

Port Edward

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

DRAFT Bylaw No. 775, 2026



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PART 1:
**INTRODUCTION
AND VISION**

Part 1 introduces the Official Community Plan and establishes the overarching vision and guiding principles for the District of Port Edward. It provides context for the Plan, outlines the planning framework, and sets the foundation for the goals, policies, and land use directions that follow.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Port Edward has an expansive land base of 16,812 hectares with a central, picturesque townsite situated on a working harbour and surrounded by awe-inspiring natural beauty. The District's bounty of marine resources, wildlife, and vegetation supported the original Tsimshian people whose history is rich with successful trade, commerce, art, and architecture in this area. The canneries, located along Inverness Passage, are a reminder of the community's recent history as a fishing, canning and marine community. The small townsite of Port Edward, comprised of 470 people¹, is nestled between Porpoise Harbour and McDonald Mountain, amidst this wild backcountry. The townsite faces directly southwest and provides a mix of sunny vistas and magnificent sunsets.

This Official Community Plan (OCP) will guide the District of Port Edward through change and economic growth as the north coast is experiencing significant industrial development and diversification, much of which is associated with the Port of Prince Rupert.

¹ Population figure based on the 2021 Census.

OCPs should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis and the District has undertaken significant OCP updates in 2009, 2013 and 2020. The District has approached the development of this 2025 Official Community Plan as an update to the 2020 Plan, as opposed to a complete re-write. The need for this update was necessitated by a series of legislation passed by the provincial government in Fall 2023 aimed at addressing ongoing housing affordability and availability issues in the province. As part of these legislated changes, the District was required to undertake an interim Housing Needs Report, followed by a review and update of the OCP to ensure alignment with the housing needs reporting. This update also provided the District with an opportunity to incorporate current demographic information such as the most recent Census data; recent initiatives such as the Truth and Reconciliation Project, Climate Action Plan, and Downtown Design Charette; as well as potential impacts associated with proposed industrial development in the region. Through this Plan, the District of Port Edward Council has signaled that the District:

- Welcomes new economic opportunities and is committed to facilitating the growth of the community;
- Supports new industrial and commercial development;
- Takes pride in the quaint, rural, small town atmosphere;
- Is prepared for residential growth to support the broader housing needs of the area; and
- Promotes and protects the quality of life for Port Edward citizens.

The land use vision of the District of Port Edward includes the following elements, much of which was carried forward from the previous OCP:

- Pursuing an enhanced town centre that includes institutional, commercial, and various forms of residential uses;
- Provision of rural residential options to maintain a unique housing option for the region;
- Development of new tourist commercial areas to leverage our significant backcountry, marine and outdoor recreation opportunities;
- Development of criteria for the siting of multiple family developments;
- Encouragement of carefully located and screened industrial areas;
- Creation of Development Permit areas to ensure high quality development standards; and
- Promoting and protecting the quality of life for all members of the community.

The community of Port Edward is proud of its perseverance, determination, optimism, and hardworking nature. Residents are filled with hope, possibility, and pride in their community. This updated Official Community Plan represents the vision of the people of Port Edward as our community moves through this time of unprecedented economic growth in Northwest BC.

2.0 WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?

Official Community Plans provide the long-range policy direction for local government land use decision making in British Columbia. Section 471 of the *Local Government Act*, outlines the purpose of an OCP as follows:

- An official community plan is a statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management, within the area covered by the plan, respecting the purposes of local government.
- To the extent that it deals with these matters, an official community plan should work towards the purpose and goals referred to in section 428 [purpose of regional growth strategy].

The land use and development dynamics of the District of Port Edward, like any community, are influenced by history, development trends, and growth. Economic progress and demographic changes in the region all have a major bearing on how the District developed in the past and how it may change in the future. The OCP needs to be able to respond to development opportunities and to channel growth in a way that does not impair the quality of life for current and future residents while, at the same time, promoting Port Edward as a desirable place to live, work, and play. Population growth in Port Edward has waned over the years, largely due to negative economic factors such as the closure of the Skeena Cellulose Pulp Mill in 1994 and the decline of the local fishing industry. The region, however, is once again experiencing significant industrial development in areas adjacent to the District including Watson Island, Ridley Island and other port facilities. These proposed developments are expected to result in significant impacts to residential, commercial, and industrial land uses in the region.

During periods of rapid economic growth, it is vital for a community to have a comprehensive OCP to guide development and land use decisions. An OCP outlines the vision of residents, defining how the community will develop. The benefits that an OCP brings to a community are numerous and include the following:

- Identifies the vision of the community;
- Demonstrates the goals of the community;
- Advances reconciliation efforts with neighbouring First Nations;
- Showcases the community;
- Clearly defines appropriate land uses;
- Regulates the form and character of development;
- Encourages efficient use of land;
- Attracts investment within the community by providing certainty regarding land use development opportunities; and
- Creates policies for future development.

An OCP can also be leveraged to pursue funding grants for key initiatives, including infrastructure improvements, as well as act as a tool for advocating senior levels of government for enhanced services and amenities that fall outside the purview of the District.

2.1 LEGAL BASIS FOR OCP

The legislative basis for an OCP is found in the *Local Government Act* of British Columbia. Section 876(1) of the *Local Government Act* defines a community plan as:

“A general statement of the broad objectives and policies of the local government respecting the form and character of existing and proposed land use and servicing requirements in the area covered by the plan.”

In 2023, the Province enacted Bill 44, *Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act* with the aim of facilitating housing development in the province. As a result, local governments, including the District of Port Edward, were required to complete a Housing Needs Assessment and update their OCP and Zoning Bylaw to support the identified future housing demand. The Act also mandates that these documents be reviewed and updated every five years to ensure alignment with evolving housing needs.

An OCP must be prepared and adopted within the statutory provisions outlined in Section 473 of the *Local Government Act*. Required content includes:

- (1) Statements and map designations for the area covered by the plan respecting the following:
 - (a) the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 20 years;
 - (b) the approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses;
 - (c) the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction;
 - (d) restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;
 - (e) the approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer and water systems;
 - (f) the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites;
 - (g) other matters that may, in respect of any plan, be required or authorized by the minister.
- (2) Housing policies of the local government respecting affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing.
- (3) Targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.
- (4) In developing or amending an official community plan, the local government must consider applicable guidelines, if any under sections 582 [*provincial policy guidelines*] and 585.5 [*provincial policy guidelines related to transit-oriented areas*].

Optional content provisions are set out in Section 474 of the *Local Government Act* and may include:

- (1) Policies of the local government relating to social needs, social well-being and social development;
- (2) A regional context statement, consistent with the rest of the community plan, of how matters referred to in section 429(2) (a) to (c), and other matters dealt with in the community plan, apply in a regional context;
- (3) Policies of the local government respecting the maintenance and enhancement of farming on land in a farming area or in an area designated for agricultural use in the community plan;
- (4) Policies of the local government relating to the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity;
- (5) Policies of the local government relating to alternative forms of transportation under sections 513.1 and 513.3 [*requirements to provide land for transportation purposes*];
- (6) Policies of the local government relating to transportation demand management under section 527.1 [*transportation demand management*].

2.2 AMENDING THE OCP



OCPs are the highest-level land use policy tool for regional and municipal governments. All bylaws enacted and works undertaken subsequent to the adoption of an OCP must be consistent with the Plan. For example, if an area is designated as Residential in the OCP, a rezoning application for a commercial use would be inconsistent and would therefore require a formal amendment to the OCP. OCPs are guiding documents that should not be amended without serious consideration. At the same time, OCPs should be 'living' documents that contain enough flexibility to allow for amendments by the District Council that are responsive to the community's interests. In addition, the Plan will serve to inform senior government authorities of the interests of the community, thereby encouraging the undertaking of federal and provincial actions that are consistent with the Plan.

Legislation introduced by the provincial government in 2023 requires that municipalities review, and if necessary, update their OCPs every 5 years to align with housing needs reporting requirements.

3.0 ORGANIZATION OF DOCUMENT

The OCP is organized into four parts:



Part 1
Introduction and Vision

Outlines the legal basis of the document, the vision and the community goals, and the planning process.



Part 2
Community Development

Outlines objectives and policies for a variety of community development initiatives which extend beyond land use and include economic development, community vibrancy, environmental stewardship, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and climate change, community safety, emergency preparedness, housing, and transportation and infrastructure.



Part 3
Land Use Designations

Contains policies to help guide land use and development within the District.



Part 4
Implementation Strategy

Contains measures for the implementation of the policies and vision outlined in the OCP.

4.0 OCP VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 VISION

The District of Port Edward's motto "Clean, Neat, and Green" is attributable to the beautiful green parks and open spaces, quiet atmosphere, ocean views, and community feel that makes Port Edward a desirable place to live, for both long-term residents and families new to the area. A secondary meaning of this motto is that the District has state-of-the-art wastewater and water treatment facilities, providing environmentally friendly waste processing and high-quality drinking water for the community.

In embarking on this planning process, the District of Port Edward Council intends to manage growth and plan the community so that quality of life is protected for its citizens. At the same time, this document also signals that the District is prepared to accept new industrial growth and is prepared to embrace new economic opportunities that will result from the major industrial development on the Prince Rupert Port Authority lands.

This OCP outlines the following long-term vision:

- Maintain and enhance the 'clean, neat and green' feel and reputation of the community;
- Encourage commercial development to create a complete community with a sustainable and strong service sector;
- Advance reconciliation with neighboring First Nations;
- Maintain fiscal responsibility;
- Use infrastructure and land wisely;
- Increase local employment opportunities;
- Enhance the reputation as a tourist destination;
- Meet the housing needs of all residents;
- Attract new industrial development;
- Maintain and enhance the park, recreation, and community facilities;
- Protect the natural environment;
- Maintain and enhance public transportation links;
- Nurture existing business; and
- Protect and promote heritage facilities and tourism opportunities.

4.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles reflect the community's long-term vision for growth, sustainability, and quality of life. They provide direction for land use planning and decision-making, while supporting Port Edward's goals of increased self-sufficiency, regional collaboration, and community well-being.

Prince Rupert Relationship

Strengthen the relationship with the City of Prince Rupert through coordinated planning, shared services, and regional partnerships that benefit both communities. Continued collaboration is key to supporting transportation access, economic growth, and mutual service delivery.

Advancing Reconciliation

Advance reconciliation by building strong, respectful relationships with local First Nations through formal outreach, shared protocols, and cultural awareness. Ongoing initiatives, such as cultural sensitivity training and inclusive engagement frameworks, will help to ensure reconciliation is embedded in District operations.

Downtown Development

Establish a vibrant, accessible downtown core that serves as the commercial and social heart of the community. Focus new development in a central hub that offers retail, dining, and community services, reducing the need to travel to Prince Rupert. Support business growth through infrastructure upgrades, cohesive urban design, and partnerships that enhance the local economy and reinforce Port Edward's unique character.

Increasing Self-Sufficiency

Increase self-sufficiency by expanding local services, amenities, and employment opportunities that meet residents' daily needs. Improving access to essential goods within the community will ease transportation burdens and support long-term resilience.

Tourism and Recreation

Strengthen Port Edward's role in the regional tourism economy by enhancing outdoor recreation amenities, supporting eco and heritage tourism, and developing visitor-serving infrastructure. Flagship assets like the North Pacific Cannery Historic Site and Inverness Passage offer opportunities for cultural tourism and nature-based experiences. The community also aims to leverage the increase in cruise passengers to the area to advance economic development initiatives in the District.

Facilitating Housing

Promote the development of affordable, accessible, and diverse housing options that reflect the needs of Port Edward's residents. Focus on enabling new residential projects, particularly rental and multi-family units, by aligning land use strategies, streamlining development processes, and working with partners to fill identified housing gaps.

Recreational Services

Enhance access to recreational facilities and programs for all ages and abilities by upgrading existing parks and developing new infrastructure. Investments in areas like Diana Lake Park and the planned kayak park will promote active lifestyles, support tourism, and reflect the community's connection to the outdoors.

Community Spirit

Foster a strong sense of community spirit by supporting events and initiatives that bring residents together. The District also wishes to recognize the important role that local volunteers and community groups play in making Port Edward a great place to live.



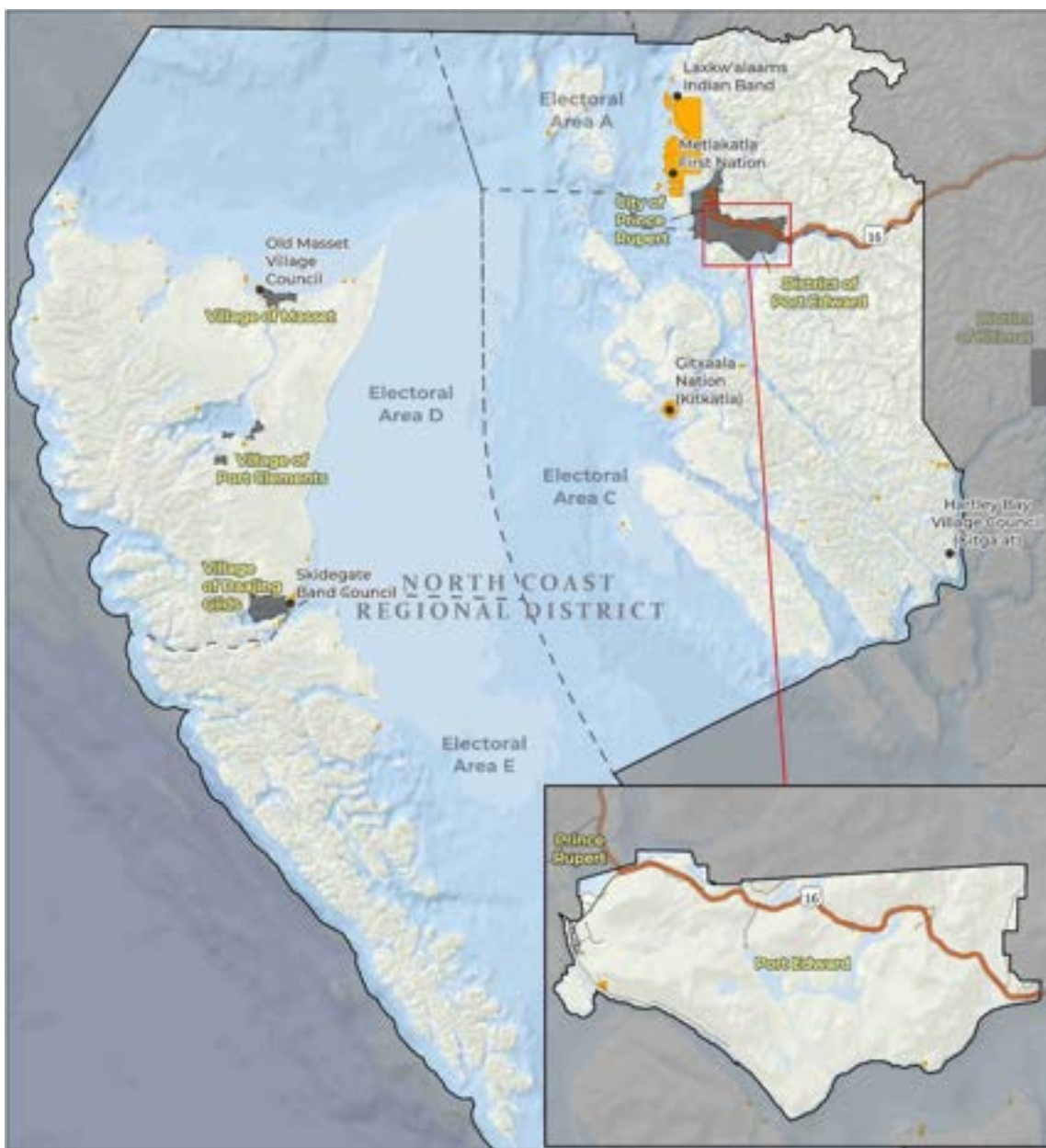
5.0 PLAN AREA AND REGIONAL SETTING

The District of Port Edward is a small coastal municipality located approximately 15 km south of the City of Prince Rupert along Highway 16. The District spans 16,812 hectares and includes a settled townsite of approximately 470 residents according to the 2021 Census. The townsite features a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and recreational land uses.

The District overlaps, or shares a border with, a number of jurisdictions including the North Coast Regional District, the City of Prince Rupert, as well as the Port of Prince Rupert and CN Rail. The District also overlaps with the ancestral lands of the Ts'mysen (Tsimshian) peoples.

The District of Port Edward is located within the North Coast Regional District. Currently, the regional district does not have a regional growth strategy; however, the Port Edward District Council supports the continued collaborative partnership with the regional district to establish and implement common goals and service agreements.

Figure 5.1: District of Port Edward



5.1 THE INTERFACE OF THE DISTRICT OF PORT EDWARD AND THE CITY OF PRINCE RUPERT

The District of Port Edward and the City of Prince Rupert share a common municipal boundary. The interface between Port Edward and the City of Prince Rupert is an area that should be mutually planned by both communities. The District Council intends to work cooperatively with the City of Prince Rupert to protect the Highway 16 transportation corridor to ensure that a consistent and attractive entrance to the two communities is maintained.

Other interfaces between Port Edward and Prince Rupert include Ridley Island and Watson Island. Ridley Island is within the Prince Rupert jurisdictional boundary but is owned by the Prince Rupert Port Authority and falls under the governance of the Federal Port Authority. Continued industrial development on Ridley Island has the potential to impact the environment as well as the quality of life within the Port Edward townsite. The District of Port Edward Council intends to continue to be active participants as stakeholders in the future planning of Ridley Island and Watson Island to ensure that the long-term environmental and quality of life of the townsite is not threatened by industrial development and that any impacts are effectively mitigated.

The Fairview Container Terminal in Prince Rupert utilizes the CN Rail line through Port Edward. In Port Edward, the CN Rail tracks bisect the townsite and the waterfront, including commercial lands that occupy both sides of the CN Rail Right of Way. CN Rail is looking to expand rail capacity within the District to meet an anticipated increased rail demand in the coming years. The District Council intends to continue discussions with CN Rail, and the Prince Rupert Port Authority, to examine long-term solutions that will allow for the success of the terminal and rail transportation corridor without impairing the quality of life and economic wellbeing of Port Edward. Finally, the Small Craft Harbour within the Port Edward townsite is operated by the Port Edward Harbour Authority which is also within the governance structure of the Federal Port Authority. The District of Port Edward intends to be included as a stakeholder in the future planning of the Small Craft Harbour and can play an important role in the expansion of infrastructure required for small craft and commercial fishing boats.

5.2 LOCAL FIRST NATIONS

The District of Port Edward is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Ts'mysen (Tsimshian) peoples, who have inhabited the north coast of British Columbia for millennia. Tsimshian traditional territory covers approximately 33,000 square km along the north coast of BC and inland via the Skeena River watershed, with some communities being located in Alaska due to migration during the 19th century. The name Tsimshian translates to "Inside the Skeena River," highlighting their profound connection to the river and the lands around it. Ts'mysen collectively refers to the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast, representing a shared history, geography, and cultural heritage. Tsimshian society was traditionally organized into 14 tribes, each with its own territories and leadership, which were further divided into four matrilineal clans, Eagle, Wolf, Raven, and Killer Whale, where inheritance and social status passed through the mother's line.²

Today, the Tsimshian Nation is composed of several communities, including Lax Kw'alaams, Metlakatla, Kitsumkalum, Kitselas, Gitga'at, Gitxaala, and Kitasoo/Xai'xais (*Kitasoo are Tsimshian; Xai'xais are Wakashan*). Of these Tsimshian Nations, Kitselas, Kitsumkalum, Metlakatla, Gitga'at, and Kitasoo are members of the Tsimshian First Nations Treaty Society.³

Recognizing the importance of respectful Government-to-Government relationships, the District of Port Edward identified building cooperative and consultative relationships with the Metlakatla and Lax Kw'alaams First Nations as a key priority in its 2020 Official Community Plan. This commitment was further advanced in 2024/2025 through the completion of a Truth and Reconciliation Project, aimed at fostering deeper and more meaningful relationships with First Nations in the Port Edward and Prince Rupert region.

