

DISTRICT OF LAKE COUNTRY



OKANAGAN CENTRE
SECTOR PLAN

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DISTRICT OF LAKE COUNTRY

OKANAGAN CENTRE SECTOR PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

Okanagan Centre provided the historic access link to the transportation corridor of Okanagan Lake. Paddlewheelers and later barges hauling railway cars plied the waters up and down Okanagan Lake moving people and goods between the emerging communities of the Okanagan Valley. Stops at Okanagan Centre linked local business enterprises and farmers with distant markets and services. A settlement soon emerged along the lakeshore and farmers cultivated the gentle slopes above the lake.

Commercial enterprises next to Okanagan Lake that supported this historic link are for the most part, now history. Remnants of their passing can still be seen around the Village community of Okanagan Centre and a small core of residential homes remains as a peaceful vestige stretched along the shoreline of Okanagan Lake and clustered around the old commercial core. Upslope the farming community, surrounded by rural residential properties, attests to the ongoing agricultural vibrancy of Okanagan Centre as a diverse and prosperous community.

Okanagan Centre is organized as a Ward of the District of Lake Country for the purpose of political representation. It is comprised of the Village next to Okanagan Lake, upland rural and agricultural properties and some smaller residential neighbourhoods scattered around the area. Today, Okanagan Centre is a community of about 2,200 people. Community growth and a diverse range of planning issues require attention as more people are attracted to Okanagan Centre as a place to live. (References to Okanagan Centre throughout this Plan represent the geographical area of the Okanagan Centre Ward.)

Pressing planning issues compelled residents and property owners in Okanagan Centre to organize so that they may consider aspects of their community that required direct action and policy governance. In early 2006 Lake Country municipal council appointed a new committee with broad community representation and gave them the mandate to create a new sector plan for Okanagan Centre. This new "Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee" created several sub-committees to work with local residents and municipal officials on local planning issues. Between 2006 and 2007 several community meetings were held and a community questionnaire was circulated which directly pointed to matters under consideration by the Committee. This Sector Plan brings together these discussions.

The intent of the Policies outlined in this Plan is to guide decision-making by elected representatives, local officials, property owners and residents of Lake Country generally on land use planning matters for Okanagan Centre.

The objective of the Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee is that these Policies will be incorporated into the "District of Lake Country Official Community Plan" and thereby the official Policies of the municipality.

2. COMMUNITY VISION AND GOALS

The residents of Okanagan Centre have a vision for their community. The vision is the collaboration of the efforts of the Sector Plan Committee working with local residents and the thoughts and opinions of residents voiced in the community questionnaire.

The Vision of the residents of Okanagan Centre is to sustain a unique community personality by balancing growth and development with the natural rural attributes and the distinctive Village settlement.

The goals of this Plan are:

- to review planning issues and provide a policy framework to address these issues for Okanagan Centre;
- to provide a framework for the residents of Okanagan Centre to continue their involvement in the application of land use policies for their community and to respond to changing circumstances in the community;
- to provide Lake Country Council a legal framework for the implementation of local policies;
- to provide property owners and residents a sense of certainty about the future direction for land use planning for the community; and
- to protect existing and future community needs.

3. AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Background

The middle sector of Okanagan Centre is highly dominated by lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve. This reserve has been established throughout the Province in the interest of all the people of the Province and is administered by a Provincial commission. Lands are placed in the Reserve because of their agricultural value; therefore, uses other than for agricultural purposes are curtailed and any subdivision or development must first be reviewed by the commission.

The designation of lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve is not on a lot-by-lot basis. Rather, the Reserve is over an area – a neighbourhood – to strengthen and support farming activities. There may be pockets of land within this area that are not suitable for farming activities; never-the-less, these pockets should stay within the Reserve as part of the whole farming neighbourhood and to minimize land use conflicts.

Residents of Okanagan Centre view the agricultural lands in their community as very important. One of the most significant land use issue voiced by the residents in the community questionnaire is the protection of the Agricultural Land Reserve – 75% of respondents said ‘yes’ to preservation of the Reserve and 17% said ‘no’.

Objective

To continue the protection of lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve as a long-term assurance of the continued presence of farming as part of the vitality of the Okanagan Centre community and the District of Lake Country generally.

Policies

General Policies

- 3.1 Lands designated as *Agricultural* on map Schedule A are those lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve. These lands are set aside for farming and related activities as permitted pursuant to the “*Agricultural Land Commission Act*”, regulations thereto and policies of the Agricultural Land Commission.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding minimum parcel size standards established by the District of Lake Country, any application to the Commission to subdivide land within the Reserve may be rejected by the District of Lake Country where it is considered that there would be a negative impact on the Reserve, farming in the local area or would be detrimental to the local neighbourhood generally.
- 3.3 The District of Lake Country will generally support subdivision applications for a boundary adjustment that would create a larger parcel within the Reserve or where a property owner is eligible to apply for subdivision pursuant to the “*Homesite Severance Policy*” of the Commission.
- 3.4 Applications to consider a non-farm use or subdivision of land within the Reserve should include a comprehensive analysis of impacts to the local farming neighbourhood and a review of current land uses in the area; and an application to consider exclusion of land from the Reserve should include these same matters as well as a report on soils types (agricultural capability), topographic conditions and geographical features of the subject property and surrounding parcels.
- 3.5 Where property is being subdivided and developed adjacent or in proximity to a property that is designated as *Agricultural*, an appropriate buffer strip should be established as part of this new development consistent with the “*Landscape Buffer Specifications*” publication of the Commission.
- 3.6 When preparing a farm bylaw for the District of Lake Country pursuant to Section 917 of the “*Local Government Act*” (Farm Bylaw), maximum building sizes and hours of operation for agricultural tourism establishments and farm products processing operations in Okanagan Centre should be considered.
- 3.7 The District of Lake Country supports and will assist in the implementation of Best Practice Guides, the Environmental Farm Plan Program and similar agricultural environmental initiatives of the BC Agricultural Council.

Residences on Agricultural Land

- 3.8 The Okanagan Sector Plan Committee recognizes that granting permission for additional dwellings on land within the Agricultural Land Reserve is an ongoing planning issue and the Committee suggests that that the District of Lake Country consider the following recommendations:
- a) Additional residences permitted for farm use pursuant to Section 18 of the “*Agricultural Land Commission Act*” should apply only to parcels classified as ‘farm’ under the “*Assessment Act*” and should take into consideration the type of farm activities. The number of additional single family residences permitted should be limited to one and it should be a manufactured home and the number of seasonal accommodation residences for farm help should be restricted to a multiplier of the size of the farm unit with an overall maximum.
 - b) The number of sleeping units permitted pursuant to the Agri-Tourism Accommodation Regulation outlined Section 3(1)(a) of the “*Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation*” of the “*Agricultural Land Commission Act*”, should be restricted to four.
 - c) The application of the Residential Use Regulation outlined in Section 3(1)(b) of the “*Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation*” of the “*Agricultural Land Commission Act*” should only include secondary suites and not include a manufactured home.

4. RURAL RESOURCE LANDS

Background

The District of Lake Country has identified large tracts of lands within the municipality that are primarily suitable for resource uses such as forestry. These lands are larger lots, frequently on steeper slopes and often provide important wildlife habitats. These lands are not slated for municipal services over the long term.

Objective

To preserve large tracts of lands as wooded areas and grazing lands suitable for rural living and recognized for their ecological attributes.

Policies

- 4.1 Large tracts of land recognized for their inherent resource values or ecological significance are designated as *Rural Resource* on map Schedule A.
- 4.2 Applications to amend this Sector Plan to change the designation of *Rural Resource* lands should include a report that outlines the ecological attributes of the lands and possible impacts if subdivision and/or development were to be permitted.

5. RURAL RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

Background

The residents of Okanagan Centre have strongly voiced the opinion that rural living should be preserved. The strongest response to all questions from the community questionnaire was that “*the rural/agricultural atmosphere should be maintained*” (85%). This desire is also a major theme from the District of Lake Country resident survey – “*maintain the rural character in all Lake Country communities*” and “*maintain the rural amenities that attract people to the area*”. The guiding course for this Sector Plan is strongly set.

Rural living is a major theme of this Plan. Areas designated for new *Urban Residential* developments are restricted to large blocks of land and strong policies are in-place to support the Agricultural Land Reserve. Major infrastructure expansions are only being supported for *Urban Residential* areas thereby releasing the pressure to develop rural land. Finally, environmental policies support the rural theme for Okanagan Centre.

The definition of rural is generally done through parcel size. The policy direction from the Province of BC and the Okanagan Basin Water Board – which has a mandate to address sewerage issues in the Valley – is that no parcel should be created less than one hectare in size without a community sewer connection. This policy direction is supported by Interior Health. Therefore, a good minimum parcel size standard for rural areas is one hectare. It is noted that some existing parcels in rural areas may be less than this minimum but any new rural developments should adhere to this minimum standard. In some areas a larger size standard may be appropriate.

