

DRAFT VERSION - 2022-07-18

AREA “G”

KEREMEOS RURAL,
HEDLEY & OLALLA



OCP Bylaw No. 2975, 2022 – Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN



DRAFT

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Electoral Area “G”
Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2975, 2022

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LIST OF SCHEDULES AND MAPS

Schedule 'A'	Official Community Plan Text
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Note: Schedules 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E', 'F', 'G' and 'H' can be viewed either on the Regional District website at www.rdos.bc.ca, or by request in hard copy at the Regional District office.

Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Electoral Area “G” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2975, 2022

A Bylaw to guide land use decisions within Electoral Area “G”
pursuant to Division 4 of Part 14 the *Local Government Act of British Columbia, R.S.B.C. 2015*.

WHEREAS the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen wishes to adopt an Official Community Plan pursuant to Division 4 of Part 14 of the *Local Government Act*;

AND WHEREAS the Regional Board may adopt an Official Community Plan by bylaw and each reading of the bylaw must receive an affirmative vote of a majority of all directors of the Regional Board who are entitled to vote on that bylaw;

NOW THEREFORE the Regional Board of the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. The Electoral Area “G” Official Community Plan attached hereto as Schedule ‘A’ and Map Schedules ‘B’, ‘C’, ‘D’, ‘E’, ‘F’, ‘G’ and ‘H’ forming part of the Plan, and the entire Plan is adopted by bylaw as the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Electoral Area “G” Official Community Plan.
2. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as the Electoral Area “G” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2975, 2022.
3. If any statement, section, sub-section, clause, sub-clause or phrase of this bylaw or the Official Community Plan adopted by this bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, the decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this bylaw or the Official Community Plan.

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME on the _____ day of _____, 2022.

PUBLIC HEARING held on the _____ day of _____, 2022.

READ A THIRD TIME AND ADOPTED on the _____ day of _____, 2022.

Chair

Corporate Officer

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SCHEDULE 'A'

Regional District Okanagan-Similkameen

Electoral Area "G"

Official Community Plan, Bylaw No. 2975, 2022

1.0 INTERPRETATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The provisions of this Plan apply to all lands and water within Electoral Area “G” identified on Schedule ‘B’ Official Community Plan Map of this bylaw.

1.1 Purpose

The Electoral Area “G” Official Community Plan (OCP) contains objectives, policies, and land use designations adopted by the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) Board of Directors.

The purpose of these objectives, policies and designations is to provide direction for land use and development consistent with the community values of the Electoral Area.

The policies of the Plan are intended to balance the demands placed on the land base to ensure an equitable, comprehensive, and logical distribution of land uses. Policies are often implemented on a long-term basis, generally over a 15 to 20 year period.

The OCP provides a basis for the following actions:

- .1 The adoption or amendment of land use regulations, such as Zoning, where applicable.
- .2 The direction of public and private investment.
- .3 The guidance of elected officials, and others who have statutory approval authority, in the evaluation of proposals, referrals, and amendment of bylaws.
- .4 Compliance with provincial regulations, such as the Riparian Area Regulation and the greenhouse gas management requirements of the *Local Government Act* and the *Climate Change Accountability Act*.

1.2 Interpretation

An Official Community Plan means an Official Community Plan as referred to in the *Local Government Act*, and as adopted by the Regional Board of the RDOS (hereafter referred to as the Regional Board), in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act*.

1.3 Administration

- .1 This Official Community Plan comes into effect as of the date of adoption by the Regional Board.
- .2 The Zoning Bylaw will be the primary tool to regulate development within the four small areas in Electoral Area “G” where existing zoning applies. Expansion or additional zoning is not being considered at this time. All rezoning amendments must be consistent with this OCP that serves as a policy foundation for the Zoning Bylaw.

- .3 This Official Community Plan will be re-examined and updated in accordance with an Electoral Area Official Community Plan Bylaw Review schedule endorsed by the Regional District to ensure that it continues to reflect the long-range planning objectives of Plan Area residents, local government staff, and the Regional Board.
- .4 The OCP can only encourage senior levels of government to act; it cannot force or require senior governments to act. Furthermore, although the OCP cannot commit the Regional Board to specific expenditures, the Regional Board cannot enact bylaws or undertake works that are contrary to it without amending the Plan.
- .5 No one goal, objective or policy contained within this OCP should be read in isolation from the others to imply a particular action or consequence.

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2.0 WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?

2.1 Background

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is a planning document that provides policies on a broad range of topics including land-use, transportation, housing, parks and infrastructure. OCPs designate land for specific purposes, such as commercial/retail, residential, park, and industrial. OCPs are developed through public consultation and the objectives and policy statements within them reflect the collective desires of the people within the planning area.

Effectively, OCPs provide a blueprint and map for the community's future. They are created to guide decisions on planning and land use management by establishing a long-term vision, supporting goals and objectives, and policies to achieve them.

Local governments in British Columbia are given the authority to adopt an OCP through the *Local Government Act* (LGA), which describes what must be included in the OCP, what may optionally be included, and what steps need to be followed for the OCP to be adopted. The required content of an OCP is defined in Section 473 of the *Local Government Act*.

Occasional updates also ensure the OCP remains consistent with other procedures, bylaws and government implementation tools.

2.2 Planning Process

In 2019, the Electoral Area "G" Director expressed an interest in the communities' opinion on future land use and development over the next 20 to 25 years.

In October 2019, the Regional District reached out to the community to get feedback on developing an OCP for Electoral Area "G" in a campaign called, "Let's Talk Land Use".

The results of that campaign showed residents were in favour of having a say in future land use in their communities through exploring the concept of developing an OCP. In response, the Regional District initiated an Official Community Plan process to obtain more input and understand the interests of the community.

The first Official Community Plan project for Electoral Area "G" was initiated in November 2020. The work was completed over three phases and included opportunities for community input including online mapping, resident surveys, open houses, and community focus groups.

In addition, the Regional District Board of Directors appointed a Citizen's Committee for the Electoral Area "G" OCP project. The Citizen's Committee was composed of Electoral Area "G" residents from a broad range of geographic areas within Electoral Area "G". The Citizen's Committee were provided opportunities to review and inform the process at each stage of OCP development. The Citizens Committee made a final recommendation to the Board for approval and adoption of the draft Plan.

2.3 Amending the Plan

An Official Community Plan is not a static document. Rather, it is intended to be adaptable to new trends within society and responsive to changing circumstances within the community. As such, following careful consideration by the Regional District Board, policies and land use designations in this Official Community Plan may be revised by an amending bylaw pursuant to provisions outlined within the *Local Government Act*. A comprehensive review of the Official Community Plan will be undertaken in accordance with the Regional District Board's Official Community Plan Review Schedule to ensure it continues to reflect the long-range planning objectives of Plan Area residents, local government staff, and the Regional Board.

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3.0 COMMUNITY PROFILE

3.1 Location and Geography

Electoral Area “G” comprises a land area of approximately 2,157 km² and is the second largest Electoral Area within the Regional District, comprising 20.4% of the total area within the RDOS. The Electoral Area includes the Village of Keremeos, Upper Similkameen Indian Band (USIB) lands, Lower Similkameen Indian Band (LSIB) lands, and the unincorporated communities of Hedley and Olalla.

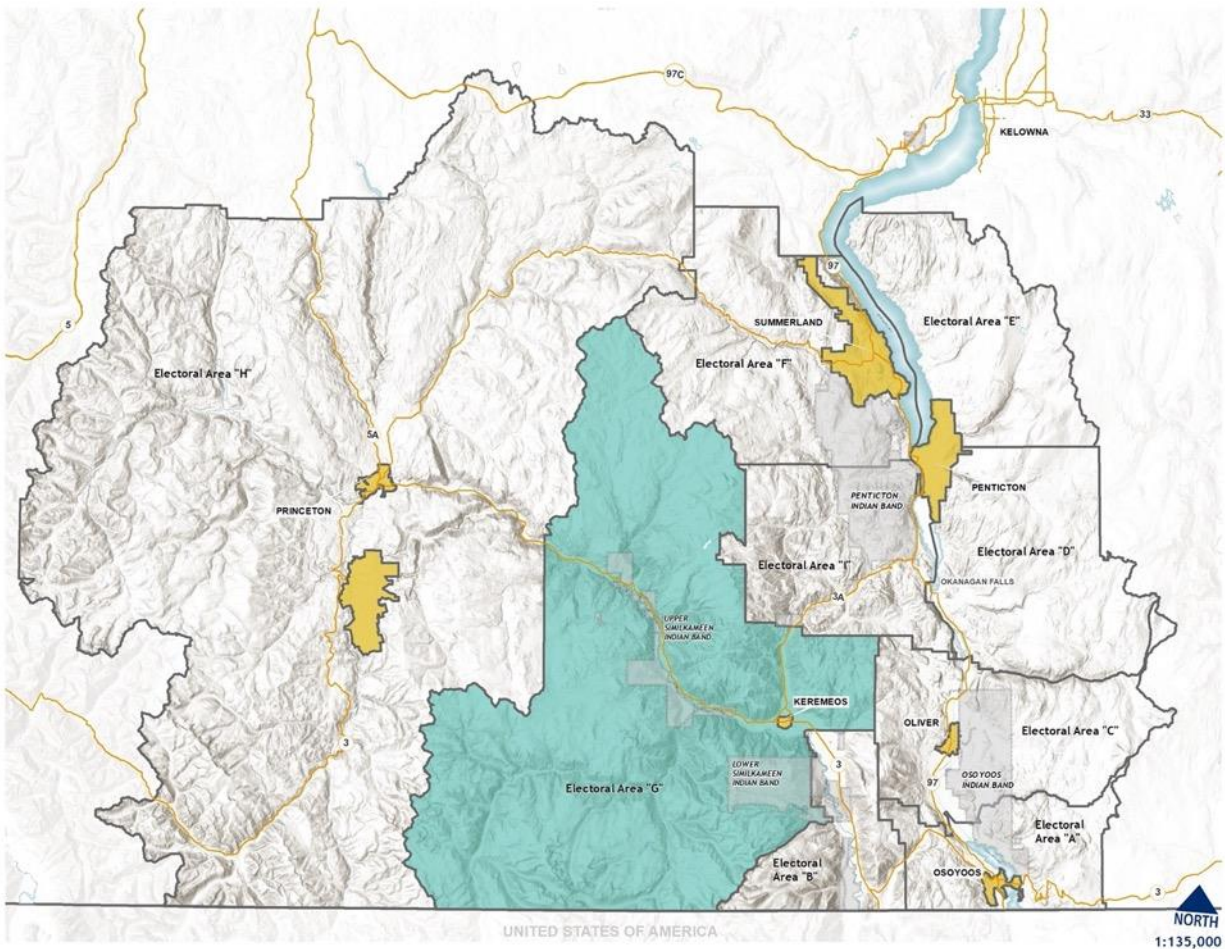


Figure 1: Plan Area Regional Context

3.2 History

Indigenous peoples have lived in the RDOS area for thousands of years prior to the arrival of Europeans. The original people of the Okanagan are known as the Syilx speaking people – the “Okanagans” and have been in the area since the beginning of people on this land. The Okanagans (Syilx) people occupied an area that extended over approximately 69,000 square kilometres. The northern area of this territory stretched from the area of Mica Creek, just north of modern-day Revelstoke, BC and east to

Kootenay Lake. The southern boundary extended to the vicinity of Wilbur, Washington and the western border extended into the Nicola Valley.

Okanagan (Syilx) peoples once travelled widely to fishing, gathering and hunting areas. Each year, the first harvests of roots, berries, fish and game were celebrated by ceremonies honouring the food chiefs who provided for the people. During the winter, people returned to permanent winter villages. The names of many of the settlements in the Okanagan Valley – Osoyoos, Keremeos, Penticton and Kelowna – all come from Indigenous words for these settled areas and attest to the long history of the Syilx people on this land.

3.3 Communities and Settlement Areas

Non-indigenous settlement in what is now Hedley and Olalla began in the late 19th century, spurred by mineral claims.

The main settlement areas within Electoral Area “G” include Olalla, Hedley and the agricultural community surrounding the Village of Keremeos. Smaller, residential agglomerations also occur in the Plan Area, primarily in the form of mobile home park developments adjacent Highways 3 & 3A.

Of its 2,236 residents, 1,462 people live in Rural Keremeos, 378 in Olalla and 242 in Hedley with only 6.8% (154 residents) living outside of these core communities.

Electoral Area “G” includes lands of the Lower and Upper Similkameen Indian Bands. Both the LSIB and USIB are members of the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA), which was formed in 1981 as the inaugural Indigenous peoples government in the Okanagan. The ONA represents eight member communities including the Lower and Upper Similkameen Indian Bands, Okanagan Indian Band, Upper Nicola Band, Westbank First Nation, Penticton Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band and the Colville Confederated Tribes on areas of common concern.

The ONA mandate is to work collectively to advance and assert Syilx/Okanagan nation Title and Rights over the Okanagan Nation Territory. The organization facilitates collaborative working in areas of shared interest including Title and Rights, natural resource management, social services and economic development. As equity and asset development for Indigenous peoples is being refocused across the country, there is an increasing interest from the private sector to do business with Indigenous communities.

Through a regional Economic Development function, the Chiefs’ Executive Council and the Economic Development Working Group has been advancing several planning and development initiatives.

3.4 Population and Demographics

The total population of Electoral Area “G” in 2021 was 2,298. This represents a change of 16 fewer

YEAR	POPULATION	Average annual population change
1966	1,044	n/a

residents or a decline of 0.7% since 2011 (see Figure 15). Of the nine electoral areas that comprise the RDOS, seven grew in population between 2011 and 2021 while the remaining two, including Electoral Area “G”, declined. Overall, the population of the RDOS grew by 11.7% in this 10-year time period. Based on the regional growth rate, the population in Electoral Area “G” may increase to around 2,500 people and 1,200 households by 2041.

1971	1,254	3.10%
1976	1,483	2.83%
1981	1,694	2.24%
1986	1,596	-1.00%
1991	1,818	2.19%
1996	1,910	0.83%
2001	2,052	1.20%
2006	2,308	1.98%
2011	2,314	0.04%
2016	2,236	-0.57%
2021	2,298	0.55%

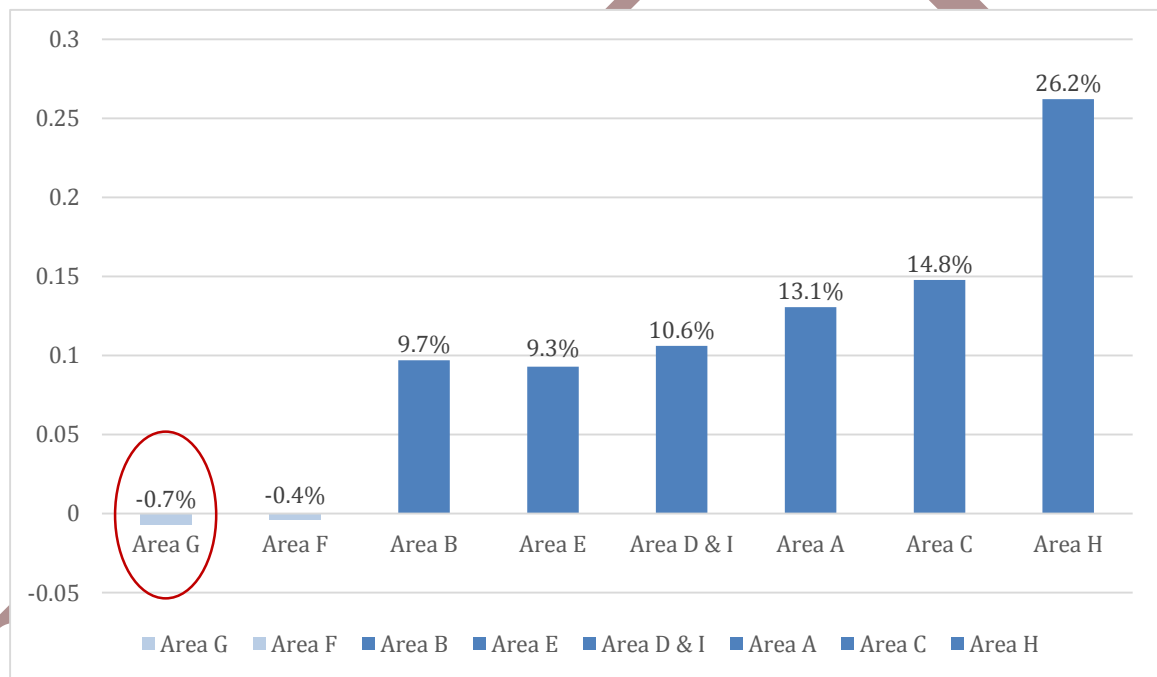


Figure 2: Regional Growth Rate Comparisons 2011-2021

The age and gender distribution of Electoral Area “G” is illustrated in Figure 3. Overall, approximately 52.5% of the population is male and 47.5% female.

In Electoral Area “G”, the “baby boomer” generation (currently aged 55 - 75 years old) makes up the largest proportion of the population (47% of the population in 2021). In comparison, the 20 - 34 year age group comprised only 9% of the population in the 2021 census. The Figure 3 profile provides a strong contrast to the Province of BC as shown in Figure 4. Both show an aging population; however, the proportion of residents aged 20 - 34 years in Electoral Area “G” is quite low relative to the provincial average.

In 2021, the median age in Electoral Area “G” was 62 years, while the provincial median age was 43 years – a 19 year difference. The median age for Electoral Area “G” is also higher than that of the RDOS as a whole, which had a median age of 56 years in 2021. Relative to the province, Electoral Area “G” has a significantly higher proportion of older residents in relation to youth and young adults, as is graphically illustrated when comparing Figure 3 and Figure 4.

