shipping containers that are actively used for the transportation of goods.

4.14.1 Objectives

- a) To encourage the safe use of shipping containers in appropriate contexts;
- b) To support innovative building techniques to support businesses, and to help provide a range and mix of housing; and
- c) To support the use of shipping containers that enhances, rather than detracts, from the character and visual identity of the Town.

4.14.2 Policies

- a) The Town's Zoning By-law shall regulate where shipping containers may be placed;
- b) A shipping container may be adapted for residential uses provided that it complies with the Zoning By-law, as well as the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Fire Code;
- c) A building permit is required for the construction and installation of a shipping container in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Building Code.

4.15 Short-term Rental Accommodations

The Town may consider creating a framework for regulating and licensing short-term rental accommodations for the purposes of supporting high-quality accommodations, enforcing the Town's By-laws, and maintaining an adequate supply of dwellings for permanent residents. Provisions may be included in the Zoning By-law identifying appropriate locations for short-term rental accommodations.

4.16 Wayside Pits and Quarries, Portable Concrete and Asphalt Plants

A wayside pit and quarry means a temporary pit or quarry opened and used by or for a public authority solely for the purpose of a particular project or contract of road construction and not located on the road right-of-way.



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A portable concrete plant means a small portable facility with equipment designed to produce concrete, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process.

A portable asphalt plant means a small portable facility with equipment designed to produce asphalt paving material, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process.

Portable asphalt plants and portable concrete plants are not of permanent construction, but are designed to be dismantled and moved to another location as required.

- a) Wayside pits and quarries, portable asphalt plants and portable concrete plants used on public authority contracts shall be permitted, without the need for an official plan amendment, rezoning or development permit under the Planning Act in all areas, except those areas of existing development or particular environmental sensitivity which have been determined to be incompatible with extraction and associated activities. Compatibility will be determined based on provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.
- b) The Town of Fort Frances requests to be given adequate notice and an opportunity to provide comments regarding the opening of the plant.
- c) Wayside pits and quarries, portable asphalt plants and portable concrete plants shall be removed from the site upon completion of the road project.
- d) Wayside pits and quarries, portable asphalt plants and portable concrete plants shall be rehabilitated to their former use and condition at the end of a project and/or contract.

4.17 Urban Design Principles

Safe and attractive neighbourhoods and high-quality built form and community design are essential for creating a physical environment where people have the appropriate places to interact, live, work, recreate and learn. The Town shall promote community design within the Settlement Area that contributes to inclusive and healthy communities through the review of new development applications, including plans of subdivision, infill development proposals, site plans and through community improvement.

The following urban design principles should be considered in the preparation and review of development proposals in the Neighbourhoods, Mixed Use, and Highway Commercial designations.

- a) The Town shall seek to maintain and improve the built form characteristics of the Neighbourhoods, Mixed Use, and Highway Commercial designations in the context of existing and new development by ensuring excellence in architecture, urban design and built form that are contextually appropriate with its surrounding land uses and built forms. The Town may prepare urban design guidelines to assist in illustrating “excellence in architecture, urban design, and built form”.

- b) The Town, through the review of development applications will:
 - i. ensure that the design of new development is in keeping with the traditional character of the area in a manner that both preserves the traditional community image and enhances their sense of place within Fort Frances;
 - ii. promote efficient and cost-effective development patterns that minimize land consumption;
 - iii. promote the improvement of the physical character, appearance and safety of streetscapes, civic spaces, and parks;
 - iv. encourage tree retention or tree replacement; and
 - v. encourage design that considers, and wherever possible continues, existing and traditional street patterns and neighbourhood structure.
- c) Measures shall be taken to ensure that the permitted uses address compatibility with adjacent land uses. Adequate separation buffering or screening shall be provided between any uses where land use conflicts might be expected, such as the provision of grass strips and appropriate planting of trees and shrubs, berms or fence screening, and other means as appropriate. Modifications to building orientation may also represent appropriate buffering measures.
- d) Streetscaping that reflects the intended character of the community shall be encouraged. In particular, contextually appropriate streetscaping and public realm features shall be required in the Mixed Use designation.
- e) A high quality of park and open space design shall be strongly encouraged. The land for parkland dedication shall be carefully selected to facilitate its use as a central focal point for new or existing neighbourhoods.
- f) Public art in the Town shall generally be encouraged to incorporate themes supporting and promoting local history, civic pride, businesses and technology.
- g) The Town shall promote the integration and accessibility of community uses including schools, municipal facilities, institutional uses, parks and open spaces and recreational uses through pedestrian, cycling and trail linkages. The Town shall require the provision of certain pedestrian, cycling and trail linkages through the development approvals process, in accordance with the policies of this Plan.
- h) The Town shall encourage development design that considers the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Specifically, proponents of new development are encouraged to situate buildings on lots to maximize natural surveillance and to use appropriate lighting to deter crime.



Section 5.0 Land Use Designations

5.0 Land Use Designations

This Section of the Plan establishes policies for the land use designations shown on **Schedules A-1** and **A-2** of this Official Plan. These policies identify where different types of land uses can locate in the Town, and policy considerations that will be applied when new development is proposed.

In addition to the land use designations, **Section 6.0** of this Plan establishes Special Policy Overlays, which set out area-specific policies for certain geographic areas of the Town.

Permitted uses and detailed development standards in the land use designations will be regulated through the Town's Zoning By-law.

5.1 Neighbourhoods

5.1.1 Objectives

- a) Lands designated as Neighbourhoods are intended to provide for residential uses and local commercial, institutional, and recreational uses which are normally associated with everyday activities within residential areas.
- b) The policies of this Plan are intended to provide for stable residential areas, which shall encourage continuous improvement in property standards and housing conditions, as well as pedestrian access.
- c) The Town shall promote opportunities for residential intensification and redevelopment on lands located within the serviced area of the Town.
- d) The Town shall promote pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods and encourage the application of sustainable design criteria for new buildings and neighbourhoods.

5.1.2 Permitted Uses

The uses permitted in the Neighbourhoods designation shall include:

- a) All types of residential uses, including group homes, home businesses, and garden suites;
- b) Small-scale commercial uses, including but not limited to, convenience stores, cafes, small grocery stores, places of recreation such as gyms, studios, and curling clubs;
- c) Institutional uses including but not limited to schools (e.g., elementary, secondary, learning centres), colleges, health care services, places of worship, and cemeteries; and
- d) Smaller, neighbourhood parks.

5.1.3 Residential Development

- a) Residential development may occur by plan of subdivision, consent to sever, or as intensification within the existing developed areas. Where more than three lots are being created and significant extensions or new municipal roadways or major sewer, water or other municipal services are being provided or improved to service the development, a plan of subdivision will generally be required. The islands within the Town limits may be developed subject to the approval of private individual sewage disposal facilities by the Northwestern Health Unit.
- b) Wherever possible, roads and services should follow grid systems, which are similar to the original lot configuration in the Town in order to provide a variety of routes for pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- c) New housing developments should reflect a range of lot and housing sizes, including smaller, affordable housing units, which would be suitable for seniors and smaller families. Where the development of new housing occurs adjacent to existing housing on larger lots, the new development should be designed and landscaped to be compatible with the character of the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- d) New residential and sensitive uses shall be designed to consider pre-existing uses such that those existing uses can continue to function without ongoing conflicts between the new and prior existing uses.
- e) The Zoning By-law shall identify appropriate setbacks between proposed sensitive uses and existing non-compatible uses. Mitigation measures such as setbacks, fences, screening, and landscaping, may be required to minimize impacts.
- f) Prior to approving an amendment to the Neighbourhoods designation, Council shall be satisfied that the development can be adequately serviced with sanitary sewers, municipal water, fire protection and utilities. Provisions for stormwater management shall be provided on-site to ensure that the predevelopment run-off rates are maintained or improved. Council shall also be satisfied that there is safe access to the development for existing and future traffic.
- g) The implementing Zoning By-law will establish separate zones for low density, medium density and high density residential.

5.1.4 Small-Scale Commercial Uses

- a) Commercial uses that serve the needs of the immediate neighbourhood shall be permitted throughout the Neighbourhoods designation in accordance with **Section 5.1.2**. These uses include, but are not limited to, small retail stores such as convenience stores, restaurants and cafes, small office, personal services, such as salons and laundromats, and small-scale places of recreation such as gyms and yoga studios.



Section 5.0 Land Use Designations

- b) The size of local commercial uses shall be limited in the Town's Zoning By-law to ensure that these uses are compatible with the built form of the surrounding residential uses. The Town may use Site Plan Control to ensure that there is sufficient landscaping, and that fencing, parking and signs do not detract from the character of the adjacent residential uses.

5.1.5 Institutional Uses

- a) Places of worship, medical clinics and offices, and elementary schools are examples of small-scale institutional uses which serve the day-to-day needs of the community. These uses are permitted in the Neighbourhoods designation and are encouraged to locate where residents can walk from their homes to use these services.
- b) Large-scale institutional uses include high schools, colleges, and hospitals, which may serve the local residents and greater Rainy River District.
- c) A cemetery shall also be considered a permitted institutional use.
- d) Development proposals for new institutional uses may be subject to Site Plan Control to address site and building design, parking, landscaping, lighting, and signs pursuant of maintaining the neighbourhood character.
- e) The Zoning By-law shall establish specific Zones and standards for small and large-scale institutional uses.
- f) Elementary schools should be located adjacent to public parks and open spaces, where possible. Generally, the school should be centrally located in regard to the area being served. The location should be selected and designed in consultation with the School Boards. The location should also be selected and designed to minimize traffic conflicts with pedestrians. Sidewalks are considered to be an integral design aspect and will be required to link all school sites to adjacent neighbourhoods; bicycle lanes will be incorporated wherever feasible.
- g) Where possible, places of worship should be located on municipal roads. Places of worship should provide on-site parking located at the rear or side of the building. Proposals for developing new places of worship may require the applicant to submit a traffic impact study, lighting study, parking study and other studies deemed appropriate by the Town.

5.1.6 Neighbourhood Parks

- a) Within the Neighbourhoods designation, neighbourhood parks should be provided within 1,000 metres of all residential uses. Pedestrian and bicycle access to and between these parks should be developed wherever possible.

- b) Neighbourhood parks should be up to two (2) hectares in size and should provide for a range of active and passive uses, such as walking paths, outdoor furniture, gathering areas, community gardens, and recreational fields or facilities.

5.1.7 Design Policies for Existing Neighbourhoods

- a) New development in existing neighbourhoods (redevelopment or intensification) shall reinforce and improve upon the character defined by the existing built form and landscaping. The Town will maintain and improve existing neighbourhoods through tools such as By-laws (e.g., property standards, tree cutting), civic beautification, heritage conservation initiatives, and urban design guidelines.

5.2 Mixed Use

The Mixed Use designation is intended to reflect the lands that have historically been the focal point of activity in the Town, with a mix of businesses, public spaces, employment, institutions, retail stores, and residential uses.

5.2.1 Objectives

- a) To support a vibrant downtown with welcoming public spaces and high-quality urban design.
- b) To foster the business function of the Town's Downtown by promoting all types of commercial uses.
- c) To serve as a gateway to northwestern Ontario for travellers from the United States.
- d) Provide a complete community where residents can access work, services, amenities, and places to live.
- e) To provide the focus for future intensification and redevelopment within the Town.
- f) Recognize the potential of redevelopment sites and their transition to mixed use with integration to the greater community.

5.2.2 Permitted Uses

- a) All types of small- and medium-scale commercial and retail uses, including but not limited to restaurants and grocers.
- b) Service uses, including but not limited to offices.
- c) Medium- and high-density residential uses, and residential uses as a secondary use.
- d) Institutional uses including but not limited to schools, municipal offices, places of worship, and social services.



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- e) Industrial uses, large-scale commercial, and automotive service uses are generally not permitted.

5.2.3 Policies

- a) Some of the lands designated as Mixed Use shall be also subject to Special Study Area 1: Downtown Area and related policies in **Section 6.5.1 Downtown Area** of this Plan. A Secondary Plan shall be prepared to address the Downtown's special issues, as well as provide for a specific set of design guidelines.
- b) Adequate off-street vehicle and bicycle parking and loading facilities shall be provided in accordance with the Zoning By-law. The parking required in the Mixed Use designation may be provided at a reduced level compared to other designations, in accordance with the Zoning By-law. Shared parking spaces are encouraged, and parking in lots in proximity to the use may satisfy parking requirements.
- c) More than one use may be permitted in a building on a lot.
- d) Sidewalks in the Mixed Use designation should be designed to be fully accessible.
- e) Commercial uses should be located so as to minimize the setback from the public right of way on the ground level.
- f) Building design, signage and landscaping details used in the Mixed Use designation should reflect the historical character of the Town's Downtown Area.
- g) Residential uses shall be encouraged to locate on the upper floors or in the rear of mixed-use buildings provided that adequate access and parking can be provided.
- h) The Town shall consider incentives to encourage the continued viability of lands designated as Mixed Use.

5.3 Highway Commercial

The Highway Commercial designation applies to commercial areas located along the main highway entries into the Town that provide a wide range of service and large-scale commercial opportunities. It is recognized that lands designated as Highway Commercial may benefit from higher visibility from the road.

5.3.1 Objectives

- a) To provide a wide range of service and large-scale commercial opportunities accessible from the highways.
- b) To create an attractive gateway to the Town.

5.3.2 Permitted Uses

- a) Commercial uses, including but not limited to large-format commercial uses and restaurants.
- b) Businesses and uses related to automotive services.

5.3.3 Policies

- a) Highway Commercial areas shall generally provide buffering from sensitive land uses, such as residential and institutional uses. Buffering may be in the form of landscaping or fencing.
- b) Commercial developments shall be encouraged to meet the needs of the residents of the District of Rainy River and its tourists, as well as support the industrial uses within the District.
- c) Commercial developments at the easterly and westerly ends of the Town should be focused on serving the needs of tourists and the travelling public. These uses shall be encouraged to provide access and parking areas to accommodate larger recreational vehicles and trailers and shall be designed to incorporate attractive entrance features to the Town. The Economic Gateway Area Special Policy Overlay applies to these lands, and is associated with additional development and design policies in **Section 6.1 Economic Gateway Area** for uses locating at the easterly, westerly and southern approaches to the Town.

5.4 Industrial Employment

The Industrial Employment designation is intended to reflect lands where people presently work and lands where employment opportunities will be provided in the future. The lands that form part of the Industrial Employment designation are generally located in the northwest of the Settlement Area, adjacent to the CN Railyard, and on the western approach to the Town.

The Town recognizes its deep-rooted history in the employment industries and is committed to protecting its Industrial Employment lands and will require extensive justification for any proposed conversion to non-employment uses. In planning for new Industrial Employment lands, the Town will consider location and connectivity to existing and planned transportation corridors, and will emphasize the benefits of Fort Frances' location, transportation connections, and quality of life when promoting the build-out of existing Industrial Employment lands.

The Town will attempt to minimize adverse impacts associated with industrial uses by ensuring that industrial uses occur on designated lands and that issues related to impacts of air, noise, vibration and odour are addressed in a manner, which is consistent with Town and Provincial standards. Separation distances shall be required between industrial facilities and sensitive land



Section 5.0 Land Use Designations

uses, such as residential uses, schools, and hospitals. Site Plan Control agreements shall be required to regulate industrial development.

The Town will plan and promote an Economic Gateway Area at the entrances into the Town which generates unique and ongoing economic development benefits. The Gateway Employment Area will be a Special Policy Overlay designation on **Schedule B** with site-specific design policies as outlined in **Section 6.1 Economic Gateway Area** policies of this Plan.

5.4.1 Objectives

- a) Provide opportunities to develop a diverse range of industrial and industrial service employment opportunities for existing and future residents of Fort Frances.
- b) Ensure that there are sufficient lands designated for industrial employment development opportunities in the Town.
- c) Ensure that there is sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing industries; and
- d) Provide for attractive development opportunities that will encourage investment in Fort Frances.

5.4.2 Permitted Uses

- a) The principal uses permitted in the Industrial Employment designation are all types of industries and industrial services whose operations may include manufacturing, assembly, packaging, warehousing, construction, storage, repair, wholesaling, recycling and transportation. Residential uses are prohibited.
 - i. Heavy industrial uses include processing, manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, research and development, laboratories, workshops, training facilities, warehousing, shipping/receiving, major offices and other similar uses. Outdoor storage for heavy industrial uses is permitted.
 - ii. Light industrial uses are those industrial uses which are entirely contained within a building, except for accessory vehicle parking and limited outdoor storage and do not emit noticeable or noxious noise, dust or air emissions.
 - iii. Permitted light industrial uses include: light-manufacturing, light-assembly, research and development, warehouses and wholesaling, indoor storage, offices related to industrial uses, as well as some commercial uses such as heavy equipment sales and services, repair shops and services and lumber yards.
- b) Accessory uses may be permitted in the Industrial Employment designation without an amendment to the Zoning By-law provided they are incidental and related to the industrial operations.

5.4.3 Policies

- a) Heavy industrial uses are encouraged to locate in the north westerly portion of the Town where existing industrial uses are located. These uses shall be located and landscaped to minimize the visual impact of open storage areas from adjacent lands designated as Neighbourhoods and major traffic routes.
- b) In determining potential impacts, studies may be required in accordance with Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' (MECP) D-Series Guidelines and supporting studies may be required to demonstrate the level of impact on the sensitive land uses, or vice versa, in addition to identifying appropriate mitigation measures.
- c) Prior to approving new industrial uses in Town that have a potential influence area that overlaps with sensitive land uses, as identified below, Council shall receive a detailed report on the use, potential emissions of noise, dust or odour, traffic implications and a Site Plan showing the proposed development.
- d) The potential influence areas (i.e., areas within which adverse effects may be experienced) for industrial facilities which would trigger a study in accordance with the MECP D-Series Guidelines are shown in **Table 5-1**:

Table 5-1: Potential Influence Area of Industrial Uses (MECP D-Series Guidelines)

Industrial Class	Potential Influence Area
Class I (Small-scale)	70 m
Class II (Medium-scale)	300 m
Class III (Large-scale)	1,000 m

- e) The minimum separation distances between industrial facilities and sensitive land uses are shown in **Table 5-2**.

Table 5-2: Minimum Required Separation Distances for Sensitive Land (MECP D-Series Guidelines)

Industrial Class	Required Separation Distance
Class I (Small-scale)	20 m
Class II (Medium-scale)	70 m
Class III (Large-scale)	300 m

In determining what constitutes a Class I, II, or III industrial facility, reference should be made to the MECP D-Series Guidelines.

Under no circumstance can a separation distance be less than the listed separation distances for a Class I, II, or III industrial use.



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- f) The following policies apply to heavy industrial uses:
- i. The use of quality exterior building materials and provision of landscaping shall be encouraged. Heavy industrial uses located near sensitive land uses shall incorporate buffering, massing and screening, as well as controls for noise, vibration, odour, dust/debris and light emissions, which minimize impacts on the nearby sensitive uses.
 - ii. Outdoor storage shall be screened, using fencing and/or plantings, so that the storage area or goods are not visible from abutting lands or the street.
 - iii. The site design of new heavy industrial uses shall include considerations for walkability, barrier-free design, and accessibility, where possible. Small surface parking areas may be provided in the front yard, however larger parking areas should be located to the side or rear of the building incorporating appropriate landscaping and/or screening.
- g) The following policies apply to light industrial uses:
- i. These uses may be situated in close proximity to commercial uses and residential uses provided that the appropriate buffering measure are undertaken to minimize traffic and visual impacts.
 - ii. Outdoor storage is not permitted, except where finished goods or materials are the primary product of a business (such as lumber in the case of a lumber yard). The Zoning By-law shall set out requirements regulating outdoor storage for light industrial uses.
 - iii. Light industrial development in the Industrial Employment designation is encouraged to have high-quality exterior building materials and landscaping. Development at the perimeter of lands developed with light industrial uses shall have edge landscaping and urban design treatments, where appropriate, to strengthen the area's visual appeal.
 - iv. The design of light industrial subdivisions or individual sites should incorporate pedestrian-friendly, barrier-free and accessible design.
 - v. Parking areas shall be screened from any adjacent sensitive land uses and large parking areas shall incorporate internal landscaping and be located at the rear or side of the building.
- h) All industrial uses shall be developed on the basis of full municipal services. Private services may be permitted where there is no industrial waste water and sewage facilities are less than 4,500 litres per day on an interim basis in areas where the Town has completed environmental studies regarding extending services to the site and servicing is likely to occur in the near future. Where these situations occur, the developer shall enter into an agreement with the Town to ensure that the site is pre-serviced and to

provide a financial guarantee relating to the extension of the connection to full municipal services.