Objective

To maintain the area beyond the Village and outside *Urban Residential* neighbourhoods as predominantly rural properties with primarily larger lots interlaced with lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Policies

- 5.1 Lands to support rural living in Okanagan Centre for the long-term are designated as *Rural Residential* on map Schedule A where rural land uses as well as some institutional and other compatible uses are permitted as outlined in the “*Zoning Bylaw*”.
- 5.2 It is the policy of the District of Lake Country that no subdivision application will be approved which will create a parcel less than one hectare without a connection to a community sewer system; and

even if a community sewer is available, an application may be rejected where possible land use conflicts may occur with nearby agricultural or rural properties or where other policies of this Sector Plan and the District of Lake Country may be compromised.

- 5.3 New rural developments that propose clustering of parcels are encouraged where a significant environmental amenity can be preserved on a larger parcel; and shall follow the one dwelling per hectare standard, shall have parcels of one hectare or larger and must have the support of Interior Health.
- 5.4 New rural developments in Okanagan Centre shall follow the *Community Infrastructure* policies outlined in Section 11 of this Plan.
- 5.5 For land not within the Agricultural Land Reserve, the Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee recommends to the District of Lake Country that the minimum size for a parcel that may be subdivided pursuant to Section 946(4) of the “*Local Government Act*” (Subdivision for a Relative) should be five hectares.

6. URBAN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS

Background

Older urban-scale developments in Okanagan Centre have resulted in a sprawling land use pattern. This type of land use is difficult and expensive to service. In addition, small lot subdivisions inherently conflict with agricultural and rural activities and at times, confront the open space aesthetic values of rural living. Larger blocks for urban living with well designed buffering to rural and agricultural properties is the desired planning direction.

Land assembly to accommodate urban development is usually preferred to create these larger blocks for urban use. The other common pattern is that a single owner of a smaller property is allowed to develop and a patchwork of urban subdivisions begins to sprawl around the rural community. The desire of property owners to develop and profit from their land holdings should be accommodated where possible. But, when development approvals follow individual applications without any recognition of long-term planning, sprawling subdivisions dot the landscape.

Equally important is that community objectives be realized because it is the community that picks-up long term consequences. Citizens have a voice on the evolution of their community and it is not uncommon for these community objectives to confront individual development expectations. Community planning is the means to address these issues and it is a means to set priorities.

One major issue for this Sector Plan is to examine previous land use plans for urban expansion and set new directions where necessary. The intent of the new Urban Residential expansion program outlined in this Sector Plan is to ensure that new developments will be serviceable; that the terrain is suitable for higher densities; and new development will not conflict with significant environmental attributes. Finally, Urban Residential expansion must respond to the community desire to maintain the rural fabric which defines the focus of Okanagan Centre land use planning.

Significant large tracks of land have been designated in this Sector Plan for Urban Residential development; namely, Lakestone resort and the McCoubrey plateau. It is estimated that around 2,000 new homes can be accommodated in this area – sufficient to

meet housing demands for 15 to 20 years. It is the opinion of the Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee that additional land for urban uses is not needed within the Sector Plan area.

Infrastructure servicing policies for new Urban Residential developments are outlined in Section 11 of this Plan.

Resort Residential

Residents of Okanagan Centre now have a significant new resort – Lakestone - as part of their community. Results from the recent municipal survey reveal that 70% of the residents support resort developments – generally with limits to size and location.

Resort developments are now a common land use in the Okanagan Valley. Generally, they are focused on a recreational amenity such as a golf course. These developments rely on a comprehensive development strategy to address residential development standards, open space and environmental issues, parks, transportation and infrastructure facilities. Interfacing these development standards with the surrounding community should be addressed by local policies. Up-and-down the Okanagan Valley the positive and negative aspects of resort developments can be observed and local policies should address these matters.

Objective

To provide a large continuous suitable area for new *Urban Residential* developments situated to minimize land use conflicts with adjacent properties.

Policies

6.1 General Policies

- 6.1.1 Lands designed as *Urban Residential* on map Schedule A are existing smaller lots that are currently zoned residential or new urban communities intended for higher density housing and related facilities. There is adequate land designated *Urban Residential* to meet anticipated housing needs for Okanagan Centre for a period of over five years.
- 6.1.2 Local topographic conditions are suitable for a possible westward extension of 'The Lakes' *Urban Residential* community. The size and location of this extension is not known; therefore, an approximation is shown on map Schedule A.
- 6.1.3 All new developments within *Urban Residential* areas, regardless of size, should be connected to community sewer and water services.
- 6.1.4 Affordable, rental and special needs housing will be accommodated within existing and new *Urban Residential* neighbourhoods.
- 6.1.5 Housing areas on lands designated as *Urban Residential* should be developed to the maximum density possible following the development standards for the neighbourhood while retaining sufficient land for neighbourhood amenities.
- 6.1.6 It is recognized that new *Urban Residential* developments will have a significant impact on local residents and property owners; therefore, the Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee recommends the implementation of new Density Bonusing regulations tied to selected zones in the "*Zoning Bylaw*" that

- would allow mitigation towards recreational amenity improvements in Okanagan Centre such as Lake Country Museum or any new public recreational or cultural facility for the benefit of all residents.
- 6.1.7 Concept Plans should be required for larger urban development blocks to ensure optimal and efficient land uses and these Plans may have to transcend the area of an individual application.
- 6.1.8 New urban developments along Tyndall Road should include a Development Works Agreement for the improvement of Tyndall Road to the Major Road standard between Okanagan Centre Road West and Camp Road.
- 6.1.9 The “*Official Community Plan*” specifies that all multi-family developments in Okanagan Centre are within a Development Permit Area to set conditions for the form and character of development and this policy direction is supported by this Sector Plan.
- 6.1.10 Larger blocks of new housing should potentially be designated as intensive residential development areas and guidelines established to implement Development Permits to address the form and character of development; except where design standards have been implemented by the Developer.
- 6.1.11 Standards for new urban developments should be amended to appreciate that the vast majority of residents in Okanagan Centre support ‘dark skies’ standards while providing minimal, but adequate, lighting for safety following the Policy outlined in Section 11.3.5 of this Plan.
- 6.2 Resort Residential
- 6.2.1 Lands designed as *Urban Residential* also include comprehensive resort developments which are defined as those developments where development agreements with the District of Lake Country may include provisions for commercial and recreational facilities.
- 6.2.2 New resorts or extensions to an existing resort are only considered through an application to amend this Sector Plan with consideration of all policies outlined in this Plan.
- 6.2.3 Resort developments are a form of *Urban Residential* development and should be connected to community sewer and water systems.

- 6.2.4 Housing components of a resort should always be fully integrated and where possible physically connected to the primary recreational facility and not designed as a satellite residential community.
- 6.2.5 The amount of land designated for the primary recreational facility of a resort should be thoroughly justified to minimize the amount of land in the municipality directed to this land use.
- 6.2.6 Gated resort communities should not be permitted. The general public should have access internal roads and trails within a resort – for walking opportunities at the least.
- 6.2.7 Internal trails within a resort should be designed to link with trails or local roads adjacent to the resort development and in the absence of a local recreational plan to address these linkages, resort planning should assist the local community with these considerations. Internal trails in the resort should be open for public use; except where it has been justified that a security or privacy issue should take priority.

7. VILLAGE COMMUNITY

Background

In 1910 Okanagan Centre consisted of two hotels, a butcher shop, a packing house and a cannery. Local businesses, farmers and residents were attracted to Okanagan Centre because of the transportation facilities focused on Okanagan Lake. Residents enjoyed a local tennis club that attracted people from across the lake. The first school was built in 1932 which is now the Lake Country Museum. Okanagan Centre was the focus for the area . . .

“Okanagan Centre was a centre. It was one of the stops the boats made. In the early days people of Winfield picked up their freight here. All the pipe for the original irrigation system was dropped off here . . . We had all the room in the world to roam around in.”

- Anne Land

A Village was born on the shore of Okanagan Lake. It is the pioneer stories and historic buildings and patterns of streets, lanes and paths that most strongly establish the current character and identity of the Village. For the purpose of this Sector Plan, the area referred to as the Village is defined as those lots or portions of lots that reflect these characteristics. This area is outlined on map Schedule A as part of the same visual landscape that defines the community.

The intensive concentration of small lots and narrow roads in the Village means that infill housing, new developments and the substantial rebuilding of new homes must be properly designed to integrate with the existing community. The management of the form and character of infill housing and new development can be accomplished through Development Permits. These Permits may also address landscaping characteristics and recognize heritage values in the community.