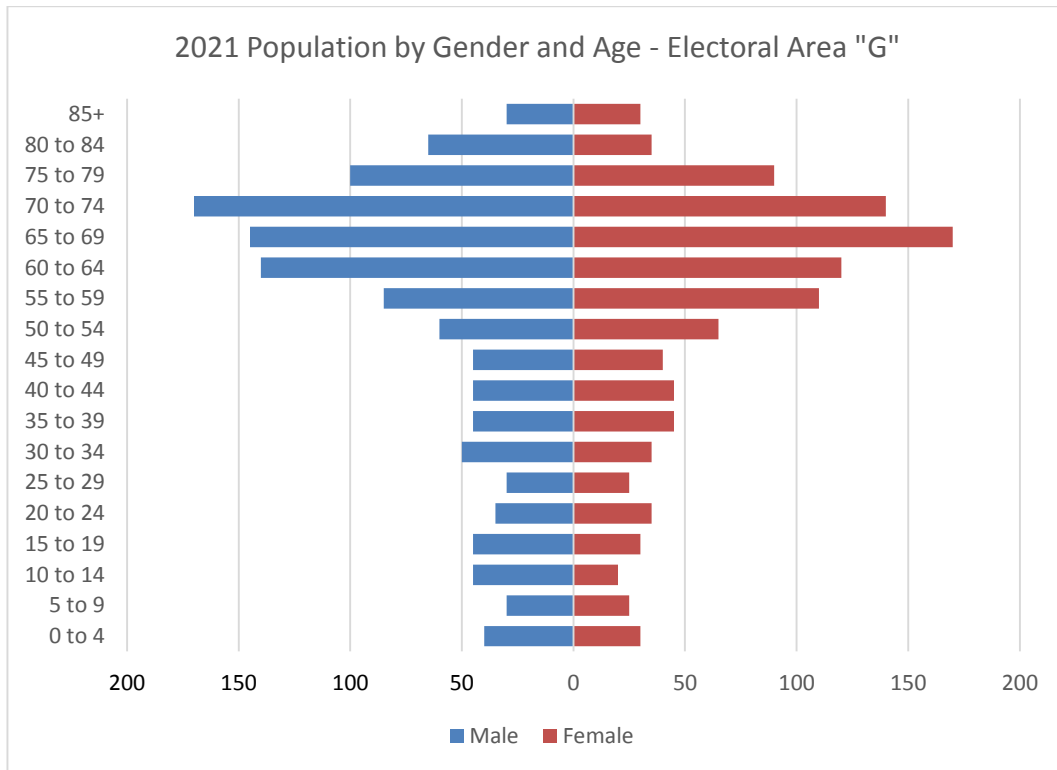


Figure 3: Electoral Area “G” 2021 Population by Gender and Age Cohort

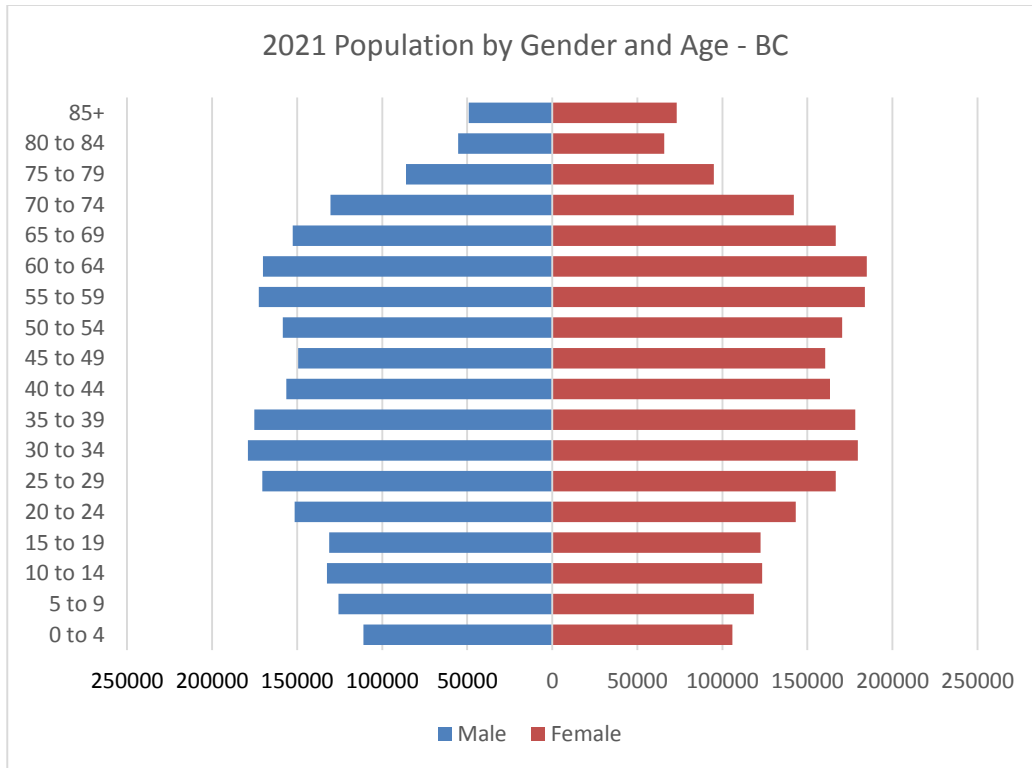


Figure 4: BC 2021 Population by Gender and Age Cohort

Looking ahead, the average age in the Electoral Area “G” is anticipated to increase slightly over time, with the most growth in the 65+ age group and marginally fewer people in the 25-65 age group.

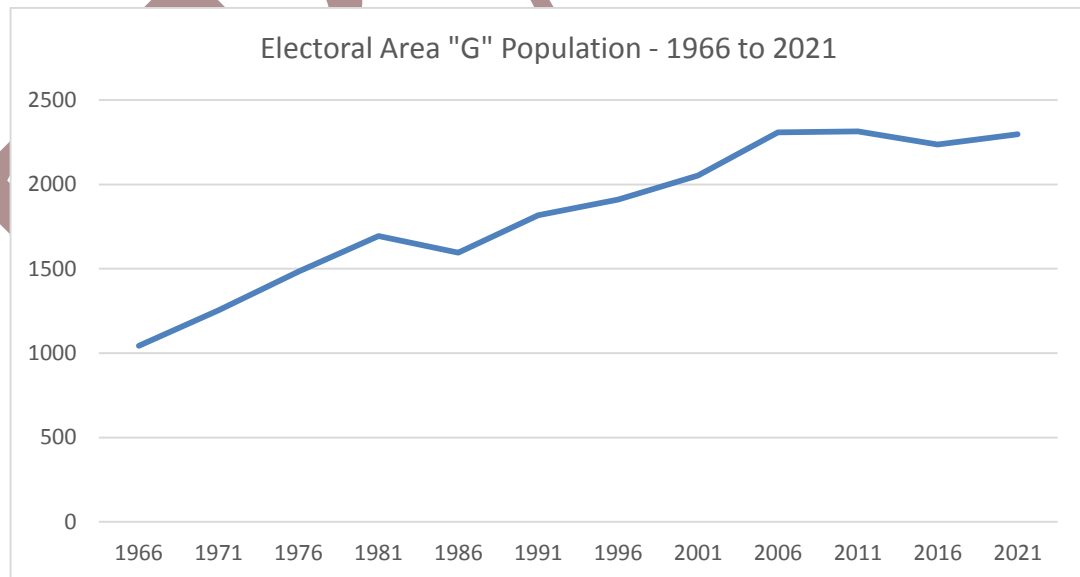


Figure 5: Electoral Area “G” Population Profile

3.4.2 Dependency Ratio

The dependency ratio, which measures the proportion of youth (0-19) and seniors (age 65+) per 100 workers (i.e., people of working age, 20-64), highlights the age composition of a given population as it changes over time.

In Electoral Area “G”, the dependency ratio is 118%, meaning there are 118 dependents for each of 100 workers (Figure 5). This figure is significantly higher than the BC provincial average, largely due to the significant number of seniors living in the area. As the last segment of the “baby boomer” generation continues to age and retire, this older segment of the proportion is expected to remain high or even increase.

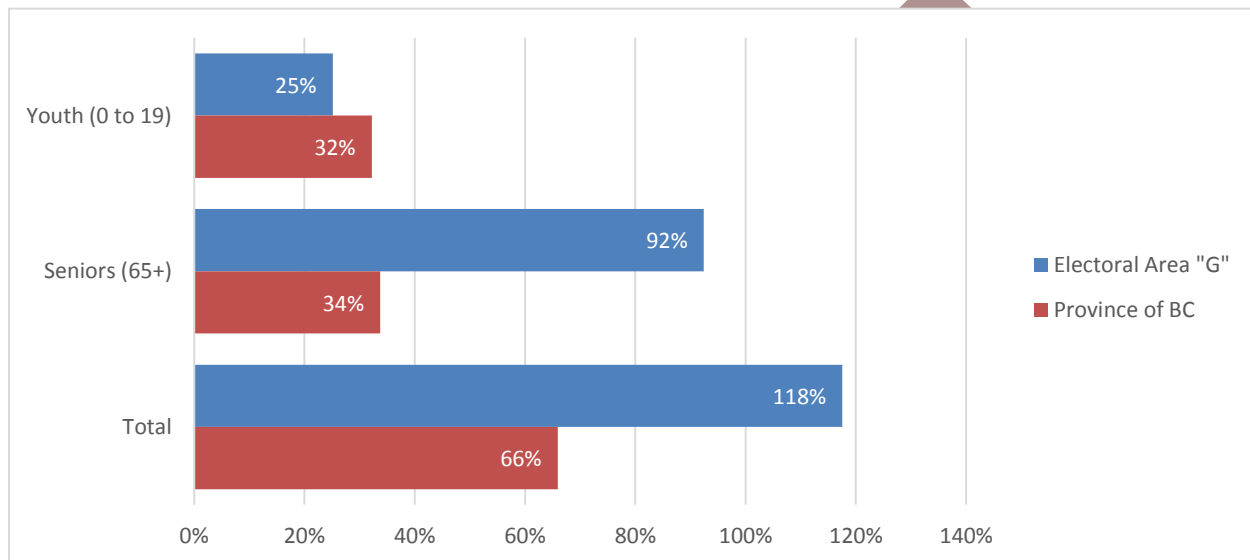


Figure 5: Dependency Ratios in Area “G” compared to BC, 2021

3.4.3 Employment and Income

According to 2019 ESRI Community Analyst data, of Electoral Area “G” residents in the labour force, the top five occupation types are as follows: Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; Retail Trade; Health care and social assistance; Construction; and Educational Services.

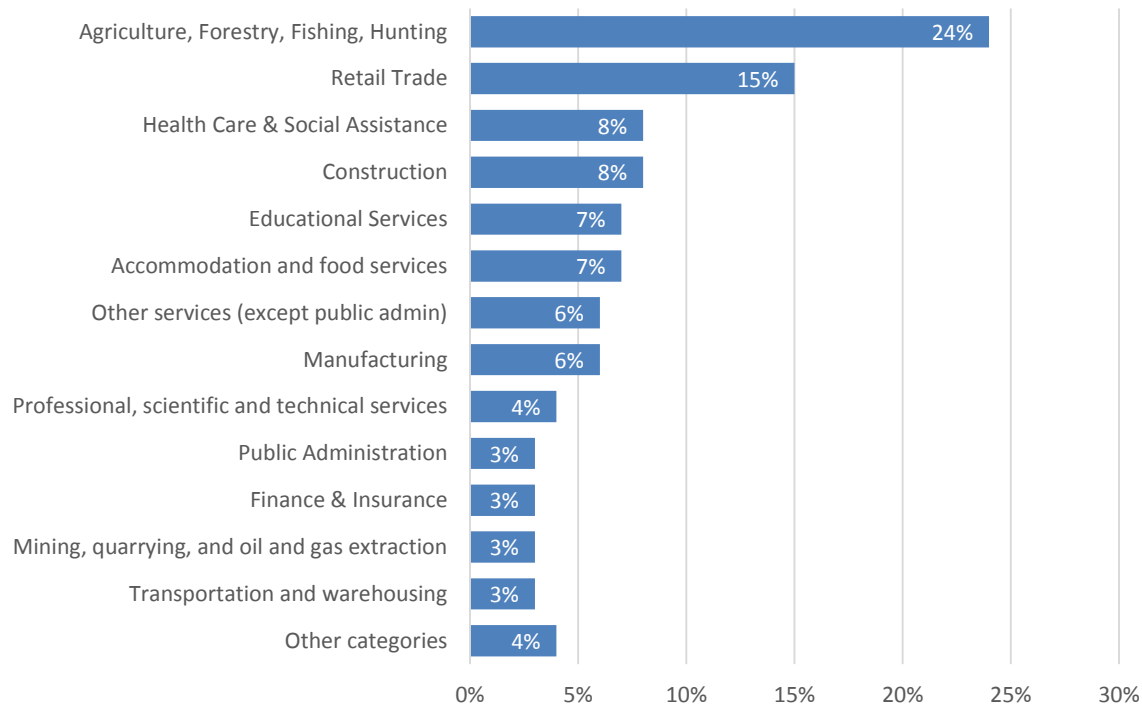


Figure 6: Electoral Area “G” Labour Force by Industry (ESRI Community Analyst Data, 2019)

Overall, the median income, and labour force participation rate is low in Electoral Area “G” relative to the region and the province, while unemployment is high. In 2016, the participation rateⁱ was 46.2% and the unemployment rate was 7.5%. Across the province, the participation rate was higher (63.9%), and the unemployment rate was slightly lower (6.7%). There are a number of workers who are employed in traditional resource occupations. The top economic sectors are agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, followed by retail trade, construction, health care and social assistance, and educational services. According to 2019 ESRI Community Analyst data, 33% of residents in Electoral Area “G” have a current income by household between \$20,000-39,999, with 19% in the \$40,000-\$59,999, and 13% in \$60,000-\$79,999 range. The percentage of households in income cohorts lower than \$79,999 is higher than that of British Columbia as a whole, while the percentage of residents in income cohorts of \$80,000 or higher are lower than that of British Columbia. The median household income for Electoral Area “G” was \$51,889.

ⁱ The participation rate measures the share of the working-age population that is working or looking for work.

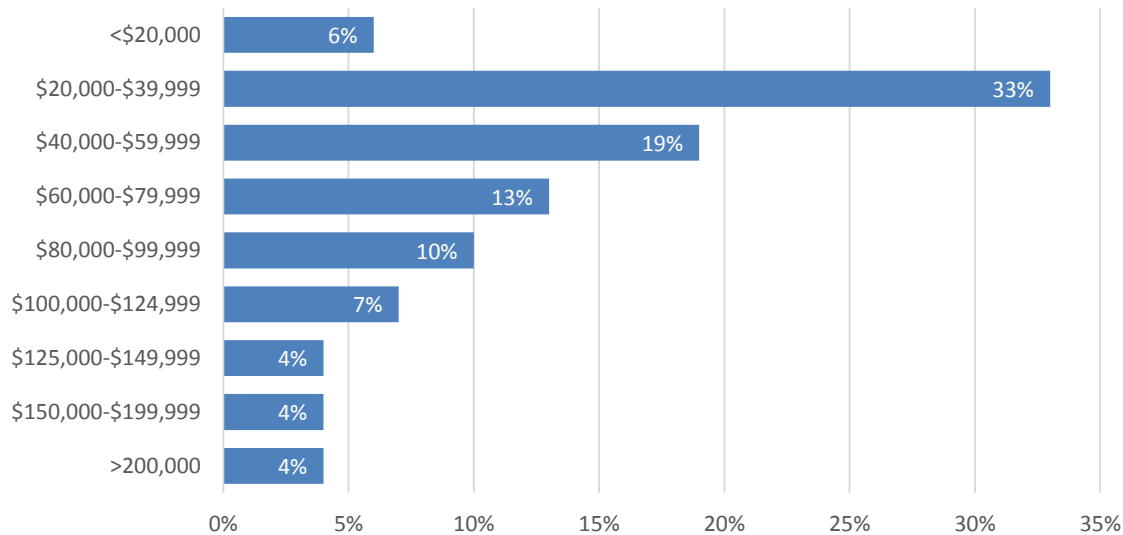


Figure 7: 2016 Household by Current Income in Electoral Area “G”
(ESRI Community Analyst Data, 2019)

3.5 Health and Wellbeing

Electoral Area “G” is within the Keremeos Local Health Area, which is within the Okanagan Health Service Delivery Area and the Interior Health Authority. While there are no health services located in Electoral Area “G”, there is access to a wide range of health services in the Village of Keremeos, Town of Princeton and the City of Penticton.

The South Similkameen Health Centre is in Keremeos and the Princeton Health Centre is in Princeton. The closest hospitals are located in the City of Penticton, the Town of Oliver, or the Town of Princeton, each of which is an approximate drive of between 35 to 50 minutes from the Village of Keremeos. People who do not have access to a vehicle or are unable to drive (such as seniors) may find it hard to access the available health care services.

Although Electoral Area “G” has a relatively mature and aging population, due to the small and rural nature of the communities, there are no assisted living facilities in the area itself. There are assisted living facilities within driving distance in the Town of Princeton and Village of Keremeos, and other larger communities in the Okanagan Valley.

The challenge of finding physicians to locate into the Keremeos and Princeton areas is a common one for rural communities.

3.6 Housing

Homes and communities are a vital element of the quality of life in Electoral Area “G”. Sustainable and enduring communities include housing opportunities for people in all

stages of life, different family types, a range of financial situations, and for individuals and families with special needs.

The Plan Area has an aging population with a majority of residents between 65 and 84. This population group is expected to increase by 25% over the next decade, while the proportion of long-term residents who have not moved in more than 5 years is also increasing.

While this suggests the need for age-appropriate housing to allow residents to age in place through home adaptations, age friendly apartments close to amenities, one-bedroom homes, or seniors housing developments, as a rural electoral area with limited community infrastructure (i.e. no community sewer systems) and significant areas of land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the ability to meet this demand will be very limited.

Accordingly, maintaining and adapting existing housing units will be an important future consideration. Currently, more than 60% of housing units in Electoral Area “G” were built before 1980 and likely require significant maintenance.

Though average household incomes have increased rapidly over the past five years, labour market participation has decreased, and unemployment has increased in the Electoral Area “G”. This may emphasize a need for programs and services in Electoral Area “G” that support residents without employment income to access housing, such as affordable housing developments and financial and housing expense management.

There are 1,100 housing units in Electoral Area “G”. Over the past 10 years, 55 new single-family homes were built. This represents an increase of 5.3% over a decade, which is a compound annual growth rate of 0.5%. Population increase may be even less due to declining family sizes.

Due to the absence of building inspection services in Electoral Area “G”, there is no data available regarding residential building permit activity.

Housing has become less affordable, as the median home price increased by 32.5%. The affordability ratio – the median home price compared to the median home income – increased from 6.7 to 7.8, well beyond the common threshold of 3.0 or 3.5.

3.6.1 Housing Types and Tenure

A majority of housing in Electoral Area “G” consists of single-detached homes (Figure 8). This comprises 58% of all housing, with the remaining housing being in the form of mobile homes (35%) and duplex/semi-detached (5%) and apartment housing (3%). Generally, the housing in Electoral Area “G” is relatively low-density and dispersed.

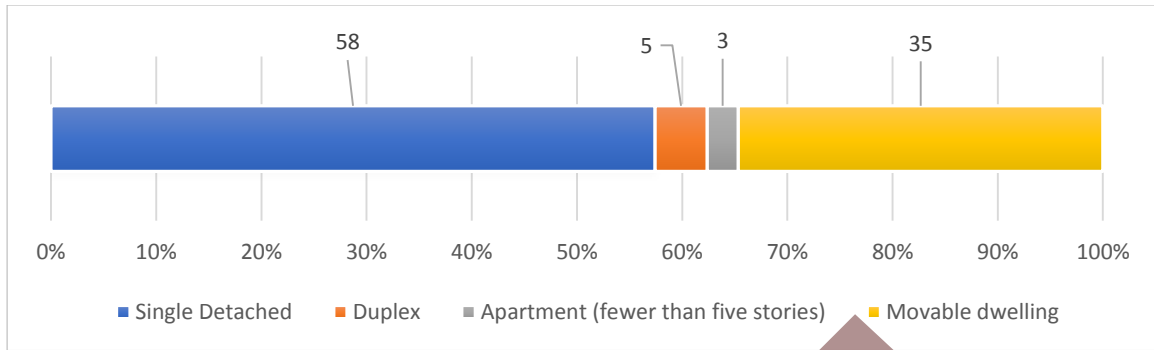


Figure 8: Housing by Dwelling Type in Electoral Area "G" (2016)

The number of households in 2016 was 1,105, 81% of which were owner households compared to about 19% that were renter households. When compared to the rest of RDOS and the Province, Electoral Area "G" has a higher percentage of homeowners.