- i) New industrial developments shall meet or exceed Provincial standards for noise, emissions, and setbacks from adjacent uses.
- j) Industrial traffic should be directed away from, and not through, residential areas. Generally, the number of access points from employment areas to arterial and collector roads should be limited to minimize potential disruptions to traffic flow.
- k) An accessory residential use, such as a caretaker's residence, which is incidental to the employment use, may be permitted subject to any appropriate mitigative measures required to conform with Provincial standards.
- l) Outside of a comprehensive review, lands designated Industrial Employment may be converted to a designation that permits non-employment uses provided the area has not been identified as provincially significant through a provincial plan exercise or as regionally significant by a regional economic development corporation working together with the Town of Fort Frances, where it has been demonstrated that:
 - i. There is an identified need for the conversion and the land is not required for employment purpose over the long term;
 - ii. The conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the Town's Industrial Employment lands and the achievement of other policies of this Plan;
 - iii. There is existing or planned infrastructure in place to accommodate the proposed uses; and
 - iv. The lands are not required over the long-term for employment purposes for which they are designated.

5.5 Parks and Open Space

5.5.1 Objectives

- a) Recognize lands designated as Parks and Open Space as valuable resources that define the identity and image of Fort Frances and contribute to the quality of life for Town residents.
- b) Provide areas, including an inter-connected park, open space, and trail system for residents and visitors of the Town to enjoy a variety of leisure and recreational activities and access to the urban natural heritage system.
- c) To ensure that sufficient lands and facilities are available to provide for flexibility and variety in recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of the Town.



Section 5.0 Land Use Designations

- d) Enhance access to parks and open space features, including shoreline and waterfront areas.

5.5.2 Permitted Uses

- a) The uses permitted in the Parks and Open Space designation include: Town and public recreation facilities such as arenas, playing fields, larger community parks, walking and bicycle paths, snowmobile trails and related facilities, municipal marina facilities, and public uses.

5.5.3 Policies

- a) Council will encourage the development of a continuous and well-connected parks, open space and trail network throughout the Town. The Town will acquire lands for this system through the land division and Site Plan Control processes. In addition, the Town will actively seek partnerships with other government agencies and private sector parties to develop the parks, open space, and trail system.
- b) Where the trail system is situated within a municipal road allowance, Council shall seek to improve the pedestrian and bicycle routes within the road allowance to provide wider sidewalks, dedicated bicycle lanes and increased landscaping.
- c) Parks and open spaces, and their facilities shall be designed to be compatible with adjacent land uses. Consideration to the impacts of noise, lighting, parking, and landscaping shall be given when new recreational uses are developed.

5.6 Resource Development

5.6.1 Objectives

- a) To provide areas for the development of uses which are incompatible with those uses found in the Neighbourhoods designation.
- b) To preserve lands for future development that requires large land areas and is centered on the natural environment.
- c) To ensure that land uses within the undeveloped portions of the Town do not limit the long-term use of the lands for the logical extension of urban services and development.
- d) To recognize areas which may have limited development potential due to environmental constraints such as flooding or high water table.

5.6.2 Permitted Uses

- a) The uses permitted in the Resource Development designation include:

- i. Recreational trails and related buildings;
- ii. Resource-related uses, and uses related to the management of resources, such as, but not limited to aggregate and peat extraction, log storage and transportation facilities;
- iii. Agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses;
- iv. waste disposal and recycling facilities;
- v. Limited residential development, including as an accessory use to an agricultural use; and
- vi. Home occupations and home industries of an industrial or agricultural nature.

5.6.3 Policies

- a) Land use compatibility will be a primary factor in determining whether new uses shall be permitted. Prior to considering an application to amend the Zoning By-law, Council shall be satisfied that the development is designed to minimize off-site impacts including storm water, traffic, noise and emissions.
- b) Residential development shall only be permitted in areas presently serviced with a municipal road maintained year-round. These uses may develop on the basis of private services subject to the approval of the Northwestern Health Unit.
- c) Extractive uses, including peat extraction, may require a Zoning By-law Amendment. The Town may pass a by-law pursuant to the Municipal Act to require extractive operations to enter into a Development Agreement between the developer and the Town.
- d) Prior to any development in the Resource Development designation, Council shall be satisfied that the lands are physically suitable for the use proposed. In areas exhibiting a highwater table or peat deposits, an engineering report supporting the proposal will be required.
- e) No development shall be permitted below an elevation of 339.5 metres (1,113.6 feet) C.G.D. adjacent to any resource development lands adjacent to Rainy River.
- f) No habitable building shall be constructed within 10 metres of the flood elevation of the Rainy River or any stream channel.

5.7 Future Development

There are significant blocks of land within the Town's existing Settlement Area that pose an opportunity for future urban development, most notably the former Mill Lands and Shevlin Woodyard. The potential for future development of the Mill Lands and Shevlin Woodyard lands



Section 5.0 Land Use Designations

have been identified and feasibility and conceptual planning processes have undertaken by the respective landowner groups in partnership with the Town.

Lands designated as Future Development on **Schedules A-1** and **A-2** represent land within urban areas that may represent an opportunity for future urban development, but either cannot be readily serviced and/or they require future studies to determine the planned function of these areas.

5.7.1 Objectives

- a) The Town recognizes the importance of Future Development lands and shall strive to ensure they are planned cohesively with surrounding neighbourhoods within the Settlement Area with adequate servicing.

5.7.2 Permitted Uses

- a) New uses shall not be permitted that would preclude the future, orderly development of Future Development lands.
- b) Existing uses and uses accessory thereto are permitted to continue.

5.7.3 Policies

- a) New development shall require an amendment to this Official Plan to redesignate Future Development lands to the appropriate land use designation, and shall be supported by studies deemed as required by the Town. The following studies may be requested by the Town, in addition to the requirements set out in **Section 9.10 Planning Applications –**

Required Information:

- i. Record of Site Condition;
 - ii. Environmental Impact Statement (EIS);
 - iii. Urban Design Guidelines;
 - iv. Transportation Impact Assessment; and
 - v. Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment.
- b) The completion of a Record of Site Condition may be required, as determined by the Town, and may be submitted to the Town prior to Council's approval of an Official Plan Amendment for lands within the Future Development designation.
- c) Lands to be developed within the Future Development designation shall have access to, and frontage on a Municipal Road maintained year-round by the Town.

- d) Development shall not be permitted in the Future Development designation susceptible to flooding or any other hazards in accordance with the policies in **Section 6.2 Natural Environment Overlay** and **Section 6.4 Shoreline Buffer** of this Plan.
- e) The proposed use shall be required to meet criteria established by the Province related to separation distances from incompatible land uses established in this Plan.
- f) Lands designated as Future Development shall be zoned accordingly in the Zoning By-law.



6.0 Special Policy Overlays

This Section of the Official Plan establishes several Special Policy Overlays that apply to certain geographic areas in the Town that are recognized as requiring unique planning approaches and area-specific policies. Lands subject to the Specific Policy Overlays have been identified by the Town as being areas of local importance, such as a gateway corridor to Fort Frances, may hold significant natural or economic significance to the Town, or may be an area of transition for future development.

Special Policy Overlays are identified on **Schedule B** of this Plan. The policies contained in this Section should also be considered when new development is proposed within areas subject to Special Policy Overlays.

6.1 Economic Gateway Area

There are three (3) main corridors that lead to Fort Frances. The first of these is Ontario Highway 11, which provides an east-west connection through the Town; the second is Mill Road, which connects Highway 11 to the built-up area of the Town and is an important truck route. Finally, the Town can be accessed from the south via the International Bridge linking the City of International Falls, USA and Fort Frances. The International Bridge route connects with Church Street, Central Avenue, and with Highway 11.

This Plan identifies an Economic Gateway Area Overlay at the three (3) main entrance corridors to Fort Frances. It is recognized that these gateway corridors are of local economic significance as they serve the Town, Rainy River District, and greater Ontario. As such, these corridors should provide a welcoming entrance into Fort Frances, which encourages residents and visitors alike to spend time in the Town.

6.1.1 Policies

- a) Economic Gateway Areas are planned to be a specialized employment area for businesses and uses related to commercial, transportation and logistics due to its location along Highway 11.
- b) Permitted uses shall include commercial uses such as offices, restaurants, grocery stores, accommodation including hotels, motels, and housing for workers, and light industrial uses.
- c) Minor retail, personal and professional services, and commercial uses, which are scaled to meet the needs of the employees within the immediate area are also permitted.
- d) Educational institutions that are complementary to the aforementioned uses are permitted.

- e) Outside storage of raw goods, materials or waste materials on lands subject to the Economic Gateway Area Overlay shall be encouraged to be located in rear or side yards.

6.1.2 Urban Design Policies

- a) New development in the Economic Gateway Area Overlay shall be encouraged to:
 - i. Have high-quality exteriors and landscaping;
 - ii. Accommodate streetscaping features, such as landscaped boulevards, street trees, and street lighting. The design of Gateway Economic Area uses should be pedestrian-friendly, barrier-free and accessible.
- b) For new development located at important intersections in Economic Gateway Areas, high-quality, unobtrusive signage and architectural detailing shall be encouraged for the principal building on site, as well as considerations for landscaping.
- c) Where large areas for vehicular parking are required for a proposed use, considerations will be made for the location of these parking areas to minimize their impact on the public realm. Parking areas shall be encouraged to be screened from adjacent sensitive land uses and incorporate internal and perimeter landscaping.
- d) Loading areas shall only be permitted in the rear yard.
- e) Illumination which enhances the aesthetics of the Gateway Economic Area's buildings and sites shall be encouraged, but illumination must not cause undue light pollution.

6.2 Natural Environment Overlay

The Town's rivers, streams, wetlands, shoreline, woodlots, forests, natural areas and habitat areas are to be protected and promoted for long term sustainability. The purpose of the Natural Environment Overlay is to protect for the long-term preservation of a diverse and connected system of natural features, areas, biological and ecological functions. Natural areas, features and functions should be maintained, restored and where possible improved, recognizing links and corridors between them.

Lands part of the Natural Environment Overlay on **Schedules B and C** of this Plan indicate the general location of known natural areas, features and hazard lands, and may include environmental features such as wetlands, woodlands, floodplains, valleylands, shorelines, significant wildlife or fish habitats, among others.

This mapping should not be construed as representing the precise boundaries or all of known natural areas, features and hazard lands. The Natural Environment Overlay, features and hazard areas may be defined more precisely through Watershed, Environmental Planning Studies, Environmental Impact Studies (EIS), Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) or other government or regulatory authority and mapping.



Section 6.0 Special Policy Overlays

A significant modification to the Natural Environment Overlay shall require an amendment to this Plan. Minor boundary adjustments shall not require an Official Plan Amendment.

Schedules B and C of this Plan may be updated as additional natural areas and features are identified, or where more accurate mapping is available.

6.2.1 Policies

- a) Where planning applications to establish a new use, or expand a permitted use, are not subject to the Environment Assessment Act, an approved Environmental Impact Study (EIS) shall be required, subject to the policies of this Plan, for any development, redevelopment or site alteration within or adjacent to natural areas and features. Protection or mitigating measures may be implemented.
- b) Lands within the Natural Environment Overlay where shall be zoned to prohibit the erection, location or use of any buildings or structures other than those which legally exist on the date that this Plan came into full force and effect.
- c) Subject to other policies of this Plan, expansion of an existing use located within or adjacent to a natural area or feature may be permitted if an approved EIS is submitted that demonstrates that the proposed development will have no negative impact on the natural feature or its ecological functions to the satisfaction of the Town.
- d) Where development or site alteration is proposed adjacent to lands part of the Natural Environment Overlay:
 - i. Newly created lots shall not extend into the lands to be retained in a natural state or any required or recommended buffers, as identified through an EIS.
 - ii. The lands to be retained in a natural state and the adjacent buffer zone shall be maintained as a single block and zoned to protect their natural features and ecological functions.
- e) The Town will, where deemed appropriate, pursue the acquisition of natural areas or features by way of land dedication or other means, and which will be adequately sized to support the protection of natural features, function, access and maintenance. It should not be assumed that these lands will be accepted as parkland dedication, and lands having inherent environmental constraints will generally not be accepted as parkland dedication pursuant to the Planning Act.
- f) The Town encourages lands part of the Natural Environment Overlay, whether in private or public ownership, to be maintained as accessible to the public at the discretion of the owner, where appropriate.

- g) The Town shall encourage and provide assistance, where possible, to private landowners and interest groups in developing and maintaining stewardship programs to support retention and enhancement of natural areas and features.

It is acknowledged that there are existing significant wildlife habitat areas in the Town that has been identified by the MNR. Due to the confidential nature of this information, wildlife habitat areas are not mapped on the Schedules of this Plan.

Other environmental features in and around the Town, such as Fish Spawning and Nursery Areas are illustrated on **Schedule C** to this Plan.

6.3 Rainy Lake Islands

- a) The Rainy Lake Islands may be developed subject to the approval of adequate sewage disposal facilities by the Northwestern Health Unit.
- b) Development on the Rainy Lake Islands shall be linked to tourist commercial, recreational and seasonal uses.
- c) No municipal services shall be provided to the Islands.
- d) Prior to approving development on the Islands, the Town shall be satisfied that adequate mainland parking has been secured.

6.4 Shoreline Buffer

The Shoreline Buffer Overlay consists of lands which are susceptible to flooding or erosion, unstable soils, poor drainage, or exhibit some other physical condition which could pose a risk to human life and/or property if the lands were developed. These include lands adjacent to the Rainy River and Rainy Lake, and lands within 45 metre of the top-of-bank of any watercourse or water body.

At the time of preparing this Official Plan, up-to-date floodplain information and mapping was not available, however the Town is obligated to show the best available mapping (originating from the previous Official Plan) in order to provide protection from the negative impacts of potential flood events. Accordingly, the Shoreline Buffer Overlay shall be as shown on **Schedules B** and **C** until such time as more accurate information can be provided by provincial authorities, the municipality or by development proponents. When such information is provided, **Schedules B** and **C** of the Official Plan may be revised without the need for an Official Plan Amendment.

Where lands are subject to the Shoreline Buffer Overlay, the policies of this Section, as well as the underlying land use designation, apply. The following policies shall apply to lands part of the Shoreline Buffer Overlay:



Section 6.0 Special Policy Overlays

6.4.1 Objectives

- a) To protect and enhance the physical, environmental, social, and recreational characteristics of the Town's shoreline;
- b) To enhance the appearance of shoreline development;
- c) To protect and enhance water quality and drinking water resources;
- d) To ensure the ecological integrity of the natural system and to protect the shorelines and islands from overdevelopment.

6.4.2 Policies

- a) Uses permitted in the Shoreline Buffer Overlay shall include conservation, forestry, agriculture, parks and trails, golf courses or other outdoor recreation uses, and other uses compatible with flooding.
- b) No new buildings or structures shall be permitted on areas subject to the Shoreline Buffer Overlay, except where such buildings or structures are:
 - i. intended for flood or erosion control or are normally associated with watercourse protection or bank stabilization;
 - ii. for essential public services, except:
 - 1. where there is threat to the safe evacuation of residents during an emergency as a result of flooding, failure of flood proofing measures or protection works, or erosion; and
 - 2. those essential emergency services which would be impaired during an emergency as a result of flooding, failure of flood proofing measures or protection works, or erosion.
 - iii. for other uses normally associated with shorelines such as docks.
- c) All buildings and structures existing at the date of adoption of this Plan shall be recognized.
- d) In accordance with the Public Lands Act, houseboats are not permitted to be used for overnight accommodation on the Rainy River or Rainy Lake.
- e) It shall be the policy of Council to discourage expansion of any non-conforming building, structure, or use within areas subject to the Shoreline Buffer Overlay; however, reconstruction and/or minor alterations to existing buildings and structures, and additions or extensions which are not likely to incur significant flood damage, and will not result in impediments to flow or floodwater storage, may be considered by the Town.

- f) The Shoreline Buffer Overlay shown on **Schedules B and C** is general in nature and may be subject to minor technical adjustments without an amendment to this Plan provided the intent of the Plan is met. Where such adjustments occur, the underlying land use designation shall continue to apply and the Zoning By-law shall be amended accordingly.
- g) Development and site alteration shall not be permitted within areas that would be rendered inaccessible to people and vehicles during times of flooding and/or erosion hazards, unless it has been demonstrated that the site has safe access appropriate for the nature of the development and the natural hazard. Where development is proposed within or partly within such areas, a technical study may be required by the Town that demonstrates the following:
 - i. The flooding and/or erosion hazard can be safely addressed, and the development and site alteration is carried out in accordance with established standards and procedures;
 - ii. No new hazards are created and existing hazards are not negatively impacted;
 - iii. No adverse environmental impacts will result due to such development and site alteration;
 - iv. Safe access for vehicles and persons can be granted during times of flooding, erosion, and other emergencies;
 - v. The proposed development does not include institutional uses or the disposal, treatment, or storage of hazardous substances.
- h) Roads for the purpose of mineral exploration and development will be permitted, provided the applicable Ministries have provided consent.
- i) The Town may consider creating and implementing shoreline development design guidelines to assist in evaluating development applications;
- j) Where new large-scale development or redevelopment is proposed along the shoreline, access to the shoreline is encouraged through connected recreational trails, parks, and other open spaces.
- k) Development proposed abutting shoreline shall require site plan approval.
- l) Preservation and enhancement of natural vegetated shorelines and buffers is encouraged, with support for the use of native plant varieties.
- m) Development should result in minimal environmental impact.
- n) A permit may be required under the Public Lands Act, 1990 and/or authorization under the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act, 1900 for any work proposed within shorelands or waterbodies.



Section 6.0 Special Policy Overlays

6.5 Special Study Areas

Schedule B to this Plan illustrates Special Study Areas. A Special Study Area is not a land use designation; rather, these Areas are identified to acknowledge and address specific planning and land use concerns such as servicing deficiencies, or shifting land use trends which necessitate a reassessment of permitted land uses.

Special Study Areas usually require more detailed study of the area and issues to be addressed. Permitted uses in Special Study Areas are those of the applicable land use designations as shown on **Schedules A-1** and **A-2** subject to any restrictions contained in this Section of the Plan. Legal non-conforming uses in these Areas may continue to operate. Development proposals not permitted within the applicable land use designation will require an amendment to this Plan.

A description of each Special Study Area is provided in this Section.

6.5.1 Special Study Area 1: Downtown Area

The Downtown Area is comprised of an area bounded by Second Street to the north, the Rainy River to the south, Central Avenue to the west, and Armit Avenue to the east. The Downtown Area requires a new direction and further study is required to address:

- a) New permitted land uses;
- b) Designation of a Business Improvement Area;
- c) Traffic circulation;
- d) Parking;
- e) Design Guidelines;
- f) Streetscape improvements; and
- g) Public open space.

6.5.2 Special Study Area 2: Former Shevlin Woodyard

The lands at Shevlin Woodyard formerly served as the main wood storage facility for the Fort Frances Mill. The former Woodyard is located east of Downtown Fort Frances, fronting on Rainy River. The woodyard is bounded on three (3) sides by residential uses and overlooks the Rainy River to the south. It is a legal non-conforming use and is designated as Future Development in this Official Plan.

Further technical studies may be required to determine the appropriate use of the site and could build upon the Land Use and Economic Development Feasibility Study for the Redevelopment of the Shevlin Woodyard and Gateway to Fort Frances completed in 2021. At the time of

preparation of this Plan, environmental assessment work was being undertaken by the Town for these lands. Previous studies have identified a variety of potential uses ranging from hotels, restaurants, commercial, tourism generating uses, and residential condo development.

