

Residential Lands & Housing

What We Heard

- Support for sensitive residential infill and more diverse housing forms.
- Need for age friendly planning.
- Concern expressed from some residents not wanting renters in their communities.

Intent

Encourage infill housing in existing residential areas (rather than new development) that is consistent with the rural character of the area. Support affordable housing and aging in place.

Draft Key Policies

1. Direct new residential development to established residential areas and municipalities to ensure efficient use of existing services and infrastructure and to avoid continuous sprawl-like development.
2. Allow accessory dwellings such as: secondary suites, carriage houses and garage suites to increase housing diversity.
3. Recognize the limitations for further residential development in specified areas of Shoreacres, Voykin Subdivision, and Playmor Junction West where water supply may be vulnerable or septic servicing at capacity.
4. Support initiatives to provide for special needs housing required for seniors and those in need of support, within the communities of Brilliant, Thrums or Tarrys where servicing and transportation needs can be met.
5. Investigate the establishment of a retro-fit program to support long term repair and maintenance associated with renovation of existing housing stock and enhanced accessibility.



Food, Agriculture & Rural Lands

What We Heard

- Agriculture and local food production are important to the community.

Intent

Support the area's existing and future agricultural activity and farmers by supporting agricultural systems and protecting agricultural lands that contribute to the area's economic base, character and sense of place.

Draft Key Policies

1. Protect lands with high soil value for existing and future agriculture, and direct residential and non-farm uses to lands where there is low agricultural capability.
2. Consider potential impacts on water resources in agricultural areas when considering land use amendment applications not related to agriculture or subdivision and non-farm use proposals in the Agricultural Land Reserve.
3. Support clustering the siting of built structures on agricultural lands to reduce the impact to agricultural potential and operations.
4. Encourage diversification and enhancing farm income by enabling uses secondary to and related to agricultural use consistent with the provisions of the *Agricultural Land Reserve Act*.
5. Discourage applications to the Agricultural Land Commission for subdivision and non-farm use in the Agricultural Land Reserve unless the proposal provides evidence that it has a net benefit to agriculture.



Economy & Jobs

What We Heard

- Lack of support for new commercial and industrial lands and a preference to direct those uses to municipalities.
- Concerns with impacts to residential uses.

Intent

Recognize the commercial and service center role of the City of Castlegar and direct that commercial and industrial development in Area I will primarily be oriented toward serving local community needs and local employment.

Draft Key Policies

1. Support smaller-scale, neighbourhood-serving commercial activities within existing commercial nodes within the communities of Thrums, Tarrys, Brilliant and Pass Creek.
2. Discourage further 'strip' style commercial development along the highway.
3. Encourage home based businesses as a means of strengthening the economic base.
4. Support light industrial uses that support local employment. Direct larger scale industrial activities to locate in or adjacent to the City of Castlegar.
5. Update development permit guidelines for the form and character of new commercial and industrial developments in order to protect the surrounding rural environment.



Natural Resources

What We Heard

- There is a need to protect the natural environment, rural character and quality of life and groundwater quality and quantity.

Intent

Retain and diversify resource-based land uses which contribute to the local economy, while protecting Area I communities from the impacts of natural resource activities.

Draft Key Policies

1. Recognize the jurisdiction of the Province over public Crown land.
2. Work with the Province to ensure community watersheds and sources of domestic water supply are recognized and protected within Area I.
3. Support communication with and participation by First Nations communities in the management and development of provincial land in resource areas.
4. Advocate to the Province to have due consideration for the impact of resource activities on existing adjacent residential developments and infrastructure such as roads.
5. Encourage the Province to refer mineral exploration proposals to the RDCK for comments and give due consideration to the impact of resource extraction activities on surrounding land uses and sources of domestic and irrigation water supply.



Health & Social Wellbeing

What We Heard

- Strong community attachment with participants noting that residents look out for each other, but with new community members moving in there is also a desire in some communities to foster more community connections.

Intent

Cultivate healthy, equitable, inclusive, and supportive environments for the overall health and wellness of the community.

Draft Key Policies

1. Adopt best practises for equity and reconciliation.
2. Foster spaces where the community can come together.
3. Develop a comprehensive regional park and trail system that is consistent and complementary with other parks and trails in the RDCK.
4. Support the establishment of public access points along the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers for the purposes of swimming, fishing and other recreational pursuits.
5. Undertake the conservation and protection of heritage resources through the Regional Community Heritage Register.
6. Support the establishment of daycare facilities and small group care facilities within residential areas or service areas such as Glade, Shoreacres, Tarrys, Pass Creek and Brilliant.