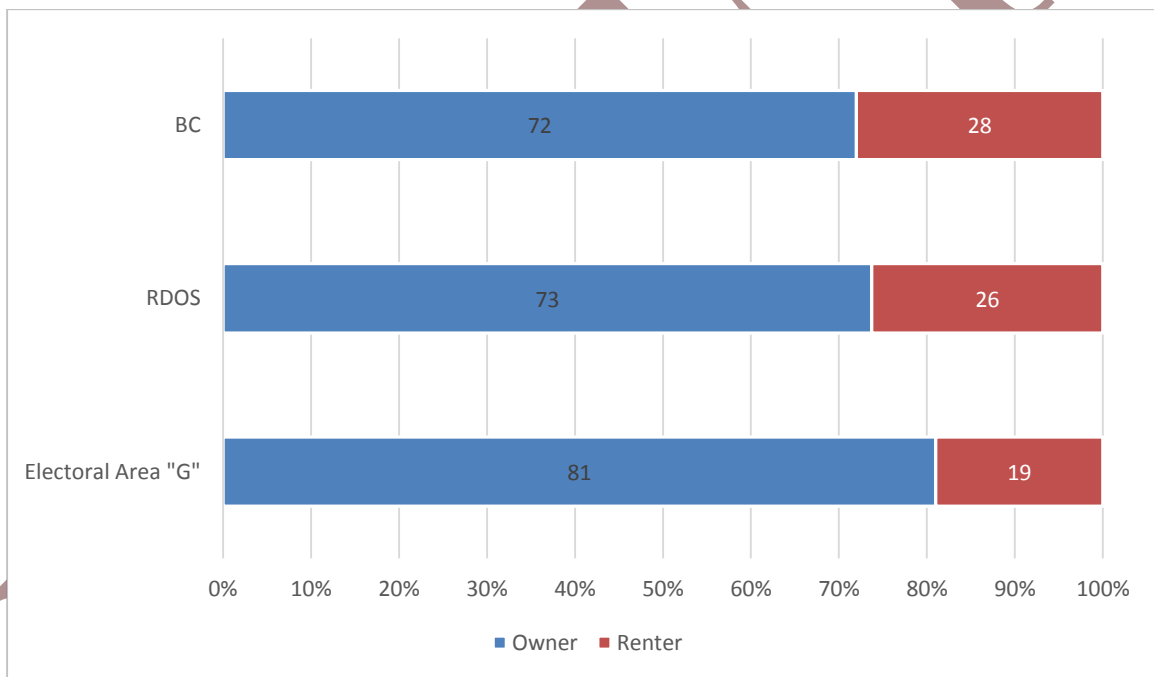


Figure 9: Owner – Renter Households, 2016

3.6.2 Household Size

Most households (47.3%) in Electoral Area "G" are two person households (Figure 10). Together, one and two person households account for 81% of households. These smaller household sizes are consistent with the older population in the area.

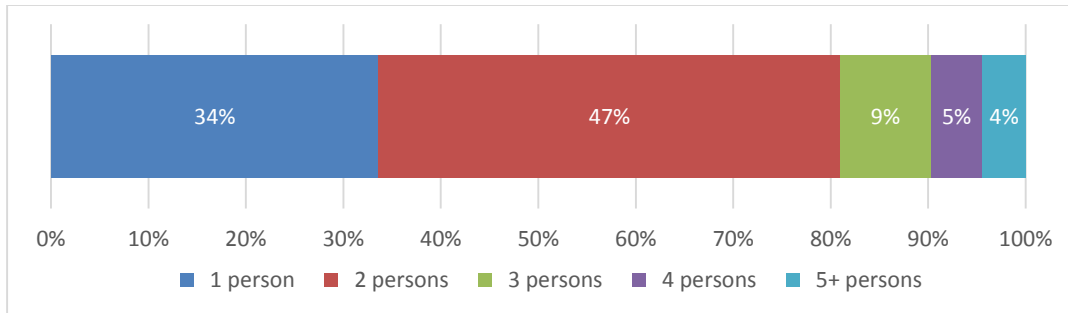


Figure 10: Electoral Area “G” Household Size (2016)

In 2016, the average household size was 2.0. The average household size is projected to increase to 2.1 in 2026.

3.6.3 Housing Needs

As mandated by Section 585 of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District completed a *Housing Needs Report* (March 2021) in order to assess current and anticipated housing needs for each of the Electoral Areas.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 585.3 of the Act, in order to meet current basic housing demand in Electoral Area “G”, an additional 59 units would have needed to be built since the 2016 Census period.

If growth continues to follow the trend of the RDOS as a whole, a further 46 units could be required by 2026 to meet basic demand.

The Report also concluded that, “in 2016, 15% of households spent more than 30% of their income on shelter costs. This decreased by 1% since 2006. Though improving slightly over the past decade, the need for more affordable housing remains.”

4.0 OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN DESIGNATIONS

The future use and development of land within Electoral Area “G” must be consistent with the land use designations illustrated on Schedule ‘B’ (Official Community Plan Map).

Rural Designations

Resource Area	RA
Agriculture	AG
Large Holdings	LH
Small Holdings	SH

Residential Designations

Low Density Residential	LR
Medium Density Residential	MR

Commercial Designations

Commercial	C
Commercial Tourist	CT

Industrial Designation

Industrial	I
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Community Services and Administrative Designations

Administrative, Cultural and Institutional	AI
Parks, Recreation and Trails	PR
Conservation Area	CA

The general types of uses encouraged in each land use designation are explained in subsequent sections of this Bylaw.

The Regional Board recognizes that some land use designations outlined above do not currently exist within Electoral Area “G” or that some existing land uses may not conform to the designations shown on OCP maps. The intent of the Regional Board is not to change the uses of this land in the immediate future but to illustrate the preferred pattern of land use as redevelopment occurs while this Plan is in force.

5.0 VISION AND BROAD GOALS

5.1 Vision

The Plan Area's communities share a similar rural lifestyle and values. While each may face its own unique challenges, community consultation identified a set of common values and a shared vision for the Plan Area. The following vision statement describes a preferred future for the Plan Area.

Electoral Area "G" is a predominantly rural region made up of smaller settlement areas. Those living in Electoral Area "G" value an independent spirit, yet recognize community responsibility, and wish to preserve and steward the area's important agricultural lands, natural habitats, and recreational opportunities that support a high quality of life. Residents are also committed to ensuring all resources are well-managed, protected and community risks reduced.

5.2 Broad Goals

The following broad goals reflect the input and priorities of Plan Area residents and are the guiding principles of this Official Community Plan. These goals will be used by the Regional District and senior government agencies to help guide future decisions on development proposals, environmental protection initiatives, and infrastructure development in the Plan Area. The first five goals outline the key priorities according to feedback from Plan Area residents, which was provided through community engagement activities, events and resident surveys.

- .1 **Water resources.** Protect and manage water resources, including both surface and groundwater, for residential, business, agriculture, and ecosystem health.
- .2 **Infrastructure and services.** Improve and support the development of new or combined infrastructure, including community water, sanitary sewer systems and improved internet connectivity.
- .3 **Natural hazards & Climate Change.** Explore ways to reduce risks from natural hazards such as wildfire and flooding, and support adaptation and greenhouse gas reduction initiatives, in order to enhance community resilience.
- .4 **Agriculture.** Support the area's existing and future agricultural activity, farmers and seasonal workers that support agricultural systems and protect agricultural lands that contribute to the areas economic base, character and sense of place.
- .5 **Community health and wellbeing.** Promote community health, safety, and cleanliness. Support active living for the area's aging population and increase activities for youth.
- .6 **Natural environment.** Steward and protect the area's natural features, including sensitive ecosystems and habitat, balanced with existing natural resource development.

- .7 **Collaboration.** Continue engaging with Upper and Lower Similkameen Indian Bands on matters that affect all communities within Electoral Area “G”.
- .8 **Recreation.** Work to build and promote the area’s trail systems and maintain existing high-quality park and recreational spaces.
- .9 **Heritage.** Honour the area’s history and heritage, both Indigenous and settlement history, including key heritage sites and attractions.
- .10 **Transportation.** Maintain a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system for all road users working in cooperation with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.
- .11 **Economic development & tourism.** Support and retain existing businesses, while encouraging new businesses, in particular those supporting health and new sustainable tourism related activities (trail systems, mountain biking, etc.).
- .12 **New Growth and Development.** Encourage new growth in existing residential areas. Support affordable housing and aging in place.

6.0 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

6.1 Background

Growth Management is a critical aspect of planning for a community's future. It allows a community to forecast growth, based on trends and aspirations and to direct anticipated growth to areas that align with the community's vision and broad goals.

Electoral Area "G" has several constraints that may impede where any new residential growth can occur. These constraints include the amount of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the steep slopes surrounding the valleys, the Lower and Upper Similkameen Band Reserve areas, and the amount of Crown Land.

6.2 Population Growth

Total population figures from 1996 - 2021 suggest a stable population with a slight decline from 2011 to 2016 (Figure 12). If modest population growth or decline were to continue for the next 20 years, the population would be between 2,079 and 3,095 by 2041, given scenarios of -0.5% , +1%, or +1.5% or annual population change.

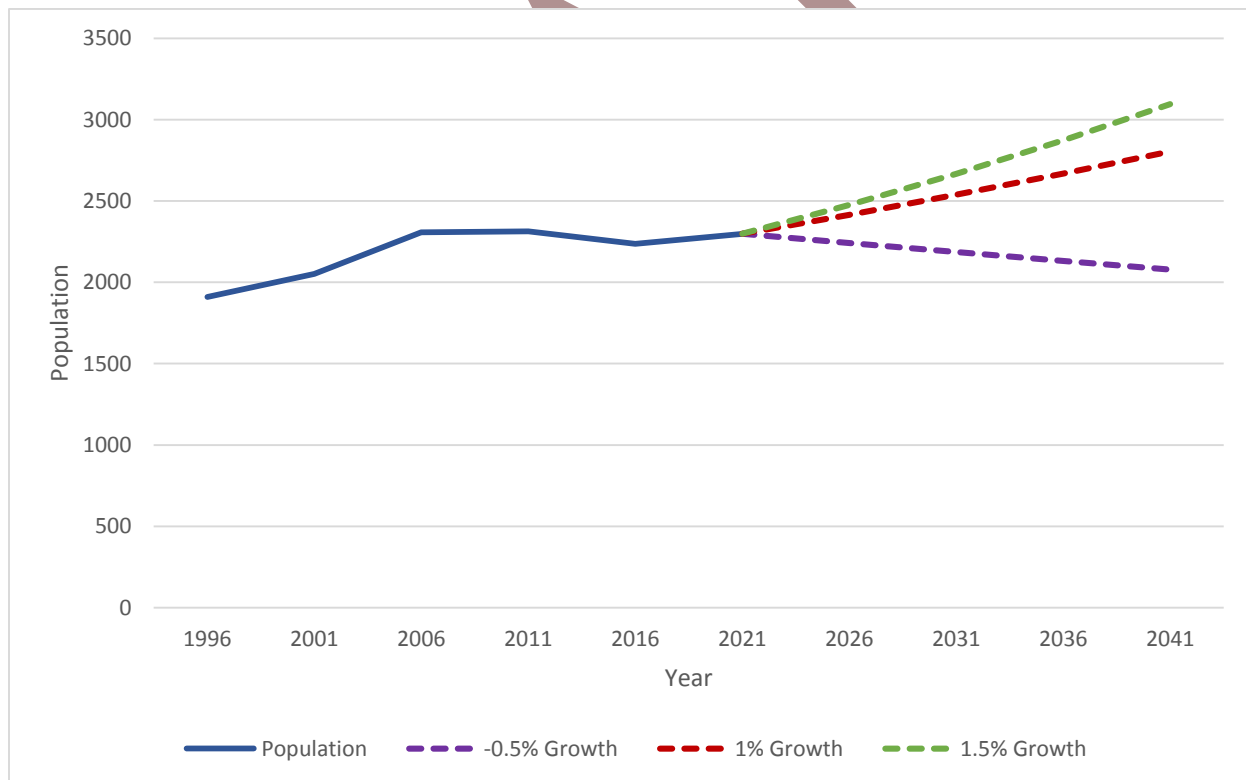


Figure 12: Electoral Area "G" Projected Population Growth (1996-2041)

6.3 Anticipated Housing Needs

To meet anticipated housing demand in Electoral Area “G”, an additional 253-399 units may be required by 2041 due to population growth. The number of units required to meet anticipated housing needs was calculated by applying projected growth rates to baseline housing numbers from the 2021 census. Most of this growth will be for the group aged 65-84.

Annual projected growth rate	-0.5%	1%	1.5%
Total estimated population (2041)	2,079	2,804	3,095
Additional population estimate (2041)	n/a	506	797
Average persons per household	2	2	2
New dwelling units	n/a	253	399

Table 3: Anticipated Housing Demand for Electoral Area “G”

6.4 Objectives

- .1 Supports residential growth within the Plan Area occurring within existing settlement areas that comprise Rural and Residential designations on Schedule ‘B’ (Official Community Plan Map).
- .2 Support new development where services currently exist, and in keeping with this OCP’s broad goals and objectives.
- .3 Encourage incremental growth while maintaining the rural character and conserving the natural environment of the Plan Area.

6.5 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Recognizes the Village of Keremeos as the commercial, institutional and social core of the South Similkameen area as it has the infrastructure, services and employment opportunities to sustain higher densities and residential growth than the Plan Area.
- .2 Requires that new subdivision development be serviced in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District’s Subdivision Servicing Bylaw.
- .3 Encourages residential development be located away from hazard lands, critical habitat areas, and designated Agricultural (AG) areas.
- .4 Requires that all new parcels less than 1.0 hectare in size connect to a community sewer and water system.
- .5 Encourages infill growth where community infrastructure is already in place or where new development will directly improve capacity.

- .6 Supports water conservation measures that also balance the impact on residents and the agricultural industry.

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7.0 LOCAL AREA POLICIES

7.1 Background

The main settlement areas within Electoral Area “G” include Olalla and Hedley, both of which formed in response to mining activity, while there is also a large agricultural community surrounding the Village of Keremeos.

Addressing issues pertaining to safe drinking water, housing and employment are some of the key objectives for residents of the Plan Area. While each of these communities have things in common, including a strong desire to maintain and protect the larger Plan Area’s rural qualities and environmental values, each community is also unique. This section of the Plan outlines policies for each of the Plan Area’s communities.

7.2 Rural Keremeos

Keremeos is a Similkameen name for the “water or stream running through an open flat” and has a long history of human activity and settlement. In 1908, the Keremeos townsite was surveyed as was the surrounding agricultural land into 3, 5 and 10 acres lots. An irrigation system was subsequently constructed to facilitate the development of tree-fruit production and agricultural settlement.

The “Rural Keremeos” area now represents the largest settlement area within Electoral Area “G”, accounting for 68% of households (e.g. 476 of 700 households). In many respects, however, residents feel far more connected to the Village of Keremeos than the Regional District and will often seek civic and land information from the Village.

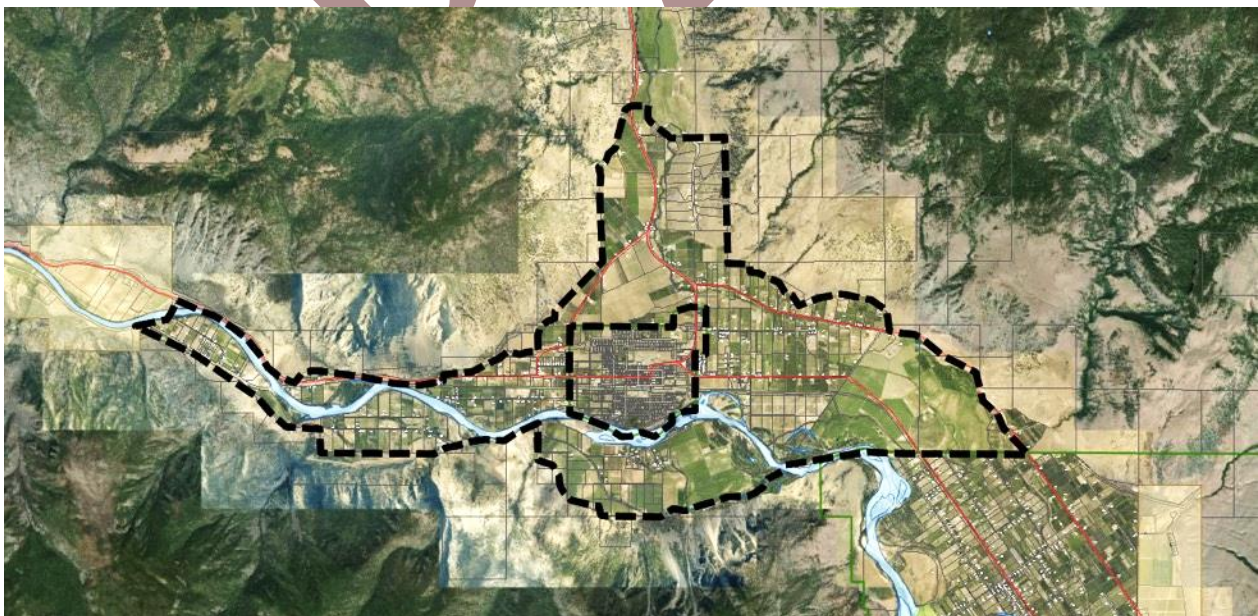


Figure 13: Aerial photo of “Rural Keremeos” Area (2017)

Over 84% of parcels in the “Rural Keremeos” area are situated within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), while 30.5% are within the Similkameen River floodplain.

The Keremeos Irrigation District (KID) operates a community water system that supplies water to large parts of the “Rural Keremeos” community.

7.2.1 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports the extension of community water to service parcels designated Agriculture (AG) provided the service is not used to increase residential densities in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- .2 Will generally not support applications to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) that result in the fragmentation of farmland through subdivision or introduction of non-farm uses.
- .3 Discourages proposals to exclude land from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) or introduce greater residential densities along the perimeter of the Village of Keremeos boundary, and considers such lands should first be incorporated within the Village prior to any redevelopment.
- .4 Encourages signage within provincial highway road dedications to comply with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s *Policy Manual for Supplemental Signs* (2005).
- .5 Recognizes Highway 3 as a visually prominent transportation corridor that informs many visitor and resident impressions of the community and discourages further commercial sprawl, including signage, to the east and west of the Village of Keremeos.
- .6 Supports the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure improving direct access from Highway 3 to existing residential and commercial businesses.
- .7 Encourages the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to improve pedestrian and cycle traffic within the Highway 3 road dedication.
- .8 Encourages the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to reconsider the re-alignment of Highway 3 to the corridor designated as Transportation Corridor (TC) on Schedule ‘B’ (Official Community Plan Map) and to formalise the use of this land as a community trail.
- .9 Support plans for additional public transit options within Rural Keremeos, including the Village of Keremeos, and to other communities such as Penticton.
- .10 Recognizes the potential archeological values in the area and encourages new development to work with Lower Similkameen Indian Band to safeguard culturally important sites.
- .11 Discourages any new residential development within the Similkameen River floodplain and that this land be retained for agriculture or open space uses in order

to reduce flood impacts.