6.5.3 Special Study Area 4: Point Park

Point Park is located in the east end of the Town fronting on Rainy Lake. The Park has been developed as a recreational park with swimming, and camping facilities. The park has great potential as a major tourist destination facility with a mixed use component. Planning and development of the lands at the Point Park is not expected to be determined until existing land tenure issues are resolved between the Town and Agency 1 First Nations.

6.5.4 Special Study Area 5: Armstrong Quarry (Part of River Range Lots 45 to 48 being parcels 9970, 6913, 13635, 12591, 16957, 17826, 11227 and Part of 7915)

The Armstrong Quarry is located in the west end of Town, north of Sunset Drive and east of Oakwood Road with frontages on Emo Road, Pit Road 2, and Ontario Highway 11. The approximately 4.86 hectare (12-acre) gravel pit has been abandoned for the most part and is slowly filling with water. The pit is surrounded by residential development and could represent a hazard to the adjacent residential uses in regards to the health, safety and welfare of the residents due to bank stability and water safety issues.

The Town will work with the owners to ensure that the proper rehabilitation of the site takes place. Any adaptive reuse proposals for the development of these lands by the private sector will require detailed studies including geotechnical and hydrogeological assessments prior to an amendment to this Plan.



7.0 Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities

7.1.1 Objectives

- a) The Town shall ensure there is a sufficient amount of land to accommodate infrastructure and utilities.
- b) The Town shall aim to ensure issues related to land use compatibility are addressed.
- c) The Town shall aim to develop a diverse transportation system which supports a variety of transportation modes, including road, rail, transit, cycling and pedestrian.
- d) The Town may work with appropriate providers to ensure the safe and efficient provision of power, cable and telecommunications in an environmentally acceptable manner.
- e) The Town shall be responsible for providing a supply of municipal sanitary sewer and water services within the Town. The Town shall work closely with the Province to ensure there is sufficient supply of sanitary and water services to meet long-term growth projections outlined in this Plan.
- f) The Town shall ensure all new development within the Town occurs on lands with access to full municipal services and necessary utilities. For lands outside of the Settlement Area boundary, the Town shall ensure that development, where necessary, complies with the standards of, and are subject to, the approval of all applicable authorities/agencies.
- g) The Town shall aim to improve water quality and reduce stormwater run-off by promoting innovative techniques for stormwater management.
- h) In the provision of infrastructure and utilities, the Town may encourage the use of innovative techniques and new technology.

7.1.2 Policies

- a) The Town shall plan for the efficient and effective use of land to accommodate utilities and infrastructure.
- b) Infrastructure and utility uses include: public and/or privately-owned facilities, including water and sanitary sewage facilities, stormwater management facilities, pumping stations, hydro corridors, communications/telecommunications infrastructure, and facilities and transmission towers. These facilities are permitted in all land use designations, subject to the policies of this Plan.
- c) Where possible, the built form of new infrastructure and utility facilities will be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area and considerations for landscaping shall be incorporated in the site design, especially where a site has frontage on a public street.

- d) The Town will encourage and support alternative and renewable-source energy generation facilities which are developed in accordance with this Plan and Provincial and Federal legislation, policies, and regulations. Proposed developments will be encouraged to locate in areas where their adverse impacts on adjacent lands and natural features are minimized and mitigated to the greatest extent possible. Where feasible and practical, power generation facilities which are primarily buildings (e.g., cogeneration plant) may be encouraged to develop on brownfield sites. When evaluating proposals for alternative energy generation facilities the Town will consider the following:
 - i. Location of facility;
 - ii. Size and scale of proposed facility;
 - iii. Potential for land use compatibility issues with adjacent land uses and potential for adverse impacts related to air, noise, odour, vibration, etc.;
 - iv. Potential for perceived risks to human health and safety; and
 - v. Any additional considerations.
- e) The Town of Fort Frances shall encourage and support energy conservation, district heating and combined heat and power, and the on-site use of alternative and renewable energy sources developed in accordance with Provincial and Federal legislation, policies, and regulations, and where all potential negative impacts to adjacent lands are mitigated.
- f) The Town shall encourage the application of energy conservation measures in the infrastructure and utility servicing of new buildings and in the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing neighbourhoods, buildings, and structures.
- g) Water conservation methods (such as efficient landscape irrigation, low water consumption fixtures, etc.) shall be encouraged and supported in the development of new sites and buildings, and in the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing sites and buildings.
- h) The Town may establish energy conservation design guidelines to encourage, or require, future development to implement energy conservation measures.
- i) The development of new infrastructure and utilities for new private development, including plans of subdivision and plans of condominium may be subject to Site Plan Control.



Section 7.0 Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities

7.2 Accessibility

7.2.1 Objectives

- a) To improve the mobility of all persons by making conditions safe for walking, wheelchair movement, and specialized transit.

7.2.2 Policies

- b) The Town will prioritize the mobility of those with the most needs, such as persons with disabilities (including but not limited to people with walkers, canes, wheelchairs, vision impairment, cognitive disabilities, and mobility scooters), children, seniors, and persons who are neurodivergent. Generally, addressing the needs of those with the highest needs provides a benefit to everyone. All new public, commercial, residential, recreational, and institutional buildings and facilities will incorporate accessible design, including, but not limited to, elevators where appropriate, automatic door openers, and ramps at building entrances.
- c) In the review of development applications, the Town will address accessibility needs by:
 - i. Ensuring that the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) are met;
 - ii. The maximum running slope of the exterior path must be no more than 1:20, but where the exterior path is a sidewalk, it can have a slope of greater than 1:20, but it cannot be steeper than the slope of the adjacent roadway;
 - iii. Requiring sidewalk curb cuts at all intersections;
 - iv. Requiring that paving changes (e.g., interlocking brick, tactile strips, etc.) be incorporated at grade changes and intersections;
 - v. Requiring barrier-free parking spaces, as specified in the Zoning By-law; and
 - vi. Encouraging any other features appropriate to ensure that barrier-free design is provided.
- d) The Town may prepare specific design guidelines for accessibility and/or ensure that accessible design is addressed when preparing design guidelines for neighbourhoods.

7.3 Cycling

7.3.1 Objectives

- a) To provide safe cycling infrastructure which enables access to all parts of the Town. This means space that is fully separated from cars and other vehicular traffic by physical barrier, wide visual barrier, or an off-road pathway or multi-use pathway.

7.3.2 Policies

- a) The Town shall implement, in a staged program, the development of a continuous and safe system of on-street and off-street cycling trails in accordance with the Town's Active Transportation Plan. Cycling infrastructure should be designed and constructed in accordance with the best practices identified in the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18: Cycling Facilities. Where there is disagreement between the Active Transportation Plan and the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18, the direction in the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18 is to be followed.
- b) On-street bicycle lanes that consist of paint do not constitute safe cycling infrastructure.
- c) The design of new, and reconstruction of existing, roads in the Town shall be encouraged to consider bicycle movements by ensuring that such projects incorporate cycling facilities. New on-street cycling routes on arterial or collector roads may be designed to buffer the effect of high traffic volumes through wide cycling lane widths, paving materials, special demarcation, etc.
- d) Development applications shall be reviewed to ensure that cycling linkages are considered into the design of the development in a safe and efficient manner, wherever warranted. In all new development and redevelopment, consideration shall be given to safe and secure bicycle movements and bicycle parking facilities.
- e) The Zoning By-law may require development in certain zones to provide a minimum number of bicycle parking facilities and may specify whether these facilities are required to be weather-protected.

7.4 Power, Telecommunications and Other Cabled Services

7.4.1 Policies

- a) New development will have local service power lines, communications/ telecommunications infrastructure and other cabled services located underground in road rights-of-way, where feasible.
- b) The Town will encourage utility installations for telecommunications towers to be located outside of residential areas, where feasible. In instances where the facilities are of a scale



Section 7.0 Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities

and function which is perceived to present significant issues related to land use compatibility, infrastructure which must be located within residential areas or within close proximity to residential areas shall be designed to be compatible with the adjacent and surrounding land uses.

- c) Where feasible, the Town will seek to have local service power lines, communications/telecommunications infrastructure and other cabled services located underground. Above ground shall be sited to reduce their visual impact on the streetscape and/or screened using street furniture and landscaping. The Town encourages utility providers to consider innovative methods of containing utility services within streetscape features such as gateways, lamp posts, transit shelters, etc., when determining appropriate locations for large utility equipment and utility cluster sites.
- d) The Town will ensure that appropriate locations for large utility equipment and cluster site have been determined and that consideration be given to locational requirements for larger infrastructure within public rights-of-way, as well as easements on private property.
- e) Utility infrastructure shall be permitted in all land use designations, subject of the policies of this Plan.
- f) The Town will ensure that adequate utility networks, are or will be, established to serve the anticipated development through discussions with public and/or private utility providers.
- g) The Town encourages all utilities to be planned for and installed in a coordinated and integrated basis in order to be more efficient, cost effective and minimize disruptions.
- h) Local zoning by-laws cannot prevent a telecommunication tower from being constructed, since the Federal Government has the approval authority under the Radiocommunications Act. Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada recognizes the importance of considering the potential impact of communication towers on the adjacent surroundings and the community. A proponent seeking to establish a communications tower shall work with the Town, seek input from the community, and meet the requirements as set out in the Radiocommunications Act.

7.5 Railways

7.5.1 Policies

- a) The Town shall support the location of rail service to meet the needs of industrial uses within the Town. It will further encourage multi-modal connections to rail as a means of supporting economic development.

- b) The Town, together with the railway authority, shall identify potential reuse of railway lands which becomes surplus to the railway's needs. Where appropriate, the Town will consider the use of surplus railway lands for new trails and open space uses, or industrial development depending on the location of such lands.
- c) The Town, together with the railway authority and other agencies, shall identify where conflicts exist between rail, vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and adjacent land uses and will implement appropriate measures to mitigate the conflict, wherever possible.
- d) The Town shall identify those level crossings requiring grade separations and seek appropriate government assistance for such construction. At the same time, the Town will identify those level crossings which are hazardous to public safety and will seek appropriate measures to improve and/or close such crossings.
- e) Sensitive land uses shall be discouraged adjacent to or in proximity to rail facilities.
- f) All proposed development of residential or other sensitive land uses within 100 metres of a railway right-of-way may be required to undertake noise studies to the satisfaction of the Town in consultation with the appropriate railway, and shall undertake appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse effects from noise that are identified. All available options, including alternative site layouts, and/or attenuation measures, shall be thoroughly investigated and implemented, if practicable, to ensure appropriate sound levels are achieved, particularly with respect to the 55 dBA outdoor living area criterion.
- g) All proposed development of residential or other sensitive land uses within 75 metres of a railway right-of-way may be required to undertake vibration studies to, to the satisfaction of the Town in consultation with the appropriate railway, and shall undertake appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse effects from vibration that are identified.
- h) All proposed development adjacent to railways shall ensure that appropriate safety measures, such as setbacks, berms, and security fencing are provided, to the satisfaction of the Town in consultation with the appropriate railway. Where applicable, the Town shall ensure that sightline requirements of Transport Canada and the railways are addressed.
- i) Implementation and maintenance of any required rail noise, vibration, and safety impact mitigation measures, along with any required notices of title such as warning clauses and/or environmental easements, shall be secured through appropriate legal mechanisms, to the satisfaction of the Town and the appropriate railway.



Section 7.0 Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities

7.6 Roads

7.6.1 Road Classifications

There are two classifications of Road within the Town: Provincial Highways and Municipal Roads. Provincial Highways include Highways 11 and 71 are under provincial jurisdiction. All other roads are considered Municipal Roads. The Town of Fort Frances maintains the Provincial Highways and Municipal Roads within Town limits.

7.6.2 Policies

- a) No new development or redevelopment will be permitted which does not front on a public road of an acceptable standard of construction. As a condition of development approval, the Town may require that sufficient lands be conveyed to provide for a future road right-of-way widening.
- b) Unless otherwise specified in this Plan, a dedication of land to widen a roadway will be taken equally from both sides of the road allowance measured from the centerline of the roadway. In certain circumstances, where factors such as topography and existing development dictate, it may be necessary to require more than half of the widening on one side of the road allowance.
- c) Notwithstanding the above, road improvements can have a significant impact on the character of the neighbourhood. Therefore, the Town shall undertake road improvements when:
 - i. The need is demonstrated through an analysis and public consultation regarding the safety, efficiency, affordability, diversity, land use impact, and integration of the transportation system;
 - ii. The resulting road improvements through the design process shall improve the livability of affected residential areas by:
 - 1. Reducing the use of local streets in residential areas by vehicular cut-through traffic,
 - 2. Reducing vehicle speeds in residential and downtown areas,
 - 3. Improving active transportation facilities,
 - 4. The addition of street trees,
 - 5. Minimizing conflicts between local and through vehicular traffic, and
 - 6. Minimizing any adverse impacts on the social and natural environment of adjacent lands.

- d) To improve the designated functions of the roadway system, the following general principles shall be used:
- i. All modes of transportation are to be considered in the safe and efficient movement of traffic on roadways. In addition to vehicular traffic, this includes modes of active transportation, which includes pedestrians, cyclists, and scooters.
 - ii. Where feasible, direct vehicular access from individual properties on arterial roads will be restricted to enhance the flow of vehicular traffic and minimize the negative impacts on abutting properties and pedestrian movement;
 - iii. The spacing of intersections between arterial and collector roads will be appropriate to accommodate traffic control devices;
 - iv. The spacing and possible reduction of driveways on arterial roads through the use of controlled joint access and common off-street parking facilities;
 - v. Discouraging the intersection of local roads with arterial roads;
 - vi. Controlling the number and design of driveways for multi-residential and commercial uses on collector and arterial roads;
 - vii. Encouraging service roads for low density residential uses abutting arterial roads, and where appropriate, collector roads; and
 - viii. Consideration of various vehicular traffic calming and management measures to reduce vehicular through-traffic and vehicular speeds on local streets and to promote safer streets.
- e) Where appropriate, the design of roads shall include provisions for:
- i. Pedestrians, the use of mobility devices, and strollers, by way of sidewalks to promote safety and reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts;
 - ii. Consideration of bicycles and other non-motorized vehicle traffic, by way of separated bicycle lanes, pre-paved boulevards, etc.;
 - iii. Aesthetic and noise reducing applications, by way of tree planting, landscaping, street furniture, berms, etc., where necessary;
 - iv. Universal access and ease of movement with minimal physical and psychological obstacles, by way of sloped curbs, raised road crossings, reducing obstructions of the sidewalk, reduced vehicular turning radii level entranceways, minimal grade changes, etc.
- f) Truck traffic shall be directed towards authorized truck routes.



Section 7.0 Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities

7.6.3 Provincial Highways

- a) The Town of Fort Frances maintains Provincial Highways within Town limits and is responsible for approving entrances and development along these corridors. In addition to all the applicable municipal requirements, all proposed development located adjacent to, and in the vicinity of, a provincial highway within the Ministry of Transportation's (MTO) permit control area under the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act (PTHIA), will also be subject to MTO approval. Early consultation with the MTO is encouraged to ensure the integration of municipal planning initiatives with provincial transportation planning. Any new areas in the municipality identified for future development that are located adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, a provincial highway or interchange/intersection within MTO's permit control areas will be subject to MTO's policies, standards and requirements, as required.
- b) Provincial Highways in the Municipality include Highway 11 and 71, and are shown in **Schedules A-1** and **A-2**. New access onto provincial highways will require approval from the MTO.
- c) Direct access onto a provincial highway will be discouraged and often prohibited. Development shall be encouraged to utilize municipal roads and service roads wherever possible. Where access is a possibility, it will only be considered to those properties that meet the requirements of MTO's access management practices and principles.
- d) A transportation study, prepared by a professional and certified engineer may be required by a proponent to address both the impact of any new development upon the provincial highway system, as well as any associated highway improvements that are required prior to the approval of the development.
- e) Any new proposed access connection (i.e., public road or signalized intersection into a provincial highway shall meet the MTO's access management practices and principles.
- f) Any proposal for snowmobiles or trail crossing of provincial highway will require the prior approval of the MTO. Trails located along the right-of-way of a provincial highway are not permitted.
- g) Outdoor storage and loading areas shall be visually screened or appropriately located so as to not be visible to the travelling public.
- h) Access to new developments adjacent to provincial highways is subject to the policies and regulations of the MTO.
- i) Where necessary, the construction of service roads parallel to any of the provincial highways in the Town may be required in order to make more effective use of the local land resource.

- j) Small scale industries and commercial uses adjacent to Provincial Highways shall be designed in accordance with the following.
 - i. Open storage areas shall be prohibited unless it can be demonstrated that appropriate landscaping and screening to shield open storage areas will not detract from the intended character of the area;
 - ii. Loading areas will generally be restricted to those areas not facing the highway;
 - iii. All industrial/commercial activities will be encouraged to locate within enclosed buildings unless it is essential for an activity to locate outdoors, in which case the industrial/commercial use will be suitably screened and buffered from the highway.

7.7 Sidewalks and Trails

7.7.1 Objectives

- a) The Town shall strive to develop and maintain a continuous and connected sidewalk and trail system providing accessible, safe, convenient and enjoyable walking for users of all ages and abilities.

7.7.2 Policies

- a) Transportation facilities, including the construction of new roads and reconstruction of roads, shall consider pedestrian needs and may include design features such as sidewalks, corner ramps, pedestrian signals and appropriate lighting.
- b) The development of pedestrian-scale streets and streetscapes which are safe, convenient and attractive shall consider the inclusion of AODA-compliant sidewalks, street furniture, canopies on buildings, landscaping, locating retail and personal service uses at street level, and supporting building design which provides shelter and other amenities.
- c) The Town will require that new subdivisions provide sidewalks and walkways, as per the Town's municipal standards manual, as deemed appropriate. Pedestrian crossing signals will be required at all signalized intersections.
- d) There should be a smooth transition between sidewalks and pedestrian walkways, with appropriate signage provided for pedestrian walkways.
- e) Sidewalks, walkways and trails shall be designed in a manner to reduce the walking distances between residential development and recreational/community facilities, schools and commercial facilities. This requirement shall be evaluated at a variety of scales.



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- f) As a condition of approval, a sidewalk shall be required beyond the limits of a proposed subdivision to complete connection to the following:
 - i. An existing sidewalk;
 - ii. Isolated sections of sidewalk created by development; and
 - iii. An intersection, walkway or logical ending point where the length of the sidewalk is reasonable.
- g) Where feasible, the Town will undertake a program of sidewalk reconstruction to upgrade existing walkways and to provide new walkways in established areas. Upgrades to existing walkways and the construction of new walkways shall be safe, accessible, well-lighted and have a relative degree of visibility. Priority will be given to those areas adjacent to schools, community centres and commercial areas.

7.8 Stormwater

7.8.1 Policies

- a) A Stormwater Water Management Plan and Sediment Erosion Control Plan, prepared and signed by a qualified engineer, may be required depending on the scale, location and other site-specific issues related to a proposed development.
- b) The Town encourages the use of innovative techniques to reduce the need for large stormwater management facilities, thereby reducing run-off and improving water quality. Innovative techniques include, but are not limited to, rainwater harvesting systems (rain barrels and cisterns), green roofs, landscape systems and vegetated swales, downspout disconnection and permeable surfaces.
- c) Stormwater Management Facilities should generally be located at the edge of Neighbourhoods; at the interface with natural areas; and/or within large public open spaces, including community parks. Stormwater Management Facilities should not be located within the Natural Area.
- d) Where appropriate, Stormwater Management Facilities shall be naturalized, making use of native plants and species.
- e) Stormwater Management Facilities shall be designed to have a high level of public exposure and should be integrated in, and contribute to, the enhancement of the Neighbourhood's public realm.
- f) The design and layout of Stormwater Management Facilities shall address issues related to safety and shall be designed with gentle slopes in areas with direct access. Areas with steeper slopes shall not have direct access and shall be designed to include overhangs, railings and dense plantings.