The objective for these Permits is to manage the form and character of new growth in a manner that is acceptable to existing residents of the Village and Okanagan Centre. Information Schedule B attached to this Sector Plan – “*Okanagan Centre Village – Design Principles for New Development*” – outlines the existing character of the Village and forms a basis for Development Permit policies outlined below and in Section 13.3.

Small lots in the Village also provide today’s challenges. These lots are very small and without sewer servicing. The long-term cumulative effect of many on-site sewerage systems on the water quality of Okanagan Lake is a concern – 79% of respondents to the community questionnaire were concerned about possible lake impacts from sewerage systems; the most significant infrastructure issue. There has been no examination of the lake to determine if current systems are causing pollution. Possible long-term implications can be addressed by requiring new systems to use a higher level of sewerage treatment.

Some lots are not connected to the community water utility, and water quality needs improvement.

Traffic, parking and road improvements along Okanagan Centre Road West through the Village are major planning issues. Coupled with these issues, is the need to preserve the ecological and recreational values of the adjacent shorezone. Implementation of the “*Greenspace Plan for Okanagan Centre and Pixton Road*” will not only set the direction for future management of the shorezone, but the ecological focus of the “*Greenspace Plan*” also sets a management direction for the road improvements through the Village.

The “*Greenspace Plan*” is not a complete document. It does not address all the planning issues for the foreshore of Okanagan Lake. This Sector Plan outlines supplementary planning guidance to address some of these additional issues.

Policies that directly affect all these planning issues for the Village also have application to other lands adjacent to the shorezone and smaller lots elsewhere in Okanagan Centre; therefore, policies that are most applicable to the Village are outlined elsewhere in this Plan. Of note are the background discussions, objectives and policies in the following Sections.

- Parks and Recreation – Section 9
- Environmental Principles – Section 10
- Community Infrastructure – Section 11
- Development Permits – Section 13

Objectives

To provide development standards and direction for infill housing, new developments, rebuilding existing homes and infrastructure improvements for the Village that recognize the environmental values and recreational opportunities along the adjacent shorezone as well as the residential attributes and low-key ambience that make the Village a unique and attractive community in which to live and visit.

Policies

- 7.1 The core community of Okanagan Centre is designated as *Village* on map Schedule A. This area reflects the small lots in this area as well as larger properties where housing and access routes are effectively part of this core community.
- 7.2 Existing small lots in the *Village* are designated as *Urban Residential* consistent with other areas of this Sector Plan; however, not all types of residential land uses outlined in the “*Zoning Bylaw*” may be suitable for the *Village*; therefore, the Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee recommends to the District of Lake Country that a new zone be designed for the *Village* with particular reference to revised permitted uses and site specific development standards appropriate for the *Village*.
- 7.3 The District of Lake Country recognizes that the *Village* in Okanagan Centre is an intensive concentration of small lots and narrow roads where infill housing, redevelopment and new developments must be carefully designed and constructed to properly integrate with the existing community and to recognize heritage values; therefore, land designated within the *Village* is also designated an intensive residential development area and within a Development Permit Area to set guidelines respecting the form and character of development as outlined in Sections 13.3 and 13.4 of this Plan.
- 7.4 The Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee recommends that a new Bonus Density regulation be implemented to mitigate community impacts from large new developments in Okanagan Centre generally with funds directed to assist recreational amenities such as the Lake Country Museum in the *Village* as outlined in Section 6.1.6 of this Plan; and the Committee also suggests that the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Okanagan Centre community should co-operate and work together with regular strategic planning for recreational and cultural facilities as outlined in Section 9.13.
- 7.5 Protecting the shorezone ecosystem along Okanagan Lake is a critically important issue while accommodating recreational pursuits along the lake and this Sector Plan outlines several policies to support ongoing efforts in this regard as outlined in Sections 9.5 through 9.9.
- 7.6 Environmental principles to guide new developments in the *Village* are outlined in Section 10 of this Plan.
- 7.7 Improvements to the water utility through the *Village* are necessary and this Sector Plan supports ongoing improvements as outlined in Section 11.1.1.

- 7.8 The residents of Okanagan Centre have voiced a major concern about possible cumulative effects of onsite sewerage disposal systems along the lakeshore of Okanagan Lake and within the *Village* and new policies have been developed to address these issues as outlined in Sections 11.2.2 and 11.2.3 and further regulated through Development Permits to address these issues as outlined in Section 13.1.
- 7.9 Well-planned and designed improvements to Okanagan Centre Road West through the *Village* are necessary and a strategy for these improvements is outlined in Sections 11.3.1 and 11.4 of this Plan.

8. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES

Background

Commercial and industrial activities are not common in Okanagan Centre. In the Village, there is one property zoned *Commercial* and one area zoned *Industrial*. This *Industrial* building is currently used for packing and storage of agricultural produce and is comprised of several small lots. There is one additional industrial property on Camp Road; this property is also in the Agricultural Land Reserve which will restrict land uses.

Sand and gravel processing operations must be zoned as *Industrial*. Currently, there are no such operations zoned for this use in Okanagan Centre. Aggregate deposits have been mapped along the western sector of Okanagan Centre as outlined in the "*Official Community Plan*". Suitability of these deposits as industrial grade materials is not known. Aggregate extraction operations are regulated by the "*Soil Regulation Bylaw*" to address matters such as reclamation and hours of operation. It is noted that the simple removal of soil products does not require rezoning to *Industrial* and approval from the Agricultural Land Commission is required if the property is within the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Objectives

To identify existing commercial and industrial operations and provide a venue for the start-up of new enterprises where supported by the community.

Policies

- 8.1 Existing *Commercial* and *Industrial* lands are designated as such on map Schedule A except for industrial operations in the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- 8.2 Lands designated as *Commercial* and *Industrial* are also designated within a Development Permit Area to set conditions respecting the form and character of development as outlined in Section 13 of this Plan.

- 8.3 There are no proposed new commercial or industrial areas within Okanagan Centre except for the commercial components of the Lakestone resort development. When considering an application to amend this Plan to designate a new *Commercial* or *Industrial* property, the District of Lake Country will consider the adequacy of infrastructure services, compatibility with adjacent or neighbourhood land uses as well as the possibility of noise pollution, environmental degradation and unsightly conditions that may prevail.
- 8.4 The continuation of policies in the “*Official Community Plan*” respecting Temporary Commercial and Temporary Industrial Permits as they apply to Okanagan Centre, are supported by this Sector Plan.
- 8.5 Processing of sand and gravel resources is only permitted where land is zoned for this use and through amendment to this Sector Plan to allow this industrial activity.

9. PARKS AND RECREATION

Background

The District of Lake Country has endorsed a “*Parks and Recreation Master Plan*”. This plan concludes, among other initiatives, that there is a considerable interest in the development of a comprehensive trail system for Lake Country. This conclusion fits with the most significant outcome concerning parks planning from the Okanagan Centre community questionnaire where the majority of respondents thought new trails should be the priority.

Generally the residents are satisfied with current park amenities in Okanagan Centre and indicated in the community questionnaire that new park amenities should be addressed ‘later’ while public access to Okanagan Lake should be addressed as ‘most immediate’.

A real concern of the community is the shorezone of the Village and at Pixton Road. The “*Greenspace Plan for Okanagan Centre and Pixton Road*” is very popular among local residents. Sixty-five percent of respondents to the community questionnaire voted that the Village shorezone should be kept natural, undeveloped and for public use. The District of Lake Country is now moving forward to implement this plan. This includes the very controversial program to remove unapproved structures. (76% of questionnaire respondents supported this initiative.) The need for additional parking is a noted concern with any discussions around the future management of the Village shorezone.

Several properties have been set aside in Okanagan Centre as park land - usually through requirements of the subdivision process. While these properties are owned by the District of Lake Country, they have not been developed for park purposes. Many are sitting as idle, unused land. While some may have significant environmental attributes that should be protected, others serve no purpose at all. A policy in this section suggests that the local community of Okanagan Centre assist the Parks and Recreation Department with a review of these lands to determine an appropriate future designation.

Objective

To support strategies for new parks and recreational facilities for the residents of Okanagan Centre and the citizens of Lake Country.