7.3 Hedley

Indigenous peoples' presence in the Hedley area dates back thousands of years with the name of the region historically being Chuchuwayha and Nickel Plate Mountain as "Snaza'ist" (meaning "striped rock place").

The Similkameen people had undertaken mining in the area for ochre, chert, opal, quartz and petrified wood.

The first mineral claims on Nickel Plate Mountain occurred in 1898; the Bulldog, Copperfield, Sunnyside, and Nickel Plate. These claims would form the nucleus of a significant underground mining operation, producing millions of dollars of gold before its close in 1955.

A small settlement at the base of these claims would come to form the community of Hedley, which derived its name from Robert Hedley, a well-known mining person from the Nelson-Trail area. Hedley had previously staked one of the early prospectors in the area who returned the favour by naming the camp after his sponsor.

In the first decade of the 20th century, the community was first surveyed and added a post office, general store, newspaper (The Hedley Gazette), church, bank, hospital, hotel, brewery and was connected by train when the first Vancouver, Victoria and Eastern Railway passenger service arrived in town.

YEAR	POPULATION
1966	347
1971	385
1976	480
1981	426
1986	374
1991	409
1996	Not available
2001	Not available
2006	256
2011	252
2016	242
2021	261



Figure 14: Aerial photo of Hedley (2017)

In January 1939 there was a fatal landslide that destroyed a number of buildings in the northern part of Hedley and the Province deemed the area too dangerous for residential use and purchased the affected parcels.

By 1949, the known economical ore pockets had been exhausted while remaining ones were either too expensive to reach or too low in gold value and the Hedley Mascot mine was closed with all the useful equipment removed and the buildings abandoned. The Mascot mine site was officially designated a Provincial Heritage resource in 1995.

In the following decade, fires would destroy many of the buildings in Hedley's original commercial area. There are no significant industrial activities left in Hedley and it now serves as an affordable retirement community (55% of the population is over the age of 60).

While there are approximately 514 parcels within the Hedley townsite area and 180 households, Hedley still resembles the historic small town feel with a commercial downtown Main Street and a walkable residential area.

Hedley is serviced with community water by the Hedley Improvement District (HID) that has approximately 200 connections, mostly domestic. There is no community sewer system in place; instead, residents have their own individual septic systems.

Geographically, Hedley is constrained by the Similkameen River to the south, Upper Similkameen Band lands to the west and mostly Provincial Crown lands to the north and east.

7.3.1 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports improving water and sewer infrastructure within the Hedley community.
- .2 Supports businesses locating within the historic commercial area of downtown Hedley.
- .3 Supports residential infill of existing lots, where community servicing exists.
- .4 Supports the showcasing of existing local heritage values and resources to encourage tourism and economic development opportunities in the south Similkameen.
- .5 Encourages communication and collaboration with the USIB where initiatives support community wide issues and solutions to community priorities.
- .6 Encourages the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to undertake a review of vehicle traffic movements and safety within Hedley and to install any recommended traffic control measures.
- .7 Will consider a request to acquire the community water system in accordance with the Regional District's *Water and Sewer Utility Acquisition Policy*.

7.4 Olalla and Area

The name of the Olalla community is considered to be a local adaptation of the Salish and Chinook word for "berries" (e.g. "olallie" or "ollalie") and is thought to be reflective of the use of the area by local Indigenous peoples prior to European settlement.

The modern settlement of Olalla dates to the mid-1880s and the staking of mineral claims in the area and the establishment of "Olalla Camp" as a service centre. While not a particularly prosperous mining area, a 1922 mining report stating that "the history of this camp, which embraces both sides of the valley, has been insignificant when based on production, only a few tons having been shipped" at its height, the Olalla community was able to support a hotel, assay office, school, dance hall, store, post office and numerous dwellings.

YEAR	POPULATION
1966	80
1971	144
1976	108
1981	327
1986	271
1991	443
1996	Not available
2001	Not available
2006	393
2011	401
2016	378
2021	415

When a real estate bubble in the province burst in 1913, land sales and mineral claims in the Similkameen stagnated. With the onset of war the following year (1914), the population of Olalla also started to decline

By 1930, the population of Olalla had declined to 80 and, according to *Ghost Towns of British Columbia* (1970), by the early 1960s, the community had virtually been abandoned and most of the structures destroyed by a bushfire that came through the area in 1950s.

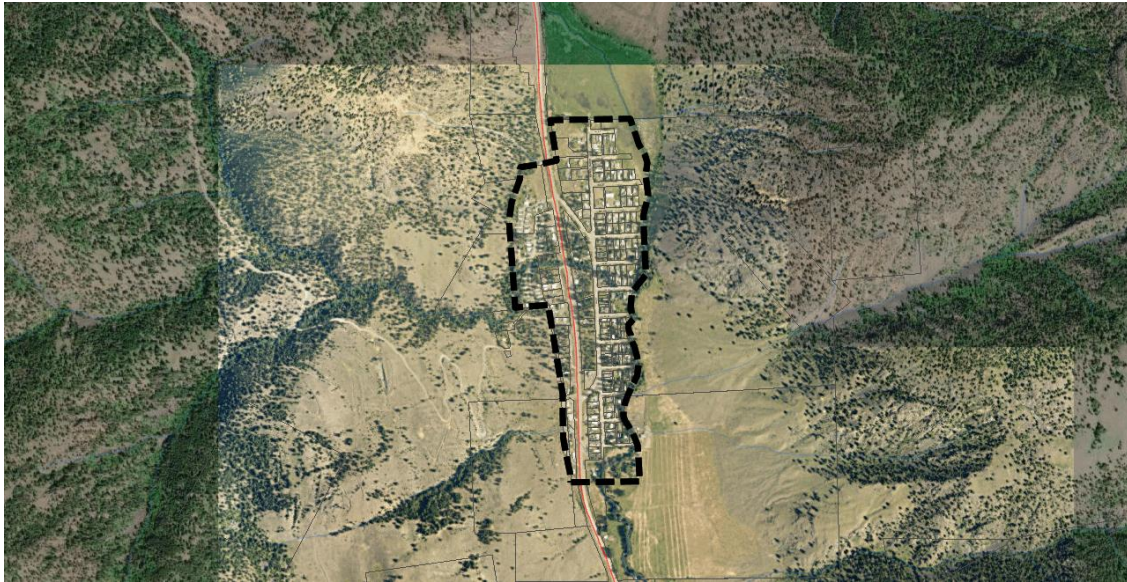


Figure 15: Aerial photo of Olalla (2017)

Over the proceeding decades, Olalla has re-emerged as an affordable bedroom community for Penticton and Keremeos with a population of 387 persons (2016).

The RDOS administers the community water system in Olalla through a deep groundwater well and currently supplies approximately 200 properties. There is no community sewer system for this area.

7.4.1 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages new development and uses adjacent Highway 3 and 3A to minimize the use of commercial signage, unenclosed outdoor storage spaces and uncontrolled highway access points.
- .2 Encourages signage within provincial highway road dedications to comply with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's *Policy Manual for Supplemental Signs* (2005).
- .3 Supports use of the floodplain associated with Keremeos Creek being retained for open space and extensive land uses such as ranching and grazing.
- .4 Requires new development within the Olalla Community Water Service Area to connect to the water system in accordance with the Regional District's Water Use Regulation Bylaw.
- .5 Supports initiatives that encourage residents to improve the outward appearance of their properties in order to increase community spirit and pride.

8.0 RESOURCE AREA

8.1 Background

This designation encompasses lands used and valued for grazing or rangelands, forestry, natural resource extraction, recreation, environmental conservation opportunities, comprised of both private and Crown land with parcels greater than 60.0 ha in area. The designated Resource Areas in Electoral Area “G” reinforce the rural character of the Plan Area and are a valued community resource.

Approximately 70 % of the Electoral Area “G” land base is designated as Resource Area (RA).

The Resource Area designation is intended to guide development outside of existing settlement areas and provide direction for responses to referrals from provincial agencies. Activities within the RA designated areas may have impacts that could negatively affect private properties within the valley bottoms.

It is recognized that certain matters considered in this section are beyond the jurisdiction of the Regional District (e.g., Provincial Crown land); however, the objectives and policies relating to these are intended to serve as indicators of community preference and to assist senior levels of government in planning and decision making.

8.2 Objectives

- .1 Conserve water resources and protect the quality and quantity of those resources for future generations.
- .2 Maintain the renewable natural resource land base and protect it from activities that may diminish the resource value and potential.
- .3 Plan for and protect wildlife corridors, habitat of threatened and endangered species and ecosystem connectivity.
- .4 Encourage and protect responsible outdoor recreation activities.

8.3 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports the use of lands designated Resource Area (RA) identified in Schedule ‘B’ (Official Community Plan Map) for grazing or rangelands, forestry, natural resource extraction, recreation, environmental conservation, watershed protection and management opportunities, and limited rural residential uses.
- .2 Supports lands designated as Resource Area (RA) generally being maintained as un-subdivided large land parcels (i.e., as un-surveyed Crown land, or as District Lots) or

with a 20 hectare minimum parcel size in recognition that these areas will remain as rural, with limited to no community services, recreation and infrastructure.

- .3 Supports responsible, low impact recreational uses which avoid critical habitats and minimize disturbance; and will work with the Province and others to ensure there are adequate staging areas with off-road parking.
- .4 Supports communication with and participation of residents, USIB and LSIB in the management and development of provincial land in Resource areas.
- .5 Supports activities that improve range and forage conditions, including the continuation of the Invasive Species Program to help control the invasion and spread of noxious weeds in the Plan Area.
- .6 Where there is forestry use, supports selective logging to maintain undiminished capacity of the land to absorb and retain water, prevent erosion, and permit groundwater recharge throughout the harvest cycle.
- .7 Encourages the Province to continue referrals of mineral exploration proposals involving surface disturbance to the Regional District as well as other regulatory agencies for review and comment.
- .8 Encourages the Province to have due consideration for the impact of resource extraction activities on existing adjacent and downstream residential developments and infrastructure such as roads.
- .9 Encourages the Provincial Government to give 30 days' notice to the Regional District and the adjacent rural community about applications for the lease or sale of Crown land.

9.0 AGRICULTURE

9.1 Background

The agricultural land base in the Plan Area is approximately 4,327 ha in area, or 2% of the total Plan area.

The Agriculture (AG) designation within the Plan Area applies to land used, or intended to be used, for an agricultural operation or activity generally including the production of livestock, poultry, farmed game, fur bearing animals, crops, fruit, grain, vegetables, milk, eggs, honey, mushrooms, wood and fibre crops, grapes, and horticultural and aquaculture products, as well as activities associated with the production and processing of these items.

Most of the land designated AG in Electoral Area “G” is generally located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and regulated by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), however, there are small portions designated as AG that lie outside of the ALR.

9.2 Objectives

- .1 Protect the agricultural land base of the Plan Area including associated farming, orchards, vineyards, ranching, and accompanying value-added activities.
- .2 Minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

9.3 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports the use of lands designated Agriculture (AG) identified on Schedule ‘B’ (Official Community Plan Map) for an agricultural operation or activity generally including the production of livestock, poultry, farmed game, fur bearing animals, crops, fruit, grain, vegetables, milk, eggs, honey, mushrooms, wood and fibre crops, grapes, and horticultural and aquaculture products, as well as activities associated with the production and processing of these items.
- .2 Will generally not support applications to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) that seek to:
 - a) subdivide land or adjust the boundaries between parcels that results in the fragmentation of farm, vineyard or orchard units, or seek to create homesite parcels;
or
 - b) introduce non-agricultural uses.
- .3 Recognizes agricultural land as necessary for agricultural businesses that provide regional economic stability and growth opportunities.

- .4 Will consider requests for the Regional District to initiate an application to the Agricultural Land Commission to have lands excluded from the Agricultural Land Reserve only within the context of a comprehensive review of this Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw.
- .5 Encourages property owners to seek, as an alternative to the exclusion of lands from the Agricultural Land Reserve, approval from the Agricultural Land Commission for other application types under the Agricultural Land Commission Act such as non-farm use, non-adhering residential use and subdivision.
- .6 Supports maintaining the integrity of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and its existing boundaries.
- .7 Encourages the preservation of environmental values in the Agriculture (AG) designation.
- .8 Supports additional dwellings within the Agricultural (AG) designation where they are used to support agricultural activities and purposes (e.g., workers' housing).
- .9 Supports and encourages developing food system infrastructure (production, processing, storage and distribution of food) to contribute to a resilient local and regional food supply.
- .10 Encourages the consolidation of small parcels into larger farm units that increase efficiency and enhance the land base of the ALR.
- .11 Encourages new development adjacent to agricultural areas to provide sufficient buffering in the form of setbacks, fencing and landscaping that is consistent with provincial policy such as the *Guide to Edge Planning Promoting Compatibility Along Agricultural – Urban Edges*.
- .12 Encourages provincial ministries and utilities to minimize the impact of new roads and utility corridors through agricultural land by utilizing only those lands necessary, and by maximizing the capacity of existing corridors and roads.
- .13 Supports the establishment of economic strategies that promote agriculture, provide added value, and identify new farm markets.
- .14 Supports local retailing opportunities for producers such as farm markets, farm gate sales, community supported agriculture (CSA) programs and promotion of local food through marketing and branding campaigns.
- .15 Supports local food security and the diversification of the agricultural and rural economy by encouraging secondary, value-added uses such as agri-tourism, secondary processing of products, and home occupations/industry that do not impact the agricultural capability of farmland.
- .16 Will consider the development of a Regional Agricultural Strategy that includes Electoral Area "G".
- .17 Will work with stakeholders to support educational programs on the importance of agricultural enterprises and local food production that is resilient to outside stressors.

- .18 Recognizes climate change will impact the agricultural sector at the local scale and will work with stakeholders to undertake adaptive action.
- .19 Supports the protection of normal farm practices within the ALR in accordance with the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*.
- .20 May consider supporting the following applications to subdivide parcels smaller than 4.0 ha within the Agricultural Land Reserve in the following cases:
 - a) for a homesite severance under the ALC's homesite severance policy;
 - b) where the applicant can demonstrate that the subdivision or boundary adjustment will enhance agricultural viability; and
 - c) to support a public use such as a public park or community facility.

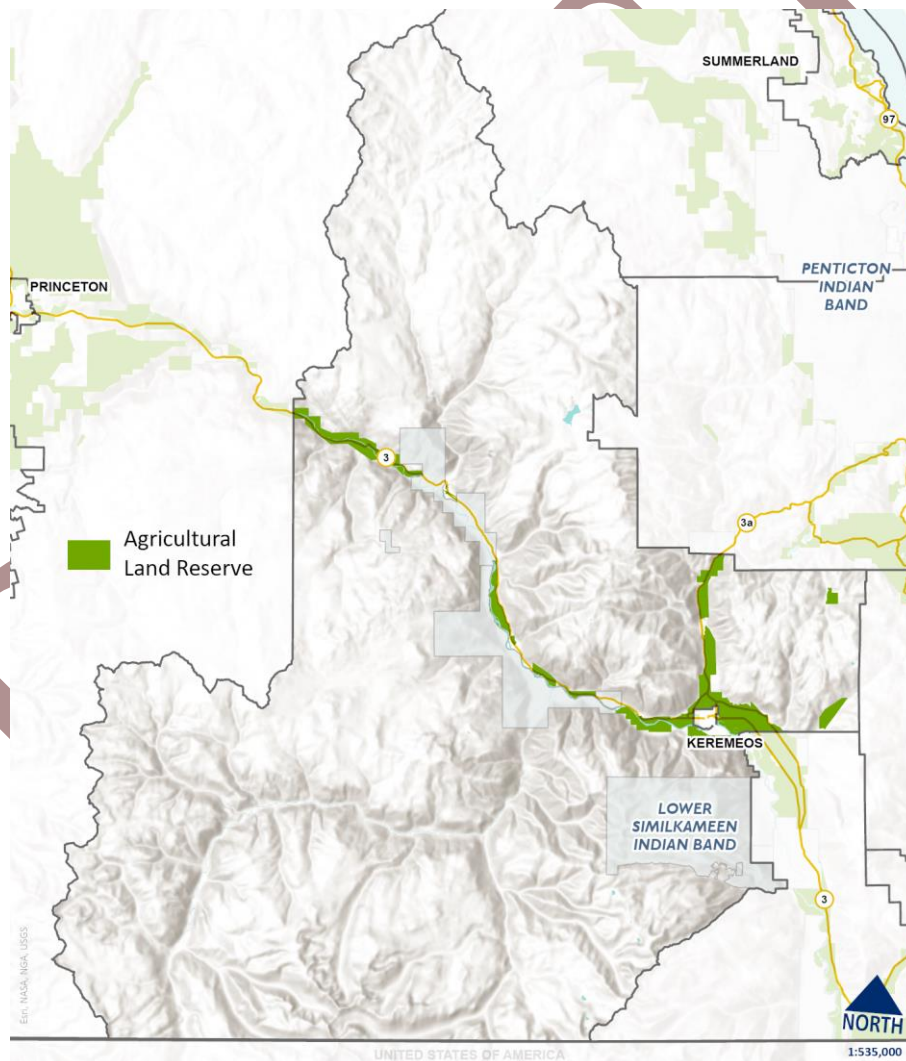


Figure 16: Agricultural Land Reserve, Electoral Area "G"

10.0 RURAL HOLDINGS

10.1 Background

The Plan Area's rural character and lifestyles are some of the most valued aspects to area residents. Within the Plan Area, Rural Holdings are generally grouped into two categories, Large Holdings (LH) and Small Holdings (SH). Large holdings comprise approximately 240 ha or 0.12% and Small Holdings 77 ha or 0.04% of the land base in the Electoral Area.

The Large Holdings designation typically applies to privately-held properties smaller than Resource Area parcels and includes large parcels of land generally used for acreages, hobby farms, limited agriculture, ranching, grazing, and other uses that fit with the character of this area. Large Holdings should have a range of minimum parcel sizes but no less than of 4.0 hectares.

The Small Holdings designation includes medium sized parcels of land generally used for rural residential, part time farming, limited agriculture, home industry uses and other uses that fit with the character of the area.

10.2 Objectives

- .1 Retain and enhance the rural character of lands designated for Large Holdings and Small Holdings.
- .2 Discourage rural sprawl by limiting the introduction of new Large Holdings and Small Holdings designations.
- .3 Reduce potential conflicts between rural residential developments and agricultural operations on Rural Holdings.
- .4 Reduce flood and wildfire hazard threat to residential areas located within the Large and Small Holdings designations.

10.3 Policies - General

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports home occupations on lands designated Small Holdings (SH) and Large Holdings (LH), provided the uses are compatible with the surrounding rural character.
- .2 Supports home industry uses (e.g., vehicle repair, machine shops) on lands designated Large Holdings (LH) that are larger than 2.0 ha in size, provided uses are compatible with the surrounding rural character.
- .3 Encourages protection and conservation of agriculturally productive land, and environmentally sensitive areas within designated Small Holdings (SH) and Large Holdings (LH) areas.