Local Infrastructure & Servicing

What We Heard

- Concerns raised about water quality, quantity, and the vulnerability of aquifers.

Intent

Work toward supporting community health and safety within existing and proposed water and sewer systems within Area I through appropriate and affordable standards of service.

Draft Key Policies

1. Investigate options and alternatives to improving the quality of domestic water supply for small and un-organized water systems in collaboration with the Province and Interior Health Authority.
2. Apply the precautionary principle to ensure that the density and intensity of land use is not increased beyond available servicing capacity in areas which are known to have concerns with domestic and irrigation water supply.
3. Require proposed development in the Shoreacres aquifer to provide the RDCK with information from a qualified professional to properly assess any impacts to the aquifer and existing servicing.
4. Encourage the cooperation and among utility companies in utilizing existing and proposed utility corridors for multiple uses, where feasible.
5. Investigate options for enhanced cell coverage in communities such as Pass Creek, where emergency response may be limited or constrained by lack of service.



Transportation & Connectivity

What We Heard

- Better transportation options like increased transit service, active transportation and car sharing.
- Safer roads.

Intent

Maintain a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system for all road users working in cooperation with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and BC Transit.

Draft Key Policies

1. Advocate for improvement to and expansion of public transportation service opportunities, bus shelters, and cross walks in cooperation with BC Transit.
2. Support acquisition of easements and right of ways or funding applications that secure an active transportation corridor from Nelson to Castlegar.
3. Investigate the creation of a community ride-share program specific to meeting the needs of seniors and people who do not drive.
4. Ensure that future development patterns and land use decisions recognize and support highway safety and mobility objectives.
5. Encourage the Province to plan for the provision of a road network capable of safely servicing existing and future development.



Natural Environment

What We Heard

- Steward and protect the area's natural features, and consider impacts on the environment in future land use decisions.

Intent

Parks, natural green spaces, and greenways are interconnected; watersheds and riparian areas are healthy; and environmentally sensitive areas and important habitats are protected.

Key Policies

1. Establish an interconnected ecosystem network of protected areas and corridors.
2. Support the protection, enhancement and management of sensitive habitat areas for endangered or threatened species.
3. Create environmental protection development permit guidelines as a tool to ensure the long term maintenance and health of domestic water supplies and riparian areas.
4. Establish environmental reserve designations for areas along the Kootenay River, at Brilliant Flats / kp'itl'els, in domestic watersheds and for other sensitive environmental values as identified.
5. Review land use applications against best management practices for land developers as found in applicable provincial guidelines such as 'Develop with Care' guidelines.



Climate Resilience & Hazard Lands

What We Heard

- Exposure to Natural Hazards such as wildfires and flooding are an item of concern for many residents.
- Wish to see objectives and policies aimed at reducing risk from these hazards.

Intent

Minimize flood and wildfire hazards to people and property in existing and proposed new development.

Draft Key Policies

1. Support inventories and studies to further determine the nature, extent, and risk of development below, on and adjacent to identified natural hazard areas.
2. Support the potential development of wildfire development permit guidelines to address wildfire risk using Fire Smart principles.
3. Discourage development of land susceptible to flooding and encourage those lands to be used for parks, open spaces, habitat conservation, recreation or agricultural uses.
4. Direct development away from lands identified as being susceptible to soil instability and potentially hazardous geotechnical conditions, such as steep slopes greater than 30% or erosion areas.
5. Support providing information on radon and radon mitigation opportunities to residents.



Climate Mitigation & Energy

What We Heard

- Support greenhouse gas reduction initiatives to enhance community resilience.

Intent

Work collaboratively with our partners and community members to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the rural areas by 50% from baseline levels (2007) by 2030 and by 100% from baseline levels (2007) by 2050 as established by the RDCK Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan.

Draft Key Policies

1. Encourage the reduction of landfill waste through the RDCK zero waste policy, and investigate ways to increase waste diversion through strategies identified in the RDCK Resource Recovery Plan (2021).
2. Encourage energy efficient retrofits of older buildings, including both residential and commercial buildings.
3. Encourage the use of local materials and green building techniques in new and retrofitted developments.
4. Support the exploration of renewable energy opportunities in the agricultural and forestry industries such as biomass energy production.
5. Support a voluntary reduction of personal vehicle transportation emissions by promoting use of public transit and shared transit, more efficient vehicles, use of alternative fuels, providing sufficient pedestrian and cycling facilities and routes, encouraging home based businesses and encouraging changes in travel patterns.