Policies

- 9.1 Existing developed parks are designated as *Park* on map Schedule A. Locations of possible future parks are designated in the “*Official Community Plan*” and new parks are developed through the strategy of the “*Parks and Recreation Master Plan*”.
- 9.2 Recreational trails are an important element of the District of Lake Country parks and recreation strategy and additional trails should be identified in Okanagan Centre; particularly where they can link to new development areas such as ‘Lakestone’.
- 9.3 This Sector Plan supports the current policy that trails are one component of the transportation network and new trails may be dedicated at the time of land subdivision.
- 9.4 It is the recommendation of the Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee that the provision of park land in Okanagan Centre through the subdivision process should primarily be land where a significant environmental amenity has been identified; secondly, land for a neighbourhood park which would meet with the parks strategy of the “*Parks and Recreation Master Plan*”; and thirdly, money as stipulated under Section 941 of the “*Local Government Act*”.
- 9.5 A significant portion of the shoreline of Okanagan Lake is currently being used for informal recreational activities and actions are underway to regularize these activities and to ensure protection of the shorezone ecosystem. This Sector Plan supports these ongoing efforts by the District of Lake Country with particular reference to the planting of new trees and shrubs to enhance the local ecology with reference to the “*The Greenspace Plan For Okanagan Centre and Pixton Road*”.
- 9.6 The District of Lake Country will inform adjacent landowners and the Okanagan Centre community and advertise in the newspaper when a referral is received from the Province on an application for a foreshore lease or license of occupation on Okanagan Lake.
- 9.7 The Okanagan Lake shorezone in the vicinity of the Village and road-ends to Okanagan Lake should be identified as parks and strategies implemented to improve recreational access and enhance ecological attributes.
- 9.8 Dedicated road-ends to Okanagan Lake provide important access points and the District of Lake Country does not support any form of encroachment on these lands by adjacent property owners or others.
- 9.9 The Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee supports any District-wide initiative to acquire an additional boat launch and parking facility on Okanagan Lake; however, any new facility should not be located within the Village shorezone.

- 9.10 The Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee supports the acquisition of land locally known as the “Serwa Property” for park purposes consistent with Lake Country Council policy to acquire shorezone properties.
- 9.11 The Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee supports a review of all lands in Okanagan Centre that have been set-aside as park land which would include comprehensive community involvement. A long-term strategy should be implemented for the eventual disposition of these lands.
- 9.12 This Sector Plan recognizes the recreational importance and cultural significance of the Okanagan Centre Hall and Lake Country Museum.
- 9.13 The Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee recommends that the District of Lake Country Parks and Recreation Committee the Okanagan Centre community should co-operate and work together with regular strategic planning for the recreational and cultural facilities within Okanagan Centre.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Background

Preservation and protection of the natural environment is a major theme of this Sector Plan. New sewerage management policies have been designed to protect the water quality of Okanagan Lake. Local environmental attributes are outlined in the “*Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory in Lake Country*” and Development Permit policies have been endorsed from the “*Official Community Plan*” to protect significant upland and aquatic habitats.

Environmental principles also include the recognition that geotechnical hazards are evident on the steeply sloping lands around Okanagan Centre. Policies are included in this Section to address these hazard lands.

Objectives

To recognize the unique environmental attributes of Okanagan Centre and to set policy to protect these attributes. To support policies that allow for the proper recognition of potential impacts of hazardous lands.

Policies

- 10.1 This Sector Plan supports ongoing initiatives to preserve and protect the natural environment and ecosystems of Okanagan Centre and in particular,
- work in the Village shorezone of Okanagan Lake to preserve and enhance the local ecological attributes; and
 - protection of the swallow nests on “Swallow Bend” on Okanagan Centre Road West where the 15 metre setback for new developments from top-of-bank, or any other initiative to protect these nests, is strongly supported by this Sector Plan.

- 10.2 The continuation of Development Permit policies to set conditions for the protection of the natural environment around upland and aquatic environmental features is supported by this Plan.
- 10.3 Where a development proposal includes areas with significant ecological features, this Sector Plan supports the definition of these areas through Covenant to restrict construction, the installation of works of any kind and the deposit or removal of fill.
- 10.4 Design standards should be established for docks to minimize impacts on aquatic habitats and geohydraulic beach building processes.
- 10.5 Restrictions on the use of land that may be subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development, are administered through the issuance of Development Permits as defined in the “*Official Community Plan*” and as outlined in Section 13 of this Sector Plan.
- 10.6 Pine beetle infestation should be addressed by the District of Lake Country through community education outlining signs of attack and the importance of dead tree removal and reforestation.
- 10.7 This Sector Plan supports ongoing efforts to identify any endangered species in the Plan area and the “*Official Community Plan*” should be amended when new information becomes available.

11. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Background

Water

The residents of Okanagan Centre have indicated through the community questionnaire, that the most important infrastructure issue they want the District of Lake Country to deal with is water. There is a great deal of concern about the quality of drinking water. The ‘Winfield and Okanagan Centre Water System’ does face turbidity problems which affects not only aesthetics, but also water quality. There are also issues on water quantity and fire flows which are hindered due to inadequacies of the distribution system in some areas. Lake Country has a long term plan to address all these matters and improvements are ongoing.

Sewer

Okanagan Centre is only minimally serviced by the community sewer system. There are expansion plans identified in the Official Community Plan to extend this utility into the Lakestone resort development area as well as nearby properties. There is also a long term desire to connect Okanagan lakefront properties to this utility. The problem with an expanded community sewer system is that the utility will start to drive community planning rather than the citizens and elected representatives. Therefore, restrictions on the expansion of the sewer utility are advanced in this Section.

It is noted that the District of Lake Country has a policy that satellite sewer systems are not permitted in Okanagan Centre.

The cumulative effect of on-site sewerage disposal systems along the shoreline of Okanagan Lake is an identified planning issue – 79% of residents voiced a major concern about this issue; the most significant infrastructure comment from the community questionnaire. The Ministry of Health regulations for on-site sewerage disposal systems does not take into account the cumulative effect of clustered systems. Therefore, the policies of this Sector Plan define works and services that will be required to address these issues and new construction must be in accordance with these standards.

Roads

Several roads in Okanagan Centre provide linkage routes to lands beyond the ward and beyond the municipality. Therefore, local policies on roads and road improvements are tightly linked to the policies affecting the whole of Lake Country.

Roads are classified according to their function and different classes have different construction and maintenance standards. This will include a standard for street lighting. Residents of Okanagan Centre have voiced favorably on the need to implement a policy of 'dark skies' to reduce the visual impact of excessive street lighting. Similarly, the use of curb & gutter in rural areas is incompatible with rural ambiance and open ditches are preferred where possible.

Roads that provide linkage through Okanagan Centre to adjacent communities are classified as Major Roads. These roads in rural areas are intended to be developed or improved to 20 metres wide with open ditches. The existing Major Roads are:

- Okanagan Centre Road West
- Carr's Landing Road
- Camp Road west to Davidson Road
- Okanagan Centre Road East

Two new Major Road corridors have been identified:

- The Tyndall Corridor - a north-south corridor along Tyndall and Camp Roads to link south through the McCoubrey Road area into the City of Kelowna and north to Goldie Road – Okanagan Centre Road East
- Carr's Landing Connector - a linkage corridor from Okanagan Centre Road East to Moberly Road as an additional entrance to Carr's Landing

It is noted that the road location within these corridors has not been established; but where a road already has been constructed (i.e. Tyndall – Camp Roads), it can be expected that these roads will be upgraded to Major Road standards.

During the preparation of this Plan, questions have been raised about the need to continue Okanagan Centre Road West as a Major Road corridor; particularly where conflicts arise in the Village with confined recreational activities and the shorezone environment. Specialized polices are listed in this Plan to deal with these conflicts. It is noted that the majority of

respondents to the community questionnaire voted in favour of a reduction in speed limits through this area and a more aggressive attitude towards towing illegally parked vehicles.

Objectives

To place community health and environmental protection as a top priority for domestic water availability and sewerage disposal; not servicing for new development.

To devise a road network system that services local residents and the needs of the local community while satisfying municipal and regional transportation requirements.

Policies

11.0 Utility facilities, buildings and their appurtenances and public institutional buildings are located throughout the Plan area as permitted by the “*Zoning Bylaw*”.

11.1 Water

11.1.1 The Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee recommends that the District of Lake Country explore all alternatives to assist property owners not connected to the Winfield Okanagan Centre Water System to connect to the utility.

11.1.2 This Sector Plan supports a policy that water conservation measures coupled with community education, should be a top priority for the District of Lake Country.

11.2 Sewer

11.2.1 Expansion of the community sewer utility should be restricted to existing and planned *Urban Residential* areas as outlined on map Schedule A or where a health concern or environmental impact has been confirmed in a neighbourhood; except, this Sector Plan does not support an expansion of the community sewer utility to foreshore properties in Okanagan Centre unless a health or environmental impact to Okanagan Lake has been confirmed.

11.2.2 Where a soil absorption area for a new or upgraded on-site sewerage disposal system is within 60 metres of Okanagan Lake, an advanced treatment system (Type 3) shall be required.

11.2.3 Notwithstanding minimum lot area specifications outlined in Sections 1.03(1) and 1.03(2) of Schedule C.7, “*Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw*” for on-site sewerage disposal systems, where a new or upgraded soil absorption area is to be installed on a property in the Village, the installation of an advanced treatment system (Type 3) shall be required.