7.9 Transportation

- a) The Town shall encourage and plan for an integrated transportation system which allows for cost-effective and efficient movement of people and goods in a manner compatible with existing and future land uses.
- b) The Town shall encourage a transportation system in Fort Frances which supports economic development and social inclusion, with minimum social and environmental disruption.
- c) The Town shall encourage other municipalities, agencies, and stakeholders in the transportation system to coordinate and cooperate towards optimizing the transportation system.
- d) The Town shall anticipate, designate and protect transportation rights-of-way and areas required for future transportation facilities in cooperation with the Province and neighbouring municipalities.
- e) The Town shall plan its transportation network as a safe and accessible system. Additionally, the Town will ensure that its transportation network also provides fast and efficient routes for emergency response purposes.
- f) The Town shall implement an Active Transportation (AT) System. An Active Transportation System is a sustainable form of transportation and is defined as any human-powered mode of transportation such as cycling, walking, jogging, inline skating, skateboarding or cross-country skiing.
- g) The Town shall regularly review and update its Active Transportation Plan as required.

7.10 Water and Sanitary Sewage

7.10.1 Policies

- a) In planning for water and sanitary sewage services, the Town shall:
 - i. Promote the efficient use of existing municipal services and existing private communal services;
 - ii. Ensure that water and sanitary sewage systems are provided in a manner that can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely, prepares for the impacts of a changing climate, is feasible and financially viable over their lifecycle, and protects human health and safety, and the natural environment;
 - iii. Promote water conservation and water use efficiency; and
 - iv. Integrate servicing and land use consideration at all stages of the planning process;



Section 7.0 Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities

- b) The Town will ensure there is a sufficient supply of water capacity within the water treatment plant and sufficient reserve capacity within the sanitary treatment plant to serve Fort Frances and accommodate the long-term growth projections for the planning horizon.
- c) All new development within the Settlement Area boundary shall be required to be connected to municipal water and sanitary sewage services as a condition of development.
- d) In areas outside of the Settlement Area boundary and where municipal services are not available, planned or feasible, private communal water and sewage are the preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot development.
- e) In areas outside of the Settlement Area boundary, individual on-site water and sanitary sewage services may be permitted provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impact, and provided that private communal water and sanitary sewage services are not available, planned or feasible.
- f) Partial services shall only be permitted where they are necessary to address failed individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services in existing development, or within the settlement area boundary, to allow for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development on partial services provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term provision of such services with no negative impacts.

8.0 The Environment

In making decisions concerning planning, development, and conservation, the Town of Fort Frances will employ an ecosystem approach addressing:

- a) The interrelationships among air, land, water, plant and animal life, and human activities;
- b) The health and integrity of the broader landscape, including impacts on the natural environment in neighbouring jurisdictions; and
- c) The long-term and cumulative impacts on the ecosystem.

The policies contained in this Section are intended to be used in conjunction with the other policies of this Plan.

8.1 Adjacent Lands

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 defines adjacent lands as those lands contiguous to a specific natural heritage feature or area where it is likely that development or site alteration would have a negative impact on the feature or area. The extent of adjacent lands may be recommended by the Province or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objectives. For the purposes of this Plan, adjacent lands are determined to include all lands within the specific distance of the boundary of natural heritage features and areas as set out in **Table 8-1**.

Table 8-1: Natural Heritage Features and Adjacent Lands

Natural Heritage Area or Feature	Extent of Adjacent Lands
Provincially Significant Wetland	120 metres
Significant Wildlife Habitat	120 metres
Fish Habitat	120 metres
Provincially Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) – Life Science	120 metres
Provincially Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) – Earth Science	50 metres

- a) No development or site alteration shall be permitted on adjacent lands unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated, through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared in accordance with the applicable policies of this Plan, that there will be no negative impact on the natural features or their ecological functions.



8.2 Air Quality and Climate Change

8.2.1 Policies

- a) The Town of Fort Frances shall encourage and support energy conservation, district heating and combined heat and power, and alternative and renewable energy sources developed in accordance with Provincial and Federal legislation, policies and regulations. The Town will also encourage the application of energy conservation measures in the design and construction of new buildings and in the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing buildings and structures.
- b) Increased flexibility in zoning and site planning may be considered in order to accommodate variances in building orientation, landscaping designs, lot coverage and other site or building characteristics to provide for increased energy efficiency.
- c) Recognizing that activities such as the dumping or placing of fill, grading of land and removal of topsoil can result in flooding and erosion, property damage, poor water quality, degradation of farmland and adverse impacts on natural areas, the Town may enact a Site Alteration By-law regulating such activities. As a condition of development approval, the Town may require measures to conserve topsoil and reduce or mitigate soil erosion.
- d) In supporting ecological restoration by the Town of Fort Frances and other groups, priority shall be given to those projects which will maintain or enhance the features of the natural heritage system and water resources.

8.3 Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest

The Provincial Planning Statement defines Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) as areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study or education.

Life Science ANSIs represent significant segments of specific types of forests, valleys, prairies, savannahs, alvars and wetlands found in Ontario, and their native plants and animals and supporting environments. They also contain relatively undisturbed vegetation and landforms, and their associated species and communities. Earth Science ANSIs represent significant examples of bedrock, fossils and landforms found in Ontario, including ongoing geological processes.

According to the MNR, there are no 'Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) in Fort Frances. In addition, since the Town is situated on the Canadian Shield, the provincial policies for significant woodlands east and south of the Canadian Shield do not apply. The Town recognizes that ANSIs may be identified in the future, where the following policies shall apply.

- a) The identification of ANSIs and candidate ANSIs shall be determined in consultation with the Province's Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) or Land Information Ontario (LIO), as well with the MNR.
- b) Development and site alteration may be permitted within ANSIs or on adjacent lands provided it does not negatively impact on the natural features or ecological functions for which the area has been identified.
- c) Where development or site alteration is proposed within 50 metres of an Earth Science ANSI or within 120 metres of the boundary of a Life Science ANSI, the proponent shall prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Town, that there will be no negative impacts on the ANSI or on its ecological function. Where warranted by species and site-specific factors, development or alteration that is proposed further 120 metres from significant portions of the ANSI may also require an EIS.

8.4 Endangered and Threatened Species

The Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA) prohibits the killing, harming, harassment, capture, or taking of a species at risk, and the damaging or destroying of their habitat. The habitat of endangered species and threatened species is not illustrated on the Schedules of this Plan, as habitat is dynamic and species and habitat information is limited or not published. The species that occupy the habitat of endangered species and threatened species are listed or categorized on the Province's official Species at Risk in Ontario list, as updated and amended from time to time. The Province administers the ESA to protect and conserve Species at Risk and their habitat. Under the ESA, the Province is responsible for identifying and approving general and regulated habitat, as well as giving technical advice on Species at Risk and their habitat. The Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) is the lead agency responsible for approving the delineation of habitat of endangered species and threatened species and administering the provisions for the ESA.

A list of Species at Risk (SAR) known to have observations and occurrences in the area is available through the MECP. If at any time, SAR as listed under the ESA is encountered, work must stop immediately and the MECP must be contacted.

- a) The presence of Species at Risk (extirpated, endangered, threatened, or special concern species) on a site shall be identified through the use of the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) provincial database, and through consultation with MECP district staff.
- b) It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure that any development or activity does not contravene the ESA. All development and site alteration must be planned and considered in accordance with the provisions of the ESA. A preliminary Ecological Site Assessment may be required to be carried out during the planning of a proposed



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development and site alteration to determine whether a listed species or its habitat may be present before carrying out an activity that may contravene the ESA. In accordance with the MNR's 2010 Natural Heritage Reference Manual, an Ecological Site Assessment can include review of one or more of the following:

- i. Information about known occurrences within the recommended screening distance of at least 1 kilometre;
- ii. Information provided by the MECP to municipalities (e.g., screening information, species lists, range maps);
- iii. In the absence of or in addition to such MECP information, guidance from the local MECP district office;
- iv. Official Plan mapping;
- v. Existing local knowledge (e.g., that of municipal staff) of the area and the species likely to occur, given their ranges and habitat needs; and
- vi. Preliminary field investigations (if needed to confirm the presence of species).

If the results of the preliminary Ecological Site Assessment determine that the significant habitat of an endangered or threatened species is not present on the proposed development site, no action is required. Proponents should submit the information to the Town.

If the results of the preliminary Ecological Site Assessment determine that the significant habitat of an endangered or threatened species may be present on the proposed development site, proponents shall prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in accordance with **Section 9.10.3 Environmental Impact Statement** of this Plan, which demonstrates that there will be no negative impacts on the habitat of endangered and threatened species or its ecological function. The EIS must be completed by a qualified professional to address potential impacts on the habitat of endangered and threatened species. To accommodate endangered and threatened species and their habitats, and to minimize any adverse effects on these species, some activities may need to be modified.

- c) Current best management practices may help to mitigate an activity's impacts. On a case-by-case basis, additional actions may be required to address specific impacts on a species at a particular site or location. In all cases, the EIS must be accepted by the MECP.
- d) If impacts to an endangered species or threatened species cannot be avoided, a permit or agreement under the ESA should be obtained before the activity proceeds. The proponent should work directly with MECP district staff to develop agreements or permits when required.
- e) Where development and/or site alteration is proposed within 120 metres of the boundary of the habitat of a species at risk, the proponent shall provide the Municipality with an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that demonstrates that there will be no

negative impacts on the significant habitat or on its ecological function. Where warranted by site and species-specific factors, development proposals further than 120 metres from significant portions of the habitat of endangered and threatened species may also require an Environmental Impact Statement.

- f) Proposals that impact on a natural feature will be referred to the appropriate ministry through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) One Window Review Process if the MMAH is the approval authority (i.e., Official Plan Amendments). If the Town is the approval authority then the proposal will be referred to the appropriate ministry through the Municipal Plan Review process (i.e., Consents, Zoning By-law Amendments, etc.).

8.5 Fish Habitat and Spawning Area

Under the Fisheries Act, fish habitat is defined as spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has a mandate to protect and preserve fish habitat on Crown and private lands under the Fisheries Act, and the MNR has a lead role in supporting planning authorities in carrying out their responsibilities.

The Town supports the management of fisheries, with important economic, social and environmental benefits.

- a) Important habitat and natural values are constantly changing and currently values mapping is likely incomplete. As these habitats and values, including the habitats of endangered and threatened species, change to the Schedules of this Plan will be updated. As these changes are usually minor in nature, formal amendments will not be required.
- b) Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on or within 120 metres of lands identified as a fish habitat or spawning area, as shown on **Schedule C**, unless an EIS, prepared by a qualified professional in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment policies, **Section 9.13.3** of this Plan, demonstrates that there will be no negative impact on the Fish Spawning and Nursery Area or its ecological function. This shall identify the features of the fish habitat, the nature of the proposed development, the potential impacts that the development may have on the fish habitat, and mitigation measures required to prevent adverse impacts on fish habitat.
- c) Where required by the Town, proponents shall be required to submit a Fisheries Assessment as part of a development application. The Fisheries Assessment shall be evaluated by the MNR as part of the development review process.



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8.6 Hazards

8.6.1 Hazardous Sites

- a) On hazardous sites, development and site alteration will not be permitted unless a Geotechnical Study, prepared and signed by a qualified engineer, has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the MNR that applicable policies can be met. On hazardous sites, the following uses shall not be permitted:
 - i. Institutional uses associated with hospitals, nursing homes, pre-school, school nurseries, day care or schools;
 - ii. Essential emergency services such as those provided by fire, police and ambulance stations and electrical substations; and
 - iii. Uses associated with the disposal, manufacture, treatment or storage of hazardous substances.
- b) Where, under this Plan, development and site alteration may be permitted on portions of hazardous lands or sites, then the MNR must be satisfied that the effects and risk to public safety are minor and can be managed or mitigated so that:
 - i. Development and site alteration will be in accordance with provincial floodproofing standards, protection works standards and access standards;
 - ii. Vehicles and people have a way of safely entering and exiting the area during times of flooding, erosion and other emergencies;
 - iii. New on-site or off-site hazards will not be created, or existing ones aggravated; and
 - iv. No adverse environmental impacts will result.

8.6.2 Human-Made Hazards

As defined in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, mine hazards include any feature of a mine as defined under the Mining Act, or any related disturbance of the ground that has not been rehabilitated. Mine hazards may pose a threat of injury and potential loss of life if they are not mitigated or rehabilitated. The Ministry of Mines (MINES) maintains the Abandoned Mines Inventory System (AMIS) which contains information relating to known and recorded mine sites.

To date, no known or recorded AMIS sites have been identified within the Town. If AMIS sites are identified in the future, these sites will be considered to be hazardous areas.

- a) The Town shall require that applicants for any proposed development on or within 1 kilometre of an abandoned mine hazard to consult with the MINES regarding the nature

of the hazard, and to undertake any remediation measures as legislated under the Mining Act.

- b) Where an abandoned mine hazard exists, the Township shall require applicants with proposed development on, abutting or adjacent to the lands affected by mine hazards to be supported by a study that:
 - i. Identifies potential safety threats;
 - ii. Demonstrates that the site can be rehabilitated to mitigate the known or suspected hazard; and
 - iii. Establishes measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards.
 - iv. Development on, abutting or adjacent to lands affected by mine hazards or former mineral mining operations shall be permitted only if measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards are underway or have been completed, to the satisfaction of the Town and the Province.
 - v. Where rehabilitation requirements are known and are feasible, known mine hazards and adjacent lands may be zoned with a Holding Zone. In these instances, rehabilitation of the site in accordance with the requirements of the Mining Act shall be required prior to the removal of the holding symbol. In the interim, uses permitted on such properties shall be restricted to existing land uses.

8.6.3 Wildland Fire Hazard Areas

Hazardous forest types for wildland fire are forest types assessed as being associated with a high or extreme risk of wildland fire, as illustrated on **Schedule D**. These areas are generally composed of forest fuel types including natural conifer forests and unmanaged conifer plantations.

Schedule D is provided for information purposes and is intended to assist in screening to identify areas at risk for wildland fire. Where updated and/or more detailed assessments are undertaken, **Schedule D** may be revised without requiring an amendment to this Plan. The following policies shall apply to areas near wildland fire hazards:

- a) Development shall generally be directed to areas outside of lands that are unsafe for development due to the presence of hazardous forest types for wildland fire.
- b) Development may be permitted in lands with hazardous forest types for wildland fire where the risk is mitigated in accordance with wildland fire assessment and mitigation standards, as identified by the MNR.
- c) In the absence of detailed municipal assessments, proponents submitting a planning application shall undertake a site review to assess for the presence of areas of high to



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extreme risk for wildland fire on the subject lands and adjacent lands, to the extent possible. If development is proceeding where high to extreme risk for wildland fire is present, measures should be identified by proponents to outline how the risk will be mitigated.

- d) Wildland fire mitigation measures which would result in development or site alteration shall not be permitted in significant wildlife habitat, unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions, in accordance with the policies of the Wildlife Habitat Section of this Plan.

8.7 Mineral Aggregate Resources

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 directs that mineral aggregate resources shall be protected for long-term use. Mineral aggregate resources means gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone, sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other material prescribed under the Aggregate Resources Act suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes but does not include metallic ores, asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, wollastonite, mine tailings or other material prescribed under the Mining Act.

The Town of Fort Frances is not designated under the Aggregate Resources Act. As such, aggregate operations on private land are not subject to the Act. Aggregate operations on Crown land are subject to the Act and there are no exemptions to wayside pits and quarries used for an individual project.

8.8 Mineral Resources

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 directs that mineral resources shall be protected for long-term use. Mineral resources may include metallic minerals, industrial minerals not regulated under the Aggregate Resources Act, mined salt, and diamonds.

There are currently no active or abandoned mines within the Town nor areas of high material potential, however the majority of the policies of this Section shall apply in conjunction with other policies of this Plan.

- a) In areas having high mineral potential, or on adjacent lands, as identified by the MNR, development which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if:
 - i. Resource use would not be feasible; or
 - ii. The proposed land uses or development serves a greater long-term public interest; and
 - iii. Issues of public health, public safety, and environmental impact are addressed.

- b) Notwithstanding Policy a) of this Section, development in areas having high mineral potential, or on adjacent lands, which are located within the Settlement Area boundary and which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall be permitted.
- c) Rehabilitation to accommodate subsequent land uses shall be required after extraction and other related activities have ceased in order to accommodate new land uses, to promote land use compatibility, to recognize the interim nature of extraction, and to mitigate negative impacts to the extent possible in accordance with the Mining Act. Final rehabilitation shall take surrounding land use and approved land use designations into consideration, as well as the opportunity to accommodate parks and open space uses. An Official Plan Amendment to the new land use designation may be required to implement the subsequent land use. Progressive rehabilitation should be undertaken wherever feasible.
- d) Development of areas with existing mineral mining operations for purposes other than resource extraction shall not be permitted in accordance with Policy a) of this Section. If such development is permitted, the underlying designation will apply.
- e) Development of sensitive uses in or adjacent to a mining operation shall be located and buffered sufficiently to ensure that the extraction is not limited and that the development is not affected by the noise, dust or other health and public safety issues that are related to the extractive activity.
- f) Where planning approvals are required to allow for either new or expanded pits, quarries, mineral or other resource extraction operations, and/or new or expanded residential or other sensitive land uses (i.e., educational and health facilities and day care centres), proponents may be required to provide supporting technical studies, prepared in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures to address and minimize potential impacts on surrounding land uses, and identify appropriate mitigation measures. Where potential impacts cannot be appropriately minimized and mitigated, planning approvals shall not be supported.
- g) A separation distance of less than 300 metres between the extraction/excavation area and any zone permitting residential or other sensitive land uses shall not be supported.
- h) Council shall conserve cultural heritage resources when considering the establishment of new areas for mineral mining, or when considering the establishment of new operations or expansions to existing operations. When necessary, Council will require the mitigation of any negative impacts on cultural heritage interest or value through the use of Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports, Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Archaeological Assessments.
- i) Federal, Provincial or joint Environmental Assessments may be required in order to develop mineral resources, followed by Federal and Provincial approvals.



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8.9 Watercourses and Waterbodies

The Town recognizes the importance of watercourses (i.e., streams, creeks and rivers) and waterbodies (including lakes and ponds) as part of the overall natural heritage system in the Town and protecting watercourses from incompatible development to minimize the impacts of such development on their hydrological and ecological function.

- a) Natural creeks, streams and lakes in the Town shall be preserved in their natural state wherever feasible and watercourse corridors should be utilized as natural green spaces in the urban design of an area.
- b) For newly created lots, all development including private septic systems shall be set back a minimum of 30 metres from the high water mark of a watercourse or waterbody. This setback shall not apply to permitted docks, boathouses, or other marine facilities.
- c) For existing lots of record, established prior to this Plan's date of approval, new development should generally be setback 30 metres if possible/feasible, otherwise as far back as the lot permits, with minimum disturbance of the native soils and very limited removal of the shoreline vegetation beyond that required for development. This setback shall not apply to permitted docks, boathouses, or other marine facilities.
- d) A natural vegetative buffer of 30 metres in width where possible, shall be maintained along all shorelines and watercourses.
- e) The Town may refer to the Lakeshore Capacity Model found in the Ontario Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook to assess the development capacity of the lakes located within the Township, especially those lakes with increasing pressures related to seasonal and/or permanent residential development and recreation.
- f) Interference with a watercourse or waterbody may require a permit from the MNR, and restrictions could apply.

8.10 Water Quality and Water Quantity

The Town recognizes the importance of watercourses (i.e., streams, creeks and rivers) and waterbodies (including lakes and ponds) as part of the overall natural heritage system in the Fort Frances and protecting watercourses from incompatible development to minimize the impacts of such development on their hydrological and ecological function.

