



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AGENDA**

July 6, 2022 12:00 PM

MEETING - Civic Centre

### Microsoft Teams meeting

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Page

#### **1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

1.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

#### **2. Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof**

#### **3. Approval of Previous Committee Minutes**

3 - 4 3.1 Session no 1 - 05 July 2022

#### **4. Items Referred from Council - None**

#### **5. New Business**

- |          |     |  |
|----------|-----|--|
| 5 - 75   | 5.1 | Priorities - short & long term                       |
|          | 5.2 | Forest Biomass Action Plan                           |
| 76 - 100 | 5.3 | Erin Crescent Residential Lots - Building Incentives |
|          | 5.4 | Unmarketable wood                                    |
|          | 5.5 | Micro Grid Study                                     |
|          | 5.6 | Business Retention & Succession Planning             |
|          | 5.7 | Immigration Benefits for Northern Ontario            |
|          | 5.8 | Small Business Diversification                       |

5.9 Downtown revitalization

**6. Outstanding Items - None**

6.1 Fort Frances International Bridge

6.2 Winnipeg to Thunder Bay Tourism Route Initiative

6.3 Cross Border Fishing Activity

6.4 Labour Force Shortages

6.5 Tax Incentive Zone

**7. Information - None**

**8. In-Camera - None**

**9. Adjourn / Next Meeting Date**

## TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

### MINUTES

### SESSION NO. #1

January 5, 2022

The meeting of Economic Development Executive Committee of the Town of Fort Frances was held virtually in the Civic Centre on January 5, 2022 from 1200 hrs to 1250 hrs.

PRESENT: Chairperson D. Judson, Councillors M. Behan and J. McTaggart

ALSO PRESENT: J. Pryde, J Ruppenstein, CAO, FFPC, C. Vangel, CBO / Municipal Planner, T. Drysdale, Economic Development Consultant, G. Gillon, RRFDC, K. Haney, Deputy Clerk, G. Lecuyer, Clerk

REGRETS: Mayor J Caul, F Anwar, CAO

1. **Call to Order @ 1200 hrs / Roll call**
2. **Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof - none**
3. **Approval of Previous Committee Minutes**
  - 3.1 Session no 10 - 08 December 2021 - Approved as presented
4. **Items referred from Council**
  - 4.1 Tax Incentives - Discussion involved Municipal piece. J. Ruppenstein to take presentation back to next meeting of Fort Frances Power Board. Intent is to update Council at meeting scheduled for 24th January 2022 and move through stages as quickly as possible further to input from FFPC in February.
5. **New Business - none**
6. **Outstanding Items**
  - 6.1 Fort Frances International Bridge - no updates for this meeting
  - 6.2 Winnipeg to Thunder Bay Tourism Route Initiative - RRFDC working with web master on 3 or 4 different routes. Provincial launch to be determined.
  - 6.3 Ranier Bridge - CN response received. No further developments at this point.
  - 6.4 Cross Border Fishing Activity - no updates for this meeting
  - 6.5 Labour Force Shortages - no updates at this meeting
7. **Information**
  - 7.1 EDEC Monthly Report - T. Drysdale provided an overview of report
8. **In-Camera - none**
9. **Adjourn @ 1255 hrs/ Next Meeting Date 09 February 2022**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Committee Chair

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F. Anwar, CAO





# Sustainable Growth:

Ontario's Forest Sector  
Strategy



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# A Message from the Minister



As we launch this strategy in August 2020, Ontario and the world are in the early stages of recovery from the staggering economic and human impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak. The vital role the forest sector plays in our society has been especially evident during these challenging times, as the industry has continued to provide essential forest products for hygiene, food and medical supplies, as well as packaging and shipping.

Ontario's forest industry generates over \$18 billion in revenue and supports almost 147,000 direct and indirect jobs in communities across the province. These are jobs that represent a critical source of employment in rural and Northern communities, regions with few other industries. Our wood and wood products are globally recognized as coming from forests that are responsibly and sustainably managed. We are also recognized as innovators and leaders in the global industry. And yet Ontario's forest sector has not been able to reach its full potential.

That's why in September 2018 our government announced that we would develop a forest sector strategy to reduce barriers and costs, attract investment and innovation to promote economic growth and create jobs — while ensuring that Ontario's forests are managed sustainably now and for future generations. The actions in this strategy are more crucial than ever as the forest sector, and the broader economy, recovers from the impacts of COVID-19.