11.2.4 Where an advanced sewerage treatment is installed and the development is intended only for seasonal use, the Maintenance Plan should include provisions to restart the system prior to occupancy.

- 11.2.5 Where a holding tank is permitted pursuant to the *“Health Act, Sewerage System Regulation”*, the District of Lake Country will require the deposit and implementation of a Maintenance Plan under the auspices of a Registered Practitioner.
- 11.2.6 A density of one dwelling per hectare shall be maintained where servicing for a development includes individual on-site sewerage disposal systems; except, where a smaller lot is approved by the Agricultural Land Commission to protect farming interests and approved by Interior Health.
- 11.3 Roads
- 11.3.1 With the planned upgrading of Tyndall Road as a Major Road corridor, the District of Lake Country recognizes that Okanagan Centre Road West should be removed from the designation of Major Road in the *“Official Community Plan”* as this route should not be promoted because of the land use conflicts within the Village.
- 11.3.2 New subdivisions and developments along the Tyndall Road corridor should severely limit the number of driveways with direct access to this new Major Road.
- 11.3.3 An effective linkage route of the Tyndall Road corridor to Okanagan Centre Road East should be identified; and the proposed Major Road linkage through the Agricultural Land Reserve from Okanagan Centre Road East northwest to Moberly Road should be re-examined.
- 11.3.4 The Okanagan Centre Sector Plan Committee recognizes the impacts of new developments on all local roads and recommends that the District of Lake Country devise means for Developer contributions to off-site road improvements such as Development Works Agreements for the ongoing improvement of Tyndall Road as outlined in Section 6.1.8 of this Plan.
- 11.3.5 It is the opinion of this Sector Plan that the number of street lights, when required for subdivision or development, should be minimized but never-the-less, adequate for safety and street lights should use illumination standards compatible with the concept of ‘dark skies’.
- 11.4 Village Roads
- 11.4.1 Any road improvements along Okanagan Centre Road West in the Village should recognize that pedestrian movements and environmental protection of the adjacent shorezone are primary considerations; whereby,
- a) enforcement of the *“Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw”* regulations should employ the policies outlined in this Section;
 - b) this Sector Plan appreciates the need to protect the existing road bed from deterioration; but any work in this regard should recognize the primary considerations noted above;

- c) any widening should firstly, provide for the definition of a pedestrian walkway route (not a sidewalk) along the west side of Okanagan Centre Road West;
 - d) any widening or filling to accommodate roadside parking should only be the minimal width required and only where there is minimal impact on ecological attributes in the adjacent shorezone;
 - e) to address issues of public safety, the speed limit should be reduced to 40 km/hr and traffic calming devices should be installed ; and
 - f) roadside parking areas should be clearly signed and no parking areas likewise signed with notification that illegally parked vehicles and trailers will be removed. Only the minimum number of signs that are required to enforce the law should be installed to preserve the natural scenic quality of the shorezone.
- 11.4.2 This Sector Plan supports the need to develop a road improvement plan for Okanagan Centre Road West through the Village and the development of this Plan should include local residents in all aspects of the planning work.
- 11.4.3 The possibility of acquiring property in or adjacent to the Village for parking for visitors to the Village should be examined and private sector initiatives or partnerships (pay parking) will be considered as a possible option.

12. IMPLEMENTATION

Background

The policies of this Sector Plan are intended to address the many planning issues raised during the preparation of this Plan. The implementation of these policies is dependent upon an ongoing commitment of local residents to continue their involvement in the governance of their community and the leadership of elected representatives.

Where policies are not effective, this Plan should be amended; therefore, monitoring of the effectiveness of these policies is an important part of implementation. It is suggested that this Sector Plan should be reviewed in five years.

Some additional studies have been noted in this Plan and these studies should be advanced when appropriate. These studies are summarized in this section.

It is noted that Development Permits are a significant tool for the implementation of the policies in this Plan. Development Permits are outlined in Section 13 of this Plan. Additionally, many other bylaws and plans adopted by the District of Lake Country such as the "*Official Community Plan*", "*Zoning Bylaw*" and the "*Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw*", are effective regulations for policy implementation.

Policies

- 12.1 The implementation of this Sector Plan requires the ongoing involvement of the residents of Okanagan Centre. The District of Lake Country will work with local representatives to devise a means to activate this goal.
- 12.2 This Sector Plan will be reviewed and updated as conditions warrant with a major review in 2013.
- 12.3 Any individual may submit an application to amend this Plan where new information has surfaced to address local planning issues; or where a property owner wishes to change this Plan to accommodate personal interests.
- 12.4 The District of Lake Country deems that all policies in this Sector Plan should be considered by the Approving Officer as conditions precedent to subdivision approval and matters to consider in the public interest.

Additional Studies

- 12.5 The *“Official Community Plan”*, *“Zoning Bylaw”* and *“Subdivision Servicing Bylaw”* should be amended to reflect the policies of this Sector Plan and likewise the programs of the Parks and Recreation Committee should be adjusted as outlined in this Plan.
- 12.6 New procedures should be established for the processing of Provincial referrals on an application for a foreshore lease or license of occupation on Okanagan Lake as outlined in Section 9.6 of this Plan.
- 12.7 A Density Bonusing study should be initiated based on the policy direction outlined in Section 6.1.6 of this Plan and a new regulation should be drafted for inclusion in the *“Zoning Bylaw”*.
- 12.8 An engineering investigation should be undertaken to develop new street lighting standards consistent with the ‘dark skies’ policy in Sections 6.1.11 and 11.3.5 of this Sector Plan.
- 12.9 Unused land set-aside as park land in Okanagan Centre should be reviewed to determine the eventual disposition of these lands as outlined in Section 9.11 of this Plan.
- 12.10 A planning program should be developed and implemented to devise a new zone for Okanagan Centre Village as outlined in Section 7.2 which will set a specific regulatory direction based on local conditions.
- 12.11 A road improvement plan for Okanagan Centre Road West in the Village should be prepared as outlined in Section 11.4.2 as well as a parking strategy for the Village as outlined in Section 11.4.3.

13. DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

Background

Development Permits are an important component for the implementation of local land use policies. In defined circumstances, these Permits must be issued to address specific aspects of new developments. The “*Official Community Plan*” has a comprehensive policy direction for Development Permits and these policies are supported by this Sector Plan.

Form and Character

An application for a new multi-family, commercial or industrial building, or an exterior renovation of an existing building, must be preceded with an application for a Development Permit to consider the form and character of the building within the guidelines outlined in the “*Official Community Plan*”. This policy applies to all lands in Okanagan Centre.

Section 7.3 of this Sector Plan places Okanagan Centre Village within a Development Permit Area to set conditions for the form and character of new development. The lands within the Village are shown on map Schedule A. The background discussion for Section 7 further outlines the conditions that prevail in the Village that promoted the preparation of this policy direction. References are made to information Schedule B “*Okanagan Centre Village – Design Principles for New Development*” which provides background material to augment the guidelines for Development Permits outlined in Section 13.3 below.

Hazardous Conditions

All lands in Okanagan Centre with slopes greater than 30%, including lands within 15 metres of these areas, are within a Development Permit Area to set conditions for the protection of new development from hazardous conditions. Therefore, a Development Permit must be issued in these areas prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Upland Environmental Features

Several natural features in Okanagan Centre have been identified in the “*Official Community Plan*” within an Environmental Development Permit Area whereby a Development Permit must be issued to address environmental matters prior to the issuance of a building permit or subdivision.

Aquatic Environmental Features

Development Permit guidelines require the submission of a Development Permit application for all development near foreshore areas as well as stream and ravine features with the objective of protecting and enhancing aquatic habitats and shorezone features. This Sector Plan goes beyond these guidelines to recognize the cumulative effect to on-site sewerage disposal system on the shorezone of Okanagan Lake. Therefore, Section 13.1 of this Sector Plan (below) extends the Development Permit policies of the “*Official Community Plan*” to implement these extra provisions for Okanagan Centre.

Objectives

To provide a strategy to support Development Permit requirements where permitted pursuant to the “*Local Government Act*” and to provide a venue for amendments when new information is submitted to contribute to Development Permit policies.

To extend the current Development Permit policies of the “*Official Community Plan*” to implement specific provisions of this Sector Plan.

Policies

13.1 The continuation of Development Permit policies in the “*Official Community Plan*” as they apply to Okanagan Centre, is supported by this Sector Plan; and the Environmental Development Permit Area (Aquatic) for Okanagan Centre is hereby extended:

- to 60 metres from the natural boundary of Okanagan Lake; and
- to include all land designated as *Village* in this Sector Plan;

and an additional guideline is hereby added to implement the sewerage infrastructure policies outlined in Sections 11.2.2 and 11.2.3 of this Plan.