² First Nations History, BC – Tsimshian Nation. <https://firstnationshistory.ca/bc-tsimshian-nation/>

³ TFN Treat Society, Who We Are. <https://www.tfn-treaty.ca/about-us.html>

According to the 2021 Census, approximately 49% of the population of Port Edward identified as Indigenous, suggesting that many members of the surrounding First Nations are living in the District.

The following is an overview of the local Tsimshian First Nations whose reserve lands are located near the District and whose traditional territory includes the area now known as Port Edward.

Gitxaala Nation

Gitxaala Nation, also known as Git Lax M'oon or "people of the saltwater," is one of the oldest coastal societies, with over 10,000 years of continuous occupation in the village of Lach Klan (Kitkatla) on Dolphin Island, 60 km south of Prince Rupert. Home to the four clans of Gisputwada, Ganhada, Lax'sgiik, and Laxgibuu, Gitxaala citizens have long stewarded their lands and waters, harvesting nearly 100 marine and terrestrial resources throughout a territory stretching from the Nass River to Aristazabel Island. The Nation speaks Sm'algyax, the Tsimshian language, and has approximately 2,117 members today with 449 living on-reserve.⁴

Lax Kw'alaams Band

Lax Kw'alaams, meaning "place of the wild roses," is home to the Nine Tribes of the Tsimshian, including Giluts'aaw, Ginandoiks, Ginaxangiik, Gispaxlo'ots, Gitando, Gitlaan, Gits'iis, Gitwilgyoots, and Gitzaxlaal, who have lived in the region for over 10,000 years and speak Sm'algyax, their traditional language. Their territory spans from the Nass River to present-day Terrace, playing a key role in trade along the "Grease Trails," historic routes named after the oolichan grease that would drip from the boxes carried by First Nations traders.⁵

Since 2020, Lax Kw'alaams has been in discussions with federal and provincial governments to move beyond the Indian Act as part of ongoing Reconciliation efforts. The creation of a Reconciliation Department highlights the Nation's commitment to strengthening self-determined, community-led governance. As of April 2025, there were 4,244 members, with 667 living on-reserve.⁶

Metlakatla First Nation

Metlakatla First Nation, just north of Prince Rupert, is located on territory occupied by the Metlakatla people for thousands of years. The name "Metlakatla" comes from Sm'algyax, meaning "saltwater pass."

Governed by a Chief and six Councilors elected for four-year terms, Metlakatla adopted a custom Election Code in 2019, moving beyond the Indian Act. The Council is currently developing a constitution through community consultation.

The Metlakatla Stewardship Society works with the Council to protect cultural sites and integrate traditional knowledge into land and marine management, reflecting the Nation's commitment to stewardship and self-determination. As of April 2025, the Nation has 1,120 members with 95 living on-reserve⁷ and continues to exercise its rights to harvest traditional foods and preserve cultural heritage.

⁴ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations Profile. https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=672&lang=eng

⁵ Nuxalk-Carrier Grease Trail. <https://greasetrail.com/trail>

⁶ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations Profile. https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=674&lang=eng

⁷ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations Profile. https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=673&lang=eng

Gitga’at First Nation

Gitga’at Nation, also known as Txalgiuw (Hartley Bay), is a coastal Tsimshian community located at the mouth of Douglas Channel, 145 km south of Prince Rupert and 630 km north of Vancouver. With deep ancestral ties to the land and sea, the Gitga’at have inhabited the region for millennia, maintaining petroglyphs, burial grounds, and culturally modified trees that reflect their enduring presence. The Nation speaks Sm’algyax, the Tsimshian language, and has a registered population of 873, with approximately 142 members living on reserve in Hartley Bay⁸ and others residing in Prince Rupert, Terrace, Vancouver Island, and Vancouver.

Kitselas First Nation

Kitselas Nation, known in Sm’algyax as Gitselasu or “People of the Kitselas Canyon,” is one of 14 Tsimshian tribes in British Columbia with a deep-rooted presence in the Kitselas Canyon along the Skeena River. Archaeological findings show Kitselas people have lived in the area for at least 5,000 years, historically using the Canyon as a toll point for trade and travel. The Nation has a population of 781, with 301 members living on-reserve⁹, primarily at the Gitaus reserve near Terrace, while others reside in Kulpai or urban areas such as Vancouver, Prince George, and Prince Rupert. The community speaks Sm’algyax, the traditional Tsimshian language.

Kitsumkalum Band

Kitsumkalum, also known as Gitsm’geelm, is one of the original tribes of the Tsimshian Nation, grounded in the traditional Tsimshian Ayaawx (Laws) that continue to guide governance and cultural life. The name “Kitsumkalum” refers to the riffles of water flowing over rocks and is also interpreted as “People of the Plateau,” reflecting their deep-rooted connection to the land. The community speaks Sm’algyax, preserving their heritage through language and cultural practice. For the Kitsumkalum people, their *laxyuup* (land), is central to their identity and way of life.

Governance blends hereditary leadership with a modern Band Council. This dual system ensures cultural continuity while meeting federal administrative standards. With a population of 905 members with 246 living on-reserve,¹⁰ the Nation is engaged in the B.C. Treaty process alongside other members of the Tsimshian First Nations Treaty Society, having signed an Agreement-in-Principle with Canada and British Columbia.

Kitasoo/Xaixais Nation

The Kitasoo Xai’xais Nation is a united community formed in the 1860s by the coming together of two distinct Nations: the Kitasoo of the islands and the Xai’xais of the mainland. Though they came from different geographies and spoke different languages, Sgüüxs, a southern dialect of Sm’algyax, and Xai’xais, part of the Wakashan language family, the two groups have since built a shared home in Klemtu, located on the central coast of British Columbia. Today, the Nation has a registered population of 491, with 241 members living on reserve.¹¹

⁸ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations Profile. https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=675&lang=eng

⁹ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations Profile. https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=680&lang=eng

¹⁰ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations Profile. https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=681&lang=eng

¹¹ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations Profile. https://fnp-ppn.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/FNRegPopulation.aspx?BAND_NUMBER=540&lang=eng



6.0 PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This OCP is an update to the former 2020 OCP. While the previous OCP was only five years old, it was important to engage the community on this Plan to review and confirm their priorities and vision for the District moving forward. The public engagement process included:

Community Survey – A community survey was available in digital and paper formats for the month of May 2025 and was distributed via social media, the District website, and print media. The survey covered topics such as community values and key issues that will be addressed through the OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates.

Community Open House – A community open house was held on October 1, 2025, from 5-8 pm at the Community Hall. The open house was well-attended with approximately 30 participants. Input was provided through a series of informational panels and informal discussions with members of District staff and the consulting team.

Council Engagement Session – A council engagement session was held on October 2 from 6-8pm. Council members were given a presentation on the draft OCP and Zoning Bylaw and were asked to provide feedback.

First Nations Engagement – Letters were sent to the surrounding First Nations with the intent of informing them of the OCP update, as well as seeking guidance on how they would like to be involved in the process. At the time of writing, three communities have reached out, and the District is looking to schedule meetings to discuss shared priorities and set the stage for future government-to-government collaboration. It should be noted that the District also engaged local First Nations during the Truth and Reconciliation project, as well as sought input during a specific planning session for the downtown commercial area.

Stakeholder Interviews – Individual discussions with stakeholders and community groups were organized and facilitated in early October 2025, including meetings with the North Pacific Cannery, Port Edward Event Planners Society, and the Port Edward Community School.

7.0 BACKGROUND AND TRENDS

7.1 DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The municipality's origins date back to 1908, when the Grand Trunk Railway selected the area for potential expansion to British Columbia's North Coast. Although land speculators quickly invested in large parcels, plans were paused when the Grand Trunk President shifted the railway route to nearby Kaien Island, where Prince Rupert was eventually established. Port Edward remained relatively quiet until WWII, when it gained strategic importance as a United States military base.

The Nelson family arrived in 1909 from Tromsø, Norway, and quickly became leaders in the region's fishing sector. Their business, Nelson Bros. Fisheries Ltd., helped pioneer long-distance fish packing along the coast. By the early 1960s, Port Edward had become Northern B.C.'s largest fish processing centre, bolstered by the installation of key infrastructure. For many years, fishing served as the backbone of the community's economy, later supported by the Skeena Cellulose Pulp Mill.

Between 1987 and 1992, Port Edward experienced modest growth with the launch of businesses such as Aero, Prince Rupert Sea Farms, Skeena Fisheries, and the Tempo Gas Bar. During this period, six new homes were built, and 27 building permits were issued for various small-scale residential, commercial, and industrial projects.

However, the regional economic landscape shifted significantly after 1992. The 1994 closure of the Skeena Cellulose Pulp Mill, coupled with a steady decline in the fishing and fish processing industries, brought development in Port Edward and Prince Rupert to a halt. While the opening of the Fairview Container Terminal in Prince Rupert brought some renewed economic activity, anticipated population growth in Port Edward did not materialize. Today, most residents of Port Edward commute to Prince Rupert for work.

In response, Council is actively working to identify and designate new lands for residential, commercial, and industrial uses to encourage local development. The District aims to revitalize Port Edward as a vibrant, self-sustaining community with a broader economic base and greater residential opportunities.

7.2 HOUSING NEEDS REPORT

In Fall 2023, the Province of British Columbia adopted new legislation aimed at accelerating housing delivery and removing barriers to housing development. As part of this effort, the Province introduced updated requirements for Housing Needs Reports. Local governments were required to complete an Interim Housing Needs Report by January 1, 2025, followed by a full report every five years starting in 2028. These reports must follow a standardized provincial methodology, which uses a multi-component assessment to identify current and future housing needs.

Each report must now assess housing needs using the following six components:

- 1) **Component A: Extreme Core Housing Need**
The number of units needed for households that cannot afford acceptable housing without spending 50% or more of their income.
- 2) **Component B: Persons Experiencing Homelessness**
Includes how many new units are needed to provide stable housing for persons experiencing homelessness. The number of persons experiencing homelessness is determined through the

Province’s Integrated Data Project (IDP), which does not capture “hidden homelessness,” such as people sleeping in vehicles, couch-surfing, or staying with friends.

- 3) **Component C: Suppressed Household Formation**
Accounts for people who would form independent households (such as young adults or seniors) but currently cannot due to lack of housing availability or affordability.
- 4) **Component D: Anticipated Household Growth**
Projects the number of units required to accommodate expected population changes and household formation over time.
- 5) **Component E: Rental Vacancy Rate Adjustment**
Calculates the number of additional units needed to achieve a healthy rental vacancy rate (3%), helping reduce pressure on the rental market.
- 6) **Component F: Additional Local Demand**
Captures demand beyond basic population-driven need—such as residents wanting to move closer to work, families needing larger homes, or seniors downsizing within their community.

The District of Port Edward completed its Interim Housing Needs Report in November 2024, aligning with the provincial framework. The report identifies a need for 40 additional housing units over the next five years and 116 units over the next 20 years, representing a 22% and 88% increase, respectively, over the current housing stock. Notably, while the low population projection as outlined in Section 7.3 indicates a declining population, housing demand is also driven by factors such as suppressed household formation and additional local demand. For instance, suppressed household formation as outlined by the province accounts for approximately 9 units over five years and 36 units over 20 years, while additional local demand contributes to 15 units over five years and 61 units over 20 years. These units reflect the needs of growing families seeking more space, individuals wanting to live closer to employment or educational opportunities, and seniors looking to downsize while staying in the community. Addressing this demand by increasing housing availability in the District not only meets local needs but may also attract new residents by offering more diverse and attainable housing options. Table 7.1 shows the number of units needed over the next 5 years and 20 years broken down by the six components.

Table 7.1: 5-Year and 20-Year Housing Needs by Component

| Component | 5 Year Need | 20 Year Need |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| A. Extreme Core Housing Need | 0 | 0 |
| B. Persons Experiencing Homelessness | 2.46 | 4.92 |
| C. Suppressed Household Formation | 8.99 | 35.98 |
| D. Anticipated Growth | 13.37 | 13.54 |
| E. Rental Vacancy Rate Adjustment | 0.08 | 0.34 |
| F. Additional Local Demand | 15.34 | 61.34 |
| Total New Units – 5 years | 40 | N/A |
| Total New Units – 20 years | N/A | 116 |

7.3 POPULATION OVERVIEW AND PROJECTIONS

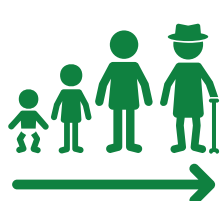
The historical population growth between 2006 and 2021 for Port Edward, Prince Rupert, and the NCRD is shown in Table 7.2. The current population, according to a BC Stats estimate for 2025, is 487.¹² The District of Port Edward’s population as per the 2021 Census is 470, a 0.6% growth from the 2016 Census. According to Census data, the population steadily declined between 2006 and 2021, resulting in an overall decrease of 18.5% over the 15-year period. In the same time span, the population in the City of Prince Rupert and the North Coast Regional District also decreased, but at a lower rate of 4.0% and 7.5%, respectively.

Table 7.2: Historic Population Growth, 2006 to 2021

| Community/Area | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | Change (2016 to 2021) |
|-------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------|
| District of Port Edward | 577 | 544 | 467 | 470 | +0.6% |
| City of Prince Rupert | 12,815 | 12,508 | 12,200 | 12,300 | +0.7% |
| North Coast Regional District | 19,664 | 18,784 | 18,133 | 18,181 | +0.3% |

District of Port Edward Census Profiles, Statistics Canada

Future population growth in the District will be influenced by these factors:



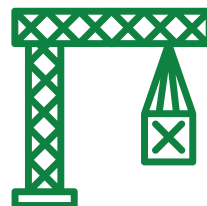
1. Continued aging of the population



2. Housing values in Port Edward relative to other centres, particularly Prince Rupert and Terrace.



3. Continued investment in Port Edward’s quality of life to attract people to the community (i.e., providing more services and business /commercial opportunities)



4. Future industrial developments



5. Expansion of the housing stock

¹² BC Stats, Population Estimates & Projections for British Columbia. <https://bcstats.shinyapps.io/popApp/>

Population projections were performed for the District of Port Edward under three different scenarios:

Low: Using the average annual growth rate (-0.7%) derived from BC Stats' 2021-2044 population projections for the 2024 Housing Needs Report. This rate was calculated by comparing the 2021 BC Stats baseline population with the 2044 projected population and determining the average annual change over the 23-year period.

Medium: Using the District's 2016-2021 growth rate from the Census (+0.6%).

High: Using an average annual growth rate of +3.1%, this scenario represents potential population growth associated with the upcoming industrial development on Ridley Island. It is estimated that the combined population of Port Edward and Prince Rupert could increase by approximately 1,100 people over the next 5-10 years. Based on the 2021 Census, approximately 96% of the population in the two municipalities currently resides in Prince Rupert, and 4% in Port Edward. Using this distribution, a proportional allocation of the anticipated 1,100 new residents would result in approximately 40 additional residents in Port Edward by 2030.

However, it is unlikely that new residents would follow this exact distribution. Factors such as slightly lower average shelter costs in Port Edward (\$1,260 per month for owners and \$900 per month for renters, compared to \$1,344 and \$1,134 in Prince Rupert¹³) and the appeal of a smaller community lifestyle may attract a larger share of new residents to Port Edward. To account for this potential, the high-growth scenario assumes Port Edward could receive approximately 80 new residents by 2030. This corresponds to an average annual growth rate of approximately 3.1% over the five-year period.

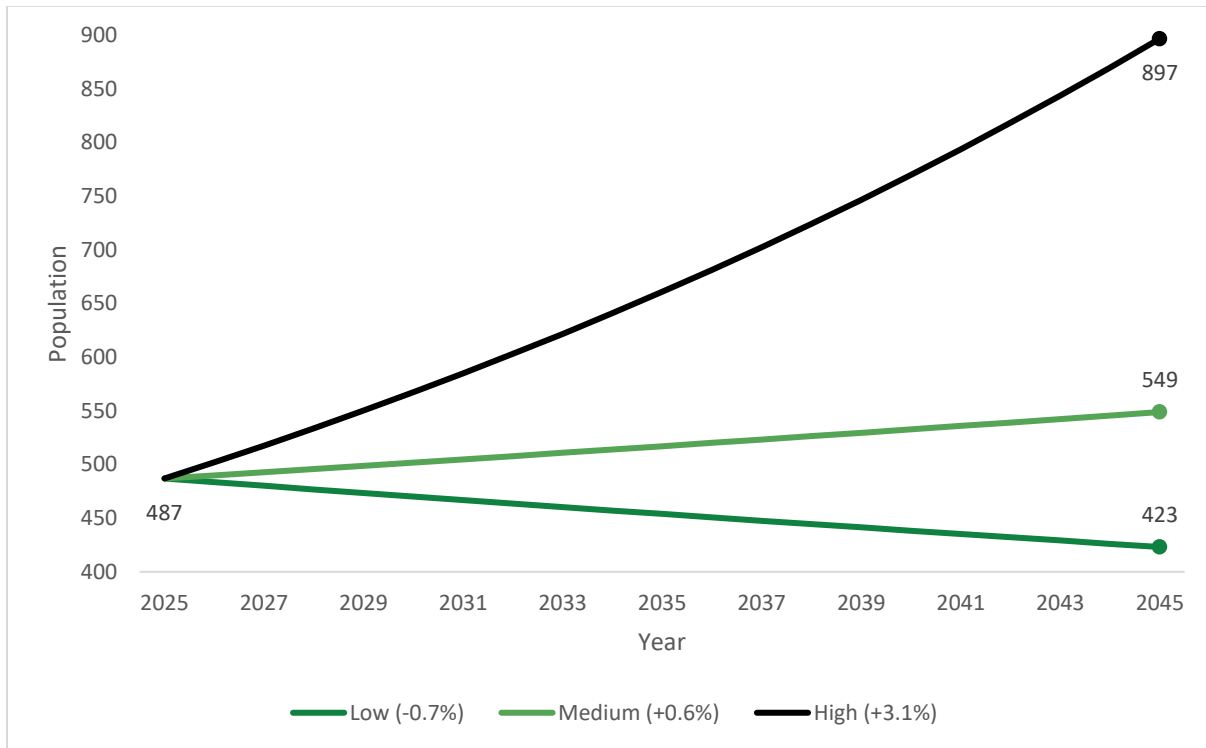
While the 1,100-person increase is projected over 5-10 years, the Ridley Island industrial development could spur additional growth over time. Therefore, it is appropriate to include this high-growth scenario when planning for longer-term population and infrastructure needs. Section 21.0 provides additional information on development occurring on Ridley Island.

Under the low growth scenario the population will decline over the next 20 years as it has since 1996, whereas under the medium and high growth scenarios the population will increase. The medium scenario predicts an increase of 62 residents over the next 20 years and the high scenario predicts an additional 410 residents by 2045. It is important to note that, for consistency, these projections use BC Stats' 2025 population estimate of 487 as the baseline. This 2025 figure was then adjusted under each growth scenario to estimate the population to 2045.



¹³ According to the 2021 Census for the District of Port Edward and the City of Prince Rupert.

Figure 7.1: Population Projections





PART 2: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Part 2 of the OCP outlines goals and policies pertaining to key Community Development topics such as community wellbeing, environmental stewardship, infrastructure, housing, and economic development. Outlining a vision for each of these topic areas will be critical for the long-term vitality of Port Edward.



8.0 GENERAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The District of Port Edward encourages new growth and new development, and Council's vision includes capitalizing on the economic potential associated with the development of the Prince Rupert Port Authority lands to improve employment opportunities and investment in the community. At the same time, the District Council believes that community growth needs to be managed to protect the quality of life for both existing and future residents and to ensure the most cost effective and efficient use of District capital expenditures and infrastructure development.

8.1 DIRECTING GROWTH

Strategically directing growth is an essential component of a well-planned community. The physical features of Port Edward, in combination with historical growth patterns, have resulted in a compact townsite that is not characterized by urban sprawl. The fact that the majority of development within the District has been directed to the existing townsite has allowed for the establishment of quality municipal infrastructure. The townsite represents a combination of light industrial, commercial, institutional, recreational and residential uses. Future urban commercial and residential growth will be directed to the lands between Skeena Drive and the conceptual Bypass Road (Wampler Way) as illustrated on **Schedule 'C'**. Focussing urban growth to this area will help to protect the natural environment and ensure effective and efficient infrastructure servicing and public investment. Employing sound growth management principles will ensure appropriate phasing and siting of future land uses within the community.