- .4 Encourages the Subdivision Approving Authority to ensure that rural developments and subdivisions allow for public access to Crown land.
- .5 Encourages voluntary environmental stewardship on private lands within Small and Large Holdings areas.
- .6 Encourages new developments that abut agricultural land or livestock grazing land to provide perimeter fencing.
- .7 Supports the development of secondary suites and additional accessory dwellings, based on the size of a parcel.

10.4 Policies – Large Holdings

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports the use of lands designated Large Holdings (LH) identified in Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map) for ranching, grazing, outdoor recreation, open space, limited residential use and other uses that will have minimal environmental impact and preserve the lands in a largely undeveloped state.
- .2 Lands designated as Large Holdings should generally not be less than 4.0 ha in area.

10.5 Policies – Small Holdings

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports a range of uses on the lands designated Small Holdings (SH) in Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map), including rural residential, hobby farming, limited agriculture and others uses that fit within the rural character of the surrounding area.
- .2 Supports a minimum parcel size of 1.0 ha for lands without community sewer within the Small Holdings (SH) designation.

11.0 RESIDENTIAL

11.1 Background

There are two residential land use designations recognized within this Plan: Low Density Residential (LR) and Medium Density Residential (MR).

- **Low Density Residential (LR):** includes single detached dwellings, mobile homes, duplexes, and complementary secondary uses such as daycares, preschools, small scale home based business and small parks which are integral to a low density residential neighbourhood.
- **Medium Density Residential (MR):** includes townhouses, triplexes, fourplexes, and those complementary secondary uses such as daycares, preschools, and small parks, which are integral to a medium density area.

Existing Low Density Residential (LR) development in the Plan Area occurs primarily within Olalla, Hedley and in Rural Keremeos. Low-density single detached dwellings are the predominant housing form throughout the Plan Area. Other forms of low-density residential housing include mobile and semi-detached/duplex homes.

Medium Density Residential (MR) designated lands in the Plan Area are limited to areas along the Keremeos Bypass (Highway 3A) west of the Village of Keremeos. More lands may be designated MR in the future to accommodate a wider spectrum of housing options to meet the needs existing or future residents throughout their lifetime, for example, seniors housing.

11.2 Objectives

- .1 Direct new residential development to existing serviced areas to protect the predominately rural character of the Plan Area.
- .2 Minimize impacts of new residential development on water quality, the natural environment and the Agricultural Land Reserve.
- .3 Accommodate a range of housing types and tenures to meet the socio-economic needs of the community.
- .4 Direct new residential development away from hazard lands, critical habitat areas, and watercourses.

11.3 Policies – General Residential

The Regional Board:

- .1 Directs the development of new housing to existing residential land uses, existing vacant lots (with servicing) or previously approved residential subdivisions, prior to considering additional new lands for more residential development.

- .2 Encourages residential infill development to maximize land use and servicing efficiencies.
- .3 Supports a range of residential densities and parcel sizes for the existing residential areas in the Plan Area.
- .4 Supports housing for a range of income levels, lifestyles and ages including rental housing and secondary suites, where appropriate and feasible.
- .6 Encourages residential development that abuts land designated Agriculture (AG) to provide buffers pursuant to provincial guidelines.
- .7 Requires that new parcels to be created by subdivision that are less than 1.0 ha in area be connected to a community water and sanitary sewer systems.
- .8 Supports accessory dwellings on parcels less than 1.0 ha in area being connected to a community sanitary sewer system.
- .9 Requires that secondary suites on parcels less than 1.0 ha in area be compliant with provincial regulation.

11.4 Policies – Low Density Residential

The Regional Board:

- .1 Generally supports the use of lands designated Low Density Residential (LR) identified in Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map) for single detached dwellings, duplexes, secondary suites, manufactured and mobile homes, small parks, small religious buildings and facilities, institutional buildings, local convenience stores and other uses that fit with the low density residential character of the designation.
- .2 Establishes a maximum density for principal detached dwelling units on lands designated Low Density Residential (LR) to be 30 dwelling units per hectare, subject to servicing requirements. The calculation of net density does not include secondary suites.
- .3 Establishes a maximum density for principal attached dwelling units (duplexes) on lands designated Low Density Residential (LR) to be 45 dwelling units per hectare, subject to servicing requirements.
- .4 Supports home occupations and bed and breakfasts within a single detached dwelling provided the operation does not have an unacceptable negative impact on the surrounding homes and the quality of life of existing residents.

11.5 Policies – Medium Density Residential

- .1 Generally supports the use of lands designated Medium Density Residential (MR) identified in Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map) for multi-family

developments, including triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, apartment buildings and community care facilities that fit with the residential intent of the designation.

- .2 Supports a maximum net density on lands designated Medium Density Residential (MR) of 60 dwelling units per hectare for areas served by a community water system and a community sewage treatment system.
- .3 Encourages affordable, community care housing, seniors housing, and special needs housing in Medium Density Residential (MR) areas.
- .4 Discourages the introduction of the Medium Density Residential (MR) designation on lands adjacent to Agriculture (AG) designated lands.

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12.0 COMMERCIAL

12.1 Background

Commercial development in the Plan Area is generally limited to existing commercial sites along Highway 3, Highway 3A, and within Hedley. The Plan recognizes that large scale service and commercial development will be directed to existing settlement areas, such as the Village of Keremeos or Town of Princeton, which are better able to function as service centers.

12.2 Objectives

- .1 Maintain the current level of local commercial sites to serve the existing communities and tourists and expand services as future growth or interest may dictate.
- .2 Direct major commercial development to the Village of Keremeos or Town of Princeton.
- .3 Achieve regional economic diversification through the facilitation of a business-enabling environment.

12.3 Policies – General Commercial

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports the use of lands designated Commercial (C) in Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map) for smaller-scale, neighbourhood-serving commercial activities.
- .2 Limits local commercial uses in existing designated areas, or areas where they may be considered in conjunction with future residential or commercial tourism developments.
- .3 Directs major office, service and general business commercial uses to the Village of Keremeos, which has the necessary infrastructure and support services.
- .4 Supports the development of a Regional Economic Development Strategy for the Similkameen Valley with participation from the Village of Keremeos, Town of Princeton and Electoral Areas "B" & "H".
- .5 Explore economic opportunities and collaborate on projects of mutual interest and benefit with Syilx communities (Upper & Lower Similkameen Indian Bands).
- .6 Encourages commercial signage within the provincial highway road dedications to comply with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's *Policy Manual for Supplemental Signs* (2005).

12.4 Policies – Tourist Commercial

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports the use of lands designated Commercial Tourist (CT) in Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map) for commercial services and activities catering to visitors and tourists, including golf courses and campgrounds.
- .2 Supports open space recreation and resort commercial opportunities such as guest ranches, trail rides, campgrounds, and/or wilderness guides in areas designated as Resource Area or Large Holdings provided that they do not have a negative impact on abutting land uses and where water quality and environmentally sensitive lands are considered.
- .3 May support open space recreation and resort commercial opportunities such as guest ranches, trail rides, campgrounds, and/or wilderness guides in areas designated as Resource Area (RA) or Large Holdings (LH) provided that the development:
 - a) is located outside the Agricultural Land Reserve;
 - b) can accommodate on-site domestic water and sewage disposal, or have community water or sewer available;
 - c) enhances adjacent land uses or the character of the existing area;
 - d) can be accessed safely from local highways;
 - e) can be adequately serviced by emergency services;
 - f) comply with riparian area regulations and take environmentally sensitive lands into consideration;
 - g) is outside areas susceptible to natural hazards, including steep slopes, flooding, soil instability, or rock fall; and
 - h) can accommodate an adequate wildfire hazard interface area if located in or near an identified high-risk wildfire hazard area.

13.0 INDUSTRIAL

13.1 Background

Under this Plan, a total of 7.46 ha or 0.004% of the land that comprises the Electoral Areas has been designated as Industrial. Other industrial activity in the Plan Area includes logging and small-scale resource extraction, which generally occur on Crown lands that are subject to the Resource Area (RA) designation.

Limited and small-scale industrial home-occupations (e.g., small scale sawmilling) can occur in Resource Areas and Rural Holdings. Larger industrial activities, including light manufacturing and fabricating are encouraged to locate in designated, serviced industrial areas in the Village of Keremeos or Town of Princeton, which are better suited to accommodate them.

The Regional District may consider designating land for proposed industrial uses on a case-by-case basis if or when demand warrants.

13.2 Objectives

- .1 Supports retaining existing industrial land use designations for small-scale industrial uses serving the needs of the community.
- .2 Encourage large-scale industrial uses requiring major services or with significant impacts to the Village of Keremeos, Town of Princeton or other suitable locations outside of the Plan Area.

13.3 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports the use of lands designated Industrial (I) identified in Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map) for activities associated with cannabis production, indoor; construction supply centre; fleet service; food and beverage processing; freight terminal; manufacturing; outdoor storage; packing, processing and storage of farm products; salvage operation; self-storage; service industry establishment; storage and warehouse; vehicle sales and rentals; veterinary establishment; and wholesale business.
- .2 Encourages larger-scale industrial and light manufacturing activities to locate in Village of Keremeos and other serviced and designated industrial areas in the Regional District.
- .3 May consider designating land Industrial, where appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.
- .4 Will consider reviewing and updating the *Lands Potentially Suitable for Industrial Use Within the Cawston, Keremeos and Hedley Corridor* (2002).

14.0 ADMINISTRATIVE, CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL

14.1 Background

As a primarily rural area with a relatively small, dispersed population, the Plan Area contains limited administrative and community facilities and cultural resources.

The Administrative, Cultural and Institutional designation includes public, non-profit or utility uses such as schools, religious buildings, recreation facilities, community centres, public health facilities, community care facilities, fire halls, libraries, post offices, and local government and improvement or irrigation district buildings.

At the time of adoption of this Plan, the Regional District is not designating any additional areas for proposed institutional uses. The Regional District may consider designating land for proposed institutional uses on a case-by-case basis, as demand warrants.

14.2 Educational and Community Facilities

The school system within the Plan Area is operated by School District No. 53 (Okanagan Similkameen) and School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen).

The Similkameen Elementary/Secondary School in Keremeos serves most of the Plan Area including Hedley. A small number of students west of Hedley attend John Allison Elementary School (K-3), Vermilion Forks Elementary Grades 4-7) or Princeton Secondary (Grades 8-12) in Princeton. There is no bus service for students in the Plan Area that are within School District No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen) and No. 53 (Okanagan Similkameen).

The Regional District has no mandate on education policies other than advocating to the School Districts on policy areas that impact the Regional District. Schools that serve the residents of the Plan Area include Similkameen Elementary Secondary School located in the Village of Keremeos.

14.2.1 Objectives

- .1 Support the maintenance of existing educational facilities within the Plan Area.

14.2.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Continues to liaise with School District No. 53 (Okanagan Similkameen) and No. 58 (Nicola-Similkameen) to determine needs and issues.
- .2 Will continue to encourage the use of school buildings and grounds, after regular school hours, by community groups, clubs, sports teams and Plan Area residents.

14.3 Protective Services

Fire protection services for the Plan Area are provided through the Keremeos Volunteer Fire Department, which serves parts of the Plan Area, as well as the Village of Keremeos and Electoral Area “B”.

The Hedley Fire Department provides public safety services to the residents of Hedley. The Hedley Fire Department also voluntarily provides the Upper Similkameen Indian Band with public safety services.

Police services are provided by the RCMP, which has a station in the Village of Keremeos. There is a BC Ambulance Service station located in the Village of Keremeos.

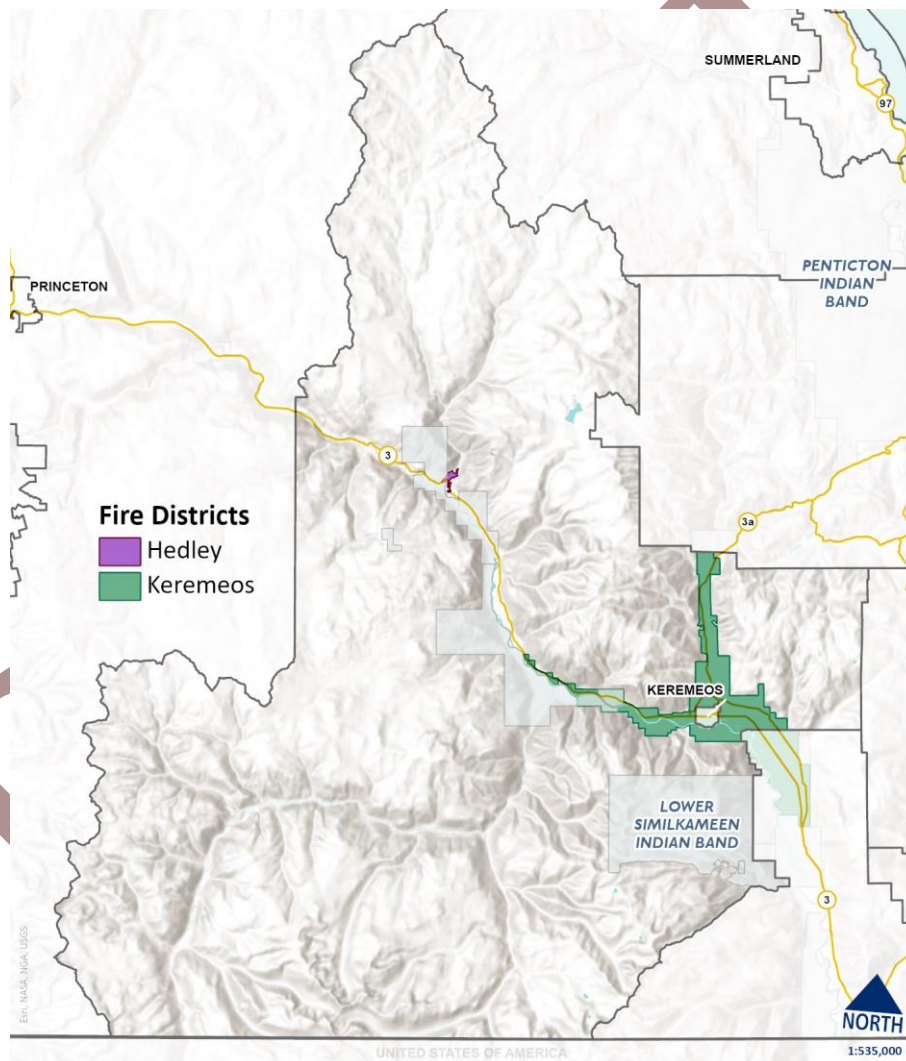


Figure 17: Plan Area Fire Protection Service Areas

14.3.1 Objectives

- .1 Maintain existing protective services and facilities, and coordinate resources to establish new facilities and services.

- .2 Expand and enhance existing community policing programs as resources and population growth allow.
- .3 Expand and enhance emergency response service capacity for fire, flooding and continued support for coordination of Emergency Support Services volunteers.

14.3.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Will continue to work with senior governments to ensure adequate and visible provincial and federal services are maintained in the Plan Area.
- .2 Encourages new and existing community water systems to be capable of fire suppression in accordance with the latest Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS).
- .3 Will work with the RCMP and Regional District staff to review opportunities to expand community policing in the Plan Area where necessary.
- .4 Supports effective and efficient bylaw enforcement for services such as animal control and untidy and unsightly premises within the Plan Area, subject to available community funding.
- .5 Supports fire and flood protection service and emergency response services for all established communities within the Plan Area.
- .6 Supports, when public facilities such as a fire hall are required, selecting the sites in accordance with the following criteria:
 - a) suitability of location on a major network road;
 - b) proximity to any concentration of residential development;
 - c) adequacy of water supply; and
 - d) other siting requirements and physical attributes.

14.4 Heritage and Cultural Resources

The Regional District recognizes that heritage conservation is an important community value that contributes to the distinct identity of the region.

The Regional Heritage Strategic Plan features sites and places in Electoral Area “G” identified by the community as having heritage significance, such as historic buildings and landscapes, and other significant heritage resources. The Regional District’s Community Heritage Register includes three sites within Electoral Area “G”: Red Bridge, Hedley Grace Church, and David Woodbury McLellan Residence.

With Indigenous traditional use activities dating back millennia, the Plan Area is home to important cultural sites and landscapes of value to the Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Upper Similkameen Indian Band, and other Okanagan Nation Alliance members.

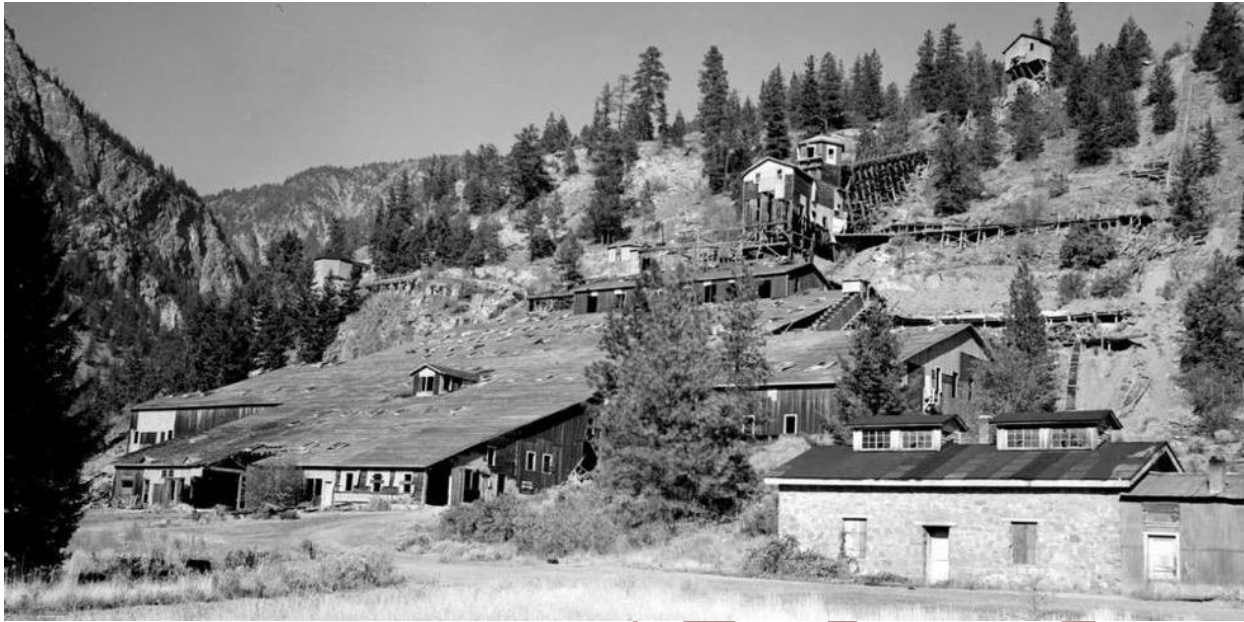


Figure 18: Hedley Mine (Source: BC Museum & Archives)

14.4.1 Objectives

- .1 Promote the conservation of cultural spaces and heritage resources in the Plan Area, as indicated by the Regional District's Regional Heritage Strategic Plan in cooperation with appropriate provincial ministries, interest groups and Indigenous governments.
- .2 Celebrate the culture and heritage of the peoples and communities, including Indigenous communities, within the Plan Area to educate and inform visitors and residents alike.
- .3 Seek opportunities to work with Lower Similkameen Indian Band and Upper Similkameen Indian Band through planning avenues, to recognize, protect and, where appropriate and feasible, interpret important cultural sites and features in the Plan Area.
- .4 Seek opportunities to use Syilx place names where they have been approved by Lower Similkameen Indian Band and Upper Similkameen Indian Band members.
- .5 Support incorporation of Lower Similkameen Indian Band and Upper Similkameen Indian Band cultural and heritage resource objectives within the Regional District's Regional Heritage Strategic Plan, where appropriate and practical.