13.2 Where new information arises about significant natural features within Okanagan Centre, individuals in the community may request that the District of Lake Country process an amendment to the “*Official Community Plan*” to include these features in the Development Permit policies of the Plan.

Village Aesthetics

13.3 The District of Lake Country has the objective to maintain the appealing and historic visual quality of Okanagan Centre Village and to effectively integrate new developments into the existing community and when reviewing Development Permit applications to consider the form and character of new development, the District of Lake Country will consider the guidelines outlined as follows.

Building Form and Character

- a) Street character should be maintained by designing houses where building massing, height, roof shape, front setbacks and façade elements should be designed in consideration of a minimum of two houses on each side of the subject site.
- b) As much of the Village identity comes from history, houses built before 1950 should be granted stronger contextual importance than contemporary houses.
- c) Architectural elements such as roof shape and finish, windows and doors, porches, details, materials and colours should not dominate those elements of adjacent houses.

- d) Additional guidelines on massing, roof design considerations, the character of windows and doors, the form of porches and guidelines for accessory buildings, are outlined on the attached report – information Schedule B “*Okanagan Centre Village – Design Principles for New Development*”.
 - e) The palette of exterior details, materials and colours present on existing pre-1950 houses in the Village can generally be used to better integrate a new houses into its context as outlined in the attached information Schedule B.
 - f) New houses can be of contemporary design if the architecture uses the principles of sympathetic creativity and contextual respect as outlined in the attached information Schedule B.
- Open Space and Landscaping
- g) The landscape plan should consider the continuity of desirable landscape qualities along a street.
 - h) Front yard fences should be low and not solid.
 - i) Low walls or terraced walls that integrate into the natural surroundings are acceptable such as stone walls and dry stacked concrete retaining wall blocks in subtle earth tones. Manufactured or ‘cultured stone’, decorative or concrete construction blocks, material trying to imitate others, tiles or stucco walls are not acceptable.
 - j) Outdoor storage areas, refuse containers, equipment and the like should be screened from public or neighbour’s view.
 - k) Landscaping should make use of new or existing native plantings, trees, rocks and other natural features.
 - l) Where no existing trees remain, new houses should have at least one new specimen or high-quality tree planted in the front yard to contribute to the street character.
 - m) Existing tall or mature landmark trees and shrubs should be retained. An arborist report may be required to fully assess tree health and retention options.

Driveways and Parking

- n) Parking is not permitted within the required front yard setback where a lane, rear or side yard access is available.
- o) Pervious paving materials are encouraged where technically feasible so as to aid storm water management.

13.4 Notwithstanding the Development Permit guidelines for the form and character for new developments in the Village outlined in Section 13.3, a Permit is not required:

- a) for subdivision;

- b) for a building that is less than 1 0 m² of building area;
- c) for internal alterations to a building, except where internal alterations result in a change in the parking or landscaping requirements for the site; or
- d) for additions to a building, except where an addition results in a change in the parking requirement or impacts existing landmark trees, shrubs or native plantings and provided that the addition is compatible and subordinate to the existing building and for buildings of heritage value, provided that the addition is distinguishable from the existing building following the principles outlined in *“Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historical Places in Canada”* (Parks Canada).

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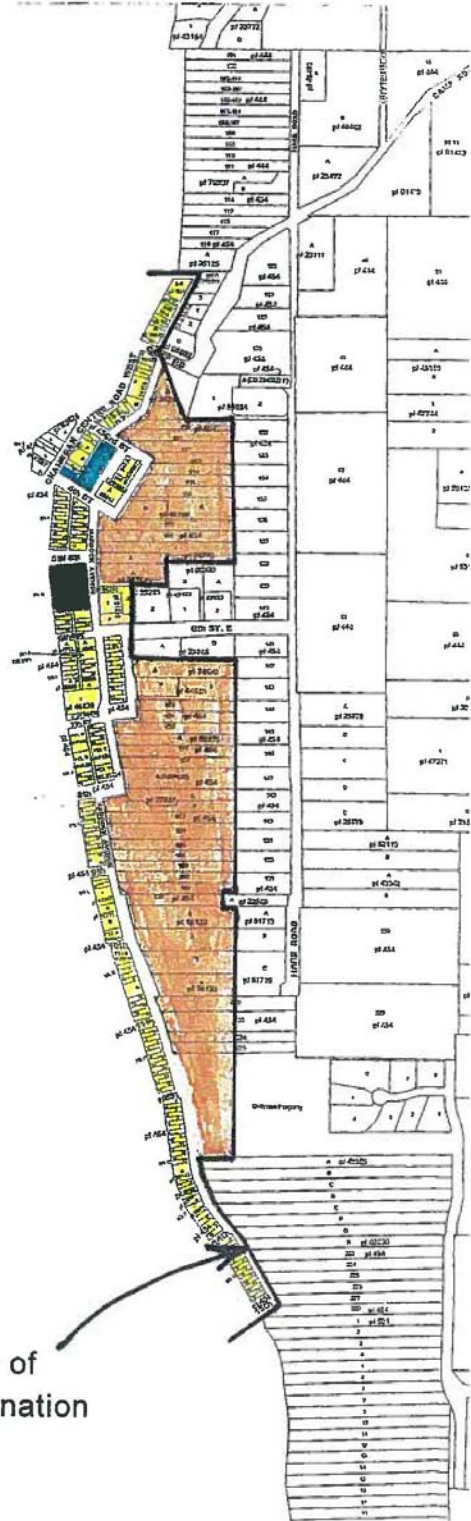
SCHEDULE A.1 - VERSION 2

OKANAGAN CENTRE SECTOR PLAN
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS
OKANAGAN CENTRE
VILLAGE

DRAFT

-  - RURAL RESIDENTIAL
-  - URBAN RESIDENTIAL
-  - ^{Developed} PARK
-  - COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL

Boundary of Village Designation

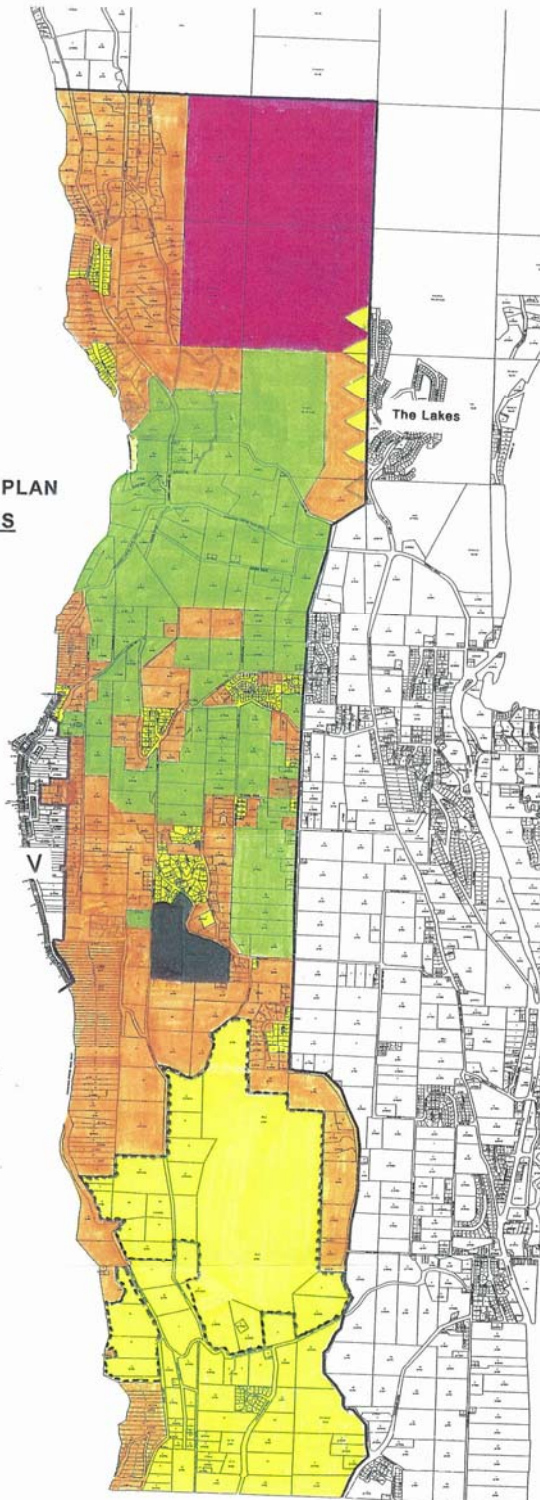


- DRAFT -

SCHEDULE A - VERSION 2

**OKANAGAN CENTRE SECTOR PLAN
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

-  - AGRICULTURAL
-  - RURAL RESOURCE
-  - RURAL RESIDENTIAL
-  - URBAN RESIDENTIAL
-  - RESORT RESIDENTIAL BOUNDARY
-  - Developed
-  - PARK
-  - COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL
-  - VILLAGE (REFER TO MAP SCHEDULE A.1)



**District of Lake Country
Okanagan Centre Sector Plan**

SCHEDULE B

**DISTRICT OF LAKE COUNTRY
OKANAGAN CENTRE SECTOR PLAN**

**OKANAGAN CENTRE VILLAGE
DESIGN PRINCIPLES
FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT**

**PREPARED FOR
OKANAGAN SECTOR PLAN COMMITTEE**

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NOVEMBER 7, 2007

OKANAGAN CENTRE VILLAGE

DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

A. SITE PLANNING

Street Character is important in maintaining and enhancing village ambience and image. Good character can be achieved by designing houses that respect their immediate built or natural context through consideration of massing, height, setbacks, landscaping and architectural elements.