New growth resulting from the construction of potential major industrial projects may create a short-term spike in employment, and a short-term demand for the housing of temporary construction workers. It is likely that the short-term housing demand will be accommodated by the creation of temporary construction camps and temporary construction lodges. These temporary construction camps and temporary lodgings should also contribute to the well-being and growth of the community. Accordingly, all temporary construction camp and temporary construction lodgings will be required to make a corporate legacy contribution to the District of Port Edward, and a policy will be developed for this purpose. The corporate legacy funds will be used for community enhancement at the discretion of the District Council.

It should also be noted that a significant portion of District land is covered in muskeg, which makes development significantly more challenging and costly as it needs to be removed prior to most development. To address this, the District is exploring the potential development of a local muskeg dump, which would allow residents and developers to properly dispose of muskeg. Currently, there is not a proper muskeg disposal site within the District, with the closest one being the Prince Rupert landfill which charges a fee of \$55 per tonne for District residents and \$61.60 per tonne for developers, subject to approval from the landfill. Providing a local muskeg dump could incentivise development by making it easier and potentially cheaper to dispose of muskeg.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Ensure the community has adequate land areas to support long-term growth.
2. Guide growth to reinforce the compact form of the existing townsite, avoiding sprawl into undeveloped areas.
3. Provide sufficient land to accommodate a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses that meet long-term community needs.
4. Protect the character of the community by ensuring that new development is compatible with existing land uses and supports Port Edward as a desirable place to live.
5. Manage the phasing of new development to ensure that municipal infrastructure and services are not overextended and remain financially sustainable.
6. Take steps to ensure that new development takes advantage of existing infrastructure and that new development happens sequentially to ensure the logical extension of District infrastructure.
7. Work collaboratively with neighboring local governments, First Nations, the local business community and various provincial and federal agencies to address shared growth and development priorities and challenges.

8.3 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Direct future growth to the urban growth area as illustrated on **Schedule 'C'**.
2. Consider undertaking a Commercial Land Allocation Strategy to ensure appropriate siting of future commercial uses that consider pedestrian movement and higher density residential housing forms.

3. Provide for both urban residential and rural residential options to ensure a variety of lifestyles are accommodated within the District.
4. Plan future growth in a manner that utilizes infrastructure effectively and efficiently.
5. Identify sufficient industrial land to protect the economic growth of the community while not creating or exacerbating the proximity of incompatible land uses.
6. Encourage the infill of vacant lots and redevelopment opportunities in order to take advantage of established services.
7. Explore potential locations and options for a local muskeg dump.
8. Take steps to implement the action items as outlined in the District's most recent Corporate Strategic Plan.
9. Require that all temporary construction camps and lodgings associated with major industrial projects are appropriately located, managed, and decommissioned, and that they contribute to the community through a corporate legacy fund directed toward community enhancement at the discretion of Council.
10. Work collaboratively with the City of Prince Rupert, North Coast Regional District, and local First Nations to establish and implement common goals.
11. Continue to be active participants as stakeholders in the future planning of Ridley Island and Watson Island.
12. Take steps to ensure the District is an active participant in the future planning of the Small Craft Harbour.
13. Continue discussions with CN Rail and the Prince Rupert Port Authority regarding future industrial and retail expansions and the potential associated impacts to Port Edward.
14. Encourage developments adjacent to railways to consider the recommendations and guidance as outlined in the *2013 Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations*, as developed by the Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities.
15. Identify lands at risk of, or potentially at risk of, natural hazards and establish appropriate guidelines for development, including mitigation measures. Such hazard lands within the District include slopes greater than 30%, floodplains, and lands at risk of inundation from tsunamis.

8.4 ADVANCING RECONCILIATION

The District of Port Edward is committed to advancing reconciliation as a foundational and ongoing process that embraces and integrates First Nations culture, governance, and land-use priorities into local planning. The District recognizes that First Nation communities have ancestral and reserve lands located within, and adjacent to, the District's municipal boundary and acknowledges the significance of engaging collaboratively with First Nation communities to support their visions for their lands and to identify potential areas for collaboration or partnership. In 2024–2025, the District undertook a Truth and Reconciliation Project to guide this work. The project produced practical tools including a consultation framework, cultural sensitivity training for Council and staff, formal land acknowledgements, and a document outlining important information about each local First Nation including history, governance, language, and culture, and their preferred consultation process. These outcomes provide a foundation for more consistent and meaningful engagement with Indigenous

partners and establish a clear process for incorporating reconciliation into day-to-day planning and decision-making.

The District of Port Edward recognizes the importance of protecting archaeological and cultural heritage resources within its boundaries and is committed to working collaboratively with Indigenous partners, provincial agencies, and the public to ensure these resources are respected and preserved. Archaeological resources are an important part of Port Edward's cultural landscape. These sites, many of which reflect the long and rich histories of the Tsimshian peoples, are protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act* (HCA) and are of significant cultural, historical, and educational significance. While archaeological sites are under the jurisdiction of the Province through the BC Archaeology Branch, local governments play a vital role in protecting these resources through planning, development review, and partnership with Indigenous communities. Objectives and policies around advancing reconciliation and the management of archaeological resources are included in the following sections.

Looking ahead, the District will continue to strengthen collaboration with neighbouring First Nations by exploring engagement protocols, aligning long-term planning objectives, and identifying shared priorities. Through these efforts, reconciliation will be advanced not only by protecting cultural resources but by supporting a shared vision for the future growth and well-being of the region.

8.5 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Advance reconciliation efforts with local First Nations.
2. Promote the protection of archaeological and cultural sites within the District.

8.6 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Take steps to protect archaeological resources by referencing the BC Archaeology Branch's Remote Access to Archaeological Data (RAAD) system in the review of future development approvals and notifying applicants in cases where potential developments overlap with registered archaeological sites or areas having archaeological potential.
2. Affirm and take steps to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and British Columbia's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) as they apply to local government planning and decision-making.
3. Collaborate with local First Nations to build a shared vision for the future, identify reconciliation actions, and ensure meaningful participation in planning processes, including coordination on Crown land within the District.
4. Recognize and celebrate the historical and ongoing presence of Tsimshian peoples by supporting cultural initiatives, using Indigenous place names and language on community signage and infrastructure, and creating opportunities to share local history and traditions.
5. Strengthen collaboration with Tsimshian Nations on the stewardship of cultural heritage resources to ensure these are protected and respected in planning and development decisions.
6. Ensure ongoing engagement with Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla First Nations regarding their future plans for the Willaough 6 reserve located within the District.

7. Apply the consultation framework developed through the Truth and Reconciliation Project to guide engagement with First Nations on planning and development matters.



9.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Port Edward's economy is shaped by its coastal location, industrial activity, and tourism potential. While historically rooted in fishing and canning, the community has evolved into a service and support hub for nearby port and energy infrastructure. Marine transportation, construction, and resource-based industries continue to provide local employment. At the same time, the community is leveraging its natural and cultural assets, such as the North Pacific Cannery Historic Site, to grow tourism and strengthen economic diversity. With an increasing number of cruise ships arriving in Prince Rupert, the District sees this as an opportunity to capture visitor traffic by enhancing local attractions, services, and marketing efforts that appeal to cruise passengers seeking regional and/or cultural experiences.

Ongoing investment in infrastructure and strategic partnerships will be essential to support a stable and resilient local economy. Broadening and growing the local economy is important for retaining current residents and drawing new people and businesses to the community.

In March 2025, the District received funding from the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) to undertake an Economic Development Plan. The purpose of the Economic Development Plan is to identify and pursue opportunities that will generate employment, attract investment, and support the community's long-term goal of becoming more vibrant and self-sufficient. While still underway at the time of this writing, the outcomes of this project will include a readiness review, market analysis (including industrial and commercial land assessments), community and stakeholder engagement, and a final strategy to guide future economic growth.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Encourage the expansion and diversification of the local economy to strengthen community resilience against economic shifts.
2. Encourage the revitalization and ongoing vibrancy of the downtown area as a commercial and social hub.
3. Foster growth in the tourism sector by supporting new and existing tourism opportunities.
4. Identify sufficient industrial land to protect the economic growth of the community while not creating or exacerbating the proximity of incompatible land uses.

9.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Support collaborative partnerships with government bodies and local industries to advance both economic growth and community development.
2. Actively promote Port Edward's tourism sector, port activities, and natural resource industries as central pillars of the local economy.
3. Recognize the importance of tourism to the economy of Port Edward and encourage new businesses and services to attract visitors to the community.
4. Acknowledge and support the North Pacific Cannery as a valuable National Historic Site, tourist attraction and economic engine and encourage further partnership to sustain its operations and preservation.
5. Support the expansion of local moorage opportunities within the District.
6. Ensure adequate land for the development of industry to allow for economic growth and job creation.
7. Finalize and implement the District's Economic Development Plan.
8. Maintain a close relationship with Prince Rupert and recognize its importance to the economy of Port Edward.
9. Support the incorporation of green and innovative technology in Port Edward's economic development.
10. Work to increase attractions and accessibility for tourism.



10.0 COMMUNITY VIBRANCY

The District of Port Edward is committed to cultivating a welcoming, inclusive, and vibrant community where all residents can enjoy a safe and healthy environment and take part in a wide range of cultural, recreational, and community activities. The District is also committed to building respectful relationships with local First Nations and Indigenous peoples, working together to support reconciliation and foster mutual understanding through meaningful collaboration.

In the past, Port Edward was home to several community groups and organizations dedicated to strengthening social connections and enhancing quality of life. In recent years, a number of these groups, such as the Port Edward Lions Club and the Neighbourhood Society, have become inactive due to declining membership and volunteer participation. Today, the Port Edward Event Planners and the Port Edward Historical Society are the only active community groups in the District. The District does support the efforts of these local community groups and recognizes their contributions in providing key services and improving the quality of life for District residents. It is essential to foster and support a strong culture of volunteerism in the community to sustain and potentially grow the programs and services available in Port Edward now and into the future.

The District recognizes that mental and physical health are key components to community wellbeing and vibrancy. As Port Edward does not have a medical clinic or hospital, residents rely on the regional healthcare services in Prince Rupert and provincial programs such as HealthLink BC and Northern Health's telehealth services. These programs improve access to care by reducing the need for travel;

however, there remains a need for expanded services to better support residents with complex health needs, particularly in the areas of mental health and addiction recovery.

To enhance community wellbeing, the District also recognizes the importance of increasing access to fresh, affordable food and supporting local food production. There is growing interest in small-scale agriculture and community food initiatives that can reduce reliance on travel to Prince Rupert for fresh produce. While Port Edward's challenging climate, terrain, and lack of viable agricultural lands have historically limited agriculture, investing in local food projects can improve access, especially for residents without personal transportation, and help lower costs by reducing the need for imported food. During community engagement activities, it was noted that some residents are interested in having a community garden to provide space for growing food, sharing knowledge, and supporting local food security. The District has attempted to implement a community garden in the past with no success, but is supportive of an individual or group championing a community garden project.

10.1 OBJECTIVES

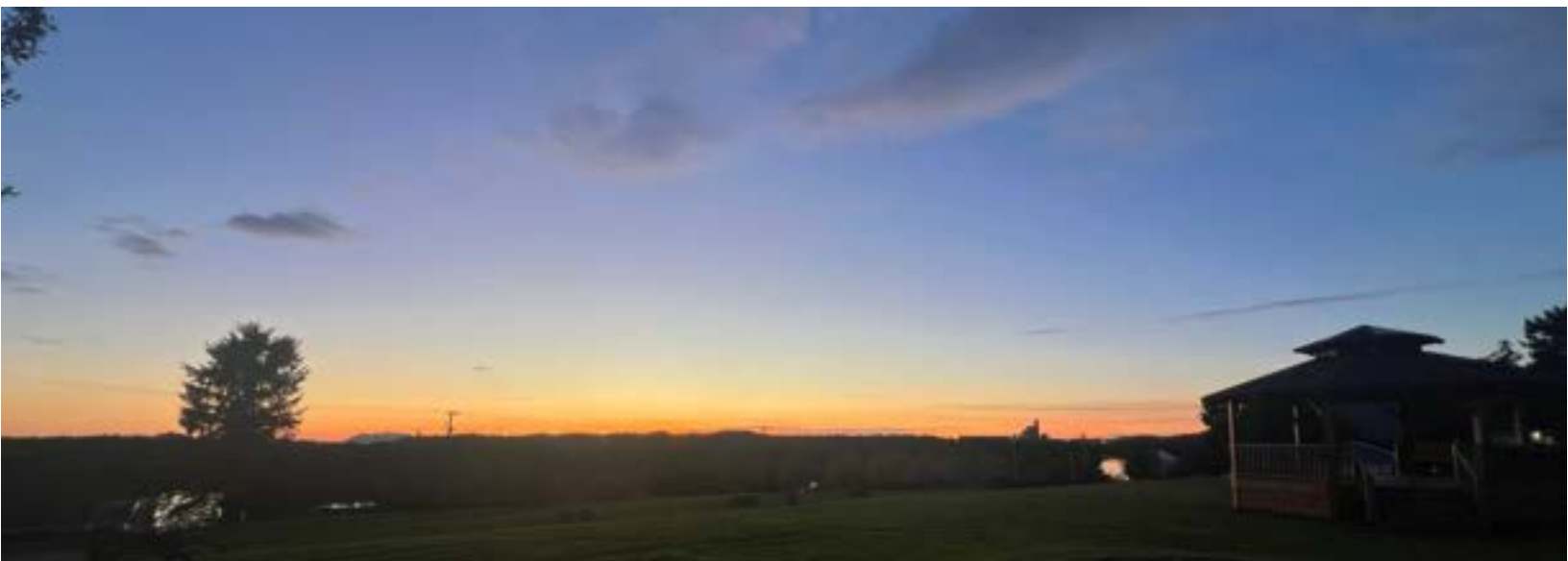
It is the objective of Council to:

1. Enhance the overall well-being of residents by supporting both mental and physical health initiatives.
2. Recognize and support the local arts community.
3. Support local community groups and volunteers.
4. Strengthen community food security by supporting local food production, small-scale growing initiatives, and affordable, accessible food options for all residents.

10.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Engage with Northern Health regarding a partnership to provide mobile healthcare services in Port Edward.
2. Advocate to provincial agencies for improved access to mental health and addiction services within Port Edward.
3. Promote the inclusion of both local Tsimshian and non-Indigenous artists in Port Edward arts and culture events.
4. Support the development of a community garden to provide space for residents to grow food locally.
5. Encourage small-scale agriculture and food growing initiatives within the District, including backyard gardens, greenhouse projects, and container growing.
6. Promote water conservation and sustainable growing practices in all food production activities.
7. Acknowledge and support the efforts of local community groups and volunteers.



11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The District of Port Edward is endowed with natural beauty, from its steep mountain slopes to the marine environments of Porpoise Harbour, Kloiya Bay, Lelu Island, Inverness Passage, and the Skeena River. This diverse and vibrant natural setting contributes significantly to residents' quality of life and offers numerous recreational opportunities for both locals and visitors.

For many residents, the high quality of life in Port Edward is closely linked to the health and integrity of the natural environment. The District Council supports the protection of the natural environment and has identified several areas of high environmental sensitivity, as outlined in **Schedule 'E'** of the OCP:

- Wolf Creek Estuary;
- Alwyn Lake Watershed Area;
- Prudhomme Lake Provincial Park;
- Diana Lake Provincial Park;
- Gamble Creek Ecological Reserve;
- The Marine Foreshore; and
- The Skeena River.

In addition to these designated areas, the District recognizes that all watercourses and lands with slopes exceeding 30% are of significant natural sensitivity.

These environmentally sensitive areas are intended to remain largely undeveloped and are subject to applicable environmental regulations from provincial and federal natural resource agencies. The District may also consider establishing Environmental Development Permit Areas through future OCP amendments. Any such regulatory development would be undertaken in consultation with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of Environment.

Floodplain Areas

Floodplains are often critical to the proper functioning and stability of watercourses and watersheds. As such, Council considers floodplain areas to be environmentally sensitive. Floodplains within the District of Port Edward have been designated under the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020. Development and other activities within such areas may be subject to regulatory requirements of the provincial and federal governments. Floodproofing regulations are found in the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020. Further, it is the policy of Council to regulate development in these areas to minimize the risk of loss of life and damage to property associated with flooding.

Marine Foreshore

The District of Port Edward is surrounded by a rich aquatic environment that includes Kloiya Bay, Morse Basin, Wainwright Basin, Porpoise Harbour, Inverness Passage, and the Skeena River. The protection of these marine foreshores is vital to the long term sustainability of various aquatic species and habitats, including salmon. Council supports the protection of these environments and has identified the coastal areas of the District as Environmentally Sensitive Areas on **Schedule 'E'**.

Lakes and Streams

Major courses within the District include Wolf Creek and a number of lakes including Prudhomme Lake, Taylor Lake, Diana Lake, Rainbow Lake, Alwyn Lake, Porpoise Lake, and Colonel Johnstone Lake. The 16,812 hectares of land that make up the District of Port Edward encompasses countless smaller water bodies including streams, creeks, swamps, and lakes, which are also vital contributors to aquatic and terrestrial habitats. The development setback requirements for all water bodies shall be a minimum of 15 metres subject to the provisions of the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw and the District of Port Edward Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw.

Steep Slopes

Council supports the protection of significant steeply sloped areas and discourages development, construction and tree removal on slopes steeper than 30%.

Air Quality

During the public consultation process, air quality was expressed as a concern with regards to future industrial development within the District. The public clearly expressed that future industrial development within the townsite should be restricted to industrial activities that produce minimal air, water, and noise pollution.

Provincial and federal regulations have become increasingly stringent regarding the reduction of emissions related to industrial combustion. The air quality of Port Edward should not, however, be left entirely to other governing bodies. Policies in the OCP can help to reduce emission issues by the appropriate siting of industrial land, screening requirements, and development standards for new industrial developments. The designation of Industrial land is illustrated on **Schedules 'B' and 'C'**. Screening and development standard policies will be regulated by the Industrial Development Permit process.

Alwyn Lake Watershed

Alwyn Lake is the drinking water source for the District. Through engagement as part of the Climate Action Plan, there were concerns expressed by residents regarding reduced water levels in the lake. The Climate Action Plan recommends assessing the intake system on Alwyn Lake to determine whether the current intake elevation remains appropriate and to plan for any necessary future upgrades. The

District holds a 1,433 Ha watershed reserve provincial tenure for the Alwyn Lake watershed. Through this tenure the District seeks to restrict resource extraction activities in the area with the aim of protecting water quality and conserving environmental values.

11.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Protect sensitive natural assets such as the estuary, riparian areas, wildlife, and marine resources.
2. Reduce the community's impact on the natural environment.
3. Ensure the protection of the District's drinking water sources.

11.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Promote the protection of the Sensitive Natural Areas as illustrated on **Schedule 'E'** through discouraging development on these lands.
2. Take steps to ensure development adheres to applicable BC Ministry of Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans rules and regulations.
3. Support the protection of floodplain areas and water bodies throughout the District.
4. Protect against the loss of life and damage to property associated with flooding by:
 - i. Encouraging park, open space, and recreation uses within floodplain prone land.
 - ii. Ensuring development adheres to the flood construction and siting regulations as outlined in the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020.
5. Support the protection of significant steeply sloped areas and discourage construction and tree removal on slopes steeper than 30%.
6. Consider the creation of Environmental Development Permit Areas as a future amendment to this OCP. The development of these regulations should occur in consultation with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of the Environment.
7. Require a minimum development setback of 15 metres for all lakes and streams.
8. Ensure ongoing communications with BC Parks in the management and protection of the Gamble Creek Ecological Reserve, Diana Lake Provincial Park and Prudhomme Lake Provincial Park.
9. Consider undertaking a Watershed Protection Plan for the Alwyn Lake watershed.
10. Ensure on-going communications with local industry to relay resident concerns regarding air quality and promote reduced emissions.
11. Promote water conservation and consider implementing seasonal water restrictions to reduce demand on the water system during summer months.
12. Consider the development of a Water Conservation Plan.