- a) It is the policy of this Plan to ensure sustainable surface and groundwater resources through the protection, conservation, and careful management of the quality and quantity of drinking water resources.
- b) Development and site alteration shall only be permitted if they will not have negative impacts on:

- i. The quantity and quality of surface and ground water;
 - ii. The functions of ground water recharge and discharge areas, aquifers and headwaters;
 - iii. The natural hydrologic characteristics of watercourses such as base flow;
 - iv. Surface or ground water resources adversely impacting on natural features or ecological functions of the Natural Area or its components;
 - v. Natural drainage systems, stream forms and shorelines; and
 - vi. Flooding or erosion.
- c) Development and site alteration shall be restricted in the vicinity of vulnerable surface and ground water features of importance to municipal water supplies so that the safety and quality of municipal drinking water will be protected or improved.
- d) The Fort Frances Water Treatment Plant is located on shoreline of Rainy River in between Fifth Street East and Elizabeth Street East on Agamiing Drive. The Town of Fort Frances has identified the Drinking Water / Watersource Protection area covering the areas to the northeast of the Treatment Plant. The Drinking Water / Watersource Protection area is located on **Schedule C** to this Plan. Development and site alteration within the Drinking Water / Watersource Protection area will be subject to a study which identifies that there will be no impact on the water quality and quantity as a result of the proposed development and/or site alteration.
- e) Efficient and sustainable use of water resources shall be promoted, including practices to conserve water and protect, or enhance, water quality.
- f) Combined Sewer Overflows have significant environmental impacts on water quality. Elimination of overflows shall be a priority of the Town.
- g) A Stormwater Management Plan and a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan prepared and signed by a qualified engineer, may be required with a development Application depending on:
 - i. The scale and nature of the proposal; and
 - ii. Site-specific environmental conditions.
- h) A Stormwater Management Plan may be required with an Application for development or site alteration in lands designated as Resource Development. Stormwater Management Plans shall be prepared in accordance with the MECP Stormwater Management Planning and Design Manual, 2003, or its successor, and with watershed and/or environmental planning studies for the area.
- i) A Stormwater Management Plan shall demonstrate that the proposal will minimize vegetation removal, grading and soil compaction, erosion and sedimentation, and



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impervious services. Generally, Stormwater Management Facilities shall not be constructed in lands designated as Environmental Protection, fish habitat, and spawning areas, or key hydrologic features.

- j) Prior to any planning approvals, new development applications requiring a Provincial Permit to Take Water shall satisfy the Town of Fort Frances that the water taking will not have negative impacts on natural ecosystems or the quality and quantity of water to meet existing and planned uses.
- k) Development and site alteration shall not have significant adverse impacts on ground water quality or quantity. In areas where development and site alteration could significantly affect ground water quality or quantity, the Town shall require that an assessment of potential groundwater impacts be submitted with the development application.

8.10.1 Drinking Water / Watersource Protection

Water quality and quantity are essential to the safe and adequate provision of drinking water. Council recognizes the importance of ensuring that the Town's drinking water source, Rainy Lake, is protected. Drinking Water / Watersource Protection, shown on **Schedule C** has been identified surrounding Rainy Lake and will serve to discourage development. Within areas identified as Drinking Water / Watersource Protection, permitted uses shall be restricted to those which are compatible with protection of the Town's drinking water source.

- a) Council may initiate the preparation of a Watershed-Based Source Protection Plan for Rainy Lake and its watershed. The Source Protection Plan would include identification of potential threats to drinking water quality and quantity, and recommendations of appropriate protection measures. These measures may include development restrictions and be implemented through the Town's Zoning By-law.
- b) Recognizing that much of the lands surrounding Rainy Lake are Crown Lands under the jurisdiction of MNR, Council will work with MNR to encourage the use of these lands for activities that would not pose a threat to the Town's drinking water source.
- c) Where development is proposed in proximity to Drinking Water / Watersource Protection on **Schedule C**, a Water Impact Assessment shall be required to ensure that there is no negative impact to the water quality.
- d) The Town's Zoning By-law shall set out additional regulations and standards for development within and adjacent to Drinking Water / Watersource Protection.

8.11 Wetlands

Wetlands are essential components of ecosystems that contribute to the high quality of the environment. Wetlands assist in flood control by controlling and storing surface water, trap sediment to improve water quality, provide habitat for a variety of plant and animal species, and function as recharge areas for groundwater resources. The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) evaluates the biological, social, hydrological and special features of wetlands to determine their relative significance in Ontario and designates certain areas as Provincially Significant Wetlands.

It is recognized that at the time of preparing this Official Plan, the Town of Fort Frances does not currently contain any designated provincially significant wetlands or evaluated wetlands. The following policies apply to wetlands, including unevaluated wetlands:

- a) All wetlands are important natural heritage features and areas and will generally be protected from incompatible development and site alteration.
- b) A wetland evaluation must be performed before any planning approvals are processed for wetlands that have characteristics or components of a significant wetland, including significant species or functions. Guidance for wetland evaluations can be found in the MNR Ontario Wetland Evaluation System – Northern Manual (2013).
- c) Any evaluated wetland that is deemed to be significant will be granted the protections afforded in this Plan, without the need for an amendment to this Plan.
- d) Any proposed development and site alteration on or adjacent to a wetland shall require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement prepared by a qualified environmental professional and in accordance with the Environmental Impact Statement Section of this Plan, to demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the natural feature and its ecological function.

8.11.1 Provincially Significant Wetlands

The Town of Fort Frances recognizes that Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSWs) must be protected and conserved. While no PSWs have been identified in the Town, the Town recognizes the potential for unevaluated wetlands to be identified as PSW in the future.

- a) Development and site alteration shall not be permitted within a PSW unless it is demonstrated, through the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by a qualified professional and in accordance with the Environmental Impact Statement Section of this Plan, that there will be no negative impact on the natural feature or its ecological function.
- b) Where development or site alteration is proposed within 120 metres adjacent to the boundaries of a PSW, the proponent shall provide the Town with an EIS, prepared by a qualified professional and in accordance with the Environmental Impact Statement



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section of this Plan, which demonstrates that there will be no negative impact on the natural feature or its ecological function. Where warranted by site and species-specific factors, development or site alteration proposals further than 120 metres from significant portions of a PSW may also require the preparation of an EIS.

- c) Any change or interference within or adjacent to a PSW may require a permit from the MNR.

8.12 Wildlife Habitat

Council recognizes that all of the undeveloped land in the Town may be suitable habitat for a variety of wildlife species. The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 defines wildlife habitat as area where plants, animals and other organisms live, and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter and space needed to sustain their populations. Significant wildlife habitat areas are not illustrated on the Schedules of this Plan, as the exact locations of these areas must be determined on a site-specific basis, in accordance with the criteria for determining significance provided in the MNR's 2010 Natural Heritage Reference Manual and the Ecoregion criteria.

- a) Wildlife habitats may include one or more of the following characteristics:
 - i. Seasonal concentrations of animals, such as deer wintering habitat;
 - ii. Rare vegetation communities and specialized habitats for wildlife;
 - iii. Habitats of species of “special concern” and other wildlife habitats, such as provincially rare plants, reptiles, amphibians, and birds, as well as nests of raptors such as osprey; and
 - iv. Animal movement corridors.
- b) Lands identified as wildlife habitat are important components of natural heritage systems in the Town of Fort Frances and must be protected from incompatible development and site alteration.
- c) A wildlife habitat evaluation must be performed by a qualified environmental professional before any planning approvals are processed for areas that have characteristics or components of a wildlife habitat. Proponents may be required to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), in accordance with the Environmental Impact Statement section of this Plan, which demonstrates that there will be no negative impacts on the natural feature or its ecological function.
- d) Any evaluated wildlife habitat that is deemed to be significant will be granted the protections afforded in this Section without the need for an amendment to this Plan.

9.0 Implementation

9.1 General

Where the policies in this Section identify requirements or standards, they are intended to express the minimum expectations for implementation of this Plan. Should specific land use policies dictate higher standards elsewhere in this Plan, then those higher standards shall prevail.

9.2 Capital Budgets

- a) During the process of allocating capital budgets to short, medium, and long-term initiatives, Council will have regard for the policies of this Plan. Where this Plan has identified priorities for change or implementation, Council will be encouraged to dedicate appropriate capital resources to these initiatives. Additionally, Council is encouraged to seek partnership capital funding to support priorities for change or implementation of this Plan's policies.
- b) Council will ensure that sufficient capital budget is made available to support the required five-year reviews of this Plan and any supporting special studies.

9.3 Community Improvement

The Planning Act allows municipalities to identify Community Improvement Project Areas, prepare Community Improvement Plans for designated Community Improvement Project Areas, and provide incentive programs which stimulate redevelopment of lands as a means to maintain the vitality of the municipality.

The Town adopted a Community Improvement Plan in 2003, as amended. The policies in this section apply to any future Community Improvement Plans or amendments to the existing Community Improvement Plan.

9.3.1 Community Improvement Plan

- a) The goal of community improvement in Fort France's Downtown is to reinforce the importance of the Town's downtown areas, aid in stimulating private sector redevelopment, and guide private sector development and redevelopment.
- b) The goal of community improvement on brownfield lands is to promote the remediation, rehabilitation, adaptive re-use, redevelopment and overall improvement of brownfield sites.



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- c) The Downtown Community Improvement Project Area includes all lands designated Mixed Use on **Schedule A-1** and **A-2** to this Plan.
 - i. The Downtown CIP may offer a range of programs, including, but not limited to: Façade Restoration and Improvement Loan Program; Development Charge Waiver/Exemption Program; Refund of Local Planning and Building Fees Program; Residential Conversion and Intensification Loan Program; Property Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Tax-Increment Grant Program; and Parking Requirements Reduction Program.
- d) The Downtown CIP will describe the eligibility criteria for obtaining funding through any of the CIP's programs. The program funding will be established by Council, but shall not place a burden on municipal finances.
- e) The Brownfield Community Improvement Project Area includes the lands designated as Industrial Employment and Highway Commercial within the Town of Fort Frances.
- f) The Brownfield CIP may offer a range of programs, including assistance for environmental site assessments and rehabilitation programs. The Brownfield CIP will describe the eligibility criteria to obtain funding through any of the CIP's programs. The program funding will be established by Council, but shall not place a burden on municipal finances.

9.3.2 New Community Improvement Plan Areas

- a) In considering the establishment of a new Community Improvement Project Area, the Town may consider any of the following criteria:
 - i. Conditions of existing buildings;
 - ii. Encouraging and incentivizing the construction of affordable housing through intensification, and housing forms that allow residents to age in place, and other housing needs of local residents, and of potential investors;
 - iii. Land use issues;
 - iv. Aesthetic issues;
 - v. Transportation or infrastructure issues;
 - vi. Natural or human-made environmental issues;
 - vii. Social or community issues;
 - viii. Economic issues; and
 - ix. Any other relevant issues which create barriers to the repair, rehabilitation or redevelopment of underutilized or dilapidated land/buildings.

- b) New Community Improvement Plans shall contain a statement of purpose, goals, objectives, a description of all programs and/or projects, an implementation plan, and a technical appendix justifying the delineation of the area and the need for the programs. The preparation and adoption of new Community Improvement Plans shall meet the minimum requirements of the Planning Act for public consultation.

9.4 Community Planning Permit System

The Town may, at an appropriate time, choose to enact a by-law to implement the provincial Community Planning Permit System (CPPS), related to the streamlining of Zoning By-law amendments, minor variances, and site plan control.

- a) A CPPS may be developed and adopted for the entirety of the Town, or a portion thereof through specific designations. Where a CPPS has been enacted and approved, the Zoning By-law and Site Plan Control By-law will not apply.
- b) At the time of adopting a CPPS, an official plan amendment will be prepared that:
 - i. Identifies the specific area proposed as a Community Planning Permit area;
 - ii. Outlines the scope of the authority that may be delegated and any limitations on the delegations, if Council intends to delegate any authority under the community planning permit by-law; and
 - iii. For each proposed community planning permit area identified:
 - 1. Contains a statement of the Town's goals, objectives, and policies in proposing a CPPS for the area;
 - 2. Sets out the types of criteria that may be included in the community planning permit by-law for determining whether any class of development or any use of land may be permitted by community planning; and
 - 3. Sets out the types of conditions that may be included in the community planning permit by-law, in accordance with the Planning Act.

9.5 Engagement

9.5.1 Objectives

- a) The Town will meet all statutory requirements for public consultation and notification in accordance with the Planning Act.
- b) The Town shall encourage development proponents to undertake public consultation as part of the development approvals process.



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9.5.2 Policies

- a) The Town shall encourage applicants of development and site alteration proposals to pre-consult with the Town. Pre-consultation will determine what is required to be submitted for a complete application and will provide an opportunity to discuss the nature of the application, the need for supporting studies, and the planning approvals process. Where appropriate, pre-consultation may also require the involvement of the Province.
- b) The Town may pass a By-law that establishes pre-consultation procedures where applicants may consult with the municipality in advance of submission of a planning application for the following: Official Plan Amendment; Zoning By-law Amendment; Plan of Subdivision; Plan of Condominium; Site Plan; Minor Variance; and any other plan at the discretion of the Town.
- c) For major planning initiatives, including but not limited to, a new Official Plan or Official Plan Review, Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review, or development of a new Community Improvement Plan or update, the Town may consider additional means of public engagement including open houses and/or workshops, social media and internet-based engagement and postings, newspaper coverage, and community surveys.
- d) Where required, notice of public meetings must be given in accordance with the Planning Act; however, the Township may consider alternate notice procedures as provided for in the Planning Act.
- e) All public meetings, open houses and/or workshops will be held at physically accessible locations.

9.5.3 Indigenous Engagement

The Town of Fort Frances recognizes and respects the cultural values and heritage of local Indigenous communities and is committed to conducting meaningful engagement respecting matters of land use planning and development within the Town.

9.5.3.1 Objectives

- a) Engage with Indigenous communities that may have an interest in planning matters in the Town.

9.5.3.2 Policies

- a) The Town shall pursue the preparation of a Community Engagement Strategy in consultation with local Indigenous communities. The Community Engagement Strategy

will outline when and how the Town, and/or development proponents, will engage with Indigenous communities on development applications and land use projects.

- b) At a minimum, the following consultation with Indigenous communities shall be required:
- i. Consultation on land use planning matters or development applications related to the lands generally identified as Special Study Area 4: Point Park on **Schedule B** of this Plan.
 - ii. Consultation on cultural heritage or archaeological studies related to proposed developments where areas of Indigenous interest or values and/or the potential for encountering Indigenous artifacts have been identified;
 - iii. Consultation prior to the approval by Council of future Official Plan amendments or site plan approval, where an Archaeological Assessment has identified the potential for encountering Indigenous artifacts; and
 - iv. Input and possible participation in Stage 2 Archaeological Assessments required for land use planning or development purposes, where a Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment indicates areas of historical interest and/or the potential for encountering Indigenous artifacts.

9.6 Interim Control By-law

Section 38 of the Planning Act provides that the Town may pass an Interim Control By-law which prohibits the use of land, buildings or structures within the Town or within a defined area.

- a) Where Council has, by By-law or Resolution, directed that a study be undertaken regarding its land use planning policies or Zoning By-law regulations for the Town or any defined area or areas thereof, it may pass an Interim Control By-law prohibiting the use of land, buildings or structures within the area defined by the By-law, except for such uses as are set out in the By-law.
- b) An Interim Control By-law shall apply for a limited period of time subject to the provisions of the Planning Act.

9.7 Land Division

It is the general intent of the Official Plan that land division shall take place by registered plan of subdivision in conformity with the Plan. Where a plan of subdivision is not necessary for the proper or orderly development of the Town, a Consent (severance) may be granted in accordance with the following applicable policies. When considering an application for a plan of subdivision or a consent, regard shall be had to the policies of this Plan, applicable provisions of the Planning Act and policies of the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024.



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9.7.1 Consents

Consents to sever land may be permitted in the Settlement Area, provided that:

- a) The consent will generally not result in the creation of more than three (3) new lots on a lot that existed prior to the date of adoption of this Plan, unless it does not it does not necessitate the creation of a new road, or the extension of municipal services.
- b) Consent applications will be evaluated on the following minimum criteria:
 - i. Consistency with the policies of this Plan;
 - ii. Consistency with a Secondary Plan (where appropriate), or guidelines, as well as compliance with the Zoning By-law;
 - iii. A Plan of Subdivision is not required;
 - iv. Size and shape of the proposed lots(s) is appropriate for the proposed use;
 - v. Parcel fronts on and has access to an existing opened and established public road that is maintained year-round and which is of an acceptable standard of construction; Resulting use of the land will be in accordance with the policies of this Plan and that no development would lead to the uneconomical expansion or extension to Township services or infrastructure;
 - vi. The impact of the consent on the ability of adjacent lots to be developed;
 - vii. The impact of the consent on the natural environment; and
 - viii. Adequacy of municipal services and utilities. Lots created by consent within the Settlement Area shall be serviced by municipal sewer and water services, where such services are available, planned or feasible. Development that would necessitate a pre-mature or uneconomical expansion of services will not be supported.
- c) As a condition of approval, proponents may be required to satisfy certain conditions as authorized by the Planning Act, including but not limited to:
 - i. The dedication of parkland or cash-in-lieu of such dedication;
 - ii. The dedication of any road widening and one foot reserves as may be required by the Town;
 - iii. Fulfillment of any financial requirements of the Town;
 - iv. A servicing Agreement pertaining to any extension or upgrading of municipal services required by the Town to accommodate the development;
 - v. Submission of a registered reference plan;

- vi. Any other Agreements which may be necessary and which may be registered on title.
- d) Notwithstanding any other policies of this Plan, consents may be granted to:
 - i. Correct lot boundaries;
 - ii. Convey land to an adjacent lot;
 - iii. Grant easements; or
 - iv. Separate buildings or structures in existence at the date of the adoption of this Plan, provided that the requirements of the Zoning By-law are met.

9.7.2 Plans of Subdivision and Plans of Condominium

Prior to considering any Land Consent (Severance) application, the Township shall establish that a plan of subdivision or a plan of condominium is not necessary for the proper and orderly development of the lands. Plans of Subdivision will be required for lot creation in situations where lot creation by consent is not appropriate. Plans of Condominium will be required for the creation of units, common elements and exclusive use common elements through the registration of a Plan of Condominium in accordance with the Condominium Act and the Planning Act.

- a) A plan of subdivision or plan of condominium shall conform to this Official Plan and shall normally be required in the following instances:
 - i. Where three (3) or more new lots are to be created on a land holding;
 - ii. Where a new road or an extension to an existing road is required;
 - iii. where an extension to trunk mains for municipal sewage and/or water services is required; and
 - iv. where it is necessary to ensure that surrounding lands are developed in a proper and orderly fashion.
- b) Applications will be evaluated on the following minimum criteria:
 - i. Consistency with the Official Plan, Secondary Plan, etc.;
 - ii. Availability of servicing without undue financial commitment by the Town;
 - iii. Suitable provision of municipal services including but not limited to, public streets, water, storm and sanitary sewers, waste collection and disposal, public and/or private utilities, fire and police protection, parks, schools, and other community facilities;
 - iv. Exposure to noise and mitigation of adverse noise impacts;
 - v. Integration with surrounding land uses;



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- vi. Integration with the transportation network;
 - vii. Impacts to, and mitigation of, negative impacts on the natural environment;
 - viii. Optimization of the supply, means of supplying, efficient use and conservation of energy;
 - ix. The provision of appropriate urban design and landscaping for the proposed development; and
 - x. Consideration of applicable Town guidelines.
- c) Lots created by subdivision or condominium within the Settlement Area shall be serviced by municipal water and sewage services.
- d) As a condition of draft plan of subdivision approval, the Town may require proponents to satisfy certain conditions prior to final approval and registration of the plan. The applicant shall be required to meet the conditions within three years, which, if not met, may cause the approval to lapse. To ensure that conditions are bound to the owner and the land, the Town shall require the proponent to enter into a Subdivision Agreement which will be registered on title.
- e) Council may by by-law, deem all or part of a plan of subdivision not to be a registered plan of subdivision in accordance with Section 50 of the Planning Act.
- f) In considering a request for an extension to draft plan of subdivision approval, the Town will work with Provincial agencies to ensure that current conditions, based on new or updated policies, guidelines and community standards, are applied.
- g) Where a draft plan of subdivision is proposed adjacent to a provincial highway, the layout of the subdivision should be designed so that the lots back onto the provincial highway, and front onto a Municipal Road.
- h) A plan of condominium will be developed with a minimum number of units to ensure adequate, reasonable, and independent operation of the condominium corporation.
- i) Common elements in condominium corporations will be permitted unless the Town requires public ownership of the lands for purposes of:
- i. Pedestrian or vehicular access, including any part of a public road allowance;
 - ii. The construction, maintenance and repair of public facilities and services;
 - iii. Safeguarding significant natural features;
 - iv. Planned trail systems; or
 - v. The proposal is not otherwise in the public interest.
- j) The Town shall encourage the preservation of existing mature trees and/or the planting of new native trees as part of any proposed plans of subdivision or condominium.