- Building massing and height, roof shape, front setbacks and architectural façade elements should be designed in consideration of a minimum of two houses on each side of the subject site.
- Architectural elements such as design character, roof shapes and finish, windows and doors, porches, details, materials and colours should not dominate those elements of adjacent houses.
- Both wide and narrow lots are acceptable as this continues the historic urban pattern, provides a variety of housing options and prevents a village of only one type of new house. Generally small lots with well designed sites and houses create a more approachable street character. Several large houses in a row create an isolating effect and compromise the existing small-scale, intimate village ambience.
- If adjacent houses are not consistent with overall village design objectives or where there are no adjacent houses, new houses can follow overall design objectives rather than solutions suggested by the adjacent houses.
- Height, setback and parking variances may be supportable for a stronger contextual fit. Many existing older houses do not strictly conform to current zoning regulations.
- As much of the village identity comes from its long history, houses built before 1950 should be granted stronger contextual importance than contemporary houses. However, it should be noted that a **Heritage Value Assessment** of adjacent houses may be required as not all old buildings have historic or urban design relevance.
- Continuity of landscape qualities along a street will unify properties and lead to a pleasant environment. However, some variety in plantings and features adds to visual interest and rhythm in urban design.

- Street character can be enhanced by the occasional home-based small business – such as barbers, bookkeepers, galleries and the like – using modest and attractive signage at the street. The activities of customers coming and going animate the street in a positive way.
- All efforts should be made to continue the pedestrian-oriented character of village streets to connect public spaces, improve general security and encourage social interaction.
- Sympathetic creativity, while offering interest, diversity and contemporary designs, should be encouraged when reinterpreting street context. The intent is considered rather than slavish contextual respect.

Open Space and Landscaping effectively extends living areas outdoors and can greatly influence the positive character of the street and village through careful consideration of lawns and plantings, existing and new trees, native ecology, privacy screening and fences, security solutions and hard surfaces.

- Historically, front yard fences (if any) were generally symbolic, low and not solid. This approach should be followed to keep front yards attractive, visible and only semi-private, open space.
- Low stone walls are acceptable as they establish high quality character and integrate the site into its natural surroundings. Acceptable wall materials include native BC stone and dry stacked concrete retaining wall blocks in subtle earth tones. Note manufactured or “cultured” stone, decorative or concrete construction blocks, materials trying to imitate others, tiles or stucco walls are not acceptable.
- Rear yards should generally be used for private open space though in some situations front yards can be used for better sun exposure, addressing slopes, improved privacy to neighbours, access to views and other site conditions, however achieving front yard design guidelines and context integration must be demonstrated.
- Fences, walls and plantings can be a maximum 4 feet high in the front yard and return along side property lines to the required front yard setback or front line of the house whichever is less, and a maximum 6 feet high along the remainder of the side and rear property lines. Note this side/rear yard requirement applies only within 10 feet of property lines.
- **Crime Prevention Through Environment Design**, or CPTED, principles of site lighting, height and density of planting, visibility of front doors, lack of hiding places and natural surveillance, should be utilized for enhanced security.
- Outdoor storage areas, refuse containers, equipment and the like should be screened from public or neighbour’s view.

- To protect critical biodiversity and maintain village character, where appropriate such as adjacent to natural ecology areas or rural residential properties, landscaping should make use of new or existing native plantings, trees, rocks, remnant ecosystems and other natural features.
- Where no existing trees remain, new houses should have a least one new “specimen” or high-quality tree preferably planted in the front yard to contribute to the street character.
- Tall or mature “landmark” trees are a *character-defining element* of the village identity. All efforts should be made to retain such trees during redevelopment. House location or parking variances could be supported to retain a notable tree. An arbourist report may be required to fully assess tree health and retention options.

Driveways and Parking can have a very negative impact on village ambience and on a neighbour’s open space. Aspects such as paving materials, size and location of driveways and parking spaces, storage of recreational vehicles and watercraft must carefully considered for minimum impact while maintaining functionality.

- A minimum of one off-street parking space must be provided for every house, this space cannot be used for long-term recreational vehicle or watercraft storage; parking is not permitted within the required front yard setback.
- If a lane or rear street exists it must be used for driveway access instead of the front yard unless deemed unfeasible due to site conditions, each lot can have only one driveway crossing to a maximum of 18 feet wide.
- Long-term parking of recreational vehicles and watercraft is not permitted on public streets or property such as boulevards.
- As vast driveways and parking areas can be environmentally unsound and very unsightly they shall be a maximum of 30 percent of site area
- Correct hard surface materials such as pavers, stamped and/or coloured concrete, concrete with a pattern of “control” joints paver inserts, or adding a grass median to driveways can greatly improve appearance.
- To reduce site runoff – often contaminated with vehicle oil – and storm water volumes, free-draining concrete pavers are recommended.

Setbacks of new and existing houses create a rhythm along streets that contributes to the appealing character of the neighbourhood and village. Some variety in setbacks is desirable as it reduces the apparent rigidity and uniformity of the streetscape. This approach continues the historic incremental and somewhat random growth of the village.

- There are a range of front yard setbacks throughout the village. New houses can be set between the maximum and minimum setbacks of two adjacent houses on each side or to the minimum required setback.
- Where several new houses are being built in a row, front yard setbacks shall be varied a minimum of 10 percent between each two houses.
- Setbacks of corner lot developments should respond to the character of both streets. Where possible, narrow side yard setbacks facing the side street should be avoided.
- To further enhance the rhythm of houses on a street and to increase open space liveability, where possible a wider than minimum side yard should be provide on one or both sides of a house and/or side yards should be unequal width.

B. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Intent

Okanagan Centre Village has evolved over the last 100 years to today where eclectic vernacular houses built in all decades can be found. However, as in most historic settings, it is the earliest stories, pioneers, buildings and patterns of streets, lanes and paths that most strongly establish the current character and identity of the village. For example, the village was established facing the lake as a transportation route and source of customers, water and sunlight. These earliest developments along with a commanding natural setting are the greatest source of village identity. Streets are named after the early founders. Mature landscapes and landmark trees provide continuity and reference throughout the village fabric. With growth and change come new houses that must respect their surroundings and sympathetically express the design tendencies of their own time. Village residents – new and old – want a place to comfortably walk, talk to neighbours and relax. The village has the potential to enhance and clearly communicate this unique ambience and identity.

The following *Form and Character Design Guidelines* serve to strengthen the village identity and overall ambience by encouraging new houses to follow consistent, thoughtful and tested design principles. Good architecture works hand in hand with sound site planning to accommodate new buildings in an existing context.

Massing refers to the overall bulk, shape and orientation of houses. Many historic houses in the village are smaller, 1 or 1½-storeys with the second floor within the roof shape. Houses are generally set up above grade. New houses tend to be larger and include both 1 and 2-storey types. Massing guidelines are to relieve the apparent bulk and proportion of buildings and include the shape of the footprint, three dimensional form, number of storeys and height above grade.

- Avoid large, boxy houses of a single unmodulated form, especially where the context is small-scale houses. Stepped back second floors, L-shapes, wings, bays or recesses can provide the desired variety.
- Use medium-sized architectural features such as porches, bay windows, cantilevers and dormers to scale down and better proportion the overall massing.
- Massing should be correctly balanced through proportion, scale, symmetry and other known architectural techniques where appropriate.
- On sloping sites rather than attempting to flatten the site to build a boxy house that will overwhelm its context, retain the natural topography by using a stepped house form (this approach often provides opportunities for roof terraces and more natural light into the house).
- Houses on small lots should have a scaled-down massing and a cottage-like appearance.
- New houses or additions with a slab-on-grade foundation, modular homes, trailers or motor homes are not acceptable as this is contrary to the general village design objectives and good urban character. The main floor of a house should be a minimum of 3 feet above grade.

Roof Design is one of the most important features in establishing the character of a house and addressing context issues. An interesting, well-proportioned and detailed roof can set a tone of quality and good design. Devices such as traditional and simple roof shapes, facing the main roof to the street, roof pitch, overhangs, details and materials contribute to the overall effect.