12.0 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The *Local Government Act* requires that an OCP includes targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Data from the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy shows that from 2007 to 2022, GHG emissions in the District decreased slightly from 2,432 to 1,908 total tonnes of CO₂e. The per capita emissions in the District are well below provincial averages, with the main GHG sources in Port Edward being from transportation and buildings. Expanding the availability of goods and services within Port Edward will help further reduce emissions by decreasing the need for residents to travel to Prince Rupert for daily needs. By strengthening local amenities and economic opportunities, the community can cut down on transportation-related emissions while improving convenience and overall quality of life. Table 12.1 compares community emissions with those of the province.¹⁴

¹⁴ Port Edward GHG emissions data is from the Community Energy Emissions Inventory (CEEI). Provincial GHG emissions data is from the Provincial inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions. It is important to note that these two data sources use different methodologies, scopes, and reporting frameworks to calculate emissions; the CEEI captures community-level emissions from sources like buildings, transportation, and waste, while the Provincial Inventory includes broader sectoral data, such as industrial emissions not accounted for in community inventories. As a result, CEEI and provincial emissions data are methodologically incompatible due to differences in emission sources, allocation methods, and reporting scope, limiting the validity of direct comparisons.

Table 12.1: GHG Emissions for Port Edward and BC between 2007 and 2022

| | 2007 | | 2012 | | 2017 | | 2022 | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | Total Tonnes CO2e | Tonnes CO2e/Capita | Total Tonnes CO2e | Tonnes CO2e/Capita | Total Tonnes CO2e | Tonnes CO2e/Capita | Total Tonnes CO2e | Tonnes CO2e/Capita |
| Port Edward | 2,432 | 4.7 | 2,982 | 6.0 | 2,050 | 4.2 | 1,908 | 4.1 |
| BC | 64,763,000 | 15.1 | 63,008,000 | 13.8 | 64,500,000 | 13.4 | 65,600,000 | 12.1 |

Climate change is one of the greatest environmental challenges of our time, with wide-ranging impacts on marine and terrestrial ecosystems. The District of Port Edward is committed to taking action and supporting broader provincial efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and prepare for a changing climate.

As a signatory to the BC Climate Action Charter, the District has committed to:

- Achieving carbon neutrality in its corporate operations
- Measuring and reporting community GHG emissions
- Promoting complete, compact, and energy-efficient communities

The District also participates in the Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP), which provides funding, guidance, and technical support to help communities implement local climate initiatives. To guide local action, the District has developed a Climate Action Plan (CAP) that focuses on both reducing GHG emissions and preparing for impacts such as more frequent extreme weather events. The CAP identifies 24 climate actions organized under five key themes:

1. Strengthen infrastructure and service resilience
2. Reduce community and corporate emissions
3. Build community climate preparedness
4. Enhance emergency response capacity
5. Integrate climate action into District operations

The CAP sets a target to reduce GHG emissions by 80% below 2007 levels by 2050, in direct alignment with the provincial GHG reduction targets.

It is important to note that in addition to the policies outlined below, policies related to climate actions are also included throughout various sections of this OCP, including policies around strengthening infrastructure and service resilience in Section 14.2: Infrastructure Policies.

12.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Support provincial climate action goals by reducing GHG emissions and increasing local resilience to climate change impacts, while considering the community's rural context and capacity.
2. Continue to work towards an 80% reduction in GHG emissions from 2007 levels by 2050.
3. Update energy and emissions inventory in 2030 and 2040 to understand the impact of changes in the District and potential updates to emissions reduction targets.

12.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Work to implement the climate actions and associated adaptation and mitigation actions outlined in the 2025 Climate Action Plan.
2. Work to integrate the climate actions and associated adaptation and mitigation actions included in the 2025 Climate Action Plan into other municipal plans.
3. Monitor and report progress of implementing climate actions.
4. Pursue climate funding opportunities, including the Local Government Climate Action Program, to support climate action and other municipal objectives.
5. Consider developing a Fleet Benchmarking Program to track and improve the emissions and costs of the District's vehicle fleet.
6. Upon reaching the end of the life span, replace fleet vehicles with higher efficiency vehicles and/or electric or hybrid vehicles.
7. Identify and share funding opportunities to support electrification and energy conservation initiatives.
8. Work with Prince Rupert to develop and implement an organics diversion program (including curbside green bin, education campaigns to reduce food waste, etc.)
9. Provide residents with opportunities to learn more about climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts and help facilitate resilience capacity building in the community, such as through community workshops, community training in partnership with emergency management professionals. This includes preparation for the disruption of critical services during extreme weather events.
10. Integrate the cost of strengthening resilience and reducing community emissions in the annual budgeting process.
11. Consider implementing a car charging station in Port Edward to encourage the use of electric vehicles for residents and to provide visitors a place to charge their vehicles.
12. Explore with neighboring jurisdictions the feasibility of implementing a ride/car sharing initiative.
13. Collaborate with local industries to support the implementation of climate actions, reduce emissions, and enhance community resilience.



13.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Port Edward is a safe and secure community with low crime rates and a strong sense of personal safety. Maintaining this requires a proactive and coordinated approach to community safety that encompasses not only crime prevention but also reliable emergency health services, fire protection, and planning for natural hazards. The District is exposed to a range of natural disaster risks, including earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, wildfires, and severe storms, all of which pose potential threats to public safety, infrastructure, and essential services. Given the community's remote location and limited access during emergencies, ensuring strong preparedness and response capacity is essential.

The District is committed to enhancing community resilience through ongoing emergency planning, hazard identification, and coordination with provincial and regional agencies. A recently completed Emergency Preparedness Plan outlines local emergency planning zones and public notification protocols, further strengthening the District's readiness. Policing services are provided through the Prince Rupert RCMP detachment, which collaborates with the District and other emergency agencies to maintain safety and respond to incidents.

Through engagement undertaken as part of this Plan, there was an identified need for a virtual emergency alert system to ensure District residents receive timely notifications of emergencies or important notices, such as boil water advisories or road closures, directly via email, phone call, or text message. The existing tsunami alarm cannot be heard in all parts of the townsite, and relying on social media posts does not effectively reach all residents. Council has expressed support for exploring options to implement a comprehensive emergency alert system for the District.

Floodplains within the District are designated under the *District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020*, with applicable floodproofing requirements and development controls designed to minimize risk

to life and property. The District continues to enforce these policies to manage land use in vulnerable areas and reduce exposure to flood-related hazards. Together, these efforts reflect Port Edward's strong commitment to protecting its residents and ensuring a safe, prepared, and resilient community.

13.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Prepare for emergencies that Port Edward may encounter due to natural disasters.
2. Ensure all residents and visitors feel safe and are safe in Port Edward.

13.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Implement the Emergency Preparedness Plan.
2. Explore the potential of the District becoming FireSmart certified.
3. Increase public education on water conservation and water consumption for residents during natural disasters.
4. Advocate for appropriate investment into policing resources.
5. Continue to support a resilient fire department.
6. Explore working with a geotechnical consultant to complete a mapping study of landslide vulnerability, risk, and debris flow potential.
7. Consider undertaking a geohazard assessment for high-risk landslide areas.
8. Integrate landslide risk into planning for transportation and mobility.
9. Consider undertaking a storm drainage and overland flood study for the District.
10. Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit and right-of-way holders to plan for landslide response.
11. Work with neighboring jurisdictions and stakeholders to collect mapping data pertaining to landslide and flood risk to support enhancing road infrastructure resilience.
12. Ensure critical buildings, such as the Municipal Hall and the Public Works building, have backup generators.
13. Install backup power systems (e.g., generators, battery storage) in Lift Station 1, Bowman life station, Arrow life station, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant to maintain service during outages.
14. Explore options for District-wide virtual emergency alert systems.
15. Consider undertaking staff emergency training (coordination, emergency roles and responsibilities, etc.) for extreme weather events.
16. Review, update, and develop new service agreements between the District and Prince Rupert to coordinator emergency management.
17. Explore opportunities for a community education program to educate residents on the actions needed to be taken in the event of an emergency such as a tsunami, flooding, or wildfire.



14.0 INFRASTRUCTURE

With an expected increase in economic activity and the corresponding potential for population increase in the townsite, it is important that new development be phased to maximize the use of the existing municipal infrastructure. New residential development should be located as close as possible to the existing development, so that the extension of municipal water mains and municipal sanitary sewer mains are both logical and efficient. Infill development should be encouraged wherever possible. With respect to residential development, the first phases of development may include the development of Alder Avenue and other privately owned properties.

In general, the municipal infrastructure within the District of Port Edward was designed and constructed to serve a much larger population. Therefore, the existing infrastructure has significant capacity to accommodate additional development, without the requirement for any significant capital expenditures. In addition, the community's existing high-quality infrastructure requires greater use to achieve economies of scale, making the encouragement of new development a key strategy for long-term sustainability.

Water

The District operates a community water system which services residential, commercial, and industrial areas within the townsite. Water is supplied to the District from a protected watershed at Alwyn Lake. Current assessments show that the potable water systems serving both Port Edward and neighboring Prince Rupert have sufficient capacity to meet average and peak daily demands. The treatment system is capable of supplying clean, treated water to a population of up to 1,000 people, more than the District's current population. The District is well-positioned to support substantial residential growth without requiring major capital investments in municipal infrastructure upgrades.

The community's water treatment plant, constructed in 2003, includes a 750,000-gallon storage reservoir. In 2004, the facility was equipped with dissolved air flotation and ultraviolet filtration systems to enhance water quality. In response to aging infrastructure and anticipated growth linked to the Prince Rupert port expansion, the District undertook a major upgrade to its water system in 2012, installing a larger and more modern distribution network.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of its water infrastructure, Port Edward recently undertook a project to bring the Alwyn Lake Dam and Wolf Creek Dam into compliance with BC Dam Safety Regulations. These projects include developing detailed operation, maintenance, and monitoring procedures, as well as establishing formal emergency response plans.

The District recently completed a Resource Management Project which examined the current condition of the water distribution system. Port Edward's water infrastructure is currently in relatively good condition, with the majority of assets rated as 'fair' or better. The District manages 10 km of water mains, 53 hydrants, and seven key assets within the Water Treatment Plant (WTP). As of 2025, these assets have an average age of 28 years and are generally well within their expected service life spans, which range from 67 years for the WTP to 90 years for the water mains. The total replacement value of the water system is estimated at approximately \$19.87 million.

Looking ahead, long-term asset renewal planning is essential to ensure the system remains reliable and sustainable. Annual renewal costs are expected to average approximately \$212,400 over the next 100 years, with lower needs in the near term (averaging \$66,200/year over 30 years) but significant spikes projected around 2030-2040 and again after 2070. These future costs are driven primarily by the scheduled renewal of the WTP and aging water mains. To mitigate the financial impact of these future needs, the District should continue building reserve funds, updating its asset management strategy, and scheduling infrastructure upgrades to align with lifecycle forecasts.

Sanitary

The District of Port Edward operates a community sanitary sewer system that services both residential and commercial areas within the townsite. The system comprises a network of gravity sewers, lift stations, and a wastewater treatment facility designed to safely collect, treat, and discharge effluent in accordance with provincial environmental standards.

Port Edward's wastewater treatment plant, constructed in 1997, includes screening, oxidation, digesters, and clarification prior to discharge. The facility is designed to serve a population of up to 1,500, providing sufficient capacity to accommodate moderate residential and commercial growth without requiring major capital upgrades.

The sanitary system includes approximately 9.14 km of gravity sewer mains, 134 manholes, 0.24 km of outfall piping, and 26 key infrastructure facilities. These assets are generally in good condition. As of 2025, the sanitary mains have an average age of 45 years and an expected service life of 81 years. The manholes are approximately 50 years old (as of 2025), with a lifespan of 76 years. Both the outfalls and facilities are 27 years old on average (as of 2025), with expected lifespans of 90 years and 49 years, respectively.

As with the water system, Port Edward is taking a proactive approach to asset management and long-term planning for its sanitary infrastructure. The District continues to monitor system performance, assess infrastructure condition, and identify priority areas for rehabilitation or replacement. A long-term capital renewal strategy is in place to address aging infrastructure. Reserve funding mechanisms and coordinated land use planning will be key to ensuring that the sanitary system continues to meet environmental standards while supporting community health and future growth.

Storm

The District manages a stormwater drainage system designed to collect and convey rainwater from residential, commercial, and roadway areas within the community. The system consists of 2,901 m of stormwater mains, 497.7 m of culvert/main, 728.4 m of culvert, 399.5 m of CB lead, 5.6 m of service, and 1,292.3 m of unknown stormwater assets. These assets are in good condition, with the average age being 42 (as of 2025), and an average expected asset life of 83 years.

Solid Waste

The District provides curbside solid waste collection for residents throughout the townsite and maintains an agreement with the City of Prince Rupert to utilize the sanitary landfill located on Ridley Island Road. The District pays a tipping fee per metric tonne for waste deposited at the facility.

A recycling program is delivered in collaboration with the North Coast Regional District. A regional program serves Port Edward, Prince Rupert, and Electoral Areas A and C, with oversight provided by the Mainland Solid Waste Advisory Committee (MSWAC). This committee includes representatives from each participating jurisdiction, a Community Environmental Representative, and an operations supervisor, and it meets periodically to ensure the regional waste system is efficient and well-coordinated.

Power & Telecommunications

The District receives its electricity from BC Hydro as part of a vast network that includes hydroelectric facilities and transmission lines spanning the region. To meet the growing demand for clean and reliable electricity, BC Hydro has proposed the expansion of transmission infrastructure in the North Coast region.

Natural gas services in Port Edward are provided by Pacific Northern Gas Ltd. (PNG). PNG operates the Western Transmission Gas System, which supplies natural gas to various communities in the region, including Port Edward.

Telecommunication services are primarily offered by CityWest, a locally owned and operated company in northern BC. CityWest provides a range of services, including high-speed internet, cable television, and telephone services to residents and businesses in Port Edward and surrounding areas. In addition, residents have access to other internet service providers such as TekSavvy, and VMedia.

Community engagement undertaken for the 2025 Climate Action Plan highlighted a need for more streetlights throughout the community.

14.1 INFRASTRUCTURE OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Ensure infrastructure renewal is supported by a long-term, sustainable financial strategy.
2. Coordinate land use decisions, such as development approvals, rezonings, and subdivisions, with the availability of potable water and wastewater treatment capacity.
3. Provide reliable water, sewer, and stormwater systems that protect public health, meet regulatory standards, and remain affordable for residents.
4. Plan all growth in a manner that utilizes infrastructure effectively and efficiently.

14.2 INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Finalize and implement the District's Asset Management Plan.
2. Encourage infill development, wherever possible, to maximize the use of existing municipal infrastructure.
3. Discourage development that requires new capital expenditures for sewage lift stations and water booster stations until those facilities are nearing capacity. Development should be directed to areas of the townsite which represent logical extensions of the existing municipal infrastructure.
4. Update the current Subdivision Servicing Bylaws to reflect modern municipal servicing standards for new residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions.
5. Evaluate development applications based on available water system capacity and require applicants to fund any necessary upgrades attributable to their proposed development.
6. Implement the water-related recommendations of the District's Climate Action Plan.
7. Identify and pursue opportunities to reduce potable water use, particularly among major water users.
8. Apply water conservation measures across all District-owned facilities, parks, and operations.
9. Consider undertaking a sanitary flow monitoring study and create a plan for capacity improvement.
10. Consider developing an Integrated Stormwater Management Plan.
11. Conduct a study on the capacity of the stormwater system. This study shall include a cost/benefit analysis on increasing the capacity of stormwater pipes to determine sufficient capacity to handle the predicted increase in precipitation that is to come from intense storm events.
12. Update design requirements for on-site water retention and peak flow capacity to account for increased frequency and volume of rainfall.
13. Review storm manholes located in areas at risk of flooding, then outline steps for monitoring and preventative action as water levels rise.
14. Update preventative maintenance and monitoring protocol for drainage assets to include infrastructure maps, known challenging locations, and regular inspections.
15. Conduct a study of potential future water sources (e.g., wells) and water treatment plant options.
16. Assess the intake system on Alwyn Lake to assess if the current intake elevation is still appropriate and plan accordingly for future upgrades.
17. Use LED light bulbs for overhead streetlights.
18. Conduct an energy assessment of non-building infrastructure to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency and conservation measures.



15.0 TRANSPORTATION

Highway 16 and Highway 599R serve as the primary transportation corridors into and through the District. Highway 16 runs east to west through the District, connecting Terrace and Prince Rupert, while Highway 599R provides the sole link between the Port Edward townsite and Highway 16. Both highways are maintained by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MoTT), which is responsible for construction, repairs, grading, and winter maintenance.

Currently, the transportation network functions well for both transient and local traffic. Highway 16 mainly serves through traffic, bypassing the townsite, while Highway 599R is used by residents for access to Highway 16. Both highways are considered to provide an adequate level of service.

The District Council will collaborate with MoTT to ensure that these corridors remain functional while minimizing development along the Highway 16 route. Access to Highway 16 will be controlled through Development Permits, with input from MoTT.

Within the Port Edward townsite, local roads are generally in need of reconstruction and the District has undertaken significant road reconstruction projects in recent years to improve local infrastructure.

In 2020, the District initiated a major road rebuilding program, focusing on Evergreen Drive and Wildwood Avenue. This project involved comprehensive work, including excavation, sub-base and base gravel installation, drainage improvements, and preparation for road and sidewalk paving. While the initial phase targeted specific sections, the overall objective was to upgrade key roads to modern standards.

It was noted during community engagement that Skeena Drive from the townsite to the North Pacific Cannery is in need of repairs, with many large depressions where water pools. While the road is out of the District's jurisdiction it was suggested that the District collaborate with MoTT to repair and improve the road, which in turn could attract more tourists.

As new development occurs, roads will be rebuilt to modern standards, including paving, curb and gutter, sidewalks, street lighting, and landscaped boulevards, with proper drainage prioritized in the upgrades.

Transportation Corridors

The Highway 16 transportation corridor provides a scenic travel route through the District of Port Edward. Council does not want a proliferation of unregulated development to occur within sight of the highway right of way. Accordingly, the District will require that all new developments be screened from Highway 16, and that all developments within 50 metres of the highway right of way be required to apply for a Development Permit. Similarly, the Highway 599R right of way will also be protected, and all developments within 50 metres of the Highway 599R right of way will be required to apply for a Development Permit. The Development Permit process will ensure the retention of pristine views along the Highway 16 and Highway 599R transportation corridors.

Public Transportation

There is one BC transit route in Port Edward, route 60, that has two stops in Port Edward; Evergreen Drive at Skeena Drive and Hillcrest Drive at Skeena Drive. The operational costs for Route 60 are cost-shared among the District of Port Edward, the City of Prince Rupert, and BC Transit.

Route 60 offers limited routes, only operating Monday to Saturday with the early morning service only offered during the weekdays and the last bus from Prince Rupert departing at 5:10 pm. In March 2025, District residents launched a petition to increase bus service to Prince Rupert, focusing on extending evening and nighttime rides.

Starting in May 2026, BC Transit will seasonally expand route 60 to service the North Pacific Cannery 3-4 times daily during their open season. During discussions with the Cannery, they expressed hope that a more accessible and affordable transit option from the cruise terminal in Prince Rupert would attract more tourists, as the transportation provided through the cruise ships is costly and can deter some visitors. Additionally, it was mentioned that many of the Cannery's staff do not have vehicles and providing daily bus service will help alleviate the stress of having to find rides daily.

Decisions regarding the expansion of bus service are made collaboratively by the Prince Rupert and Port Edward Councils in partnership with BC Transit. Any proposed service enhancements would require additional funding commitments from both local governments and the Province.

15.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Ensure that development along Highways 16 and 599R is managed through the Development Permit process to maintain safety, protect the transportation corridor, and align with provincial standards.
2. Strengthen collaboration with MoTT and BC Transit to support safe highway access, affordable regional transit, and ongoing improvements to the transportation network.
3. Plan and prioritize local road, sidewalk, bicycle lane, and signage improvements through asset management and strategic investment, enhancing mobility, safety, and connectivity for residents and visitors.