14.4.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 May consider the inclusion of heritage conservation in all aspects of community and regional planning.
- .2 Supports the Province and other interest groups in identifying and protecting features and sites of Indigenous, paleontological, scenic, architectural, historical, archaeological and other sites of significance within the Plan Area.

- .3 Supports the management of heritage resources on a regional basis including those listed in the Regional District's community heritage register.
- .4 Should undertake the conservation and protection of heritage resources through the Regional Heritage Strategic Plan using appropriate heritage conservation tools.
- .5 Encourages developers to consider cultural and heritage resource opportunities in project planning and design.
- .6 Recognizes and celebrates the rich Syilx cultural and cultural features that exist in the Plan Area, including Syilx place names that have been approved by Upper and Lower Similkameen Indian Band (USIB & LSIB) members for use.
- .7 Support exchanging information, identifying issues of concern and coordinating efforts to address issues with the Upper and Lower Similkameen Indian Bands (USIB & LSIB) and other members of the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) through appropriate planning and collaboration avenues.

15.0 PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAILS

15.1 Background

Parks are generally publicly owned areas that provide an opportunity for individuals to pursue leisure and recreation activities. In other Electoral Areas, parkland includes Crown land, land owned by the Regional District, land zoned for park purposes and land designated as park on a subdivision plan. Parkland can also include land or general areas that the Regional District may have an interest in for future park or trail use.

There is 54,942 ha of land, or 27% of the land base in Electoral Area “G” designated as PR and a further 8 ha as part of the trail system within Transportation Corridor (TC).

Some of the types of park and recreation facilities under the Parks, Recreation and Trails (PR) designation in the Plan Area include:

- **Local Parks:** There are no parks formally operated by the Regional District in Electoral Area “G”; however, there are neighbourhood parks/amenities in Hedley operated by community groups serving the local community (i.e. Woodlie Park and outdoor facilities on Fourth Street)
- **Great Northern Railway (GNR) Trail:** The sections of the GNR Trail that are publicly owned and maintained by the Regional District are designated Transportation Corridor (TC); however, other portions of this historic trail are designated as park for potential future trail use.
- **Vancouver, Victoria, and Eastern Railway Trail:** This trail runs through Electoral Area “G” through Keremeos and Hedley and is outlined as a future proposed trail route.
- **Provincial Recreation Areas:** Cathedral Provincial Park, Cathedral Protected Area, Snowy Protected Area, Keremeos Columns Park, Stemwinder Park, Nickel Plate Provincial Park, Brent Mountain Protected Area and various recreation sites.

Together, parks and trails provide a valued amenity for Plan Area residents and visitors and provide important environmental benefits. While the Plan Area includes only one small regional park, the need for additional community parks is moderated both by the area’s small population and the extensive opportunities available on Crown land, area lakes, and in provincial protected areas. It is also a challenge to provide community park services to areas with small, dispersed populations.

Provincial legislation authorizes the provision of land to the Regional District as parkland — equivalent in size to 5% of the parcel being subdivided. It is anticipated that acquisition of new land will be focused upon on connecting trails and improving access to bodies of water, such as the Similkameen River, although the Regional District will consider acquiring new parkland as opportunities arise.

The Regional District will be undertaking a *Parks, Trails and Recreation Masterplan* that

defines future direction, policies, priorities, standards and actions for the Regional District and its partners with respect to existing and potential future parks and trails. The plan provides the basic framework to define and guide park acquisition and regional trail development and management.

In July 2019, the governments of Canada and British Columbia and the syilx/Okanagan Nation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formally work toward establishing a National Park Reserve in the South Okanagan-Similkameen. This MoU confirms the working boundary of the South Okanagan National Park Reserve, which extends into an eastern portion of the Plan Area. This national park would protect the area's ecological-diversity and integrity, strengthen relationships between all levels of government, and bring economic opportunities.

See Schedule 'C' (Parks, Recreation and Trails) for a map of designated trails in the Plan Area.

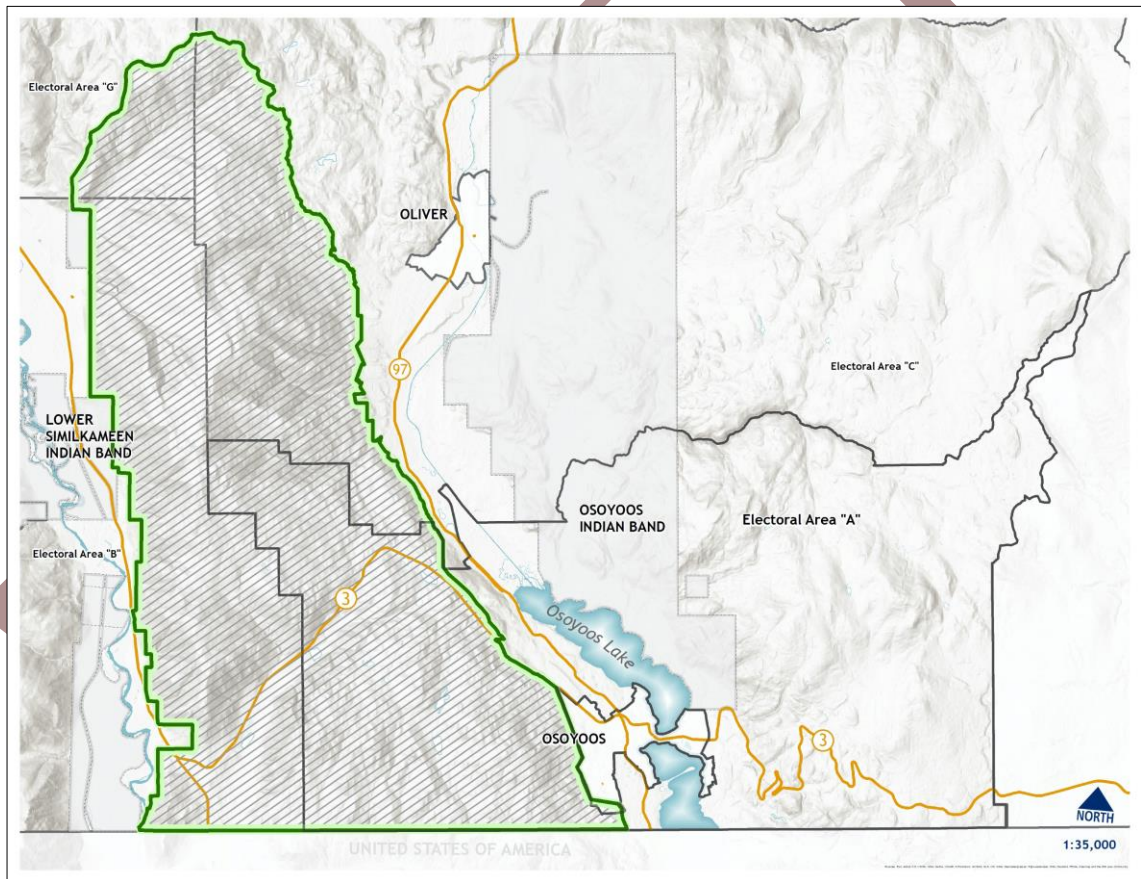


Figure 19: Proposed South Okanagan National Park Reserve (2021)

15.2 Objectives

- .1 Provide a level of parks and recreational opportunities that can meet the needs of local residents, within their ability and resources to pay for such facilities.

- .2 Promote recreational opportunities that meet local needs and complement the natural environment and existing resources.
- .3 Improve and maintain public access and accessibility to park and recreation resources.
- .4 Promote the development of an integrated trail and park system.
- .5 Identify and work to acquire parks and recreation sites to meet the present and future needs of residents.

15.3 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages that all new trail projects are designed and constructed using provincial best management practices, to minimize the impact on the natural environment.
- .2 Seeks to mitigate existing and future conflicts between trail users, agricultural operators and rural landowners.
- .3 Encourages trails proposed on agricultural lands, including those located within the ALR, to be developed using provincial guidelines.
- .4 Encourages tenure holders to preserve, steward and maintain trails to maintain the integrity of the larger trail system and the natural environments they traverse.
- .5 Encourages the Province to undertake a backcountry recreation planning process.
- .6 Encourages relevant provincial agencies and tenure holders to manage public access to the backcountry.
- .7 Seeks to work with regional partners and local environmental organizations to support wildlife education programs to minimize wildlife/human conflicts on trails.
- .8 Seeks to work with regional partners to ensure that trails within Plan Area boundaries include adequate parking, bear-proof garbage and recycling receptacles, and signage where feasible and appropriate.
- .9 Supports trail use guidelines that promote “leave no trace” trail use.
- .10 Seeks to continue to work towards developing a comprehensive system of linear parks, trails and pedestrian linkages throughout the Plan Area to accommodate a variety of uses, including but not limited to walking, running, bicycling, horseback riding and cross-country skiing.
- .11 Seeks to ensure that future linear parks, trails, and pedestrian linkages connect to existing and future parks, schools, Crown land, and natural open space, and allow for easy pedestrian access through residential areas.
- .12 Seeks to continue to provide universal access to recreational amenities in the Plan Area, including parks, trails, facilities and programs.

- .13 Strives to ensure that there are recreational opportunities that suit a variety of age groups, interests and ability levels.
- .14 Supports local First Nations to continue traditional cultural practices and uses in any National Park Reserve that may be established in the Plan Area.
- .15 Will consider establishing a Community Parks Service in Olalla in the future as community interests dictate.

15.4 Parkland Dedication Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 For the purposes of Section 510(2) of the *Local Government Act*, designates the entirety of the Electoral Area covered by this OCP as having future park potential.
- .2 Recognises that the Plan Area is generally rural in nature, and that when land is acquired it should be focused upon lake accesses, greenways, and trails.
- .3 May consider, when determining a potential park land dedication under Section 510 of the *Local Government Act*, the following policies:
 - a) proximity to settlement areas, other parks & trails, and bodies of water;
 - b) distance from environmental hazard areas;
 - c) average slope should be 10% or less;
 - d) adequate accessibility:
 - i) vehicular ingress and egress should meet or exceed Ministry of Transportation standards;
 - ii) in the case of trails and pedestrian-access only parks, there should be various linkages to and from the trail or park, with at least one linkage wide enough to allow for maintenance vehicle access;
 - e) cultural or natural features of significance;
 - f) potential for additional dedication of parkland from subdivision applications of surrounding parcels; and
 - g) potential for recreation (active park), conservation (passive park) or enhancement of public access.
- .4 Considers that park land proposals should provide a benefit for the community and those lands with no benefit to the community should not be accepted.
- .5 Strongly prefers that land being considered for parkland be maintained in its natural state and should not be cleared. Cleared and disturbed lands should only be accepted where the proposed parkland is to be used for recreational uses which require cleared lands or can be reclaimed for park purposes.

- .6 Encourages developers to dedicate greater than 5% parkland in areas where parkland is desired.
- .7 Where environmentally sensitive areas or Critical Habitat for species at risk have been identified, encourages developers to donate such lands to a conservation organisation or the Regional District in addition to the parkland or cash in-lieu required by the Act.

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16.0 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

16.1 Background

The South Okanagan-Similkameen is recognized as a region that combines a wide range of natural habitat areas with a large number of unique species, many of which are not found elsewhere in the province or in Canada. The area is also home to the largest number of endangered and threatened species of plants and animals in BC and Canada.

The natural environment of Electoral Area “G” offers many unique physical features such as BC’s pocket desert, the meandering Similkameen River, steep mountains and sensitive ecosystems such as grasslands, riparian areas, forest wetlands, shallow-soiled rock outcrops and ridges. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide diversity of species, both common and rare, that are found within Electoral Area “G”.

About 70% of land base in Electoral Area “G” contains ecosystems ranked high or very high, with approximately 20% of these lands within designated protected areas and parks and is shown on Schedule ‘H’ (Sensitive Ecosystem Map).

16.1.1 Objectives - General

- .1 Maintain and sustain a healthy environment by encouraging the enhancement of ecological systems and by protecting biodiversity.
- .2 Integrate measures to sustain environmental quality and consider impacts on the environment in future land use decisions.
- .3 Support efforts to protect source water quality and quality today and for future generations.

16.1.2 Policies - General

The Regional Board:

- .1 Recognizes the importance of containing and controlling noxious weeds through the continued endorsement of weed prevention and control initiatives.
- .2 Recognizes and encourages the educational and eco-tourism contribution toward protection of the community’s natural environment made by environmental organizations and supports accommodating these uses with the necessary changes to the land use designations so long as the general intent of policies in this Plan are met.
- .3 Supports the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge in the stewardship of important foreshore, riparian, and terrestrial ecosystems, and will seek to work with the Upper Similkameen Indian Band and Lower Similkameen Indian Band to incorporate it where feasible, practical and appropriate.

16.2 Riparian and Foreshore Areas

Riparian areas are places under the influence of water. They surround and contain wetlands, ponds, permanent and intermittent creeks, springs, wet meadows, etc. in and around the Similkameen and Ashnola Rivers.

The Plan Area is generally dry and riparian areas tend to be unusually productive and support a disproportionately high number of species. In addition, riparian and foreshores areas tend to have significant land use and development impacts. Most wetlands that once occurred in the Similkameen have been lost to infilling, development, roads, agriculture etc. Thus, the areas that remain are very important to retain. Many species and species at risk require riparian habitats for some part of their life cycle.

Activities in riparian areas have potential to impact water quality, affect erosion, damage fish habitat and impact habitat for species at risk.

Trees like Black Cottonwood that once were common in these areas have been removed and replaced with non-native trees or invasive trees like Russian Olive and Siberian Elm. Some limited areas of willow, birch, red osier dogwood and other shrubs remain in foreshore areas, but much of the developed area has been replaced by lawns and landscaped yards. Road construction near, or within riparian areas is also common. Agriculture impacts are significant and range from infilling to cultivation and livestock use.

Because riparian and foreshore areas are so strongly connected to both habitats for species at risk and water quality through groundwater/surface water, it is vital that land use practices protect riparian areas by retaining and restoring native species, and ecosystems. Natural riparian areas provide significant ecosystems benefits that costly water treatment and recovery planning for species at risk cannot replace.

Most land above the high-water mark (natural boundary) is privately held and land below the high-water mark belongs to the Crown and forms part of the water resource in the province. Land within 30.0 metres of the high-water mark of a stream or a ravine is identified as being within a riparian area.

16.2.1 Objectives

- .1 Foster community awareness of the importance and sensitivity of the riparian and foreshore environments in the Plan Area.
- .2 Minimize and avoid development in high hazard soil instability areas within the riparian area along the rivers, streams and lakes.
- .3 Conserve, protect and enhance surface, ground and aquifer water sources in cooperation with provincial ministries, local water purveyors and landowners.

- .4 Identify, manage and protect significant watercourses to maintain their natural habitat and environmental quality.

16.2.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages provincial and federal water and resource managers to protect and enhance water quality, base flows, natural drainage patterns, and continuous riparian corridors of sufficient width to accommodate the dynamic nature of the hydrologic system, to avoid and reduce flood damage, to avoid the need for channel stabilization, to avoid underground drainage systems, to avoid groundwater interruption, and to protect and sustain aquatic biota, important fish populations and habitats.
- .2 Supports efforts that maintain appropriate riparian buffers, determined by qualified professionals that take into account processes of natural erosion, deposition and movement of natural stream boundaries, floodplain provisions and sensitive terrestrial habitats
- .3 Encourages and supports the analysis of ground water hydrology in areas with identified aquifers and requires environmental assessments in advance of considering zoning amendments for uses such as heavy industrial, mining, fuel storage and/or sewage or waste containment.
- .4 Discourages development that will have a negative environmental impact on riparian and foreshore areas.
- .5 Encourages the subdivision approving officer to ensure that public access to lakes is provided pursuant to Section 75 of the *Land Title Act*.

16.3 Terrestrial Areas

Terrestrial areas are simply described as the areas upland or beyond water. They include areas with grassland and shrub-steppe, sparsely vegetated, broadleaf woodlands, coniferous woodlands and old forest ecosystems. Many at risk species are found in terrestrial ecosystems in the Plan Area.

Like foreshore and riparian areas, terrestrial areas also contain areas sensitive to development and land use. Of the various ecosystem types, the grassland and shrub-steppe ecosystems are particularly sensitive to disturbance and subject to habitat loss through development, agriculture conversion, impacts from invasive plants, and habitat loss resulting from recreation use.

Significant proportions of sensitive terrestrial habitat have been provincially recognized and protected in the Plan Area and include: the Cathedral Lakes Park, Brent Mountain and the areas south of Keremeos along the Similkameen River. The Nature Trust of BC and other

conservation organizations have also purchased properties for habitat and terrestrial ecosystem conservation purposes.

16.3.1 Objectives

- .1 Protect and steward sensitive and important terrestrial ecosystem areas as identified in Schedule 'H' (Sensitive Ecosystem Map).
- .2 Encourage provincial and federal governments, private organizations and private landowners to protect, enhance and manage critical habitat areas for species at risk in the Plan Area.
- .3 Work cooperatively with regional partners and support rehabilitation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitats and environmentally sensitive areas that have been subject to negative impacts in the past.
- .4 Encourage and facilitate linkages of protected habitat areas.
- .5 Encourage the integration of *FireSmart* approaches in the management of terrestrial areas where practical and appropriate.

16.3.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages the parcel sizes of land shown on Schedule 'H' (Sensitive Ecosystem Map) to remain as large as possible to protect these habitat areas.
- .2 Will strive for development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an application.
- .3 Encourage the protection, preservation, enhancement and management of sensitive ecosystems or land contiguous to sensitive ecosystems of private lands through the following methods:
 - a) donation of areas to the Regional District or provincial government;
 - b) donation of areas to a land trust or conservation organization;
 - c) introduction of conservation area designation in the OCP;
 - d) creation of conservation covenants in favour of municipal, provincial government, private conservation organizations;
 - e) establishment of statutory right of ways under the *Land Title Act* for affected areas;
 - f) establishment of long-term leases for sensitive areas;
 - g) land stewardship and participation in conservation initiatives by the private landowner; or
 - h) consideration of alternative development standards.

- .4 Supports conserving, enhancing and promoting the protection of wildlife corridors and ecosystem connectivity with interfacing Crown lands.
- .5 Encourages the use of native vegetation to restore disturbed sites.