9.8 Official Plan Amendments

- a) From time to time, an amendment to the Official Plan may be necessary to provide for a proposed development. In considering the suitability of a proposed amendment, Council will consider the following criteria:
 - i. Provincial policies and plans;
 - ii. The vision, strategic directions and goals of this Plan;
 - iii. Whether the amendment creates an inappropriate precedent; and
 - iv. The Town, neighbourhood, and immediate area impacts of the proposed land use change.
- b) Where a comprehensive review has identified that changes to the Plan's policies are necessary to maintain the currency of the Plan, then Council may adopt an amendment to this Plan.
- c) Where changes to or new Provincial policies and plans come into effect that require updates to this Plan, then Council may adopt an amendment to this Plan.
- d) Where a planning study has been undertaken to address the needs of a specific area or recent trend, then Council may adopt an amendment to this Plan to implement the recommendations of the study.

9.9 Parkland Dedication

As a condition of a plan of subdivision or condominium, consent, or site plan approval, the Town is entitled to a dedication of land for park purposes, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act.

- a) Parkland dedication will normally amount to 5% of the land proposed for residential purposes and 2% of the land proposed for commercial or industrial purposes; or alternatively, be consistent with provisions for park and public recreation purposes as specified in Section 51 of the Planning Act.
- b) To ensure that parkland dedications are of an acceptable quality, parkland sites should follow these guidelines:
 - i. Be relatively level and not be required for drainage purposes, nor contain lands susceptible to flooding, having steep slopes or other physical features which are unsuitable for open space or park development;
 - ii. Be located within a neighbourhood or community context to provide convenient pedestrian and/or vehicular access;



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- iii. Provide a reasonable park configuration to accommodate the dimensions and shape of large playing fields (i.e., soccer fields, baseball fields, etc.) as appropriate;
 - iv. Have adequate access within the development; and
 - v. Be provided with basic service requirements;
- c) Cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication may be required, at a rate not to exceed the maximums as set out in the Planning Act. Cash-in-lieu of parkland may be requested by the Town for any division of land situated in an area where there is an existing public park which is capable of providing adequate facilities for both the existing population and the projected population expected. Cash-in-lieu may also be requested where the amount of land involved is small, such as when individual lots are created by consent, and, therefore, unsuited to park development.
- d) Cash-in-lieu payments shall not be construed as obligating the Town in any way to provide future works or capital improvements for the particular lands involved in the development (e.g., severance or subdivision) causing the payment to be made.
- e) The Town shall not consider accepting any required stormwater facility or area as parkland dedication.

9.10 Planning Applications – Required Information and Studies

The Municipal Planner or designate shall be responsible for determining whether a submitted planning application (e.g., Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Plan Control, Consent, Minor Variance, Subdivision, and Condominium applications) is complete pursuant to the Planning Act. If an application is submitted without adequate supporting information and/or reports, and any planning fees required by the Town, the application may be deemed incomplete.

In addition to the information and materials required under the Planning Act and any other legislation or regulation, additional information in the form of studies or assessments may be required to consider a planning application complete.

The additional information will be required as part of a complete application under the Planning Act in order to ensure that all the relevant and required information pertaining to a development application is available at the time of submission to enable the Town to make informed decisions within the prescribed time periods. It also ensures that the public and other stakeholders or interested parties have access to all relevant information early in the planning process.

9.10.1 Required Studies

Support studies may be required as part of planning studies or development proposals. The support studies, and when they are needed, are generally described below; however, the Town may refine the scope or requires that a support study be undertaken based on its discretion, the context of the proposed development, or input from the appropriate agencies.

- a) The additional information or material that may be required by the Town to support a complete planning application includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - i. Air Quality Report;
 - ii. Archaeological Assessment, including a Marine Archaeological Assessment;
 - iii. Building Elevations;
 - iv. Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment or Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report;
 - v. Energy Assessment Report;
 - vi. Environmental Impact Statement/Study;
 - vii. Environmental Site Assessment;
 - viii. Financial Impact Study;
 - ix. Grading and Drainage Plan;
 - x. Green Space Assessment;
 - xi. Flooding Hazard Analysis;
 - xii. Hydrology, Soils and/or Geotechnical Study;
 - xiii. Lakeshore Capacity Assessment
 - xiv. Land Use Needs Assessment
 - xv. Landscape Plan;
 - xvi. Market Impact Analysis;
 - xvii. Natural Features Restoration Plan;
 - xviii. Noise/Vibration Study;
 - xix. Parking Demand Analysis;
 - xx. Pedestrian Circulation Plan;
 - xxi. Planning Justification Report;
 - xxii. Public Consultation Strategy;
 - xxiii. Servicing Study;



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- xxiv. Site Plan and/or Concept Plan;
 - xxv. Slope Stability Study;
 - xxvi. Soil, Environmental Audit, Record of Site Condition;
 - xxvii. Stormwater Management Study;
 - xxviii. Streetscape Design Study;
 - xxix. Sub-Watershed Study;
 - xxx. Urban Design Brief;
 - xxxi. Traffic Impact Study or Brief;
 - xxxii. Tree Inventory and Preservation Study/Plan;
 - xxxiii. Wildlife Habitat Evaluation; and
 - xxxiv. Wildland Fire Hazards Assessment;
- b) The information and material submitted shall be prepared by a qualified professional to the satisfaction of the Town, retained by and at the expense of the applicant.
 - c) The Town shall review all reports and studies and may also require a peer review by an appropriate public agency or by a professional consultant retained by the Town at the applicant's expense.
 - d) The findings and recommendations of submitted reports and studies shall be implemented through amendments to the Official Plan and where appropriate, Secondary Plans, Zoning By-law and other plans produced under the Planning Act (such as a Plan of Subdivision or Site Plan).

9.10.2 Stormwater Management Plan

A Stormwater Management Plan provides for the maintenance of the stormwater functions of watercourses based on the impacts of the site-specific or area specific development. Where a Plan of Subdivision, Site Plan or applicable plan under the Planning Act is being undertaken, a Stormwater Management Plan may also be required, based on terms of reference developed in consultation with the Town.

9.10.3 Environmental Impact Study

An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is a technical assessment of a development proposal's environmental impacts on natural heritage features and functions.

- a) An EIS shall be prepared and signed by a qualified professional. An EIS for lands within, or adjacent to, the Environmental Protection Overlay on **Schedule B** shall be prepared to

the satisfaction of the Town, in consultation with the appropriate Provincial agency. The EIS shall include but not be limited to:

- i. A description of the existing natural environment, including natural features and ecological functions, that may be affected by the proposed development;
 - ii. A description of the potential impacts of the proposed development on the natural features and the ecological functions for which the area is identified;
 - iii. Suggested development alternatives that would avoid these impacts or, if impacts cannot be avoided, recommended mitigation measures, including proposed implementation methods; and
 - iv. Recommended monitoring activities.
- b) Where required, no planning approval will be granted until an EIS has been completed to the satisfaction of the Municipal Planner. Where necessary, other agencies or individuals with environmental expertise may be consulted to assist in the review of an EIS.
- c) Where significant woodlands, significant wildlife habitat, significant valleylands or other natural heritage features are not designated, development and site alterations shall not be permitted for:
- i. Any development permitted under the policies of this Plan within the feature;
 - ii. Any development permitted under the policies of this Plan within 120 metres of the feature; unless an EIS demonstrates that there will be no negative impacts on the natural heritage features or on its ecological functions.
- d) In cases where the development constitutes a relatively minor undertaking (e.g., construction on a single residential lot), or where the proposed development would result in minor encroachment of the adjacent lands zone, Town planning staff may exercise discretion and request that the proponent prepare a scoped EIS. This typically involves a simple checklist approach of planning issues that only addresses the key issues identified at the initial assessment stage.

9.10.4 Transportation Impact Study or Brief

A Transportation Impact Study provides for the maintenance of the Town transportation system given the demands in different transportation modes generated by a proposed development. Where an Official Plan Amendment, Secondary Plan, Plan of Subdivision, Site Plan or other plans produced under the Planning Act are being undertaken, a Transportation Impact Study or Brief may also be required, based on terms of reference developed by the Town.



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9.10.5 Geotechnical Subsurface Investigation

A Geotechnical Subsurface Investigation provides for confirmation of the load-bearing capacity of soils to support development. Where a Plan of Subdivision, Site Plan or other plans produced under the Planning Act is required, based on terms of reference developed by the Town.

9.10.6 Archaeological Assessment

An Archaeological Assessment provides for the documentation, protection, and conservation of the Town's archaeological resources. Archaeological Assessments shall be prepared in accordance with the Archaeological Resources section of this Plan.

9.10.7 Wetland Evaluation Study

A Wetland Evaluation Study provides for the delineation of a wetland or wetlands based on field survey of the wetland feature(s). A Wetland Evaluation Study may be required where an Environmental Impact Study is required. A Wetland Evaluation Study will be undertaken by qualified persons.

9.10.8 Record of Site Condition

A Record of Site Condition, prepared and filed in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act, confirms the status of a site or lands with respect to contamination. Where any development is proposed, a Record of Site Condition may be required.

The findings and recommendations of a Record of Site Condition shall be implemented through a Plan of Subdivision, Site Plan or other plans produced under the Planning Act, or Building Permit and, where required, Amendments to the Official Plan, Zoning By-law and/or other plans.

9.10.9 Noise and/or Vibration Study

A Noise and/or Vibration Study provides assurance that the proposed development meets Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' (MECP) D-Series Guidelines and other relevant guidelines for the protection of sensitive land uses from noise and/or vibration. Where a Plan of Subdivision or Site plan is being undertaken, a Noise and/or Vibration Study may also be required, based on terms of reference developed by the Town in consultation with the MECP.

9.10.10 Planning Justification Report

A Planning Justification Report shall be required to support any proposal for development or site alteration and should demonstrate how the proposal meets the policies and objectives of this Plan. Where appropriate, the Report should also provide a synthesis of planning and development issues for a site or area, where the proposed development requires a number of

the above-noted studies. The Report should synthesize and integrate the various findings and recommendations of the supporting technical studies, and provide a final planning justification for the proposed development.

9.10.11 Other Studies

The Town may require that any other special studies be undertaken in support of a development proposal. Where possible, the Town will advise of the need for special studies during pre-consultation with the proponent regarding the proposed development. Any special study may be subject to a peer review, the cost of which will be recovered by the Town from the proponent.

9.11 Planning Studies

The Town may undertake planning studies from time-to-time, in order to monitor progress of planning initiatives, understand new trends, ensure an appropriate response is provided for issues which may arise, or for any other purpose deemed suitable by the Municipal Planner, Committee, or Council. The Town shall dedicate sufficient resources, or seek partnership funding, for planning studies so that the work can be undertaken with appropriate professional diligence. The Town may implement the findings of a planning study with a follow-up Official Plan Amendment, a Secondary Plan, a Zoning By-law Amendment, a By-law or any mechanism deemed appropriate.

Should other agencies undertake planning studies which may have implications to Fort Frances, the Town shall encourage that its interests be represented on an advisory committee, steering committee, etc. If deemed appropriate, the Town may also contribute resources to assist with the study.

9.12 Secondary Plans

A Secondary Plan provides detailed land use direction and guidance for the development or redevelopment of a specific area of the municipality. Examples of situations which may warrant a Secondary Plan process include, but are not limited to:

- a) Larger areas identified as potential for new development, such as the lands that formerly served as the Fort Frances Mill and Shevlin Woodyard;
- b) Older residential, non-residential or mixed-use areas which are in transition or experiencing land use compatibility issues;
- c) Residential, non-residential or mixed uses areas which are experiencing pressure for land use conversions or intensification; and
- d) Areas containing properties or Heritage Conservation Districts which have been designated for heritage protection under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.



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9.12.1 Policies

- a) The Secondary Plan process and resulting Secondary Plan will address, as appropriate:
 - i. Land use;
 - ii. Natural heritage and the environment;
 - iii. Natural and human-made risks;
 - iv. Transportation;
 - v. Water and wastewater servicing;
 - vi. Stormwater management, including preparation of a subwatershed or scoped subwatershed study as deemed appropriate by the Town;
 - vii. Mitigation of negative impacts;
 - viii. Climate change adaptation and resilience;
 - ix. Sustainable design;
 - x. Urban design;
 - xi. Archaeology, built, and cultural heritage;
 - xii. Local context;
 - xiii. Utilities;
 - xiv. Phasing of development; and
 - xv. Costing (i.e., Private and/or public).
- b) Any future Secondary Plans will be undertaken with appropriate consultation with the public, stakeholders, and local Indigenous communities.
- c) At a minimum, a Statutory Public Open House and Statutory Public Meeting as required by the Planning Act will be held prior to consideration of adoption of the Secondary Plan by Council.

9.13 Site Plan Control

- a) Council shall pass a by-law under the provisions of Section 41 of the Planning Act to designate the entire area of the Town of Fort Frances as a Site Plan Control Area.
- b) The site plan control process may be used to address land use matters including:
 - i. Providing a high standard of landscape amenity, with consideration for accessibility, wayfinding, and buffering of service areas, while retaining natural features, wherever possible;

- ii. Ensuring a safe, functional, and visually attractive environment;
 - iii. Minimizing impacts on abutting uses;
 - iv. Delivering universal accessibility to community facilities and services;
 - v. Providing for safe and attractive access, parking and loading for vehicles and all forms of active transportation;
 - vi. Protecting existing mature trees and/or planting new native trees;
 - vii. Controlling stormwater and, where applicable, securing necessary service or utility easements, road widenings, and/or parkland or payment-in-lieu thereof; and
 - viii. Providing safe and desirable on-site lighting.
- c) All types of development or redevelopment shall be subject to Site Plan Control, with the exception of:
- i. Residential development containing ten (10) units or less, that is located:
 - 1. More than 120 metres of wetland, lake, or river (including creeks and streams); and
 - 2. More than 300 metres of a railway line including active, heavy rail, but does not include light rail or decommissioned or abandoned railway lines.
 - ii. Additions or renovations thereto;
 - iii. Public utilities and utility installations;
 - iv. Agricultural uses; and
 - v. The operation of licensed pits and quarries.
- d) The following matters are not subject to site plan control:
- i. Interior design;
 - ii. Exterior design, except to the extent that it is a matter relating to exterior access to a building that will contain affordable housing units or to any part of such a building;
 - iii. The layout of interior areas, excluding interior walkways, stairs, elevators and escalators; and
 - iv. The manner of construction and standards for construction.
- e) Plans showing the location of all buildings, structures, and facilities to be developed, and drawings showing plan, elevation, and cross-section views for each building to be erected, will be required as part of the Site Plan Approval process. In accordance with



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the Planning Act, the requirement for the submission of drawings shall also include residential buildings containing less than twenty-five dwelling units.

- f) The following will be considered in the evaluation of applications:
- i. Location, massing, and conceptual design of buildings and structures;
 - ii. Location and design of vehicular and pedestrian access points;
 - iii. Location and design of off-street parking and loading facilities;
 - iv. Facilities for on-site pedestrian and vehicular circulation;
 - v. Road widening;
 - vi. Location and design of on-site exterior lighting, landscaping, buffering, fencing, outdoor storage, and garbage disposal facilities;
 - vii. Measures to minimize any loss of sunlight and privacy to adjacent properties;
 - viii. Location and design of outdoor recreational areas;
 - ix. Location of external facilities and works;
 - x. Easements over, and grading of, lands;
 - xi. Provisions for stormwater management and drainage;
 - xii. Facilities designed to have regard for accessibility for persons with disabilities;
 - xiii. Matters relating to exterior design including elements pertaining to character, scale, appearance and design features of buildings and their sustainable design;
 - xiv. The sustainable design elements on any adjoining roadway under the Town's jurisdiction, including trees, shrubs, hedges, plantings or other ground cover, permeable paving materials, street furniture, curb ramps, waste and recycling containers and bicycle parking facilities; and
 - xv. Provision for the Town to enter into one or more Agreements with applicants, to ensure that development proceeds in accordance with the proposal and Town requirements.
- g) As a condition of Site Plan Approval, the Town may require proponents to satisfy certain conditions. The applicant may be required to meet the conditions within a specified time period, which, if not met, may cause the approval to lapse. To ensure that conditions are bound to the owner and the land, the Town shall require the proponent to enter into a Site Plan Control Agreement which will be registered on title.

9.14 Temporary Use By-law

Provided the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan are maintained, Council may pass By-laws to authorize the temporary use of land, buildings or structures for a purpose that is otherwise prohibited by this Plan, for renewable periods not exceeding three (3) years, in accordance with the Planning Act.

- a) In enacting a Temporary Use By-law, Council shall have regard for the following matters:
 - i. Compatibility of the proposed use with surrounding land uses;
 - ii. Any requirement for temporary buildings or structures in associates with the proposed use;
 - iii. Any requirement for temporary connection to municipal services and utilities;
 - iv. The potential impact of the proposed use on transportation facilities and traffic in the immediate area;
 - v. Access requirements for the proposed use;
 - vi. Parking requirements for the proposed use, and the ability to provide adequate parking on-site; and
 - vii. Any potential long-term impacts associated with the proposed temporary use.

9.15 Review of Official Plan

This Official Plan is not a static document. Although it provides some degree of flexibility, the Plan will be reviewed no later than ten (10) years after it comes into effect as a new Official Plan, and not less than every five (5) years thereafter, pursuant to Section 26 of the Planning Act. Review should ensure that the policies are relevant and appropriate, in light of changing conditions, and reflect a local interpretation of provincial policy statements.

The scope of the comprehensive review will be discussed with Council and may be discussed with stakeholders through public consultation.

The comprehensive review will include a discussion of Provincial policies and plans and identify where updates to the Official Plan are needed to ensure conformity to provincial policies and plans.

9.16 Zoning By-law

- a) The Zoning By-law is the primary tool for implementing the Official Plan. In accordance with the Planning Act, the Zoning By-law shall be updated so that it is in conformity with the Official Plan, within three (3) years of the Official Plan coming into effect.



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- b) The Zoning By-law shall contain regulations to control the amount and type of development with respect to matters such as:
- i. Permitted uses;
 - ii. Location of uses;
 - iii. Lot areas and dimensions;
 - iv. Floor areas;
 - v. Siting of development relative to the lot;
 - vi. The portion of the site which can be occupied by buildings or structures;
 - vii. Densities of residential land uses;
 - viii. Densities of non-residential land uses;
 - ix. The bulk and massing character of buildings;
 - x. Requirements of parking and loading areas;
 - xi. Requirements for landscaping; and
 - xii. Any other such regulations or requirements which may be allowed to be controlled through a Zoning By-law as enabled by the Planning Act.

9.16.1 Holding Provisions

The holding provision is an implementation tool pursuant to the Planning Act that can be included to an amending by-law to ensure local municipal services and infrastructure are in place. A Holding (H) symbol will supersede the Town's Zoning By-law.

- a) The Zoning By-law shall incorporate provisions for Holding Zones which may be applied on lands where the lands are pre-zoned for a use, but presently there exist a number of conditions which must be satisfied prior to development. Lands subject to a Holding Zone will be identified with an "H" symbol beside the land use symbol on the Zoning map.
- b) Holding Zone provisions will be applied where there is a need for additional conditions which cannot be applied on a pre-zoning basis or through the Site Plan Approval process.
- c) To place a holding provision on lands, conditions will be identified in a Development Agreement and must be met before the final use of the land is permitted, which may include the following:
 - i. Adequate infrastructure is available, as required to service the proposed development;

- ii. Completion of transportation and infrastructure improvements;
 - iii. Fulfillment of financial obligations related to open space, recreational and community services and facilities;
 - iv. Environmental remediation or mitigation measures;
 - v. Natural environmental hazard management;
 - vi. Protection of the natural environment including tree preservation;
 - vii. Professional or technical studies to assess potential development impacts;
 - viii. Phasing of development;
 - ix. Draft plan subdivision and/or site plan control approval;
 - x. Approval of a Secondary Plan and/or Block Plan encompassing one or more parcels of land;
 - xi. Provision of affordable and attainable housing, where appropriate;
 - xii. Measures to protect cultural heritage and archaeological resources; and,
 - xiii. Entering into legal agreements, including a subdivision agreement, and other agreements pursuant to the Planning Act, to secure any of the matters required to satisfy the conditions of removal of the holding provision.
- d) The Zoning By-law may specify interim uses which may be deemed compatible and/or permissible, even though lands are subject to a Holding Zone.
- e) The Zoning By-law will be amended to remove the Holding symbol when it has been determined that the conditions requiring the Holding have been satisfied. Such conditions may include, but are not limited to:
- i. Completion of special studies related to the area, or site's opportunities or constraints, or the impact of development and mitigation thereof;
 - ii. The grading of the site;
 - iii. The provision of road infrastructure, including, but not limited to, the road base, streetlights, signage and traffic control signals;
 - iv. The provision of water, wastewater, or stormwater servicing for the lands;
 - v. Satisfying certain financial requirements of the municipality; and
 - vi. Any other matter provided for by the provisions of the Planning Act.
- f) Consultation related to lifting of the Holding Zone will be done in accordance with the Planning Act.