15.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Within the District of Port Edward boundary from Tye to the Port Edward townsite, all lands within 50 metres of Highway 16 and Highway 599R are designated as Highway 16 Development Permit Areas. All subdivision and development of these lands are subject to approval through the Development Permit process.
2. Liaise closely with the MoTT to plan upgrades and improvements to both Highway 16 and Highway 599R.
3. Collaborative with MoTT on a plan to improve the portion of Skeena Drive from the townsite to the North Pacific Cannery.
4. Work with MoTT to upgrade signage along Highway 16, and in particular to improve signage which directs additional tourist traffic to the Port Edward townsite.
5. Take steps to ensure that all new development which requires access to both Highway 16 and Highway 599R are referred to the MoTT for review and comment.
6. Continue to work with BC Transit with respect to affordability of the public transportation system, which operates between Port Edward and Prince Rupert.
7. Identify and prioritize local road improvements, including the provision of sidewalks and bicycle lanes.
8. Work in collaboration with Prince Rupert and BC Transit to explore options to increase public transit services (operating hours) to and from Prince Rupert.
9. Consider working with Prince Rupert, Tourism Prince Rupert, and tourism service providers to provide transportation options for tourists to travel from Prince Rupert to Port Edward.



16.0 HOUSING

Housing forms the foundation of community life. The quality and security of housing directly affect people's physical health, sense of safety, and overall well-being. At the same time, housing represents one of the most significant financial commitments individuals and families make, often their largest purchase, their biggest monthly expense, and a key source of personal equity and long-term stability.

The Interim Housing Needs Report completed in November 2024 identified several housing challenges and needs in the community. The key issues identified in the Interim Housing Needs Report, as well as the 2020 Housing Needs Assessment include:

- A need for increased diversity in housing types;
- A lack of rental accommodations, including non-market rental housing;
- A lack of seniors housing, including for those wishing to downsize; and
- A lack of supportive or accessible housing for senior residents and residents with special needs.

Recommendations to support the District in meeting its future housing needs include:

- Update zoning regulations to permit a wider range of housing types, support higher-density developments, and facilitate accessible and supportive housing;
- Continue to engage the community on housing needs;
- Focus on diverse housing options including accessible units for seniors and higher density developments;
- Update the Age and Disability Friendly Plan to support grant applications for seniors' housing;
- Continue to support proposed housing developments on Alder Avenue and Sunset Drive;
- Explore municipal incentives like density bonuses and tax exemptions as a way to boost rental housing supply;

- Acquire land for future market and non-market housing developments; and
- Develop eight (8) to ten (10) affordable seniors' housing units.

The objectives and policies outlined below are aimed at supporting housing that reflects community values and priorities, while preserving Port Edward's historic character.

16.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Support the development of safe, affordable housing options to meet the needs of Port Edward residents.
2. Encourage the creation of accessible housing that meets the needs of seniors and individuals with limited mobility.
3. Support a variety of housing types within the community, including higher density multi-family and senior's housing, to accommodate different household sizes, incomes, and lifestyles.

16.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Encourage housing accessibility to support residents of all ages and abilities.
2. Support a mix of housing forms (single family dwellings, townhouses) and different tenure types.
3. Encourage the retrofit and renovation of existing homes to improve the quality and longevity of the local housing stock.
4. Promote the development of new homes on vacant, serviced residential lots in existing neighborhoods.
5. Support housing development that responds comprehensively to extreme core housing needs, homelessness, suppressed household formation, anticipated growth, rental vacancy gaps, and additional local demand.
6. Facilitate the creation and preservation of affordable and non-market housing to meet the needs of vulnerable populations and households facing affordability challenges.
7. Promote housing that accommodates families needing larger homes as well as seniors seeking accessible and adaptable units to age in place.
8. Encourage the development of diverse rental housing to improve rental vacancy rates and provide secure housing choices for residents.
9. Ensure the OCP is reviewed for compliance with housing needs reporting as per provincial legislative requirements.
10. Explore updating the Age and Disability Friendly Plan as a step towards being recognized as an Age Friendly British Columbia Community, which would support the District in applications for grant funding to facilitate additional seniors housing units.
11. Explore the use of municipal incentives such as density bonuses, Revitalization Tax Exemption Bylaw, and an Infill Housing Strategy to enhance the rental housing market supply.
12. Explore land acquisitions for the use of future market rental and non market rental housing developments.



PART 3: LAND USE PLAN

Part 3 of the Official Community Plan outlines the goals and policies for land use in designated areas of the community.



17.0 RESOURCE

The intent of the Resource designation is to maintain lands that are largely free from development. Appropriate land uses within this designation include gravel extraction, forestry, and other resource related activities, as well as open space, parkland, and recreation.

Forestry activity in Port Edward is regulated by the Ministry of Forests. Council supports forestry activities within the District boundaries and encourages open communication with the Ministry of Forests to ensure new applications of woodlot licenses are consistent with the long-term planning goals of the District.

Prudhomme Lake Provincial Park, the Gamble Creek Ecological Reserve, Diana Lake, Rainbow Lake, and Colonel Johnstone Lake all fall within areas designated as Resource. Open space recreational opportunities within Resource areas are supported by Council and could include seasonal recreation and camping, as well as golf courses and nature parks. Council supports recreation uses within the

District boundaries and encourages open communication with the Ministry of Environment/BC Parks to ensure that provincial parks are well maintained and accessible to District residents.

The soil conditions in Port Edward consist of a combination of rock and muskeg. Crushed rock and gravel are frequently needed as engineered fill for construction purposes. Gravel extraction is an important resource and gravel extraction activities within the District boundaries are supported by Council. There are currently eight (8) provincial tenures within the District designated for quarrying purposes. These tenures encompass an area of approximately 201 Ha and include both rock for crushing and sand and gravel resources. Five (5) of these tenures are held by the MoTT, two (2) are held by the District of Port Edward, and one (1) is held by a private business. These tenures are illustrated on **Schedule 'B'**. Additionally, in 2023, the District undertook an amendment to the OCP to permit quarrying on a parcel located along Highway 16 at Prudhomme Lake. Port Edward will work in collaboration with the MoTT in the management of aggregates within the District.

17.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Support the continued use of wilderness areas within the District for low-impact resource and recreational uses, recognizing their environmental sensitivity and development constraints.
2. Encourage coordination with relevant provincial agencies to ensure that land use activities within the Resource designation, such as forestry, recreation, and gravel extraction, align with environmental stewardship and long-term land use objectives.

17.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Direct resources uses to the lands designated as Resource on **Schedule 'B'** and **Schedule 'C'**.
2. Work in collaboration with local First Nations, senior levels of government and authorizing agencies to ensure resource extraction activities on lands designated as Resource follow best practices and consider environmental, cultural and recreational values.
3. Permit gravel extraction activities in adherence with provincial regulations and the quarrying regulations as outlined in the District's Zoning Bylaw.
4. Work in collaboration with the MoTT in the long-term management of rock for crushing and sand and gravel quarries within the District.
5. Encourage quarry extraction activities occurring near Rural Residential or Residential areas, or in areas where these activities might impact the visual attributes, to be carried out in the way that minimizes impacts to nearby homes and preserves the visual character.
6. Permit forestry activities in areas designated Resource on **Schedule 'B'** and **Schedule 'C'**, excluding the Alwyn Lake watershed.
7. Encourage open communication with the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MLFNRO) to ensure new applications of woodlot licenses are consistent with the long-term planning goals of the District.
8. Permit open space recreational opportunities, including seasonal recreation, camping sites, golf courses, and nature parks, in areas designated Resource in **Schedule 'B'** and **Schedule 'C'**.

18.0 RESIDENTIAL

18.1 EXISTING HOUSING

The housing stock composition in Port Edward, according to the 2021 Census, includes 207 private dwellings, with 181 of those dwellings occupied by usual residents. Of the occupied private dwellings, 145 are single-family homes, 20 are semi-detached homes, and 10 are row homes. Additionally, there is one 8-plex and one 4-plex in the District. The Census indicated that there were no dwellings constructed between 2001 and 2021, although it appears this number has been suppressed due to it being under 10. According to District building permit data, there were two manufactured homes built between 2001 and 2021, and a seniors housing 8-plex constructed in 2018 on land provided by the District. The majority of homes in the District, 58%, were constructed between 1961 and 1980. There are 25 homes in need of major repairs as of the 2021 Census. Port Edward is a compact community, and all houses are within a five-minute drive from the town centre.

18.2 FUTURE HOUSING

As outlined in Section 7.2, recent provincial legislation required the District to update their Housing Needs Report in 2024 using the standardized methodology. The 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report identified a 5-year housing need of 40 units and a 20-year need of 116 units. A review of the vacant residential lands indicates there is sufficient lands within the District to meet both the identified 5-year and 20-year housing needs. To address these needs, the District has identified the following key housing sites and developments:

- **Alder Avenue Subdivision:** A 2.9 Ha parcel originally designated for mobile homes, but since re-designed to accommodate 11 single-family homes.
- **Old School Site (Sunset Drive) Affordable Housing:** In 2021, an Expression of Interest was issued to develop affordable housing units, targeting non-market housing, on the former school site. The old school is located along Sunset Drive. A currently undeveloped 1.6 parcel, which has been previously identified for mixed commercial/residential uses, is located directly north of the school. The District is currently seeking funding for the demolition and removal of the former school.
- **King Subdivision:** A conceptual 134 lot layout, known as the King City Subdivision, has previously been proposed for the District (see **Schedule 'C'**). The proposed subdivision encompasses an area of approximately 11.4 Ha and is accessed off Jubilee Crescent and Royal Drive. The proposed housing composition of this neighbourhood is predominately single family, however, duplex housing on a scatter site basis throughout the neighbourhood is also supported. Should this development be realized, it has the potential to fully meet the identified 20-year housing needs of the District.
- **Fir Drive Multiple-Family Residential:** There is a 2.35 Ha undeveloped parcel off the east end of Fir Drive that is zoned for Multiple-Family Residential (RM2) purposes. The Rainbow Avenue right-of-way also extends to the eastern boundary of the parcel, however this portion of Rainbow Avenue is currently undeveloped. Given the size of the parcel and permitted densities of the RM2 Zone (up to 60 units per hectare), this parcel has the potential to significantly contribute to the District housing stock, as well as provide for a diversity of housing types.

In addition to the specific lots/developments outlined above, there are also a number of vacant lots scattered throughout the townsite and the District does support infill development to help meet the short and medium-term housing demand. New residential development may occur on both privately owned and municipal owned properties.

18.3 HOUSING FORMS

The public engagement process for this OCP has identified the desire of the residents of Port Edward to have more variety in housing choices available within the townsite. As discussed, the available housing stock is predominately single family, with very limited medium density housing and rental opportunities. In order to achieve a complete community that includes housing forms that will accommodate people from all age brackets and socio-economic groups, Council supports the provision of a variety of housing forms within the Port Edward townsite.

Increasing the variety of housing forms can be accomplished through a number of means, such as the infill of existing serviced lots with duplexes and/or medium density housing forms, as well as permitting secondary suites within single family homes. While duplexes should be located on a scatter site basis throughout existing neighbourhoods, secondary suites can be within any single family home subject to the BC Building Code. The District’s Zoning Bylaw outlines parcels appropriate for higher-density forms of housing. Council supports the goal of achieving a residential density of 80% single family and 20% multiple family homes throughout the townsite.

Table 18.1 identifies appropriate densities of different housing forms to be permitted with the townsite

| Housing Form | Density |
|---|--|
| Single family | Maximum of 10 dwelling units per hectare |
| Duplexes, Townhouses/Row houses (multiple family) | Maximum 20 dwelling units per hectare |
| Low Rise Apartments (up to 3 storeys – multiple family) | Maximum 60 dwelling units per hectare |

area.

Table 18.1: Townsite Densities

| Housing Form | Density |
|---|--|
| Single family | Maximum of 10 dwelling units per hectare |
| Duplexes, Townhouses/Row houses (multiple family) | Maximum 20 dwelling units per hectare |
| Low Rise Apartments (up to 3 storeys – multiple family) | Maximum 60 dwelling units per hectare |

The densities recommended in

| Housing Form | Density |
|---------------|--|
| Single family | Maximum of 10 dwelling units per hectare |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Duplexes, Townhouses/Row houses (multiple family) | Maximum 20 dwelling units per hectare |
| Low Rise Apartments (up to 3 storeys – multiple family) | Maximum 60 dwelling units per hectare |

Table 18.1 are lower than those typical of larger urban centres; however, these densities are appropriate to the form and character of Port Edward.

18.4 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Encourage the development of a variety of housing types.
2. Encourage the development of affordable housing in the community.
3. Encourage the development of housing for seniors in Port Edward.
4. Ensure sufficient land to meet the identified 5-year and 20-year housing needs of the District.

18.5 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Permit residential densities in accordance with
2. Table 18.1 on lands designated as Residential on **Schedule ‘C’**.

| Housing Form | Density |
|--|--|
| Single family | Maximum of 10 dwelling units per hectare |
| Duplexes, Townhouses/Row houses (multiple family) | Maximum 20 dwelling units per hectare |
| Low Rise Apartments (up to 3 storeys – multiple family) | Maximum 60 dwelling units per hectare |

3. Encourage the logical and sequential development of the townsite to maximize the efficient use of existing infrastructure.
4. Support infill development on vacant residential lots within the townsite.
5. Permit duplexes throughout the townsite on a scattered-site basis and encourage varied façade design for side-by-side units to enhance visual diversity.
6. Evaluate proposals for multi-family housing based on criteria such as viewscales, neighbourhood integration, access, proximity to schools, and proximity to local commercial services.
7. Permit secondary suites within single-family dwellings, subject to compliance with provincial legislation.
8. Support the development of senior’s housing in central locations, using the same siting criteria established for multi-family developments.
9. Encourage a diverse range of housing types and forms within the townsite to support community needs.

10. Strive to achieve a residential mix of approximately 80% single-family and 20% multi-family housing within the townsite.
11. Support the inclusion of affordable and rental housing options in new residential developments, including the sale of District-owned lands for projects that incorporate secondary suites and rental units.
12. Permit seniors' housing and related community facilities in all areas designated Residential.
13. Provide for both urban residential and rural residential options to ensure a variety of life styles are accommodated within the District.
14. Encourage the construction of higher density housing, including multi-family units in and around the downtown core.
15. Encourage new homes to consider and minimize the risks of groundwater intrusion.
16. Take steps to advance the re-development of the former school site for affordable housing, including pursuing funding for the demolition and removal of the former school building.

19.0 RURAL RESIDENTIAL

The intent of the Rural Residential designation is to provide land for low density residential use, as well as home occupation use that is not serviced by municipal services. Rural housing options are becoming increasingly popular. The Port Edward and Prince Rupert housing markets currently do not offer many rural residential options and, as a result, there is an opportunity for Port Edward to provide a unique housing form within the region. It is envisioned that Rural Residential properties will be developed on lots with a minimum lot size of 0.6 hectares (1.5 acres) provided that the lots can be suitably serviced with private, on-site water and sanitary systems. This may be problematic as soils within the District of Port Edward are frequently rocky or deep muskeg and may not be suitable for onsite servicing. However, with the abundance of scenic locations and lack of Rural Residential lots available in the region, other systems such as “pump and haul” may be considered to support this lifestyle. Council supports the provision of land to satisfy those seeking rural lifestyles. Rural Residential areas include around Rainbow Lake, Prudhomme Lake, and Kloiya Bay and have been identified on **Schedule ‘B’**.

19.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Provide land for low density housing that accommodates rural lifestyles, and to enable home occupations that are not reliant on municipal services.

19.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Support Rural Residential land use in areas designated on **Schedule ‘B’**.
2. Prefer Rural Residential development in locations where on-site sanitary sewer systems and water wells can be provided; in other areas, consider alternative water supply systems and “pump and haul” sanitary sewer systems, with the option to require professional certification confirming serviceability as a condition of rezoning and/or subdivision.
3. Availability of utilities will be limited, and municipal services will not be provided.
4. Permit home occupations on lands designated Rural Resource.
5. The minimum lot size, subject to the provision of on-site sanitary systems, is 0.6 hectares (1.5 acres).
6. Subdivision within land designated Rural Residential shall be subject to the requirements of the *District of Port Edward Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw*.

20.0 COMMERCIAL

20.1 BACKGROUND

The District of Port Edward currently has a small but active commercial sector. As of 2020, approximately 70% of businesses operating in the District were goods producing, that is industrial type land uses. The remaining 30% of the District's businesses were retail and service-related businesses. This is an inverse of what is occurring at the provincial level. Industries that are well represented in the District include construction and manufacturing. Industries that are underrepresented or not represented include retail trade and food services.

The community's only general/convenience store permanently closed in 2024, resulting in residents having to drive into Prince Rupert for fuel and basic household items. During engagement, residents and businesses expressed a strong desire for new commercial services, including:

- Convenience store
- Grocery store
- Restaurants and take-out food establishments
- Licensed dining or pub
- Coffee shop with Wi-Fi
- Personal care services
- Boat wash
- Day care
- Sporting goods or bait and tackle shop
- Financial services
- Liquor store

It is also noted that the District has long sought to develop a downtown core, which would act as a business and community hub. In Fall 2025, District staff and Council met with affected property owners and stakeholders to undertake a design charette for a Downtown District. Further details on this process are outlined in Section 20.5.

20.2 EXISTING COMMERCIAL LAND SUPPLY

There is a limited supply of commercial designated lands relative to industrial within the District, with approximately 30.8 hectares designated for commercial uses and 264 hectares designated for industrial use.

Commercial lands within the District currently include parcels along the Highway 599 corridor, portions of the former school property and the lands bounded by Nelson Avenue, Harborview Drive, Skeena Drive and Rainbow Avenue. There is also a 20 hectare undeveloped area directly east of the proposed King City subdivision identified for commercial uses. These lands include approximately 23.8 hectares of vacant or underutilized commercial lands.

While there may be a future need for commercial land in association with the expansion of port facilities in the area (see section 20.3), the District has not yet experienced such a demand. As noted

above, approximately 77% of the District’s commercial land is currently vacant or underutilized, providing room for growth. The District also has a significant amount of land (264 hectares) identified for industrial uses.

20.3 FUTURE COMMERCIAL DEMAND

The Port of Prince Rupert has plans to expand operations and capacity through the construction of a second container terminal. This project is currently estimated to be completed in 2030-2031. This expansion and associated need for ancillary support services, such as construction, transportation and warehousing, is anticipated to result in a demand for commercial services and retail uses to meet the needs of both new employees and existing residents. Retail trade, ambulatory health care services, forestry and logging, and transportation and logistics, including port, freight, and rail operations, are all expected to grow in the North Coast over the next ten years (Table 20.1).

Table 20.1: Top 5 Industries by Total Job Openings in North Coast and Nechako Development Region – 2025 to 2035

| Industry | Employment 2025 | Annual employment growth rate % 2025-2035 | Job openings 2025-2035 | | |
|--|-----------------|---|------------------------|-------------|--------|
| | | | Expansion | Replacement | Total |
| All industries | 46,200 | 0.5% | 2,500 | 11,200 | 13,700 |
| Other retail trade (excluding cars and personal care) | 3,600 | 0.9% | 300 | 800 | 1,100 |
| Ambulatory health care services | 1,600 | 2.55 | 500 | 400 | 900 |
| Ports and freight transportation arrangement | 1,500 | 2.4% | 400 | 400 | 800 |
| Forestry, logging, and support activities | 1,500 | 1.3% | 200 | 400 | 600 |
| Rail transportation and support activities | 500 | 5.5% | 400 | 200 | 600 |

BC Labour Market Outlook, 2025-2035

Critical to retaining a growing labour force to support the Port’s expansion, will be the provision of commercial services and amenities that attract and support worker’s moving to the area. Without such services and amenities, a community will have challenges in attracting needed talent.

Preliminary research undertaken as part of the District’s Economic Development Plan suggests that 7,200-7,500 square feet of retail space is currently needed in the community. The community’s existing vacant commercial lands are sufficient to meet this need.