16.4 Conservation Areas

For the purpose of protecting environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), the Regional District may designate lands as Conservation Area (CA). The Conservation Area designation is applied to land that is preserved and protected for its unique natural value, land left in a natural or semi-natural state for the purpose of conserving plant life and providing habitat for wildlife or fish.

Conservation Area lands may include Crown land designated as an Ecological Reserve or Wildlife Management Areas, but is generally applied to private lands that have been acquired or donated for conservation purposes and which are held by an individual or an organisation, such as The Nature Trust of British Columbia or the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

For a map of Conservation Areas in the Plan Area see Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map).

16.4.1 Objectives

- .1 Protect and steward designated Conservation Areas in their natural or semi-natural state for the purpose of conserving plant life and providing habitat for wildlife or fish.
- .2 Work with agencies and partners, including local First Nations, to enhance, protect and interpret ecological systems and biodiversity in Conservation Areas.
- .3 Work with property owners and agents to inform and guide the design of development in a way that is sensitive to adjacent or abutting Conservation Areas.

16.4.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Recognizes and encourages the educational and eco-tourism contributions toward protection of Conservation Areas made by environmental organizations and supports accommodating these uses where they do not conflict with Conservation Area objectives.
- .2 Supports the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge in the stewardship of Conservation Areas, and will work with local First Nations to incorporate it where feasible, practical and appropriate.

17.0 HAZARD LANDS

17.1 Background

Hazard lands include areas the Regional District has reason to believe are subject to natural hazards including flooding, mud flows, debris flows, erosion, rockfall, landslip, sink holes and wildfires.

The information available for the entire Regional District can be variable and may lack detail, so hazards often need to be investigated on a site-by-site basis. Recognizing this, site planning for proposed developments should consider the potential hazards on any given site. Some hazards can be evaluated and mitigated at the time of development. Other hazards, such as wildfire, can not only impact new developments, but also threaten existing structures.

As dynamic systems, forested ecosystems change over time along with the fuel hazards they pose. As the South Okanagan Valley contains ecosystems within which wildfire is a natural disturbance, and since wildfire cannot be eliminated from these ecosystems, the threat of wildfire will always be present. However, the risk wildfire poses to development can be managed through appropriate development policies and continual management efforts.

Hazard lands are identified on Schedules 'D' (Hazard Lands – Flooding), 'E' (Hazard Lands – Steep Slopes) and 'F' (Hazard Lands – Wildfire).

17.2 Objectives

- .1 Prevent injury and loss of life and to prevent or minimize property damage because of natural hazards.
- .2 Ensure development does not occur in areas subject to known hazardous conditions, unless the hazard has been sufficiently addressed and mitigated.
- .3 Recognize that important habitat may also be found in natural areas that are considered hazardous, and that disruption of these areas should be minimized.
- .4 Minimize flood and wildfire hazards to people and property in existing and proposed new development.

17.3 General Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages development on lands with natural hazards as identified by the Regional District or other agencies having jurisdiction, be supported by a report by a Qualified Professional Engineer or Geoscientist confirming that the land can be safely used for the use intended.

- .2 Encourages the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to undertake annual inspections, and as-needed inspections after large storms, runoff or flooding events, at the highest risk areas for impacts, such as steep slopes and major culverts outfalls.
- .3 Encourages the provincial Approving Officer to ensure that technical reports for hazard lands that are to be subdivided are prepared by appropriately qualified individuals and that any recommended conditions for safe use of the land area are registered as s. 219 covenants to inform future property owners.

17.4 Geotechnical Hazard Management

The Plan Area contains a number of topographic features with potential for geotechnical hazards and development in areas should be avoided.

17.4.1 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Discourages development on lands identified as being susceptible to soil instability and potentially hazardous geotechnical conditions.
- .2 Discourages development on slopes with grades more than 30% to avoid geotechnical hazards.
- .3 Encourages new development areas with slopes greater than 30%, including those areas that may be regraded to be less than 30% after development, to be reviewed for soil instability and potentially hazardous conditions with any development subject to the recommendations of a geotechnical report.
- .4 Requires that where the Regional District has requested a geotechnical report, a qualified professional registered with Engineers and Geoscientists BC shall prepare the report.

17.5 Flood Hazard Management

Based on recent flood events in the Similkameen Valley, aging flood protection infrastructure and climate change are increasing the susceptibility of lands to flooding from rapid snowmelt and intense rainfall events. Land development for these communities within the floodplains has put them at risk of flooding and their vulnerabilities have been highlighted during recent flood events.

17.5.1 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Discourages development of land susceptible to flooding and encourages those lands to be used for parks, open space, habitat conservation, recreation or agricultural uses.
- .2 Requires that where land subject to flooding is required for development and no alternative land is available, construction and siting of buildings and manufactured homes to be used for habitation, business, industry, or the storage of goods damageable by floodwaters shall comply with Provincial Flood Hazard Area Land Use Management Guidelines and the recommendations of an engineering report prepared by a qualified professional engineer or geoscientist.
- .3 Supports the use of Section 86 of the *Land Title Act* and Section 56 of the *Community Charter* to regulate development in a floodplain and provide for the safe use of the land for the intended purpose.

17.6 Fire Management

A *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (CWPP) was completed for the Regional District in 2020. The plan assessed wildfire risk across the region and made recommendations to improve the community's risk profile through pre-planning and preparedness, policy, and fuel management. The Plan calls for a combination of public engagement and education, and fuels management.

As a predominantly rural area, the CWPP determined that development in the Plan Area generally consists of:

- low to moderately dense rural intermix areas (>1structure/ha) with more forested areas between structures and a less defined perimeter;
- a well-defined urban/interface complex where the interface perimeter is more clearly defined; and
- individual structures remotely scattered within the wildlands.

In Electoral Area "G", the vast majority of wildland fuels are situated on Crown land and this is reflected in the CWPP and presented in Schedule 'F (Hazard Lands – Wildfire), being a map of wildfire hazard areas in the Plan Area.

In the next few decades, climate change will likely have a significant change on fire hazard within Electoral Area "G" based on the decreases in precipitation and changes in forest fuel structure and composition.

Risk management and mitigation recommendations include public education, fuel hazard mitigation on Crown, BC Parks and private lands and land route evacuation planning. This should include the *FireSmart* program, which is an example of an effective education and engagement strategy to reduce the wildfire threat to residences and property.

17.6.1 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 In reviewing a development proposed referred to the Regional District for comment and that is in an area identified in the *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (CWPP) and shown on Schedule 'F' (Hazard Lands – Wildfire), the Regional District may recommend a fire hazard risk assessment be completed by a qualified professional that includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a) incorporating fuel breaks adjacent to, or on, residential subdivisions;
 - b) establishing zones around potential structures and homes which are clear of debris, highly combustible material or trees;
 - c) utilizing fireproofing techniques and fire resistant materials in building design;
 - d) designing roads that provide evacuation routes and facilitate movement of firefighting equipment;
 - e) ensuring all roads are named and signed;
 - f) ensuring availability of water supply facilities adequate for fire suppression;
 - g) ensuring the provision of access to local water sources, lakes and watercourses as part of access requirements; and
 - h) implementing setbacks, interface fire protection standards, and building material standards pursuant to Provincial guidelines, or their equivalent.
- .2 Using the *FireSmart* guide as a principal guidance document, strives to foster wildfire awareness and resiliency through public education materials, programs and events.
- .3 Strongly encourages that all new developments be designed to incorporate best practice interface forest fire mitigation techniques for buildings and landscaping.
- .4 Should review and update wildfire protection approaches based on changing community circumstances, climate change driven ecosystem conditions, and mitigation techniques.
- .5 Encourages property owners to adhere to the relevant Provincial guidelines to protect properties and communities from wildfire risk through such measures as reducing fuel loads. Such measures should be supportive of the natural environment and mimic the natural effects of localized ground fire such as thinning and spacing trees and vegetation, removal of debris and dead material from the ground, and removal of lower tree branches.
- .6 Supports pursuing provincial funding and resources to undertake wildfire risk reduction in the community/forest interface areas.
- .7 Supports the development of an inventory of accessible water sources that could be enhanced to support water extraction by firefighting equipment.

17.7 Radon Gas Hazard Mitigation

Radon is a radioactive gas that occurs naturally when the uranium in soil and rock breaks down. It is invisible, odourless and tasteless. When radon is released from the ground into the outdoor air, it is diluted and is not a concern. However, in enclosed spaces like homes, it can accumulate to high levels.

The Plan Area and larger region has been recognized for radon issues. Radon gas is a recognized health hazard and the Province has established regulations in the BC Building Code for new construction to vent radon that may seep into homes. As each building is unique the level of radon from one building to another can be quite different, testing is the only way to know the concentration of radon that is present in any indoor space.

17.7.1 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages provincial and/or federal agencies to conduct further research on possible radon health risks in and around the Plan Area.
- .2 Encourages Plan Area residents to test their homes for radon exposure and to take appropriate mitigation measures where radon levels are found to be higher than recommended levels.
- .3 Supports providing information on radon and radon mitigation opportunities to Plan Area residents.

18.0 TRANSPORTATION

18.1 Background

The Province identifies Highways 3 & 3A as primary highways, but that no development of new major road systems by the Province is anticipated within the Plan Area.

The road network indicated on Schedule 'G' (Transportation Network) shows:

- Highways (Highway 3), allow for rapid, efficient movement of large volumes of through traffic to achieve regional continuity. To secure swift and safe traffic movement, direct access onto Controlled Access Highways will be limited, and more turning lanes and channelization may be required at major intersections.
- Collector Roads (e.g., Old Hedley Road and Main Street in Olalla) consist of secondary roads linking rural communities that are generally paved.
- Local Roads are generally gravel roads providing access to smaller, secondary communities.

The Okanagan-Similkameen Transit Future Plan, adopted by BC Transit in 2015, envisions what the transit network should look like in 2040, informing local government and the province about proposed transit investments, changes and priorities to achieve the vision. The Plan focuses on service along key corridors, connecting neighbourhoods and major destinations. Targeted transit services include meeting the needs of specific customers between communities within the region and inter-regional services to provide commuter connections for post-secondary students and employees working outside of the region. Short term priorities included the introduction of service within Keremeos, and to Cawston and Olalla as well as a regional service between Princeton and Keremeos.

Schedule 'G' (Transportation Network) shows existing trails within the Plan Area.

18.2 Objectives

- .1 Enable safe, efficient mobility of goods and people along Highways 3 and 3A and within the Plan Area in general.
- .2 Provide for safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to schools and parks throughout all Plan Area communities.
- .3 Support an expanded regional transit system that services communities throughout the Regional District.
- .4 Provide a multi-model transportation system and secure trail network for various forms of transport, including pedestrians and bicycles.

18.3 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Supports and encourages the provision of safe pedestrian and cycling opportunities along all Plan Area roads where feasible and appropriate as improvements are made to the roadways.
- .2 Encourages the Province to widen and pave shoulders on designated cycle routes and improve safety signage for cyclists and drivers.
- .3 Encourages the Province to require traffic impact studies as part of major development proposals or which impact safety and mobility on network roadways to ensure that:
 - a) existing and future roads and alignments are designed with due consideration for watercourses and critical habitat areas;
 - b) safety is maintained through access management and control;
 - c) disruption to farming operations is minimized; and
 - d) projected traffic volumes do not reduce the present service levels for the existing roadway.
- .4 Supports the implementation of the Okanagan-Similkameen Transit Future Plan.
- .5 Will continue to liaise with BC Transit to monitor conditions and future ridership demand including an update of the Okanagan-Similkameen Transit Future Plan.
- .6 Supports the closure of unused, unconstructed road right of ways, where such closures result in traffic pattern improvements and are not detrimental to the use of adjoining lands or planned infrastructure projects.

19.0 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICING

19.1 Background

The provision of important infrastructure services such as community water and sewer systems are an integral component of a well-planned community and key to achieving the long-range land use objectives.

Focusing available infrastructure funding on priority locations where higher residential densities or intensive uses such as commercial and industrial have been identified as appropriate and desirable ensures these types of development can be realized.

This further allows the provision of infrastructure to be done affordably (e.g. sewer and water lines do not have to be extended over long distances), while the population base will be sufficiently large enough to ensure the infrastructure and services can be sustained over the long-term.

Infrastructure and services that the Regional District has authority to regulate include water, sewer, solid waste and street lighting. All others, such as roads, road right-of-ways and stormwater management are managed by the Province, while electrical, gas and communication utilities are regulated by senior levels of government.

19.2 Water Systems

Drinking water in the Regional District comes from a variety of sources including RDOS operated water systems, local Irrigation Districts or Improvement Districts as well as private water systems (e.g. groundwater wells or surface water licences).

It is the Regional District Board's policy that essential services such as drinking water are best provided by government, where citizens can elect representatives interested in their well-being and will operate the service in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

Further, drinking water is considered essential to a high quality of life and citizens should expect their local government to assist in acquiring and operating water systems (where ratepayers support acquisition).

As of 2022, the Regional District operates a water supply system in the unincorporated community of Olalla. Additional water systems include:

- The Keremeos Irrigation District (KID) supplies water to large parts of the "Rural Keremeos". Groundwater has always been the main water source for the Keremeos Irrigation District. Water is pumped from the 13 wells and distributed for irrigation, stockwater, domestic indoor/outdoor, parks, institutional, commercial and industrial purposes.
- The Hedley Improvement District (HID) is responsible for providing water distribution, fire protection, first response, and street lighting for the benefit of the

residents of the town of Hedley. Groundwater from two wells provides the main water supply for the Hedley Improvement District. Water is pumped through a distribution system to a reservoir and gravity fed to mostly domestic users (approximately 200 connections) and some commercial properties (approximately 6 connections).

- The Similkameen Improvement District (SID) operates and maintains the dam and weir structure on Nickel Plate Lake. SID holds a storage licence on Nickel Plate Lake for a total of 4,071 ML and reports that they are currently (2017) storing 1,974 ML (1,850 ML for private surface water licence holders and 123 ML for Apex Mountain Ski Resorts).
- The Lower Similkameen Indian Band (LSIB) is a license supplier of water for domestic use.

Many individuals also hold surface water licences for various purposes throughout the Similkameen Watershed, but there is no known information available on actual water use.

The Regional District strives to ensure a reliable source of safe, high-quality drinking water is provided to residents within an RDOS water system.

19.2.1 Objectives

- .1 To ensure sustainable water quantity and quality is provided to residents in the Plan Area.

19.2.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Requires all new development be connected to a proven and adequate water supply that meets all current water quality regulations.
- .2 Requires that all new parcels to be created by subdivision with a land area of less than 1.0 ha connect to a community water system.
- .3 Supports the introduction of pricing and metering on water systems owned and administered by the Regional District.
- .4 Does not support the creation of new private community water utilities.
- .5 Will consider the acquisition of a community water system in accordance with the Regional District's *Water and Sewer Utility Acquisition Policy*.
- .6 Will assess requests to include new parcels within a water service area owned and administered by the Regional District on the following criteria:
 - a) if the parcel is within an existing settlement area;
 - b) if inclusion will improve public health, environmental values or fire suppression;

- c) for irrigation purposes related to an agricultural use:
 - i) if the parcel is designated as “agricultural land” under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*; and
 - ii) if a development plan supporting agricultural use of the parcel has been prepared.
- d) the ability to connect the parcel to the water system, including:
 - i) required upgrades (e.g. reservoir capacity, proximity to existing water mains);
 - ii) physical access (e.g. legal frontage to a public road); and
 - iii) ability to serve the parcel (e.g. topography, natural hazards).
- .7 Considers lands designated as Resource Area should remain un-serviced and not be proposed for inclusion within a water service area.
- .8 Requires that all new groundwater well infrastructure and maintenance be completed in accordance with the *Groundwater Protection Regulation* under the *Water Sustainability Act*, including the installation of sufficient surface seals.
- .9 Encourages well owners using water for domestic purposes to register their well in the provincial database in order to document water use and help ensure existing uses are considered in future water license applications.
- .10 Supports the protection of water systems by encouraging new developments to provide sufficient buffer in the form of setbacks around water sources.

19.3 Wastewater and Sewage

The predominant sewage disposal method in the Plan Area is individual on-site septic systems. Individual septic systems are not viewed as a long-term sustainable method of sewage disposal unless parcels are over one hectare in size. This method of disposal also increases the probability of potable groundwater contamination and nutrient loading into watercourses and rivers, such as the Similkameen River.

19.3.1 Objectives

- .1 Establish long-term sustainable sewage collection, disposal and treatment methods.

19.3.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Requires that all new parcels to be created by subdivision with a land area of less than 1.0 ha connect to a community sewer system.
- .2 Does not support the use of septic holding tanks for existing or new developments.
- .3 Strongly discourages the creation of new private community sanitary sewer utilities.

- .4 Will consider the acquisition of a community sewer system in accordance with the Regional District's *Water and Sewer Utility Acquisition Policy*.
- .5 Will assess requests to create a new sewer service area to be owned and administered by the Regional District on the following criteria:
 - a) if the area is within an existing settlement;
 - b) if creation will improve public health or environmental values; and
 - c) if the area contains lands designated as "agricultural land" under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.
- .6 Encourages "Authorized Persons" as defined under the provincial *Sewerage System Regulation* to design onsite sewage systems that avoid the placement of dispersal areas within close proximity of watercourses, lakes, and water wells.

19.4 Stormwater Management

Effective stormwater management will help protect the water quality of the various lakes and other water bodies found within the Plan Area. Currently, stormwater drainage in the Plan Area is the responsibility of MoTI and predominantly comprises open ditches, natural drainage courses and absorption into the ground through dry wells. The Similkameen River and other surface waters and aquifers, which are the area's sources for drinking water, are the ultimate destination for much of the stormwater in the Plan Area.

The Regional District has limited authority to manage stormwater but supports the province developing alternative stormwater management solutions that are both cost effective, environmentally sustainable and reflective of the rural character of the majority of the Plan Area.

19.4.1 Objectives

- .1 Encourage the province to ensure its management of stormwater quality and quantity within the Plan Area exceeds best practices.

19.4.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages the province to develop and use alternative development standards that support integrated drainage management options, such as reduced road widths, use of permeable surfaces and roadside swales.
- .2 Encourages new subdivisions to be designed and constructed with integrated rainwater management solutions, such as bioswales and stormwater detention ponds.

- .3 Supports the retention of existing low-lying areas, water bodies and ditches as the rainwater and stormwater drainage systems outside of designated Primary and Rural Growth Areas.

19.5 Solid Waste

Solid waste management consists of curbside collection of garbage and recycling, refuse disposal and landfill operations, a solid waste management planning service and an illegal dumping clean-up service:

- Curbside recycling and garbage collection: The provision of a curbside recycling and garbage collection service is currently provided to residences in parts of Electoral Areas “G” and includes seasonal yard waste pickups and a yearly pickup of large bulky items.
- Solid Waste Management Service: The Solid Waste Management Service is a mandatory service of all regional districts that regulate garbage collection in BC and includes long-term planning for solid waste management the entire regional district. Solid waste planning includes preparation and update of the Regional District’s *Solid Waste Management Plan* (2012) and provides a long-term vision for waste diversion targets and disposal plans. The service also includes public education, waste reduction coordination, annual reporting, preparation of new waste facility sites, and other works or services as required by the plan.
- Landfill Operations: There are currently seven (7) sanitary landfills within the Regional District that manage the region’s solid waste. Of these, four (4) are operated by the Regional District with the remaining three (3) operated by municipalities. The Regional District has proposed a new organics composting facility adjacent to the Campbell Mountain Sanitary Landfill (CMSL) and is partnering with the City of Penticton to build a facility that can compost the wastewater solids as well as food and yard waste organics.
- Illegal Dumping: The Regional District provides a regional illegal dumping education and control service that includes reporting of illegal dumping within the region, collection and supporting community clean-up efforts. The service is provided region wide with all electoral areas and municipalities participating in the service.