- Roofs should have consistent primary and secondary portions. Avoid the design challenges of mixing roof shapes such as gables with hipped roofs.
- In most cases gable roof ends or large dormers should face the public street instead of unrelieved sloped roofs.
- As many attractive houses – built in different eras – have flat roofs, this type remains acceptable if correctly designed within the context and the overall architectural intent.
- All roofs should be the same pitch except secondary portions of steep roofs such as dormers, skirt roofs or porches can have a single lower pitch. Avoid the challenges of mixing flat roofs with sloped roofs.
- Secondary roofs over bay windows, dormers, porches and entries add visual interest and scale to the house profile.
- Addition roofs should match the type, slope and details of existing roofs.

- Where suitable with the architectural character and/or the site context, incorporate roof details such as decorative chimneys, overhang brackets, open or closed soffits and wide bargeboards.
- Roofs on corner lot houses should be designed to respond to both streets; often the street corner is acknowledged with a special roof such as a turret, corner bay window or porch pavilion or a change in roof material.
- Generally for improved proportioning, the bigger or wider the house the wider the roof overhangs should be.
- Required roof venting should be provided by gable end vents or continuous ridge vents. Standard plastic roof vents are unsightly and air movement through them can discolour roofing materials. Consideration should be given to locating metal appliance vents on the least visible roof face. Metal chimneys should be concealed by an architectural enclosure.

Windows and Doors complete the “face” of a house and should be carefully considered to respond to the site context and the overall design intent. The size, proportion, shape, location and number of windows and doors have an important effect on house character, especially in the village historic setting.

- Limiting the total amount of window area, windows that are taller than wider and adding glazing “muntins” gives a house a more traditional appearance.
- Contemporary designs with larger areas of glass should carefully arrange the windows on a given building elevation for scale and proportion within the overall massing.
- Avoid large single areas of glass facing public streets, create groupings where windows are separated by wide mullions. Note, larger windows have a greater tendency for low performance and high maintenance.
- To avoid privacy conflicts, when placing windows on the sidewall of a house, consideration should be given to reduce oversight directly into the windows of neighbouring properties.
- For architectural interest vary window size according to room function or the view from the window. However too many different window sizes and positions can make a design look chaotic and unresolved.
- Entry doors should always have a roof overhead for weather protection and to add depth and character to the house appearance.
- The main entry should be on the front of the house and be visible from the public street. This is an important CPTED principle.

- If a front-facing entry is not possible, a gate or trellis can give a strong sense of entry to the property and at the house a porch or other design elements can “signal” the location of the front door.
- The main entry door should be of high quality and visual interest and present a welcoming appearance. Glazing in or beside doors greatly contributes to this character and permits observation of visitors.

As an extension of the inside living space, **Porches** are very useful to homeowners, they keep the sun and weather off the front of the house and they greatly contribute to the safety and ambience of the public street. Large and modest porches are found throughout the village in houses of all eras and are a key element in integrating a new house into an existing neighbourhood. Porches provide opportunities for socializing with neighbours and for natural surveillance of the street.

- In most cases a porch should be the primary ground floor design element on the front of a house.
- Where a lot has a front and back street, the porches and main entry should face the historically more important or main street or the street faced by the contextual houses.
- Porches can be recessed into or extend out from the main body of the house.
- The underside of porches or main floor decks should be enclosed with screening or latticework. Living space built under front porches is not acceptable; decks with living space below should be designed as roof terraces.
- Porches should be a minimum of 6 feet deep, however avoid overly deep or wrap-around porches that won't be fully utilized unless supported by the overall design intent or interior functions.
- If porches are to be enclosed, use glazing instead of solid walls to create a traditional sunroom appearance.
- Porches and decks present a good opportunity for exterior detailing of railings, posts and stairs to add visual interest to the house design. The supporting structure of raised decks should include architectural piers at grade, groupings of posts, latticework and detailed elements to reduce the unsightly appearance of isolated wood posts.

Accessory Buildings such as decks, garages, carports, studios and garden sheds contribute to the variety, scale and use of village buildings. This is especially useful in improving the ambience, safety and pedestrian use of lanes and pathways. These buildings and **House Additions** should compliment the style and character of the houses they are associated with and work within the site context.

- Accessory buildings, decks and additions should have the same architectural appearance and features as the main house.
- Garage for houses that do not have a lane or back street can be located in the basement of the house, *detached* in front of or beside the house (not permitted in the required front yard), *attached* to the side of the house or in the rear yard accessed by a driveway down the side of the house.
- The front of a garage at the front of a house shall be set back a minimum of 5 feet from the most forward portion of the house or porch.
- To reduce the negative impact of garage doors facing village streets, if the site is wide enough, garages should be positioned 90 degrees to the street. There shall be no more than two single garage doors or one double garage doors facing the street. Garage doors with glass panels – frosted if necessary – present a friendly face to the street and improve appearance.
- Historically, sharing a driveway with the neighbouring house successfully provided both owners with rear yard access using the minimum amount of site area. A legal easement may be required in this case.
- Open carports visible from the front street are not acceptable. Carports should have roofs and design elements that match the main house.
- The effects of overshadowing or overlooking neighbouring property should be addressed when locating an accessory building, deck or addition on a site.
- Overly large entertaining decks should be avoided – especially at upper floors and on the street side – unless architecturally well integrated and scaled down with portions covered by small roofs or trellises. At-grade terraces are less obtrusive on the site and to public appearance; they also better connect the house to its yards.
- Large decks must avoid shading and privacy problems for neighbours. Consider smaller recessed decks or roof decks situated behind a solid, flat roof parapet. Frequently decks are built far larger than necessary for their functions.
- Large-glazed roofs or expanses of glazed deck guardrails are unsightly and diminish architectural quality. Glazed sections should be kept to a maximum 10 foot length before relief by a solid railing or other architectural element.

A palette of exterior **Details, Materials and Colours** is present on existing village houses and should generally be used on new houses to better integrate a new house into its context. Houses up to 1950 should be considered as having possible heritage merit worthy of respect and reinterpretation of design characteristics in new houses. A Heritage Value Assessment of adjacent houses may be required.

Details

- Details and various smaller elements should be used to effectively scale-down larger houses and to complete a pleasing composition. However, excessive, weak and arbitrary details are not acceptable.
- Wide roof overhangs can be enhanced with timber support brackets, attractive soffits, exposed rafter tails and substantial bargeboards with secondary trims.
- If a house is designed with traditional character, windows and doors should be trimmed with wide boards possibly topped with a small crown or other moulding.
- Traditional porches should be detailed with well-proportioned posts, detailed railings, generous stairs, newel posts, pickets, post brackets and the like.
- Care should be taken when using traditional details that correct scale, proportion and amount of detailing is in keeping with traditional approaches and not overdone.
- Architectural detailing should be consistent with the design character of the house. Avoid arbitrarily mixing details from designs of different historic areas.

Materials

- New houses and additions should employ traditional, local and substantial exterior materials that pass the “touch test” whereby up close the look good and feel real.
- Materials imitating real materials such as vinyl or metal siding, pressboard panels, brick “tiles”, asphalt shingle “bricks” and similar products are not acceptable. Fibre-cement siding and manufactured stones are sufficiently substantial to be acceptable. None-wood roof soffits are only acceptable in dark colours.
- Stucco cladding with overt patterns, large dots or swirls of applied stucco and 2-storey walls unrelieved by banding or material or colour change are not acceptable. Traditional houses used a wet-dashed texture and houses from the 1930s and 40s often used pebbles or glass chips to good effect.
- Wood should be used for exterior trimwork at roofs, windows, doors, porches, etc. Metal or vinyl trims are not acceptable.
- Roofing material should be asphalt, wood shingle or metal generally in subdued tones. Concrete, metal or composite tile roofs are not acceptable.

- Juxtaposition of materials should be used to define the levels of a house; such as the traditional design use of a stone base, wood siding main floor, wood shingles for upper floor and gable ends.
- Materials should not change at outside corners of a house especially at the front where façade materials should return down the side of a house. Changing materials at an inside corner is more acceptable.

Colours

- Generally exterior colour schemes that utilize subtle earth tones and colours from the native landscape, or are selected from a manufacturer's historic palette are acceptable. Utilize historic palettes found in regional historic architecture.
- Colour choice should be consistent with the architectural intent especially when traditional designs are used such as Edwardian, Craftsman, Moderne.
- Traditional colour schemes shall have a minimum of three colours, field (body), trims and features (window sashes, details). Avoid using several different colours and applying colour inconsistently on exterior elements.
- Roof colour is part of the colour scheme and should be carefully considered. When in doubt choose basic charcoal, dark brown or earth tones. Traditional houses would often have cedar shingles stained red, green or brown.

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