20.4 TOURIST COMMERCIAL

The area between the townsite and the North Pacific Cannery and the lands surrounding Kloiya Bay, both identified on **Schedule ‘B’**, are designated for Tourist Commercial use to support the development of a vibrant tourism destination. Permitted uses may include accommodation (e.g., fishing lodges, RV parks, campgrounds), retail (e.g., local arts and crafts), and other visitor-serving amenities. Current

accommodation options are limited and will not meet projected demand if tourism increases. Expanding tourist commercial uses along Skeena Drive will help address this gap.

The Inverness Passage corridor is well-positioned to benefit from growing interest in eco-tourism, sport fishing, and RV travel, and offers opportunities for tourism-related businesses that capitalize on the area's natural beauty and historic assets. Improved moorage along the Inverness Passage is also a priority to support both resident and tourism needs. All development in this area must be coordinated with senior government agencies to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and protection of marine and foreshore habitats. The District supports responsible tourism development along this corridor, provided it does not negatively impact sensitive environmental areas.

Kloiya Bay is a popular destination for kayaking, fishing, and enjoying the scenery. Skeena Kayaking offers kayak rentals and guided tours from its launch site at the bay, which also features a picnic area, fire pit, and beach shelters. Additional opportunities for similar uses exist at Rainbow Lake and Diana Lake.

Partnerships with the Metlakatla and Lax-Kw'alaams First Nations are also encouraged to support Indigenous heritage tourism.

20.5 DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

The establishment of a downtown area has long been a vision for the District of Port Edward. Although Port Edward does not currently have a “downtown” and the community has existed for many years without one, there are significant reasons why the development of a downtown district is timely.

1. There is significant growth and expansion proposed and occurring at the Port of Prince Rupert, specifically on Ridley Island.
2. Recruitment of a skilled labour force to fill new positions at the Port and other supporting industries will be highly competitive. An important consideration for potential employees will be the availability of amenities and services within the community which support quality of life.
3. Prince Rupert has experienced an increase in cruise ship visits in recent years. The development of a downtown area could act as a focal point to attract cruise ship passengers to Port Edward.
4. With the recent closure of the only store in the community, residents must drive into Prince Rupert for gas and basic household items. There is a strong desire to develop these commercial uses in community to promote and support increased self-sufficiency.

While recognizing the factors outlined above, the development of a Downtown District in Port Edward comes with additional considerations and benefits:

- **Downtowns are a focal point for a community** - They provide a sense of place by providing public spaces such as parks, plazas, and recreation and cultural facilities where people can meet for social activities and community events. They also provide a central location for amenities and services including commercial and retail services, recreation, and entertainment.
- **Downtowns provide quality of life** - Because downtowns provide a center and a focal point in a community, they thus provide an opportunity to improve quality of life by providing essential gathering and meeting places to maintain social connections. These connections can occur several ways including festivals, art exhibits, markets, and activities for children and families. Further, these quality of life enhancements benefit both existing residents, and serve to attract new residents, businesses and visitors to the community which can translate into longer term more sustainable economic growth.

- **Downtowns serve as symbols** - Downtowns can serve as a place where the history can be shared, whether through creating public storytelling places, public art, or both. This in turn can serve as a source and symbol of community pride. Downtowns can also serve as a place to develop partnerships between public and private sectors by implementing projects that broaden the appeal of a downtown, including public infrastructure investments, and incubator space for small businesses. Clustering a range of activities also creates spinoff opportunities due to activities being near one another.
- **Downtowns are critical for employers in their professional and talent recruitment of employees** - due to all the factors outlined above.

District staff and Council met with affected property owners and other community members to undertake a design charette for a Downtown District between September 15th and 18th, 2025. This charette resulted in a conceptual design for a new Downtown District that reflected community needs and was responsive and scaled to realistic market demand. Through this process detailed next steps to advancing the vision for the downtown were also outlined. These next steps were categorized into the following three categories:

- **Establish the Program** – What is the opportunity, and what policy is needed to set the stage?
- **Engage Partners** – Who will the District partner with to realize the vision?
- **Build Excitement** – How will the District get the word out about the opportunity?

Further information regarding the implementation of the Downtown District is outlined in Part 4 of this Plan.

20.5.1 ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

Research on successful downtowns in rural areas has identified the following five elements¹⁵:

- **Develop a Vision and Plan for a Downtown** - A vision for what people want the downtown to be in five to ten years is an essential starting place. A common approach used is the traditional Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) analysis wherein interested stakeholders (business operators, workers, residents, local institutions) come together to outline a shared vision.
- **Identify and Build Upon Local Assets** - Due to the smaller scale of amenities in rural communities it is essential to take advantage of the assets that are available, including history and physical location, such as access to water and viewpoints.
- **Build a Strong Public Private Partnership** - Pooling human and financial resources, particularly for small communities, will provide greater benefit from an organized coordinated effort. Successful downtown development cannot occur unless both the public and private sectors are involved and committed. City government can demonstrate this commitment by:
 - investing in necessary public improvements such as sidewalks, streetlights and infrastructure; and
 - providing incentives to business expansion.
- **Create a Sense of Place** - A sense of place is an important quality that brings people to a downtown, makes them feel connected, and causes them to want to stay. What are the fundamental elements found in many rural downtowns that can contribute to a strong sense of place? Establishing a distinctive image that identifies the downtown as a special and desirable place will be key.

¹⁵ Robertson, Kent (2006). "Rural Downtown Development: Guiding Principles for Small Cities". <https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/resource/9154134/>

- **Determine the Downtown Market** - A key question to ask early is “Who do we envision using our downtown?” The answer to this will help determine the range of uses and activities that should be available. Residents are an obvious market, but other questions related to this include: “What would draw residents to a downtown area, in lieu of traveling to another larger community for their shopping and entertainment needs?” Other questions to consider: “What are the needs of local employees and can these be served in a centralized downtown area?”, “What will attract potential employees to live and work here?”, “Is there a market for further attracting tourists and serving their needs?”

20.5.2 ASSETS AND USES IN A DOWNTOWN

Assets frequently found in successful, rural downtowns include the following:

- Locally owned, independent businesses that are an integral part of the community.
- The presence of government functions (i.e., municipal hall, public library, post office, community centre) that consistently draw people.
- Open spaces for community events and a place for lingering and social gatherings.
- Access to waterfronts to/from or within the downtown that, if designed properly, naturally act as a draw for human activity.
- A group of dedicated individuals in the community who care deeply about a downtown.
- Pride of place residents have in the town and the downtown area.
- Proximity to destinations of interest.
- Local community based financial institutions.
- Social gathering places, such as a place of worship, coffee shop, and/or public plaza or square that brings people together.

This list provides some initial ideas on what assets could be maximized or created for the development of a new downtown district in Port Edward.

20.5.3 LOCATION AND DESIGNATION

Port Edward’s Downtown District has been established as a central hub for community life, economic activity, and public services. While the community historically developed without a traditional downtown, the designation of this area, bounded by Harbourview Drive, Skeena Drive, and Rainbow Avenue as shown on Figure 20.1, represents a significant milestone in supporting long-term sustainability, livability, and economic growth. This location is considered ideal to serve the majority of commercial needs, including residents, tourists, marine related and industrial employees. This centrally located commercial area can service residents, employees, and travelers given its location and access to other uses.

The purpose and intent of the land use designation is to accommodate commercial uses that support provision of essential commercial services and public amenities that support residents, workers and visitors of Port Edward.

Figure 20.1: Downtown District Location



20.5.4 DOWNTOWN VISION AND PRINCIPLES

The following Vision and Principles have been developed to provide a design and implementation framework for the future development of a Downtown District. Part 4 Implementation outlines next steps required to advance the further development of the Downtown District.

Vision Statement

Create a focal point for the community that provides a strong sense of place that draws the community together and becomes a significant asset that aids in the sustainable, long term economic development for the District.

Guiding Principles

- **Access and Accessibility** – There should be equal opportunity for people of all ages and mobility levels to be engaged in the downtown. All elements of the downtown should encourage diverse groups to feel welcome and enjoy themselves.
- **Connections** – The downtown should provide connections on many levels, including connections to and from the water, to history and culture in the community, and to people (i.e., social gathering places).
- **Attract** – The downtown should attract people of all ages, abilities, cultures, as well as residents, workers, and visitors.
- **Adaptable** – The downtown should be adaptable to different uses, different users, and different seasons

20.6 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Ensure there is adequate land identified for commercial development that will support a growing, vibrant economy and meet the needs of community and tourists.
2. Promote and support the development of the tourism industry in Port Edward.
3. Take steps to establish a downtown district commercial area which will act as a business and community hub.
4. Ensure commercial development considers potential impacts to the natural environment.
5. Encourage the demolition of buildings that are structurally unsound and cannot be restored.

20.7 POLICIES

20.7.1 GENERAL COMMERCIAL

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Direct general commercial uses to the areas identified on **Schedule 'C'**.
2. Pursue economic development opportunities through advocacy and a supportive business climate to promote new commercial uses including a mix of local-serving retail uses, grocery store, pharmacy, restaurants, cafés, tourist accommodation, and local and regional professional and business offices that diversify employment opportunities in the community.

3. Permit new commercial development on the site adjacent the former Port Edward Elementary School.
4. Support advertising and marketing of the District's available commercial lands
5. Ensure any proposed Official Community Plan land use amendments from 'Commercial', 'Downtown District' or 'Tourist Commercial' to a non-commercial land use designation address, to the satisfaction of the District, the following:
 - a. The impact of the decreased commercial land supply on providing essential commercial services to support residents, workers and visitors.
 - b. Mitigation measures to address identified impacts to ensure that the ongoing supply of commercial lands will be sufficient to serve existing and future residents, workers and visitors.

20.7.2 TOURIST COMMERCIAL

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Direct tourist commercial uses to the areas designated Tourist Commercial on **Schedule 'B' and Schedule 'C'**.
2. Ensure any expansion of tourist related commercial activities along Skeena Drive through Inverness Passage adequately considers potential impacts to the marine environment.
3. Coordinate with the Ministry of the Environment and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to ensure any development along the Inverness Passage considers, and mitigates against, potential impacts to the marine foreshore and fish habitats.
4. Encourage new developments within the Inverness Passage to consider the recommendations as outlined in the 2013 Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railways as development by the Railway Association of Canada and Federation of Canadian Municipalities.
5. Explore partnerships with the neighbouring First Nations to promote First Nations heritage in tourism developments within the District.
6. Improve signage along Highway 16 to attract tourists to the area.
7. Consider locations where recreational and tourism activities are possible.

20.7.3 DOWNTOWN DISTRICT POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Support commercial development within the Downtown District area designated on **Figure 20.1**.
2. Build off of the vision and identified next steps resulting from the September 2025 Downtown District design charette.
3. Continue to engage community members, property owners and key stakeholders in establishing a vision and strategy for the Downtown District.
4. Establish Development Permit Area guidelines for the Downtown District which incorporated the latest vision and feedback gathered through the recent design charette.
5. Encourage the development of commercial and mixed-use projects that provide essential retail and commercial service space that serves both Port Edward and the wider region.
6. Encourage developments to provide:

- a. outdoor seating areas,
 - b. public gathering spaces, such as plazas or squares
 - c. opportunities for public art and/or historical interpretive displays that celebrate the District's past,
 - d. high-quality, pedestrian-friendly and accessible site and building design, and
 - e. pedestrian and cycling connections to designated trails, and waterfront access.
7. To the extent feasible, buildings should be encouraged to front onto streets to develop continuous commercial frontages, opportunities for weather protection and provide a sense of place.
 8. Safe, convenient and accessible walking and cycling access shall be provided to the Downtown District through trail, sidewalk, and pathway connections.

21.0 INDUSTRIAL



Historically, industry in Port Edward was sustained by fishing and canneries. While the canneries have closed and the fishing industry is no longer as prominent as it was, industry within Port Edward is still largely centered around ocean-related activities.

Port Edward's proximity to Prince Rupert positions it within a significant marine corridor. The Prince Rupert Port Authority (PRPA) is responsible for managing and overseeing port operations in the harbours of Port Edward and Prince Rupert. Established under the *Canada Marine Act* and governed by Letters Patent from the federal Minister of Transport, the PRPA directs land use and development within its jurisdiction. The Port of Prince Rupert is Canada's third-largest port and serves as a critical gateway for trade between North America and Asia, offering the shortest shipping routes across the Pacific. The port handles various cargo types, including containers, bulk commodities, and liquids, and is serviced by CN Rail, providing inland transportation links.

In 2023, the Port of Prince Rupert handled 23.5 million tonnes of cargo, marking a 5% decrease from the previous year and the third consecutive year of volume decline. This downturn is primarily attributed to shifting global shipping routes, reduced import demand, and increased competition from other North American ports. Despite these challenges, the port remains a significant economic driver, contributing approximately \$1.4 billion in economic output in 2023 and supporting around 7,800 full-time equivalent jobs across various sectors, including marine operations, logistics, and administration.¹⁶

Significant industrial projects proposed and on-going within the region include:

Fairview Container Terminal Expansion

Significant investments have been made in recent years to expand the port's capacity. The Fairview Container Terminal has undergone expansions to increase its throughput, and a second container terminal is currently in the planning stages, with completion anticipated between 2030 and 2031. This new facility is projected to add at least 2 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of annual capacity, strengthening trade infrastructure and delivering significant economic benefits to the region.

CANXPOR: Enhancing Rail-to-Container Transloading

To counteract declining cargo volumes and enhance its role in global trade, the PRPA is investing in infrastructure projects such as the CANXPOR facility, designed for rail-to-container transloading of goods like agricultural and forestry products. This project is designed to increase

¹⁶ Prince Rupert Port Authority, 2023 Annual Report. <https://2023.rupertport.com/>

efficiencies in export supply chains, maximize value for Canadian exporters, and support the growth of intermodal business at the Port of Prince Rupert.

Ray-Mont Logistics has been selected to develop and operate facilities that will provide transloading service capacity for 400,000 TEUs of agricultural, forestry, and plastic resin products. The project will consist of a 108-acre greenfield development on Ridley Island and is slated to begin operations in the third quarter of 2026.¹⁷

The Canada Infrastructure Bank has reached financial close on a C\$150 million loan to the Prince Rupert Port Authority for the first phase of CANXPORT, which will expand capacity and capabilities for rail-to-container transloading of multiple export products at the Port of Prince Rupert.¹⁸

REEF: Bulk Liquid Storage Export Facility

The Ridley Island Energy Export Facility (REEF) is a large-scale liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and bulk liquids terminal located on Ridley Island at the Port of Prince Rupert. Developed as a joint venture between AltaGas Ltd. and Royal Vopak NV, REEF is designed to facilitate the export of LPG, methanol, and other bulk liquids to Asia. The project includes the construction of storage tanks, a new dedicated jetty, rail infrastructure, and other facilities required to operate a state-of-the-art facility.

REEF is being developed on a 190-acre site adjacent to AltaGas and Vopak's existing Ridley Island Propane Export Terminal (RIPET). The joint venture has executed a long-term lease with the Port of Prince Rupert and has been granted the necessary federal and provincial permits to proceed with construction.¹⁹

The project is expected to commence operations in 2026 and will be developed and brought online in phases.

Supplementary activities associated with these large projects, mainly during the construction phase, will continue to increase the need for housing in the region, specifically short-term rental housing for contract workers. As mentioned in Section 7.3, the expansion on Ridley Island has the potential to significantly increase the population in Port Edward over the next 10 years.

21.1 INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Currently, the majority of industrial activity in the District takes place at the north end of the townsite near Boundary Drive and Royal Avenue. The waterfront area within the townsite of Port Edward is the largest area of occupied industrial land and is the centre of ocean-related industrial activity within the townsite.

While there are 264 hectares of land designated for industrial use within the District, much of these lands are either unserviced or have access constraints. To address this challenge, the District has committed to ensuring that adequate industrial lands are available to support future development needs. In 2025, the District received funding to undertake an Economic Development Plan to identify economic opportunities, including industrial operations. One driver for this project is the need for developable industrial lands in the District and the Economic Development Plan will include an

¹⁷ PRPA to begin construction on \$750 million export logistics project (October 19, 2023), PRPA. <https://www.rupertport.com/prpa-to-begin-construction-on-750-million-export-logistics-project/>

¹⁸ CIB investment to improve flow of Canadian exports through Port of Prince Rupert (May 23, 2024), CIB. <https://cib-bic.ca/en/medias/articles/cib-investment-to-improve-flow-of-canadian-exports-through-port-of-prince-rupert/>

¹⁹ REEF (April 17, 2025). <https://www.reefproject.ca/>

industrial lands assessment to identify available lands and approximate costs for getting potential industrial lands to market. At the time of writing, the Economic Development Plan is underway and is scheduled for completion by March 2026.

21.1.1 CANOXY NORTH INDUSTRIAL AREA

The Canoxy Industrial Area sits at the entrance to the townsite along Highway 599R and offers convenient access to both the highway and waterfront. With very little undeveloped waterfront industrial land left in Port Edward, this spot is likely to become more important over time. To maintain a visually appealing entrance to the town, the section of land along Highway 599R has been designated as an Industrial Development Permit Area.

21.1.2 WOLF CREEK INDUSTRIAL AREA

The Wolf Creek Industrial Area sits at the north end of the townsite near the old fish hatchery. To help reduce potential impacts on nearby homes, this area has been designated as an Industrial Development Permit Area. Any development here will rely on the future construction of the Port Edward Bypass Road (Wampler Way) and the extension of municipal services to the site. The new bypass road is also intended to act as a buffer between future industrial growth and residential neighbourhoods, helping to keep these areas separate and minimize conflicts.

21.1.3 BOUNDARY DRIVE INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The existing industrial areas along Boundary Drive are also designated as a Development Permit Area as identified on **Schedule 'C'**.

21.2 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Support the continued operations of existing industry, while creating the opportunity for additional industry to be located within the District, provided it is compatible with surrounding land uses.
2. Ensure there is sufficient industrial land within the District to meet anticipated future demands.

21.3 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Support industrial development within areas designated on **Schedule 'C'**, guided by design criteria established through the Industrial Development Permit Area guidelines.
2. Encourage the development of industrial lands that are constructed in support of container shipment, container storage, natural gas and other commodity exports, warehousing and loading.
3. Finalize and implement the industrial lands assessment as part of the District's on-going Economic Development Plan.
4. Continue to engage with local industries and stakeholders to stay apprised of future industrial expansions and associated potential impacts to the District.

22.0 PRINCE RUPERT PORT AUTHORITY

The Prince Rupert Port Authority (PRPA) is the organization responsible for the overall planning, development, marketing and management of the port facilities within the Port Edward and Prince Rupert Harbours. The PRPA operates under the provisions of the *Canada Marine Act (CMA)* and related CMA regulations, and through Letters Patent issued by the federal Minister of Transport. The PRPA controls land use and development on their lands, identified in Figure 22.1.

Figure 22.1 Prince Rupert Port Authority Jurisdiction Area



Prince Rupert Port Authority 2020 Land Use Management Plan

22.1 2020 PRPA LAND USE PLAN

The *2020 PRPA Land Use Plan* outlines how the PRPA intends to manage future development of their lands. The PRPA lands include Lelu and Stapledon Islands within Port Edward. The Land Use Plan identifies a marine development moratorium for areas to the west of Lelu Island, but does not prohibit industrial development on either Island. In fact, the Plan outlines an Industrial land use designation for both Stapledon and Lelu Island, with viewscape buffers proposed for the northeast portion of Lelu Island. Further information on these islands is outlined below.

22.2 LELU ISLAND

Within the District of Port Edward, the PRPA has jurisdiction over Lelu Island. Lelu Island lies within the Ridley Island / Outer Harbour Planning District of the *2020 Land Use Management Plan*. Lelu Island is identified as being 219 hectares of undeveloped land with the long-term potential of being used for a bulk terminal, shipyard and other marine activity. Lelu Island has a moderate to high habitat value. Further, the *2020 Land Use Management Plan* has the following policies regarding Lelu Island:

"10. For the medium term, the PRPA does not envisage any development for Lelu Island, but long-term opportunities suggest use of this island for bulk commodity terminals and general industrial uses. More detailed site analysis, planning, and infrastructure analysis, including consideration of possible recreational features will occur prior to any development considerations.