19.5.1 Objectives

- .1 Reduce the volume of solid waste requiring disposal and increase the number of recycling and transfer stations options within the Plan Area.

19.5.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages and supports the diversion of solid waste from landfills through a comprehensive approach of education and services consisting of waste reduction, resource recovery, recycling, and backyard composting.
- .2 Will continue to implement the Solid Waste Management Plan, as it is amended from time to time.
- .3 Will explore the introduction of regulations to ensure that the location of bins in residential developments allows for efficient pickup and avoid the need for collection vehicles to execute difficult turning manoeuvres.

19.6 Street Lighting

The Regional District currently maintains two service areas for street lighting within Electoral Area “G”, being Olalla and Schneider Road.

While street lights can improve visibility and safety for pedestrians and traffic, particularly at intersections, the Plan Area is comprised of predominately rural communities and street lighting is seen to be incompatible with the character of these areas (e.g. loss of dark skies to light pollution).

Typically, there are two types of street lights used within the Regional District, being Overhead Street Lights, which is typically mounted to a utility pole and is in the form of a “cobra-head”. The other type is Ornamental Street Lights, which are independent, free-standing and serviced through underground wiring and tend to be “decorative”.

19.6.1 Objectives

- .1 To maintain the rural character of the Plan Area by preserving the visibility of night-time skies and minimizing the impact of artificial street lighting.

19.6.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

1. Strongly discourages the creation of new street lighting service areas outside of an existing settlement areas.
2. Requires the establishment of a new street lighting service area occur through a formal assent process initiated by property owners living within an area currently un-served by street lighting.
3. Will asses requests seeking to create a new or expand an existing street lighting service area on the following criteria:
 - a) if the proposed service area is within an existing settlement area;
 - b) if there is a need to improve vehicle and pedestrian safety;

- c) if neighbourhood support exceeds 66% of affected property owners representing more than 50% of the land value within the proposed boundaries of the service area; and
 - d) if street lights will promote economic development.
- 4. Will evaluate requests proposing the installation new street lighting within a service area administered by the Regional District against the following priority locations:
 - a) intersections;
 - b) adjacent to an existing educational facility;
 - c) adjacent to an existing park;
 - d) a transit stop;
 - e) a cluster mailbox location; or
 - f) within an existing settlement area.
- 5. Supports the conversion of existing street lights to energy efficient fixtures in order to reduce maintenance, energy consumption costs and “sky glow”.
- 6. Supports new street lights being energy efficient fixtures in order to reduce maintenance, energy consumption costs and “sky glow”.
- 7. Supports the use of ornamental poles and fixtures that are owned are funded by the Regional District complying with approved fixtures and designs set within the Approved Products List under the subdivision servicing bylaw.

19.7 Other Utilities

Utility services, including electrical, gas, communications and internet are vital services to a community and are provided by private utilities.

19.7.1 Objectives

- .1 Encourage the operators of utilities to provide residents and businesses in the rural settlement areas with utility services.

19.7.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages utility providers to deliver affordable and convenient utility services, including high-speed Internet and cellular service, throughout the Plan Area.

20.0 AGGREGATE AND MINERAL RESOURCES

20.1 Background

The Regional District has limited influence on the location of mineral and aggregate resource extraction. The objectives and policies of this section remain broad in nature to offer guidance to senior governments in their decision-making process. Figure 20 illustrates *potential* aggregate areas for a portion of the Plan Area and existing aggregate operations, where this information exists.

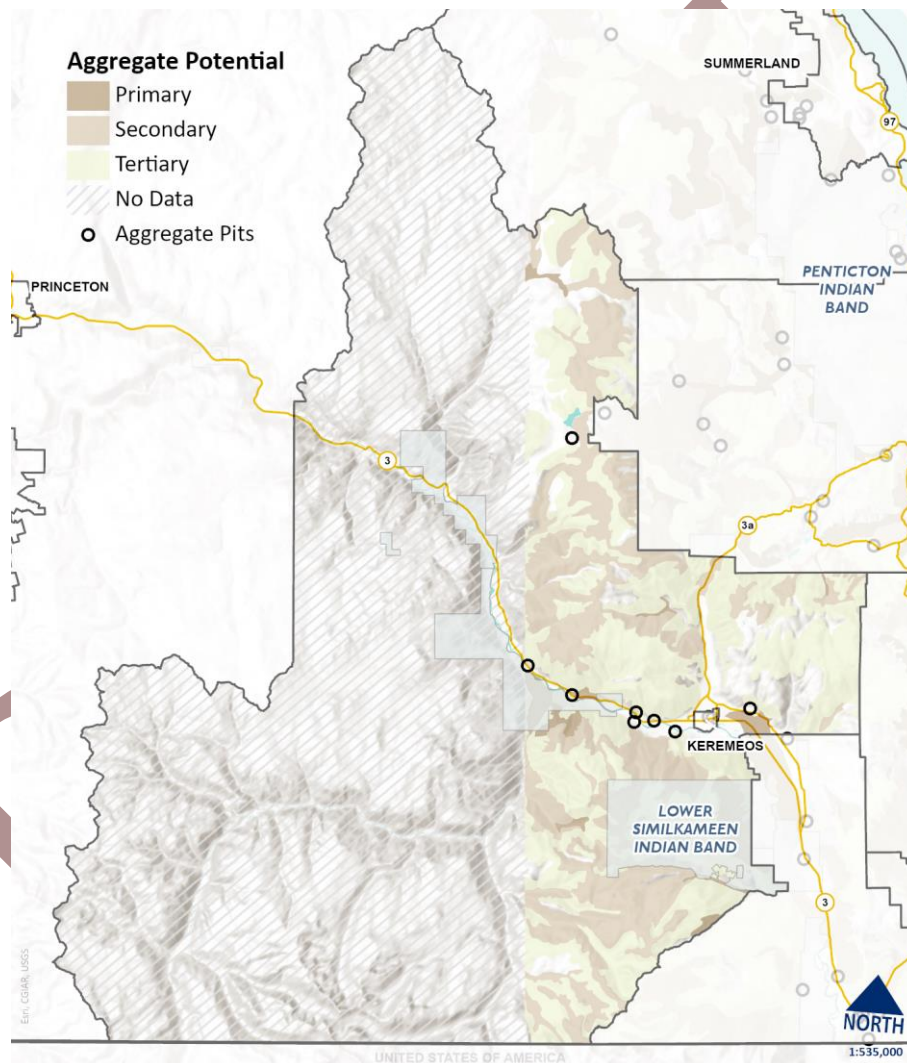


Figure 20: Resource Extraction Potential

20.2 Objectives

- .1 Protect sand and gravel aggregate supplies for anticipated future needs.
- .2 Protect non-agricultural lands having recoverable aggregate or mineral resources from development or adjacent uses that would limit or prohibit extraction.

- .3 Minimize conflicts between sand and gravel processing operations and adjacent land uses.
- .4 Support the Province to require rehabilitation and remediation of resource extraction sites.
- .5 Direct sand and gravel extraction proposals toward sites that have no adverse environmental impact or where the impact can be adequately mitigated.

20.3 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Encourages the Province to continue referrals of mineral exploration proposals to the Regional District for comment and due consideration of the impact of resource extraction activities on surrounding land uses and development.
- .2 Will consider the use of designated Resource Areas for sand and gravel extraction, where the uses will not cause a significant visual, environmental, or cultural resource disturbance.
- .3 Will consider Crown land referrals involving the processing of aggregate resources based on any or all the following criteria:
 - a) extent of visual screening, and other mitigation works proposed;
 - b) type of processing proposed;
 - c) prevailing wind direction, and the potential for noise and dust;
 - d) compatibility with adjacent land uses;
 - e) environmental sensitivity of the site, and lands adjacent to potential aggregate resource processing site;
 - f) accessibility; and
 - g) characteristics of aggregate deposits and groundwater resources.
- .4 Encourages the Province not to issue new surface leases and permits for mineral processing within 1,000 metres of designated residential areas unless effective mitigation measures can be implemented to significantly reduce or nullify the effects of the proposed activity.
- .5 Encourages the Province to include in their licensing, the rehabilitation of aggregate extraction and processing sites after extraction and processing are completed.
- .6 May consider implementing conditions set by the ALC to mitigate the impact of aggregate extraction and processing sites on lands outside the ALR.
- .7 Supports additional product end-use consideration for areas slated for gravel and sand extraction. Specifically: gravel or rock crushing sites characteristic of radon rich materials should be avoided for concrete mix, otherwise the concrete used in the

foundation could import an indoor radon gas problem into the house for centuries. Likewise, material taken from sites high in crystalline silica or containing significant clay/silt fines used as winter road grit may cause an outdoor air dust problem, and associated air quality advisory, that could otherwise be avoided if equally or better-quality road grit was used with a lesser capacity for airborne fines.

- .8 Does not support the exploration and mining of uranium within the Plan Area.
- .9 Encourages the Province to ensure that mineral or aggregate resource extraction sites are reclaimed in a timely manner after depletion of the resource.
- .10 Supports timely reclamation of mineral or aggregate resource extraction sites on private land.

DRAFT

21.0 CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

21.1 Background

The scientific community has reached consensus that the increasing emissions of human-caused greenhouse gases (GHGs) are rapidly changing the earth's climate. Greenhouse gases refer to any or all of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydro fluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride and any other substance prescribed by regulation.

Globally, the impacts of climate change will be significant, and are already evident in some areas. Locally, the potential impacts and vulnerabilities are less well documented; however, they are a growing concern.

As one of 187 local governments that are signatory to the B.C. Climate Action Charter, the RDOS is committed to reducing GHGs and has agreed to take actions to achieve certain goals. Under the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, B.C.'s GHG emissions are to be reduced by at least 40% below 2007 levels by 2030, at least 60% below 2007 levels by 2040 and by at least 80% by 2050. The three areas where local government can play a role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions are in the transportation, waste management and building sectors.

The three Okanagan regional districts commissioned a climate change report to assist in medium- and long-term planning. The February 2020 report, termed *Climate Change for the Okanagan Region*, provided information on anticipated climate change for the medium-term future (2050s) and the long-term future (2080s).

In the past, the Okanagan region experienced just under a week per year, on average, of days above 30°C. By the 2050s, the region can expect an average of over three weeks above 30°C per year and over five weeks per year by the 2080s. The valley bottoms are projected to experience the greatest changes, with approximately 50 additional days above 30°C projected by the 2080s, compared to the past.

In the past, the coldest winter night for the Okanagan region was about -25°C. By the 2050s, the coldest night is expected to warm by 6°C to -19°C, and by the 2080s, temperatures are projected to warm by 10°C to -15°C. While the coldest night is projected to warm in all seasons, the coldest night in winter is projected to warm more rapidly than other seasons.

The largest precipitation increases are expected to occur during the spring and autumn months with between 10% and 20% more precipitation during these seasons by the 2080s. Summer will remain the driest season and become even drier. By the 2080s, the region can expect about one quarter less precipitation than in the past. Natural year-to-year variation could result in some years experiencing extended periods without (or with low) precipitation.

For the Okanagan-Similkameen as a whole, climate change is anticipated to cause far-reaching impacts and generate new risks. This includes heat waves and droughts and reduced precipitation, combined with warmer summer temperatures, which will likely result in the depletion of water resources, loss of wetlands, stress on local fisheries, and depletion of aquatic species. Warmer winters will on average result in less snow accumulation on the valley uplands, reducing water availability and increasing the need for water storage. Groundwater and aquifer recharge will also be compromised as drought conditions increase. Warmer temperatures will also enhance the potential for invasive species, pests, and pathogens across the region. Extreme events such as flooding, wildfires, and landslides will increase in intensity.

21.2 Objectives

- .1 Understand the likely impacts and vulnerabilities of regional climate change within the Plan Area.
- .2 Reduce GHG emissions within the Plan Area as per the reduction targets in the *Climate Change Accountability Act*.
- .3 Achieve carbon neutral local government operations.
- .4 Promote and provide community outreach and education related to climate change and reduction of GHG emissions.

21.3 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Will work towards the target of reducing GHG emissions by 40% below 2007 levels by 2030, 60% by 2040 and 80% by 2050 as per the Climate Change Accountability Act.
- .2 Will work with other agencies, stakeholders and the community to achieve emission reduction targets and energy conservation goals by encouraging:
 - a) the construction of energy efficient buildings;
 - b) improvements to the energy efficiency of existing buildings;
 - c) the increased use of low carbon energies;
 - d) energy efficient developments;
 - e) improvements to alternative transportation amenities;
 - f) the use of fuel-efficient vehicles;
 - g) development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
 - h) reduction and diversion of waste from landfills;
 - i) maximization of value from agricultural wastes;

- j) the development of more compact and complete communities;
 - k) the protection and restoration of natural areas and forest ecosystems; and
 - l) the protection of riparian areas and sensitive habitats.
- .3 Supports continuing public education as essential to the success of climate change adaptation and mitigation.
 - .4 Will work towards a corporate GHG reduction strategy to achieve carbon neutral operations.
 - .5 Supports adoption of the BC Energy Step Code as an optional compliance path in the BC Building Code that local governments may use as an incentive or requirement for energy efficiency in new construction that goes above and beyond the requirements of the BC Building Code.
 - .6 Encourages builders to use the performance approach in the BC Energy Step Code as a compliance path to meet or exceed the energy-efficiency requirements of the BC Building Code.
 - .7 Supports innovative building technology that improves energy conservation such as the installation of energy efficient appliances and alternative energy systems, alternate siting of buildings, the use of solar panels to maximize passive solar gain, heat exchange pumps and insulation standards that exceed the BC Building Code.
 - .8 Encourages homeowners to retrofit existing homes to become more energy efficient and to reduce their carbon footprint.
 - .9 Encourages applicants for subdivision and new building construction consider the orientation of lots in subdivision proposals and building designs that take passive solar power potential into consideration.
 - .10 Encourages builders to exceed the current energy conservation standards of the BC Building Code as provided in the Energy Step Code using either “prescriptive” or “performance” approaches to comply with the code’s efficiency requirements.
 - .11 Supports current initiatives to enhance energy conservation such as the BC Energy Step Code, and Passive House standards for building and site design and construction.
 - .12 Encourages the Province to update its Climate Action Plan Thompson / Okanagan Region 2016 – 2018 to better understand what actions the RDOS can take to improve community-wide resiliency to climate hazards.
 - .13 Supports ongoing public education to help residents understand changing risks posed by climate change (e.g., drought, heat waves, flooding, wildfire) and take actions to address them and improve community resiliency.
 - .14 Supports working with Interior Health to educate residents on climate change and to help reduce the health impact heat can have on residents through the development of a Heat Alert and Response System.

22.0 IMPLEMENTATION

22.1 Introduction

The OCP sets out broad objectives, policies and directions for the Plan Area, but does not provide the tools for implementing its policies. The Regional District has several tools and methods available for implementing the Plan. The purpose of this section is to set out specific steps the Regional District can take to implement this Plan. Some of the steps include refining the Plan; changing existing bylaws; adopting new bylaws; conducting studies to obtain more information and direction; and working closely with other jurisdictions and government agencies. Some of the specific steps are set out in the subsections below.

While some areas within Electoral Area “G” may desire additional regulatory tools to protect the values and interests or health of residents, in general, the residents of Electoral Area “G” have expressed an interest to maintain a “minimal” level of regulation.

22.2 Refinements and Amendments

Changes to the OCP may be proposed by RDOS staff to keep the plan up-to-date and to meet the needs of a changing community.

The *Local Government Act* regulates the process for an OCP amendment which requires public notification, public hearing, and opportunities for consideration of the application by the RDOS Board.

The Regional District may also consider refinements to this OCP. These refinements may include but are not limited to the following:

- .1 Periodic assessment of the Plan Area OCP to determine area revisions.
- .2 Coordination with changes to Provincial legislation (e.g. *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter*, *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, etc.).
- .3 Coordination with new or revised Provincial plans and policies that relate to land use and community issues in the Plan Area.
- .4 Coordination with new or revised regional plans and policies (e.g., Regional Growth Strategy).
- .5 Changes resulting from transportation planning (e.g., Okanagan-Similkameen Transit Future Plan) and capital improvements.
- .6 Changes to the known geographic extent of Environmentally Sensitive areas, as determined through the review of plans, reports and applications submitted by project proponents to the Regional District.

- .7 Changes suggested by the Joint Council (i.e., Regional District, Upper Similkameen Indian Band, Lower Similkameen Indian Band).

The Regional District maintains a schedule of anticipated review periods for each Electoral Area Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw, and generally tries to avoid undertaking multiple reviews at this same time. This results in a schedule in which each Electoral Area OCP Bylaw is comprehensively reviewed every 18 to 22 years.

22.3 Zoning Bylaw

At this time, the Regional District does not see a need to expand existing zoning or create new zoning within Electoral Area “G” unless requested and supported by residents.

22.4 Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw

The Regional District’s Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw sets out standards for water systems, sewer systems and street lighting. Subdivisions must meet these standards before they are approved.

The Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw will need to be reviewed and amended where necessary to ensure it works to implement various policies in the Plan, particularly with respect to servicing levels related to parcel sizes.

22.5 Other Agencies

The Regional District will take a leadership role in coordinating work with Provincial, Federal and other agencies to help implement and complement portions of the Plan.

22.6 Follow-up Studies and Initiatives

The following are studies and initiatives that have been identified in the OCP as actions that could implement portions of this Plan. The actions are organized into short-term (one to five years), medium-term (five to 10 years), and long-term (10+ years) actions.

Recognizing the capacity issues (i.e., limited time, human resources, financial resources) faced by the RDOS and stakeholders who may be involved in implementing OCP actions, RDOS staff screened and prioritized the actions.

Short-term / ongoing (1-5 years)
Actions
Updated Flood Risk Assessment for Electoral Area “G”
Medium-term (5-10 years)
Agricultural Plan for Electoral Area “G”

Assess if the community supports an RDOS parks service within Electoral Area “G”
Long-term (10+ years)
Investigate lands suitable for Industrial use within Electoral Area “G”

22.7 Monitoring

The Regional District Board should monitor the OCP on an ongoing basis. The OCP should be revised when necessary to ensure it addresses current needs and aspirations of the community and reflects changing local and external conditions. In support of this initiative, the Regional District will monitor:

- .1 population and demographic changes;
- .2 groundwater supply, consumption and management issues;
- .3 land supply / demand;
- .4 changing housing requirements; and
- .5 economic, social, and environmental factors.

Based on the review of information collected from OCP monitoring, the Regional District may choose to refine or amend the Electoral Area “G” OCP accordingly as resources permit.

~ end of Schedule ‘A’ ~