10.0 Interpretation

10.1 Land Use Boundaries

The boundaries between land use areas designated in **Schedules A-1** and **A-2** shall be considered as general only and are not intended to define the exact limits of such areas. Except in the case of roads, railways and other definite physical barriers, minor boundary adjustments may be made for the purpose of any Zoning By-law without necessitating an amendment to this Plan. Other than such minor adjustments, no areas or zones shall be created that do not conform with this Plan in respect to land use.

When determining the boundary of any designation as shown on any Schedule forming part of this Official Plan, the following provisions shall apply:

- a) A boundary indicated as following a highway, street or lane shall be the centre line of such highway, street or lane. In the event that a street or lane which forms the boundary between such designations is closed, the boundary between such designations shall be construed as the former centre line of the said closed street or lane.
- b) A boundary indicated as following a right-of-way of a railway or any electoral, gas or oil transmission line shall be the centre line of such right-of-way.
- c) A boundary associated with a natural heritage feature or area can be more accurately confirmed in the field through an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) and/or through confirmation by the appropriate agency. Provided the general intent of the Plan is maintained, minor adjustments to boundaries will not require an amendment to this Plan.
- d) A boundary indicated as approximately following lot lines shown on a registered plan of subdivision or lot and concession lines shall follow such lines.
- e) A boundary indicated as following a closed road, land or railway shall imply that the property formerly in the said road, land or railway shall be included within the designation of the adjoining property on either side of the said closed road, land or railway. In the event that the said road, land or railway was a designation between two or more different designations, the new boundary shall be the former centre line of the said closed road, land or railway.
- f) Where a boundary is indicated as approximately parallel to a street line or other feature indicated in policies (a) or (b) of this Subsection, and the distance from such street line or other feature is not indicated, and policies (d) or (e) above is not applicable, such boundary shall be construed as being parallel to such street line or other feature and the distance there from shall be determined according to the scale shown on **Schedules A-1** and **A-2**.
- g) A boundary indicated as following the limits of the Town shall follow such limits.

10.2 Road Location

The location of roads as indicated on the Schedules to this Plan, shall be considered as approximate only. Amendments to this Plan, therefore, will not be required in order to make minor adjustments or deviations to the location of roads, provided that the general intent of this Plan is maintained.

10.3 Plan Intent

The Plan is designed to express the general intent of the Town and it may be interpreted not in a narrow technical manner, but rather, from a long-term conceptual point of view. Interpretation of the intent of this Plan, or any part thereof, will be made by Council after receiving the advice of staff.



11.0 Definitions

Access standards

Methods or procedures to ensure safe vehicular and pedestrian movement, and access for the maintenance and repair of protection works, during times of flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or other water-related hazards.

Adjacent lands

Lands contiguous to a specific natural heritage feature or area where it is likely that development or site alteration would have a negative impact on the feature or area.

Adverse effects

As defined in the Environmental Protection Act, means one or more of:

- a) Impairment of the quality of the natural environment for any use that can be made of it;
- b) injury or damage to property or plant or animal life;
- c) Harm or material discomfort to any person; An adverse effect on the health of any person;
- d) Impairment of the safety of any person;
- e) Rendering any property or plant or animal life unfit for human use;
- f) Loss of enjoyment of normal use of property; and
- g) Interference with normal conduct of business.

Affordable

In the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:

- a) Housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
- b) Housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area.

In the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:

- a) a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or
- b) a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.

Agricultural uses

Means the growing of crops, including nursery and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment.

Agriculture-related uses

Farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are small scale and directly related to the farm operation and are required in close proximity to the farm operation.

Archaeological resources

Includes artifacts, archaeological sites and marine archaeological sites. The identification and evaluation of such resources are based upon archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

Areas of archaeological potential

Areas with the likelihood to contain archaeological resources. Criteria for determining archaeological potential are established by the Province. Archaeological potential is confirmed through archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

Areas of mineral potential

Areas favourable to the discovery of mineral deposits due to geology, the presence of known mineral deposits or other technical evidence.

Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)

Areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study or education.

Brownfield sites

Undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.

Built heritage resources

One or more significant buildings, structures, monuments, installations or remains associated with architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military history and identified as being important to a community. These resources may be identified through designation or heritage conservation easement under the Ontario Heritage Act, or listed by the Town, Province or federal government.



Section 11.0 Definitions

Comprehensive review

An Official Plan Review which is initiated by a planning authority, or an Official Plan Amendment which is initiated or adopted by a planning authority, which:

- a) Is based on a review of population and growth projections and which reflect projections and allocations by upper-tier municipalities and provincial plans, considers alternative directions for growth, and determines how best to accommodate this growth while protecting provincial interests;
- b) Utilizes opportunities to accommodate projected growth through intensification and redevelopment;
- c) Confirms that the lands to be developed do not comprise specialty crop areas;
- d) Is integrated with planning for infrastructure and public service facilities; and
- e) Considers cross-jurisdictional issues.

Conserved

The identification, protection, use and/or management of cultural heritage and archaeological resources in such a way that their heritage values, attributes and integrity are retained. This may be addressed through a conservation plan or heritage impact assessment.

Cultural heritage landscape

A defined geographical area of heritage significance which has been modified by human activities and is valued by a community. It involves a grouping(s) of individual heritage features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites and natural elements, which together form a significant type of heritage form, distinctive from that of its constituent elements or parts. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act; and villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, railways and industrial complexes of cultural heritage value.

Development

The creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the construction of buildings and structures including an addition or alteration, requiring approval under the Planning Act, but does not include:

- a) Activities that create or maintain infrastructure authorized under an environmental assessment process; or,
- b) Works subject to the Drainage Act.

Disability

Means any one of the following:

- a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the

foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) A mental disorder, or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”).

Ecological function

The natural processes, products or services that living and non-living environments provide or perform within or between species, ecosystems and landscapes. These may include biological, physical and socio-economic interactions.

Employment area

Means those areas designated in the Official Plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.

Endangered species

A species that is listed or categorized as an “Endangered Species” on the MNDNRF’s official Species at Risk list, as updated and amended from time to time.

Erosion hazard

The loss of land, due to human or natural processes, that poses a threat to life and property. The erosion hazard limit is determined using considerations that include the 100-year erosion rate (the average annual rate of recession extended over an one hundred year time span), an allowance for slope stability, and an erosion/erosion access allowance.

Fish

As defined in the Fisheries Act, c. F-14, as amended, includes fish, shellfish, crustaceans, and marine animals, at all stages of their lifecycles.



Section 11.0 Definitions

Fish habitat

As defined in the Fisheries Act, c. F-14, means spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes.

Flood plain

For river stream, and small inland lake systems, means the area, usually low lands adjoining a watercourse, which has been or may be subject to flooding hazards.

Flooding hazard

The inundation, under the conditions specified below, of areas adjacent to a shoreline or a river or stream system and not ordinarily covered by water:

- a) Along the shorelines of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System and large inland lakes, the flooding hazard limit is based on the 100-year flood level plus an allowance for wave up rush and other water-related hazards;
- b) Along river, stream and small inland lake systems, the flooding hazard limit is the greater of:
 - i. the flood resulting from the rainfall actually experienced during a major storm such as the Timmins storm (1961), transposed over a specific watershed and combined with the local conditions, where evidence suggests that the storm event could have potentially occurred over watersheds in the general area;
 - ii. the 100-year flood; and
 - iii. a flood which is greater than 1.or 2.whichwasactually experienced in a particular watershed or portion thereof as a result of ice jams and which has been approved as the standard for that specific area by the Minister of Natural Resource (MNR)

Except where the use of the 100-year flood or the actually experienced event has been approved by the Minister of Natural Resources as the standard for a specific watershed (where the past history of flooding supports the lowering of the standard).

Floodproofing standard

The combination of measures incorporated into the basic design and/or construction of buildings, structures, or properties to reduce or eliminate flooding hazards, wave uprush and other water-related hazards along the shorelines of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River System and large inland lakes, and flooding hazards along river, stream and small inland lake systems.

Ground water feature

Refers to water-related features in the earth's subsurface, including recharge/discharge areas, water tables, aquifers and unsaturated zones that can be defined by surface and subsurface hydrogeologic investigations.

Hazardous lands

Property or lands that could be unsafe for development due to naturally occurring processes. Along the shorelines of large inland lakes, this means the land, including that covered by water, between a defined offshore distance or depth and the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard, erosion hazard or dynamic beach hazard limits. Along river, stream and small inland lake systems, this means the land, including that covered by water, to the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard or erosion hazard limits.

Hazardous sites

Property or lands that could be unsafe for development and site alteration due to naturally occurring hazards. These may include unstable soils (e.g., sensitive marine clays [leda], organic soils) or unstable bedrock (karst topography).

Hazardous substances

Substances which, individually, or in combination with other substances, are normally considered to pose a danger to public health, safety and the environment. These substances generally include a wide array of materials that are toxic, ignitable, corrosive, reactive, radioactive or pathological.

Heritage attributes

The principal features, characteristics, context and appearance that contribute to the cultural heritage significance of a protected heritage property.

Hydrologic function

The functions of the hydrological cycle that include the occurrence, circulation, distribution and chemical and physical properties of water on the surface of the land, in the soil and underlying rocks, and in the atmosphere, and water's interaction with the environment including its relation to living things.

Individual on-site sewage services

Individual, autonomous sewage disposal systems within the meaning of s.8.1.2, O.Reg. 403/97, under the Building Code Act, 1992 that are owned, operated and managed by the owner of the property upon which the system is located.



Section 11.0 Definitions

Individual on-site water services

Individual, autonomous water supply systems that are owned, operated and managed by the owner of the property upon which the system is located.

Industrial, light (Class I)

Means a building or part of a building that produces, manufactures, assembles or stores a product and has a low probability of fugitive emissions (e.g., noise, odour, dust and vibration). Such industries operate primarily in the daytime with infrequent movement of products and minimal outside storage.

Industrial, medium (Class II)

Means a building or part of a building where a product is produced, manufactured, assembled, or stored, and that have point source emissions with minimal risk of adverse effects, and that may have occasional outputs of fugitive emissions (e.g., noise, odour, dust, and/or vibration). Shift operations may occur along with frequent movement of products. Outside storage of raw material, waste and/or finished products may be a normal part of the operation.

Industrial, heavy (Class III)

Means a place of business for uses characterized as having regular emissions such as noise, smoke, odour, fumes and/or vibrations. Such industries may operate continuously with frequent movement of products and extensive outside storage.

Infrastructure

Physical structures (facilities and corridors) that form the foundation for development. Infrastructure includes: sewage and water systems, septage treatment systems, waste management systems, electric power generation and communications/telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors and transmission, facilities, oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

Intensification

The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- a) Redevelopment, including the reuse of brownfield sites;
- b) The development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- c) Infill development; and
- d) The expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

Mineral aggregate operation

Lands under license or permit, other than for wayside pits and quarries, issued in accordance with the Aggregate Resources Act, or successors thereto;

- e) For lands not designated under the Aggregate Resources Act, established pits and quarries that are not in contravention of municipal zoning by Zoning By-laws and including adjacent land under agreement with or owned by the operator, to permit continuation of the operation; and
- f) Associated facilities used in extraction, transport, beneficiation, processing or recycling of mineral aggregate resources and derived products such as asphalt and concrete, or the production of secondary related products.

Mineral aggregate resources

Gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone, sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other material prescribed under the Aggregate Resources Act suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes but does not include metallic ores, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, wollastonite, mine tailings or other material prescribed under the Mining Act.

Municipal sewage services

A sewage works within the meaning of Section 1 of the Ontario Water Resources Act that is owned or operated by a municipality.

Municipal water services

A municipal drinking-water system within the meaning of Section 2 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002.

Natural heritage features and areas

Features and areas, including significant wetlands, significant coastal wetlands, fish habitat, significant woodlands south and east of the Canadian Shield, significant valleylands south and east of the Canadian Shield, significant habitat of endangered species and threatened species, significant wildlife habitat, and significant areas of natural and scientific interest, which are important for their environmental and social values as a legacy of the natural landscapes of an area.

Natural heritage system

A system made up of natural heritage features and areas, linked by natural corridors which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species and ecosystems. These systems can include lands that have been restored and areas with the potential to be restored to a natural state.

Negative impacts

Degradation to the quality and quantity of water, sensitive surface water features and sensitive ground water features, and their related hydrologic functions, due to single, multiple or successive development or site alteration activities. In regard to fish habitat, the harmful



Section 11.0 Definitions

alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat, except where, in conjunction with the appropriate authorities, it has been authorized under the Fisheries Act, using the guiding principle of no net loss of productive capacity. In regard to other natural heritage features and areas, degradation that threatens the health and integrity of the natural features or ecological functions for which an area is identified due to single, multiple or successive development or site alteration activities.

Portable asphalt plant

A facility with equipment designed to heat and dry aggregate and to mix aggregate with bituminous asphalt to produce asphalt paving material, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process, which is not of permanent construction, but which is to be dismantled at the completion of the construction project.

Portable concrete plant

A building or structure with equipment designed to mix cementing materials, aggregate, water and admixtures to produce concrete, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process which is not of permanent construction, but which is designed to be dismantled at the completion of the construction project.

Protected heritage property

Means property designated under Parts IV, V or VI of the Ontario Heritage Act; property subject to a heritage conservation easement under Parts II or IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; and property identified by the Province and prescribed public bodies as provincial heritage property under the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties; property protected under federal legislation, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Protection works standards

The combination of non-structural or structural works and allowances for slope stability and flooding/erosion to reduce the damage caused by flooding hazards, erosion hazards and other water-related hazards, and to allow access for their maintenance and repair.

Redevelopment

The creation of new units, uses, or lots on previously developed land in existing communities, including brownfield sites.

Residential intensification

Intensification of a property, site or area which results in a net increase in residential units or accommodation and includes:

- a) Redevelopment, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
- b) The development of vacant or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;

- c) Infill development;
- d) The conversion or expansion of existing industrial, commercial and institutional buildings for residential use; and
- e) The conversion or expansion of existing residential buildings to create new residential units or accommodation, including accessory apartments, secondary suites and rooming houses.

Sensitive

In regard to surface water features and ground water features, means areas that are particularly susceptible to impacts from activities or events including, but not limited to, water withdrawals, and additions of pollutants.

Sensitive land uses

Buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more adverse effects from contaminant discharges generated by a nearby major facility. Sensitive land uses may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to: residences, daycare centres, educational institutions, and health facilities.

Shorelands

Means areas seasonally inundated by water.

Significant

In regard to wetlands, coastal wetlands and areas of natural and scientific interest, an area identified as provincially significant by the MNR using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time.

In regard to the habitat of endangered species and threatened species, means the habitat, as approved by the MNR, that is necessary for the maintenance, survival, and/or the recovery of naturally occurring or reintroduced populations of endangered species or threatened species, and where those areas of occurrence are occupied or habitually occupied by the species during all or any part(s) of its life cycle.

In regard to woodlands, an area which is ecologically important in terms of features such as species composition, age of trees and stand history; functionally important due to its contribution to the broader landscape because of its location, size or due to the amount of forest cover in the planning area; or economically important due to site quality, species composition, or past management history.

In regard to other features, ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system.



Section 11.0 Definitions

In regard to mineral potential, means an area identified as provincially significant through comprehensive studies prepared using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time, such as the Provincially Significant Mineral Potential Index.

In regard to potential for petroleum resources, means an area identified as provincially significant through comprehensive studies prepared using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time.

In regard to cultural heritage and archaeology, resources that are valued for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, an event, or a people.

Site alteration

Activities, such as grading, excavation and the placement of fill that would change the landform and natural vegetative characteristics of a site.

Special needs

Means any housing, including dedicated facilities, in whole or in part, that is used by people who have specific needs beyond economic needs, including but not limited to, needs such as mobility requirements or support functions required for daily living. Examples of special needs housing may include, but are not limited to, housing for persons with disabilities such as physical, sensory or mental health disabilities, and housing for older persons.

Surface water feature

Water-related features on the earth's surface, including headwaters, rivers, stream channels, inland lakes, seepage areas, recharge/discharge areas, springs, wetlands, and associated riparian lands that can be defined by their soil moisture, soil type, vegetation or topographic characteristics.

Threatened species

A species that is listed or categorized as a "Threatened Species" on the MNR official species at risk list, as updated and amended from time to time.

Utilities

All public and/or private utilities (including, but not exclusive of cable television, hydro, communications/telecommunications, Canada Post etc.) or any similar works or systems necessary to the public interest.

Valleylands

A natural area that occurs in a valley or other landform depression that has water flowing through or standing for some period of the year.

Vulnerable

Surface and groundwater that can be easily changed or impacted by activities or events, either by virtue of their vicinity to such activities or events or by permissive pathways between such activities and the surface and/or groundwater.

Watershed

An area that is drained by a river and its tributaries.

Wayside pits and quarries

A temporary pit or quarry opened and used by or for a public authority solely for the purpose of a particular project or contract of road construction and not located on the road right-of-way.

Wetlands

Lands that are seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water, as well as lands where the water table is close to or at the surface. In either case the presence of abundant water has caused the formation of hydric soils and has favoured the dominance of either hydrophytic plants or water tolerant plants. The four major types of wetlands are swamps, marshes, bogs and fens. Periodically soaked or wetlands being used for agricultural purposes which no longer exhibit wetland characteristics are not considered to be wetlands for the purposes of this definition.