"11. Lelu Island is recognized by the First Nations as a potential archaeological site containing a number of culturally modified trees. Any future development on Lelu Island will consider the archaeological values of the site during the environmental and socioeconomic assessment or planning of the site;"

The island currently has marine access only but has the potential for a bridge connection from Port Edward.

22.3 RIDLEY ISLAND

Although Ridley Island is outside of the District of Port Edward boundary, the townsite of Port Edward has direct and unobstructed views of Ridley Island. All activity occurring on Ridley Island will have significant visual impacts on the community of Port Edward. In addition, noise, light and air pollution will directly impact Port Edward residents. As such, the District and the community's residents would like to be informed and involved in the planning and development of activities on Ridley Island.

22.4 STAPLEDON ISLAND

Stapledon Island is a small island within the District of Port Edward in which the PRPA also has jurisdiction over. This island is found in a narrow waterway between Lelu Island and the mainland of Port Edward. Stapledon Island is approximately 11.45 hectares in size and given its location, has been proposed as a connection between Lelu Island and the mainland via a future roadway. Two bridges could connect Lelu Island to the mainland using Stapledon Island as a land connection, thereby opening up Stapledon to future development.

22.5 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Support active communication and collaboration with the Prince Rupert Port Authority on the planning, development, and management of PRPA lands that may impact Port Edward.
2. Advocate for the interests of Port Edward residents in all PRPA-related development, including projects located outside District boundaries that may have visual, environmental, or socio-economic effects on the community.
3. Maintain Port Edward's involvement in the long-term land use visioning for undeveloped PRPA lands within the District's jurisdiction, with attention to balancing industrial, environmental, and community needs.

22.6 POLICIES

The District of Port Edward has significant interest in the future planning and development of Lelu Island, within the Prince Rupert Port Authority lands. As such, the District has outlined their policies moving forward regarding a number of goals related to the PRPA on Lelu Island.

1. Designate areas under PRPA jurisdiction on **Schedules 'B' and 'C'**,
2. The District encourages ongoing collaboration with the Prince Rupert Port Authority regarding the development of PRPA lands, both within the District of Port Edward and outside of the District Boundary.
3. The District recognizes that development on PRPA lands, including Lelu Island and Stapledon Island within the District of Port Edward and Ridley Island within the City of Prince Rupert, will have significant impacts on residents of Port Edward. As such, the District will endeavour to ensure that the interests of Port Edward residents are considered and that residents are properly consulted regarding the planning and development of PRPA lands.





23.0 PARKS AND RECREATION

Outdoor recreation is a vital component to the quality of life in the District of Port Edward and residents cherish the outdoor opportunities available to them. With the ocean, mountains, lakes, rivers, and surrounding rainforest, the District of Port Edward is located within a truly diverse and beautiful environment.

23.1 EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Outdoor recreational facilities within the Port Edward townsite are concentrated at the baseball, skatepark and soccer fields of McKeown Sports Field. Other open spaces include the King City Park, Fisher Point, and the Lions Memorial Park.

The District of Port Edward is fortunate to have a land base that encompasses diverse and beautiful terrain. Some of the key parks and recreational areas within the rural areas of the District include:

- Porpoise Harbour Picnic Site;
- Prudhomme Lake Provincial Park: Approximately 7 hectares in size, offering 24 vehicle accessible campsites, boating, fishing, and picnicking;
- Rainbow Lake: Allowing boating, swimming, picnicking and fishing;
- Diana Lake Provincial Park: Encompassing 233 hectares, this park offers a wide variety of water-oriented activities. Sunbathing, swimming and canoeing are popular activities at this lakefront park and a nature trail winds through lush coastal rainforest; and
- Major trails in the District include the Community Forest Trail, Cassier Dam Trail, Marion Lake Trail, and Tona Lake East and West Trails.

The recreational amenities and associated activities available in the District are major advantages for Port Edward. Projects aimed to improve the quality, access, and marketability of tourist recreational areas in the District will help Port Edward maximize its draw of tourists to the area.

The *District of Port Edward's Recreational Master Plan* that was completed in 1993 outlines numerous areas in which parks and recreation within the District can be enhanced. The age of this document

dates the cost estimates for the proposed initiatives, but the ideas and strategies found within this document are as relevant today as they were in 1993. Strategies outlined in the *Recreational Master Plan* that have not yet been completed include:

- McKeown Park and Port Edward Cultural Gardens;
- Streetscape Plan;
- Porpoise Harbour Waterfront Walk;
- Rainbow Lake Campsite;
- Public Boat Launch and Marine Facility; and
- A themed District Sign System

During community engagement residents noted the need for trails and multi-use pathways throughout the townsite, especially along Skeena Drive. During the summer months, boats and trailers park along the shoulder of Skeena Drive which forces residents to have to walk on the road as there is no sidewalk. Additionally, there are some residents without a vehicle who walk to Prince Rupert regularly and they noted that a pathway from Highway 16 along Skeena Drive would improve safety and comfort. To help address these concerns and guide future investments, the District could look at developing an Active Transportation Network Plan. This plan would outline key routes and connections for sidewalks, trails, and multi-use pathways, and set out basic design standards to support them. It could also consider how new trails and routes might link to recreation areas, tourism amenities, and broader climate goals. Taking a strategic and coordinated approach to active transportation would help to ensure a safer and more efficient pedestrian network in Port Edward, while also supporting a more active and connected community.

A *Recreation Master Plan and Trail Plan* was prepared for the District in 2020 that outlines proposed community trails. An Active Transportation Network Plan could expand upon this work and identify potential funding sources for building trails and pathways. Figure 23.1 shows the proposed community trails identified in the *Recreation Master Plan and Trail Plan 2020*.

Figure 23.1: Proposed Community Trails



The District Council strongly encourages the future completion of these projects and will continue to advance projects as partnerships and funding opportunities allow. Once completed, these projects will help Port Edward cultivate the image of being the heart of outdoor recreation and will enhance recreational opportunities for local residents. Enhancement projects will also benefit the District economically by taking maximum advantage of the recreational vehicle and camping traffic that passes through the area and encouraging new residents to the region to settle in Port Edward.

23.2 WATERFRONT

Waterfront access is an important element of living in Port Edward. Waterfront access is limited within the townsite due to the location of the CN Rail Right of Way and the nature of the working harbour. However, options are available for improving waterfront access in the Port Edward. Projects identified in the *Recreational Master Plan* and listed above such as the construction of a marina, boardwalk, parks and picnic areas along the townsite's waterfront are desirable and will improve access and enjoyment of the waterfront. The community has also previously explored options for a kayak launch and waterfront park and the development of a concept plan for such facilities is outlined in the District's Corporate Strategic Plan.

Waterfront land is more readily available near the Sunnyside and North Pacific Canneries and these areas can be utilized for recreational purposes including improved trails and RV campsites. Outdoor recreational activities along Inverness Passage will enhance and support the Tourist Commercial designation for the area and will help enhance the experience of visitors to the North Pacific Historic Fishing Village.

The District Council has been actively working with the Ministry of Environment – BC Parks to improve waterfront access to the lakes in the District for recreational purposes. In 2020, these efforts gained support through a partnership with BC Parks and \$80,000 in funding from Ridley Terminals, which allowed for the clean-up of accumulated logs and debris at Diana Lake Provincial Park, improving beach access and safety. Building on this work, further upgrades are now underway in 2025, including improvements to the day-use area with a new accessible shelter, expanded parking, upgraded creekside toilet facilities, and the relocation of the park's entry gate further from private property. These improvements will be an important benefit for residents and travelers to the area.

23.3 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Ensure the availability and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities for residents of all ages and abilities.
2. Maintain and enhance the community's active transportation network.
3. Maintain and enhance access to the waterfront.
4. Maximize the benefit from the unique surroundings Port Edward has to offer by:
 - o Encouraging key projects that will improve the availability and diversity of recreational activities;
 - o Enhancing the beauty of the Port Edward townsite and entrance way;
 - o Improving the signage to Port Edward along Highway 16;
 - o Enhancing the tourist experience and promoting Port Edward as a destination location;

- Ensuring that the Highway 16 corridor remains in a pristine, natural condition and retains the magnificent, natural viewsapes; and,
- Improving the state and unsightliness of the south end of the townsite, towards North Pacific Cannery so that this can be a more appealing tourist gateway to the Inverness Passage area.

23.4 POLICIES

It is the priority of Council to:

1. Direct parks and recreation uses into the areas identified as Parks and Recreation on **Schedules 'B' and 'C'**.
2. Increase park area within the townsite as new residential development occurs. Where the park land dedication requirements of Section 941 of the *Local Government Act* are triggered by subdivision, the District may determine whether the owner must provide land or cash in lieu and, in making that determination, will consider the objectives set out in the *District of Port Edward Recreational Master Plan and Trail Plan 2020*.
3. Continue to maintain and improved District-managed parks and recreational facilities.
4. Consider undertaking an update to the Recreation Master Plan.
5. Continue to work with BC Parks to improve the regional facilities, specifically Diana Lake.
6. Improve signage for the Port Edward townsite and important recreational, cultural, and heritage areas within the District.
7. Further examine the demand for moorage in Port Edward and the possibility of expanding the North Pacific Cannery facilities.
8. Promote Port Edward as a tourist destination.
9. Support recreation uses within the District boundaries and encourages open communication with the Ministry of Parks to ensure that provincial parks are well maintained and accessible to District residents.
10. Retain the natural beauty of the Highway 16 corridor by restricting any development within 50 metres of the Highway right of way, subject to the Development Permit guidelines established in Section 0 of this OCP.
11. Take steps to advance the kayak park along Highway 599.
12. Explore developing an Active Transportation Network Plan to identify potential locations, designs, and funding sources for future trails and multi-use pathways throughout the townsite.
13. Establish a community trail system that provides pedestrian and cycling connectivity and access to the Downtown District and a number of public amenities including public wharf, Lions Memorial Park, and existing park and lookout.
14. Explore options to leverage the school gym for public and private recreational uses.

24.0 INSTITUTIONAL

The institutional land use includes District administration offices, the school, firehall, infrastructure facilities. Further details on key institutional facilities are provided below.

Port Edward Community School

The Port Edward Community School has been a source of community pride since it opened in 2013. The elementary school forms part of a community complex which includes a library, a community hall, Council chambers and the municipal offices. The school motto “Unity of the Clans through the Children” exemplifies the importance of this facility within the community.

The White House

The District owns the White House property adjacent to the fire hall and is currently exploring options for its future use. Potential ideas have included converting the site into a restaurant, cultural centre, or housing. To move forward, the District will need to outline its preferred direction for the property. If a commercial use is pursued, it is recommended that a Business Case be undertaken to assess the project’s feasibility, development costs, and potential for revenue generation.



North Pacific Cannery and Historic Fishing Village

Located along the Inverness Passage near the mouth of the Skeena River, the North Pacific Cannery and Historic Fishing Village was constructed in 1889 and is now the oldest surviving cannery on the west coast of Canada. Located six kilometres past the Port Edward townsite along Skeena Drive, this National Historic Site draws numerous tourists each year to enjoy the exhibits, live performances and guided tours.

Connected by elevated wooden walkways, this unique site contains the original bunk houses and management cabins, belt driven machinery in the main cannery building, and the old cannery store that now operates as the cannery gift shop. The North Pacific Cannery site also has a restaurant with an outdoor patio area overlooking the scenic Inverness Passage.

The North Pacific Cannery and Historic Fishing Village is the largest draw for tourists to the Port Edward townsite and a major asset for regional tourism. The facility is financially supported by the North Coast Regional District and has received extensive staff support by the District of Port Edward historically. The District will focus on securing additional partnership for operational and restoration support as the facility does not currently have the resources it needs to be sustainable.

Utilities

Utilities such as water, sewer, stormwater, electricity, and telecommunications are critical forms of institutional infrastructure that support the functioning, safety, and livability of the community. While typically not thought of as traditional institutional land uses, utility services and associated facilities, including pump stations, transmission corridors, water reservoirs, and utility easements, represent key infrastructure that requires protection through land use planning. As Port Edward grows, it will be important to ensure that adequate land is

designated and protected for the expansion, maintenance, and upgrading of utility systems to meet current and future demand. Coordination with regional utility providers and provincial agencies will be essential for long-term servicing and infrastructure resilience.

24.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Maintain and enhance public and institutional facilities.
2. Plan for and designate sufficient land for utility infrastructure to support future population growth, economic development, and the needs of both residents and visitors.

24.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Direct institutional uses to those areas designated Institutional on **Schedule 'C'**.
2. Direct utility uses to those areas designated Utilities on **Schedule 'B' and 'C'**.
3. Maintain and operate the public water system in accordance with the infrastructure outlined in **Schedule 'D1'**
4. Maintain and operate the public sanitary system in accordance with the infrastructure outlined in **Schedule 'D2'**
5. Continue to work in collaboration with School District 52 to ensure the continued operation and growth of the Port Edward Community School as a vital community amenity.
6. Continue to support the growth and improvement of the North Pacific Historic Fishing Village in partnership with other governments and agencies.
7. Continue to support the community centre as a community amenity.
8. Continue to support community and recreational programming in the community centre.
9. Explore options for providing space for before and after school care within the community centre or school.
10. Develop a vision and strategy for the White House property.
11. Permit places of worship to be located in any Plan designation within the District but encourage their siting to align with the criteria for medium density multi-family housing, as the impacts and siting requirements are similar.



25.0 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

Pursuant to the *Local Government Act 488(1)*, Council may designate Development Permit Areas. These may be established under the following conditions:

- a) Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity;
- b) Protection of development from hazardous conditions;
- c) Protection of farming;
- d) Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted;
- e) Establishment of objectives for the form and character of intensive residential development;
- f) Establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multi-family residential development;
- g) In relation to an area in a resort region, establishment of objectives for the form and character of development in the resort region;
- h) Establishment of objectives to promote energy conservation;
- i) Establishment of objectives to promote water conservation; and
- j) Establishment of objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

This Plan contains four separate Development Permit Areas:

- **DPA # 1 – Multi-Family Residential Lands**
- **DPA # 2 – Commercial Lands**
- **DPA # 3 – Industrial Lands**
- **DPA # 4 – Highway 16 and Highway 599R**

25.1 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA # 1 – MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

All lands where multi-family development is a permitted use are designated Residential Development Permit Areas.

25.1.1 AUTHORIZATION

Development Permit Area No. 1 is designated pursuant to *Local Government Act* section 488(1)(f) establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development.

25.1.2 DESIGNATED AREA

The Multi-Family Residential Development Permit Areas apply to all RM1 and RM2 Zones as set out in the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020.

25.1.3 JUSTIFICATION

It is Council's objective to foster a high standard of livability for residents within multi-family developments, improve the integration of medium density housing forms within neighbourhoods, and ensure new developments provide a high quality of design.

25.1.4 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT TRIGGERS

The *Local Government Act* imposes development permit requirements in development permit areas. Unless exempted by 25.1.5 a development permit must be obtained when any of the following types of development activity occur in Development Permit Area No. 1, in accordance with 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

1. Subdivision of land;
2. Construction, addition or alteration of a building or other structure; or
3. Alteration of land.

25.1.5 EXEMPTIONS

In Development Permit Area No. 1, a development permit is not required for the following:

1. Temporary buildings and structures, construction trailers, temporary boarding or scaffolding, temporary structures associated with a sidewalk/parking lot sale, and buildings and structures permitted by a Temporary Use Permit;
2. Construction of, or addition to or alteration of a building or structure by the District, the federal or provincial governments, or their agents for construction or maintenance works;

3. Construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or structure involving only interior renovation, repair or maintenance; façade improvement to an area less than 20% of the existing façade; construction of an accessory building, or an addition to principal building less than 100 square metres; or,
4. Replacement of a building that has been destroyed by natural causes, in cases where the replacement building is identical to the original in both form and location.

25.1.6 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LANDS DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

The following Development Permit Guidelines apply in Development Permit Area No. 1:

1. Sites for duplex lots should be not less than 800 square metres.
2. Sites for multiple family dwellings should be not less than 1,200 square metres in order to allow sufficient space to incorporate adequate site design and open space.
3. Townhouses shall be clustered to take advantage of open space and views. Smaller clusters are preferred and shall not exceed 6 continuous dwelling units.
4. The repetition of façade in townhouse developments is discouraged.
5. Maximum sun exposure should be considered in the siting of dwelling units. The effect of shadows on neighbouring buildings should also be considered.
6. Façade colours should be chosen with consideration to providing colour in winter.
7. All areas not required for building or parking shall be fully landscaped with hard and/or soft landscaping.
8. Parking areas and loading areas are to be paved to the standard of the Port Edward Subdivision Bylaw, 544, 2014.
9. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened from view.
10. Landscape screens and fenced screening shall be included between multiple family Developments and other land uses.
11. Garbage containers shall be screened from view on three sides.

25.2 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA # 2 – COMMERCIAL LANDS

All lands designated as 'Commercial' and 'Tourist Commercial' and properties with commercial ('C') zones are located within a Commercial Development Permit Area.

25.2.1 AUTHORIZATION

Development Permit Area No. 2 is designated pursuant to *Local Government Act* section 488(1)(f) establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development.

25.2.2 DESIGNATED AREA

The Commercial Development Permit Areas are all C Zones as set out in the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020.

25.2.3 JUSTIFICATION

The objective of this development permit area is to foster a high level of building and site, promote pedestrian friendly sites and encourage high-level design standards with respect to landscaping, paving, screening, and access control.

25.2.4 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT TRIGGERS

The *Local Government Act* imposes development permit requirements in development permit areas. Unless exempted by 25.2.5, a development permit must be obtained when any of the following types of development activity occur in Development Permit Area No. 2, in accordance with 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

1. Subdivision of land;
2. Construction, addition or alteration of a building or other structure; or
3. Alteration of land.

25.2.5 EXEMPTIONS

In Development Permit Area No. 2, a development permit is not required for the following:

1. The alteration of a building that is limited to the addition, replacement or alteration of doors, windows, building trim, awnings, or roofs;
2. Interior alterations to buildings;
3. The construction of new buildings or structures less than 10 square metres in area;
4. The erection of a sign or fence;
5. The placement of temporary construction site offices, structures used for short-term special events and emergency facilities; or
6. The consolidation of a lot or road widening.

25.2.6 COMMERCIAL LANDS DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

The following Development Permit Guidelines apply in Development Permit Area No. 2:

1. The facilitation of pedestrian movement shall be considered in the siting of commercial buildings.
2. Pedestrian connectivity between commercial buildings and sites is encouraged.
3. Commercial uses are to be buffered and screened from residential uses.
4. Electrical kiosks and mechanical equipment, including rooftops, shall be screened.
5. Garbage containers are to be screened.
6. All areas not utilized for building or parking shall be fully landscaped with hard or soft landscaping.
7. All Parking areas are to be paved to the standard established by the District of Port Edward Subdivision Bylaw No. 544, 2014.

25.3 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA # 3 – INDUSTRIAL LANDS

The objectives of the Industrial Development Permits are to foster improved design of industrial sites and buildings where such sites are visible from major roads or adjacent to residential or commercial properties.

25.3.1 AUTHORIZATION

Development Permit Area No. 3 is designated pursuant to *Local Government Act* section 488(1)(f) establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development.



25.3.2 DESIGNATED AREA

The Industrial Development Permit Areas are all M Zones as set out in the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020.

25.3.3 JUSTIFICATION

The objective of this Development Permit Area is to promote high-quality design for industrial sites and buildings, particularly where they are visible from major roads or adjacent to residential or commercial areas.

25.3.4 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT TRIGGERS

The *Local Government Act* imposes development permit requirements in development permit areas. Unless exempted by 25.3.5, a development permit must be obtained when any of the following types of development activity occur in Development Permit Area No. 3, in accordance with 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

1. Subdivision of land;
2. Construction, addition or alteration of a building or other structure; or
3. Alteration of land.