Wildlife habitat

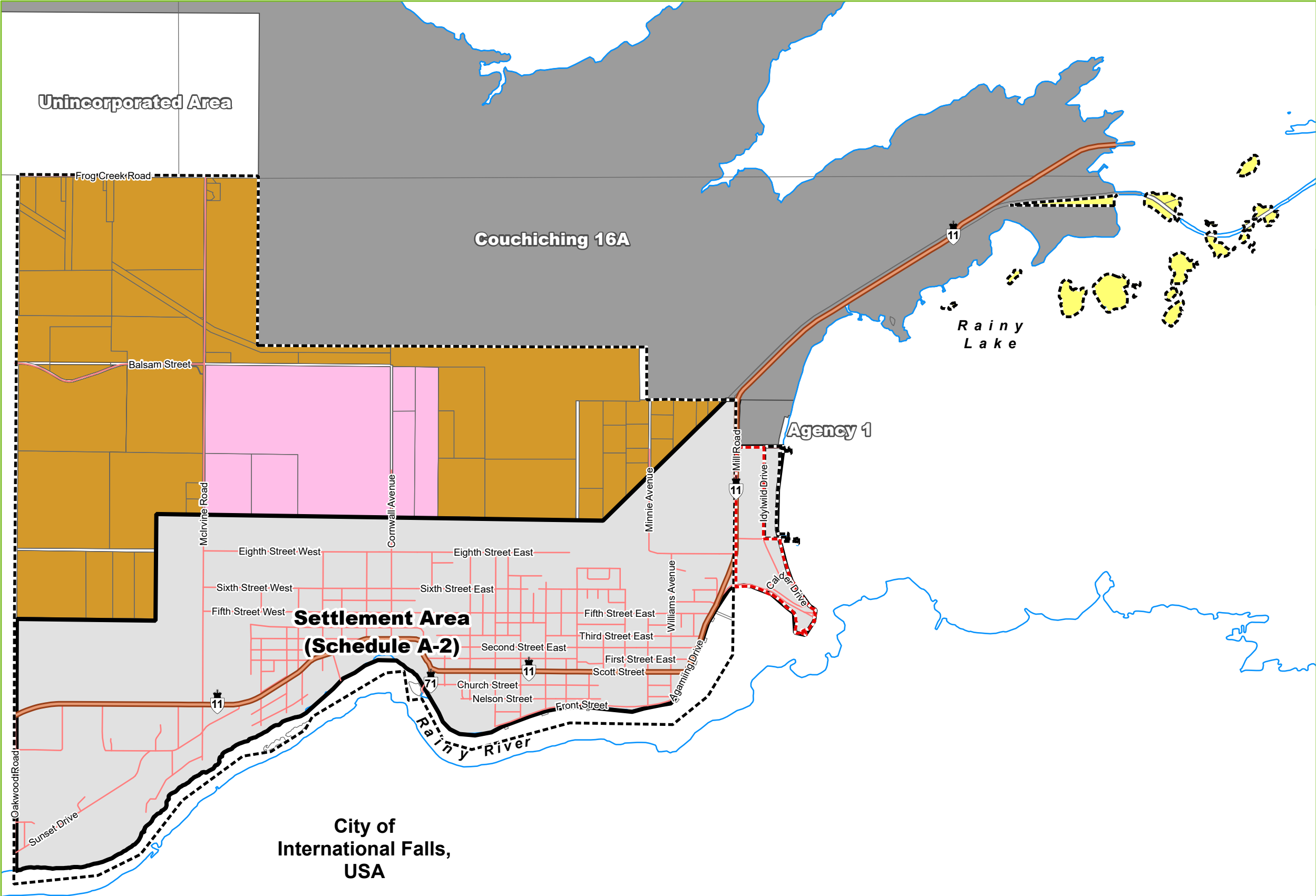
Areas where plants, animals and other organisms live, and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter and space needed to sustain their populations. Specific wildlife habitats of concern may include areas where species concentrate at a vulnerable point in their annual or life cycle; and areas which are important to migratory or non-migratory species.



12.0 Schedules

The Schedules to this Official Plan include:

- Schedule A-1 – Land Use – Rural Area
- Schedule A-2 – Land Use – Settlement Area
- Schedule B – Special Policy Overlays
- Schedule C – Natural Heritage and Development Constraints
- Schedule D – Wildland Fire Hazard Areas





TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND
COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

Schedule A-1: Land Use - Rural Area

Legend

-  Town Boundary
-  Ongoing Land Claim*
-  Indigenous Lands
-  Settlement Area Boundary
-  Highway
-  Municipal Road

Official Plan Designations

-  Industrial Employment
-  Neighbourhoods
-  Resource Development

Source: Town of Fort Frances



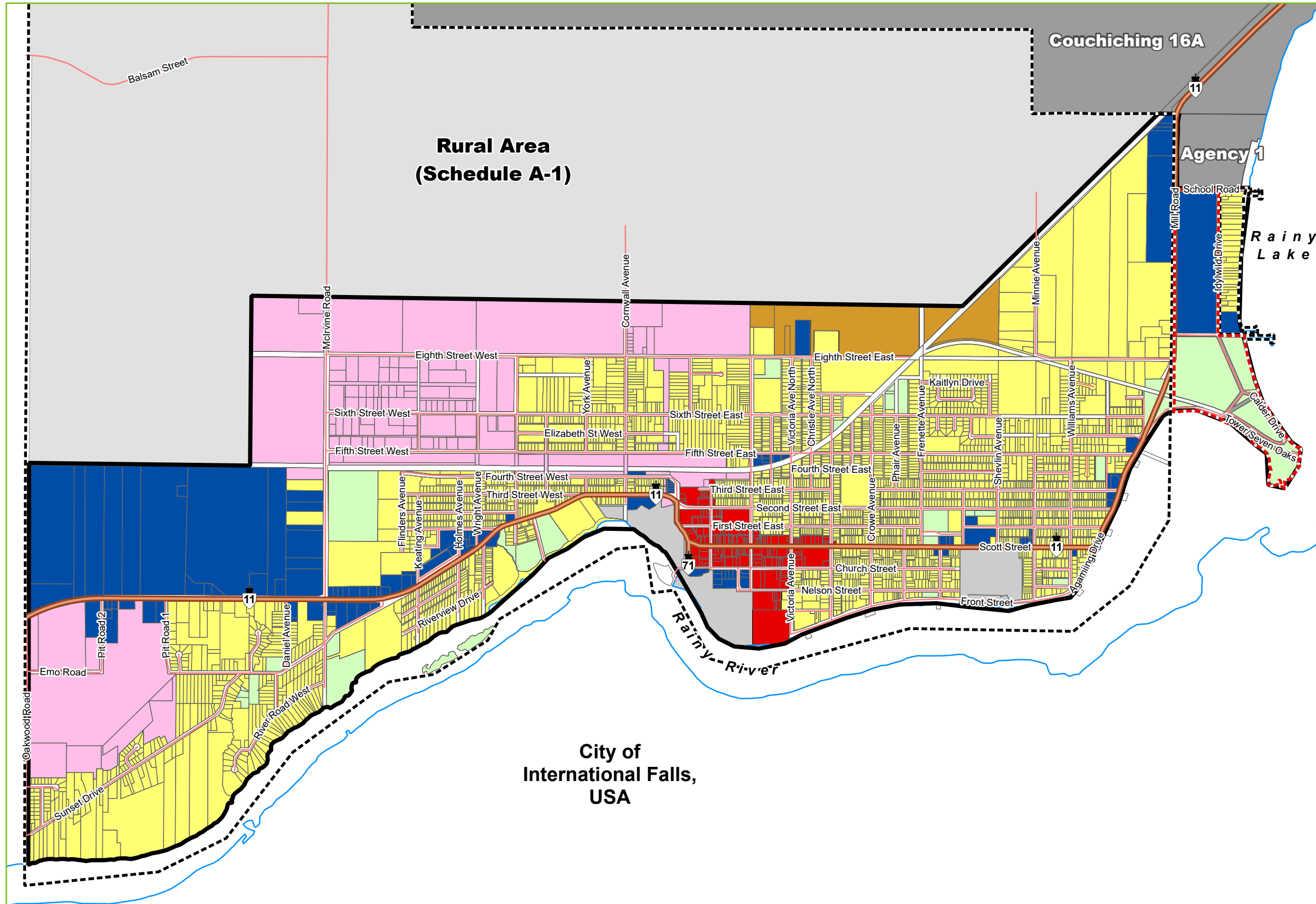
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0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000
Metres



* It is acknowledged that there is an ongoing land claim by the Agency One Reserve and the Town of Fort Frances for a portion of the lands between Idylwild Drive and east of Highway 11.



NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND
COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

Schedule A-2: Land Use - Settlement Area

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Ongoing Land Claim*
- Indigenous Lands
- Settlement Area Boundary
- Highway
- Municipal Road
- Official Plan Designations**
- Mixed Use
- Highway Commercial
- Industrial Employment
- Neighbourhoods
- Parks and Open Space
- Resource Development
- Future Development

Source: Town of Fort Frances

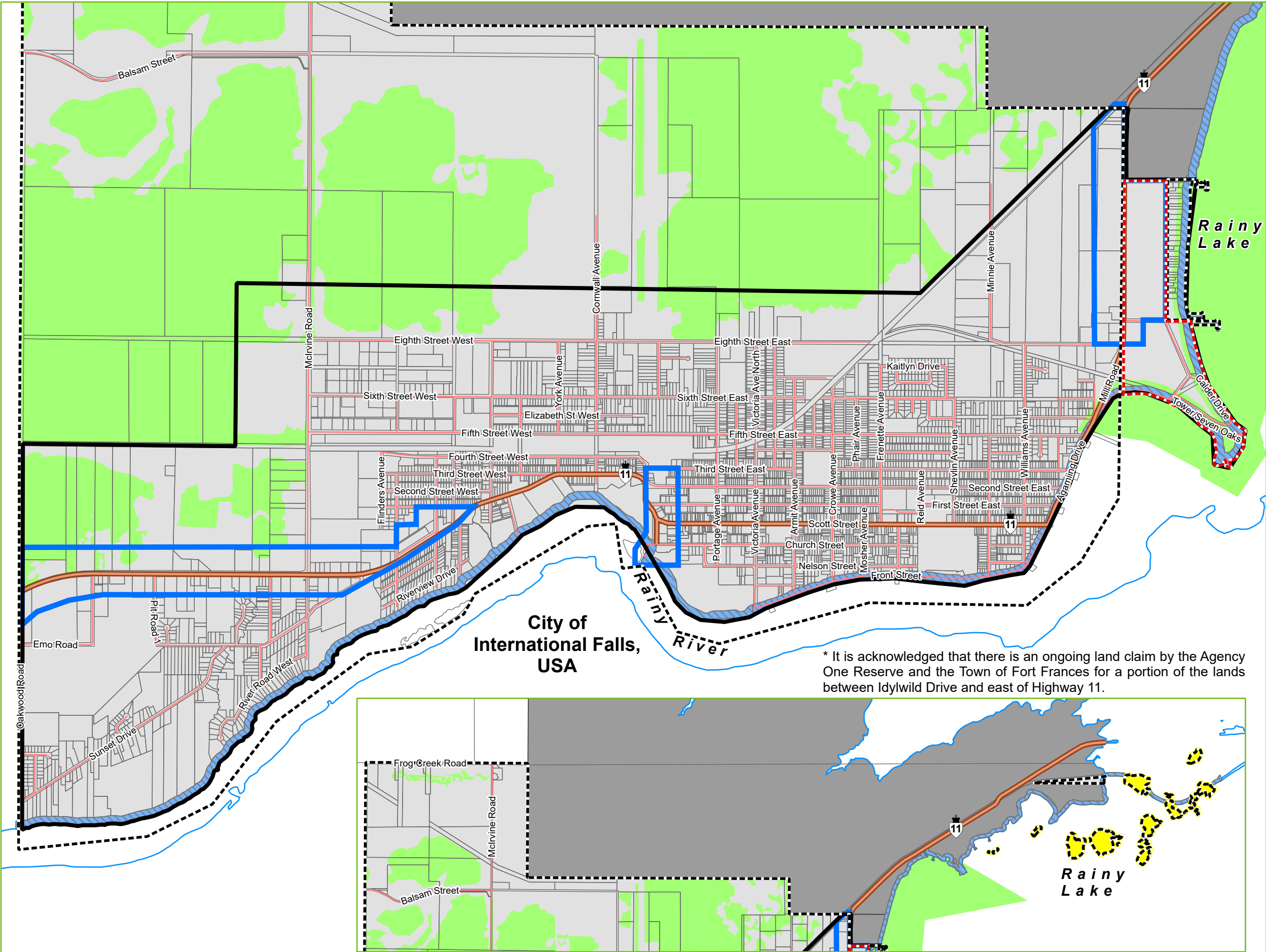


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Metres



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Council Adopted: January 13, 2025





NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND
COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

Schedule B - Special Policy Overlays

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Ongoing Land Claim*
- Indigenous Lands
- Settlement Area Boundary
- Highway
- Municipal Road

Special Policy Overlay

- Shoreline Buffer (45 m)
- Natural Environment Overlay
- Rainy Lake Islands
- Economic Gateway Area
- Special Study Areas

- ① Downtown Area
- ② Former Shevlin Woodyard
- ③ Point Park
- ④ Armstrong Quarry

Source: Town of Fort Frances



N

0

250

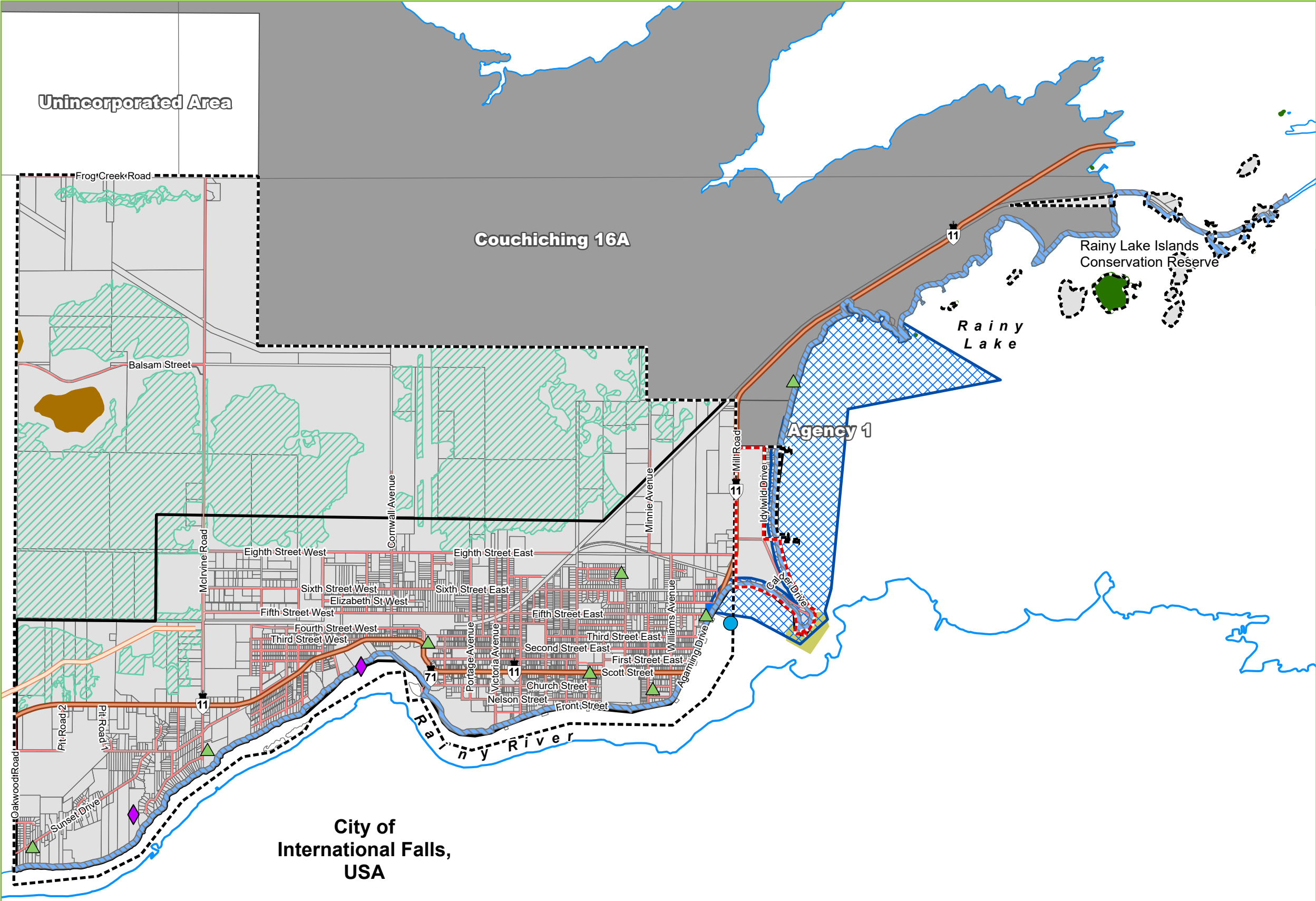
500

750

1,000

Metres







NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND
COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

**Schedule C -
Natural Heritage and
Development Constraints**

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Ongoing Land Claim*
- Indigenous Lands
- Settlement Area Boundary
- Highway
- Municipal Road
- Natural Gas Pipeline
- Water Intake
- Sanitary Pump Station
- White Sucker Spawning Area
- Walleye Spawning Area
- Conservation Reserve
- Unevaluated Wetlands
- Drinking Water / Watersource Protection
- Shoreline Buffer (45 m)
- Waste Management Site
- Water Treatment Plant
- Sanitary Treatment Plant

Source: Town of Fort Frances
Ontario GeoHub © King's Printer for Ontario, 2022.

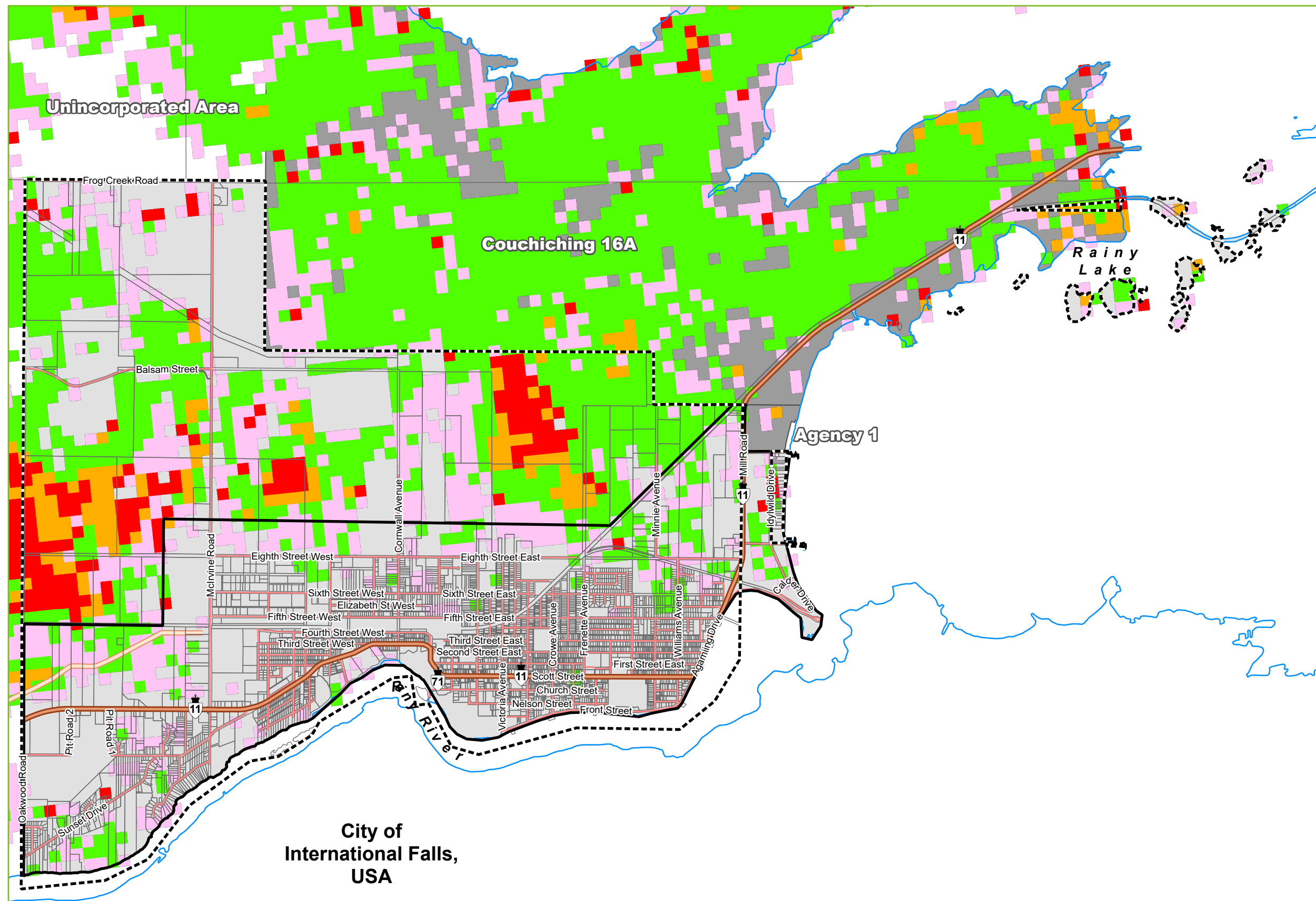


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0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000
Metres



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NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND
COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

Schedule D - Wildland Fire Hazard Areas

Legend

- Town Boundary
- Settlement Area Boundary
- Indigenous Lands
- Highway
- Municipal Road
- Natural Gas Pipeline
- Wildland Fire Hazard Areas**
 - Extreme
 - High
 - Moderate
 - Low
 - Pine Needs Evalutaion

Source: Town of Fort Frances
Ontario GeoHub © King's Printer for Ontario, 2022.



0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000
Metres



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Council Adopted: January 13, 2025