25.3.5 EXEMPTIONS

In Development Permit Area No. 3, a development permit is not required for the following:

1. Temporary buildings and structures, construction trailers, temporary hoarding or scaffolding, temporary Structures associated with a sidewalk/parking lot sale, and buildings and structures permitted by a Temporary Use Permit;
2. Construction of, or addition to or alteration of a building or structure by the District, the federal or provincial governments, or their agents for construction or maintenance works;
3. Construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or structure involving only interior renovation, repair or maintenance; façade improvement to an area less than 20% of the existing façade; construction of an accessory building, or an addition to principal building less than 100 square metres; or,
4. Replacement of a building that has been destroyed by natural causes, in cases where the replacement building is identical to the original in both form and location.



25.3.6 INDUSTRIAL LANDS DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

The following Development Permit Guidelines apply in Development Permit Area No. 3:

1. All lands designated as Industrial in this Bylaw, or which are zoned Industrial in the District of Port Edward Zoning Bylaw No. 713, 2020, are within the Industrial Development Permit Area.
2. Where industrial lands front along either Highway 16 or Highway 599R and are therefore subject to the Highway Development Permit Area, only one Development Permit is required, and both guidelines should be followed to the greatest extent possible.
3. Industrial buildings are to be sited, where practical, close to property lines to limit the impact of parking and loading from adjacent properties.
4. Parking areas and loading areas are to be paved.
5. Landscaping is to be included along property lines fronting streets, particularly Highway 599R and Highway 16.
6. 1.8 metre high solid screens are to be constructed between industrial and residential or between industrial and commercial land uses.
7. 1.8 metre high solid screens are to be constructed along Highway 599R and Highway 16 frontages.

25.4 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA # 4 – HIGHWAY

The Highway 16 and Highway 599R transportation corridors through the District of Port Edward are seen as valuable attributes to the community. Industrial and Commercial development along Highway 16 and Highway 599R should respect the nature of the transportation corridors through Port Edward.

25.4.1 AUTHORIZATION

Development Permit Area No. 4 is designated pursuant to *Local Government Act* section 488(1)(f) establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development.

25.4.2 DESIGNATED AREA

The Highway Development Permit Areas are all those areas within 50 metres of Highway 16 and Highway 599R as illustrated on **Schedule 'C'** of this Official Community Plan.

25.4.3 JUSTIFICATION

The form and character of industrial and commercial development along the highway corridors should provide a positive impression of the community of Port Edward.

25.4.4 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT TRIGGERS

The *Local Government Act* imposes development permit requirements in development permit areas. Unless exempted by 25.4.5, a development permit must be obtained when any of the following types of development activity occur in Development Permit Area No. 4, in accordance with 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

1. Subdivision of land;
2. Construction, addition or alteration of a building or other structure; or
3. Alteration of land.

25.4.5 EXEMPTIONS

In Development Permit Area No. 4, a development permit is not required for the following:

1. Temporary buildings and structures, construction trailers, temporary hoarding or scaffolding, temporary structures associated with a sidewalk/parking lot sale, and buildings and structures permitted by a Temporary Use Permit;
2. Construction of, or addition to or alteration of a building or structure by the District, the federal or provincial governments, or their agents for construction or maintenance works;
3. Construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or structure involving only interior renovation, repair or maintenance; façade improvement to an area less than 20% of the existing façade; construction of an accessory building, or an addition to principal building less than 100 square metres; or,
4. Replacement of a building that has been destroyed by natural causes, in cases where the replacement building is identical to the original in both form and location.

25.4.6 HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

The following Development Permit Guidelines apply in Development Permit Area No. 4:

1. All proposed Developments of any kind, or properties located within 50 metres of Highway 16 and Highway 599R shall require a Highway Development Permit.
2. All Highway Development Permit applications shall be referred to MoTT for comments.
3. The safety of the travelling public will be considered in all Highway Development Permit applications.
4. Natural buffers or berms may be required to be retained along the highway corridors in order to screen development from the travelling public.
5. Natural buffers should be retained to a width of 15 metres.
6. Berms should be constructed to a minimum height of 2.5 metres or sufficiently to screen the development from the Highway.
7. Where natural buffers cannot be used or do not exist and berms are not feasible, screening and landscaping shall be provided along Highway frontages.



PART 4:
**IMPLEMENTATION
STRATEGY**

Part 4 outlines the next steps for implementing the vision set out in this OCP.



Zoning Bylaw

- Ensure regular reviews and updates to the District's Zoning Bylaw to align with the OCP as well as provincial legislation.
- Consider the development of a Comprehensive Development zone to accommodate a range of uses for the identified Downtown District.

Development Permit Areas

- Amend the Industrial Development Permit Application (DPA) Guidelines to add form and character objectives to support the vision and growth of Port Edward.
- Consider establishing Environmental Protection Development Permit Areas in future OCP amendments.
- Consider undertaking mapping to identify the steep slopes within the District and the establishment of a Hazard Lands Development Permit Area.
- Establish Development Permit Area guidelines for the Downtown District which incorporated the latest vision and feedback gathered through the recent design charette.

Downtown District

- Amend uses in the C 3 and C 1 zones to limit the range of industrial uses permitted and develop conditions of uses.
- Develop new Downtown District DPA Guidelines, include form and character objectives for buildings and sites located in the Downtown District.
- Develop a Wayfinding Plan to guide pedestrians, cyclists to key destinations in and around the Downtown District and to other key destinations of interest including the community trail, Public Wharf and Harbour Access, and existing Park and Lookout (Port Edward store and gas station, Post office).
- Develop an Historical Interpretive Display Program for the Downtown District, Community Trail and key destinations along the Community Trail such as Parks, lookouts and public wharf.
- Develop a Downtown District Marketing Plan to determine who will and can be drawn to the downtown district, including residents, workers and visitors. The Marketing Plan should address the following:
 - What would draw residents to a downtown area, in lieu of traveling to another larger community for their shopping and entertainment needs?
 - What will attract potential employees to live and work in the area?
 - Is there a market for further attracting tourists and serving their needs?

The scope of the Marketing Plan should include:

- Branding that identifies the downtown district as a special, desirable place.
- Methods to promote the strengths including safety, housing affordability, healthy lifestyle, and access to nature.
- Develop an informal Public Private Partnership for Downtown District through pooling of resources to provide greater benefit, including:
 - identifying and implementing a targeted Capital Investment Plan of public improvements including sidewalks, streetlights, and infrastructure; and
 - providing incentives for business development.

Council Policies

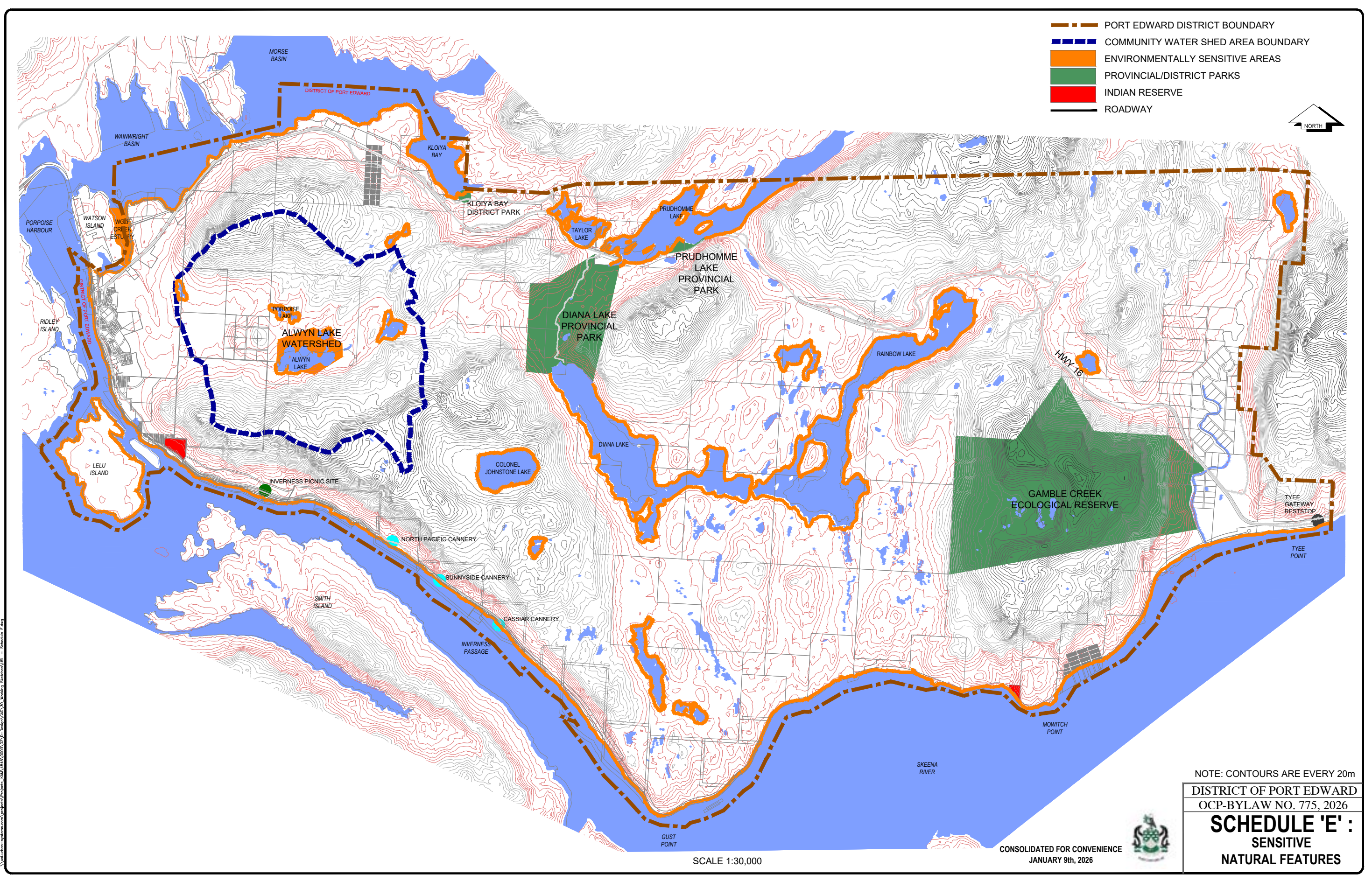
- Ensure all District plans, policies and bylaws reference, and are consistent with, the objectives and policies of this OCP.

Development Approval Information

- Consider including provisions related to development approval information requests in future OCP amendments as outlined in Sections 484-487 of the *Local Government Act*. Including such a provision would also require the District to establish procedures and policies, through bylaw, for requiring development approval information and the content of the information required.

Port Edward Organizational Capacity

- Ensure key organizational resources and processes are in place to successfully implement this OCP, including but not limited to; sufficient staffing, sound financial planning, provision of skill development, advancement of key strategic planning initiatives and succession planning.



- PORT EDWARD DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- COMMUNITY WATER SHED AREA BOUNDARY
- ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS
- PROVINCIAL/DISTRICT PARKS
- INDIAN RESERVE
- ROADWAY



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NOTE: CONTOURS ARE EVERY 20m

DISTRICT OF PORT EDWARD
 OCP-BY-LAW NO. 775, 2026

SCHEDULE 'E' :
SENSITIVE
NATURAL FEATURES










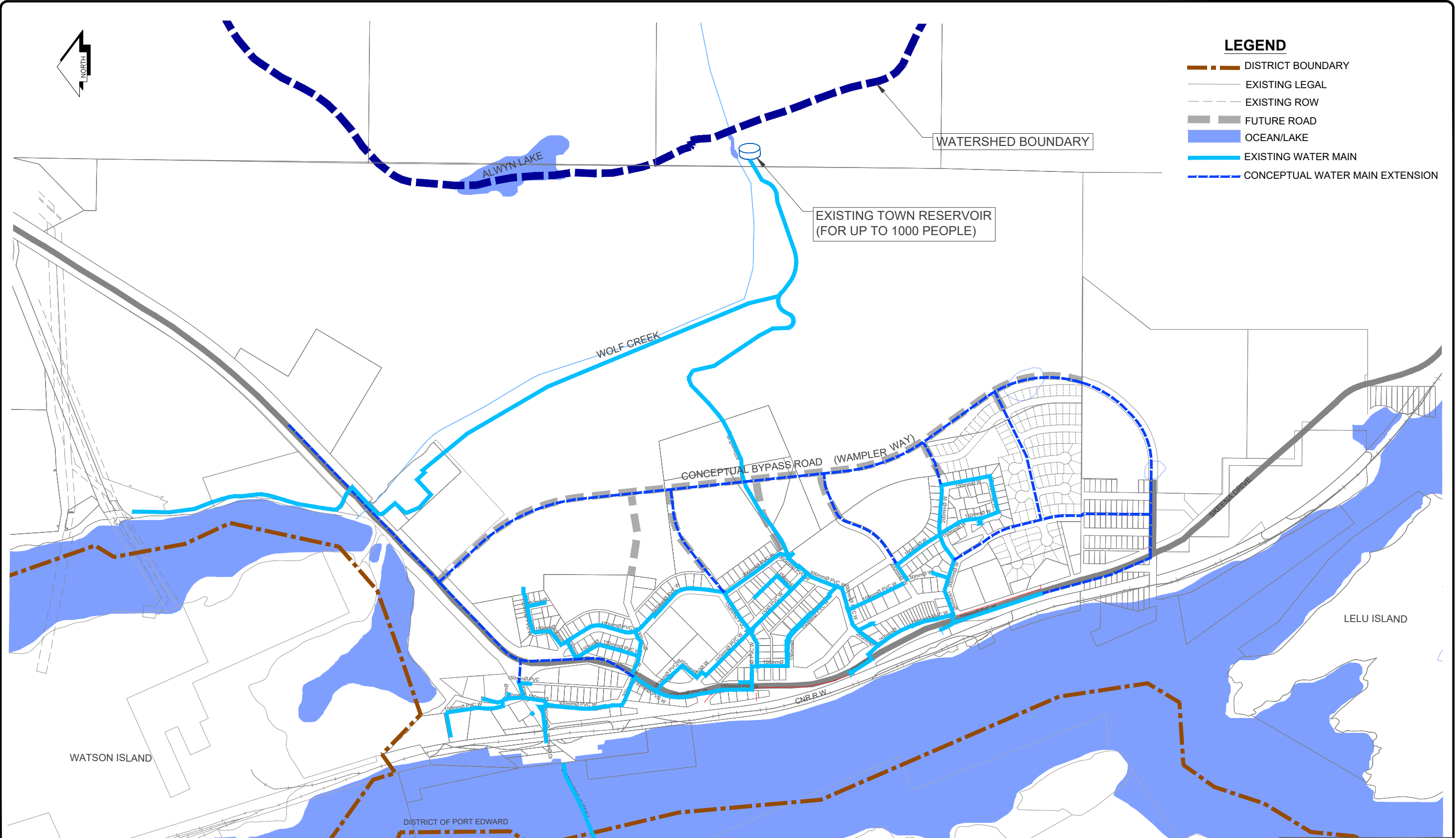
CONSOLIDATED FOR CONVENIENCE
 JANUARY 9th, 2026

SCALE 1:30,000



LEGEND

-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  EXISTING LEGAL
-  EXISTING ROW
-  FUTURE ROAD
-  OCEAN/LAKE
-  EXISTING WATER MAIN
-  CONCEPTUAL WATER MAIN EXTENSION



EXISTING TOWN RESERVOIR
(FOR UP TO 1000 PEOPLE)

WATERSHED BOUNDARY

WOLF CREEK

CONCEPTUAL BYPASS ROAD (WAMPLER WAY)

WATSON ISLAND

LELU ISLAND

DISTRICT OF PORT EDWARD

CNR R.W.

SCALE 1:10,000

CONSOLIDATED FOR CONVENIENCE
JANUARY 9th, 2026










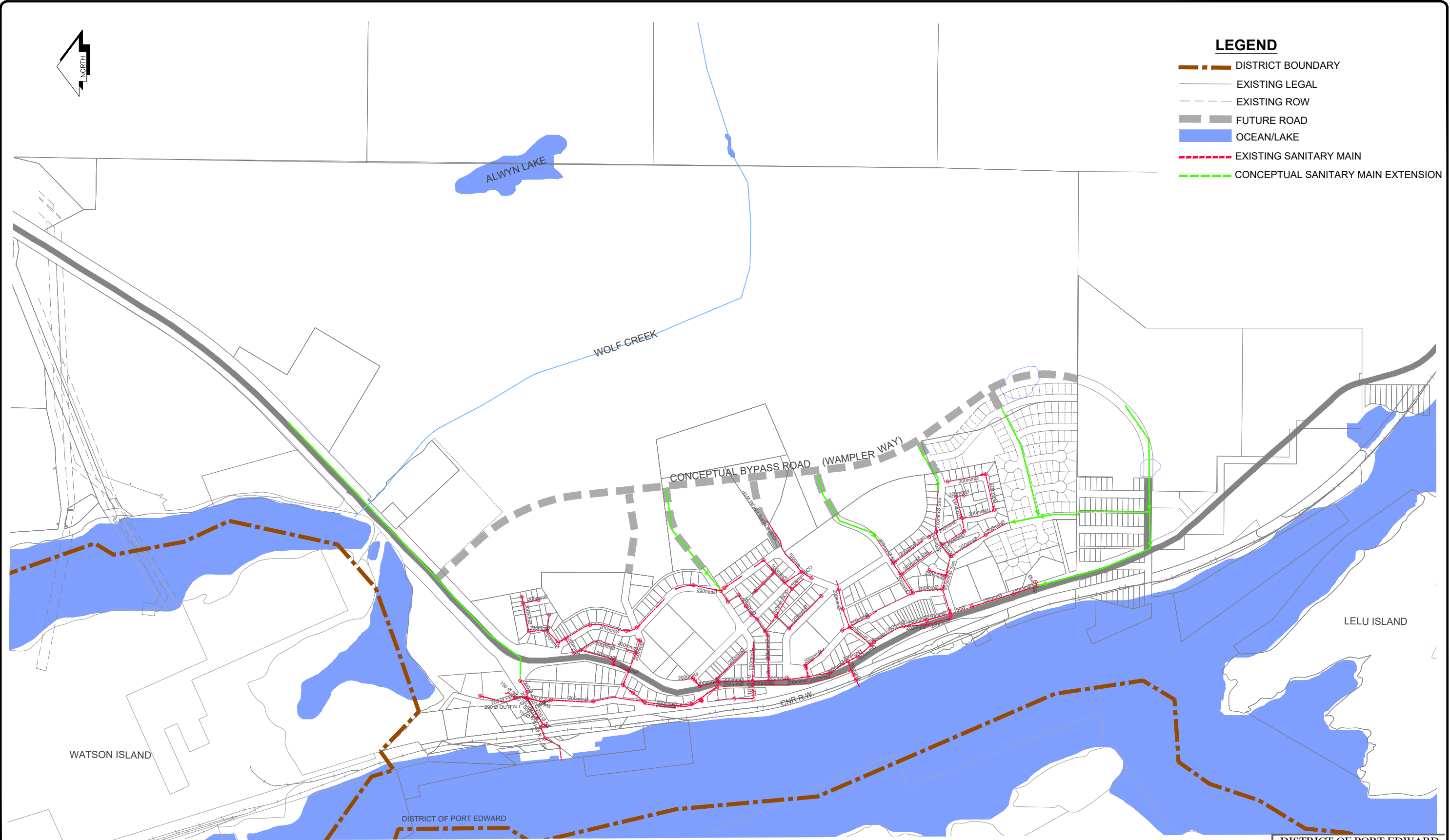
DISTRICT OF PORT EDWARD
OCP-BY-LAW NO. 775, 2026
SCHEDULE 'D1'
LONG RANGE LAND USE
WATER SERVICING MAP

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LEGEND

-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  EXISTING LEGAL
-  EXISTING ROW
-  FUTURE ROAD
-  OCEAN/LAKE
-  EXISTING SANITARY MAIN
-  CONCEPTUAL SANITARY MAIN EXTENSION



WATSON ISLAND

LELU ISLAND

DISTRICT OF PORT EDWARD

SCALE 1:10,000

CONSOLIDATED FOR CONVENIENCE
JANUARY 9th, 2026



DISTRICT OF PORT EDWARD
OCP-BY-LAW NO. 775, 2026
SCHEDULE 'D2'
LONG RANGE LAND USE
SANITARY SERVICING MAP

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