I offer my sincere thanks to the many individuals and organizations who contributed to the development of this strategy: to the Indigenous, municipal and industry leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators, experts and people from communities across Ontario who shared their experiences and ideas as we developed a draft and then final strategy. This forest sector strategy is based on what we heard and presents steps we will take to support businesses in taking full advantage of the tremendous potential of Ontario's forests, while ensuring high standards of sustainable forest management.

I look forward to working with the forest industry, Indigenous partners, and municipal representatives to implement this strategy and build a bright future for the forest sector and the many people and communities who rely on it.

John Yakabuski  
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

# A Strategy for Ontario's Forest Sector



For centuries now, residents of Ontario have used wood for building homes, furniture, making paper and packaging, and as an energy source. This reliance on forests has been critical for Indigenous communities who hold a significant connection to the land, some of whom derive their livelihoods, values and medicines from these forests. In modern times, we have been using wood and its components in products like toothpaste, food thickeners, toiletries, diapers, sterilized medical and food packaging, adhesives, car parts, cosmetics, chemicals, advanced construction materials and even clothing.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the forest sector was recognized as essential in order to produce and deliver products that are needed – from building materials to hygiene, food and medical supplies, as well as packaging and shipping products and paper towels, sanitary needs and toilet paper. It has also provided raw materials needed for manufacturing personal protective equipment such as masks, gowns, filters, and bio-active packaging.

Globally and locally, we are seeing a definite movement in consumer preference towards using renewable, more environmentally conscious and sustainably sourced products. Wood is now seen as a viable replacement for single-use plastics. Ontario's forest sector has been providing such products for generations, and the opportunities are growing.

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***A 2018 study commissioned for the United Nations indicates that the global demand for forest products is expected to increase by more than 30% by 2030.***

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Ontario is well positioned to contribute to this need because of our strong record of responsible forest management.

Yet since 2000, Ontario's forest sector has struggled with the loss of more than 35,000 jobs and real employment income has declined by \$1.9 billion over that same period. The current volume of timber harvested is less than 60% of what it was in 2000. That's why in the 2018 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review, the government committed to developing a forest sector strategy that will encourage economic growth and send a strong signal that Ontario is open for business. The goal of the strategy is to sustainably grow the forest sector so that it will create opportunity and prosperity for thousands of Ontario families, while also encouraging innovation and investment in the industry.

This strategy is part of the government's plan to create jobs, reduce administrative burden, and promote economic growth and prosperity across the province, while ensuring responsible stewardship of our natural resources for future generations. The strategy also works in conjunction with several other strategies of the government including the Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan and Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan to help Ontario achieve its objectives to responsibly grow the forest sector while creating opportunity and prosperity for the many people who depend on it.

Together, the Ontario government and the forest industry, along with partners in the research and education sector, Indigenous communities and other levels of government, will create a business climate that fosters growth, promotes innovation, and helps the industry adapt to an ever-changing business climate.

# Key Principles

Leveraging  
Assets

Strengthening  
Partnerships

Ensuring  
Sustainability

Fostering  
Innovation

Growing  
Markets

## Vision

Ontario's Forest Sector is a world leader in making and selling forest products from renewable, sustainable and responsibly managed forests.

Ontario is a preferred location for investing in commodity and innovative forest products and advanced manufacturing.

## Four Pillars of Action

1

### Promoting Stewardship & Sustainability

- Enhance recognition of our sustainable forest management
- Establish and strengthen partnerships with Indigenous communities
- Respect Indigenous rights and protect values
- Apply best research and science
- Respond to a changing climate
- Improve collaboration in managing our forests

2

### Putting more wood to work

- Invest in advanced remote sensing technologies
- Remove barriers to accessing wood
- Increase forest growth
- Provide wood supply certainty
- Maintain and attract new investment

3

### Improving Ontario's Cost Competitiveness

- Increase efficiencies to help reduce costs
- Reduce regulatory burden
- Consider strategic investments in critical infrastructure
- Encourage use of underutilized species and log qualities

4

### Fostering Innovation, Markets & Talent

- Expand and find new markets
- Grow talent in the forest sector
- Encourage wood use and develop new innovative products
- Enable technology adoption
- Increase the use of wood in Ontario's building and bridge infrastructure



# Forestry

## By The Numbers

**66%**

forest  
coverage



**17%**

of Canada's  
forests



**2%**

of the world's  
forests



### Ontario's forests

**71 M**

hectares of forests in Ontario is  
the equivalent to the combined  
areas of Germany, Italy and  
the Netherlands



Germany



Italy

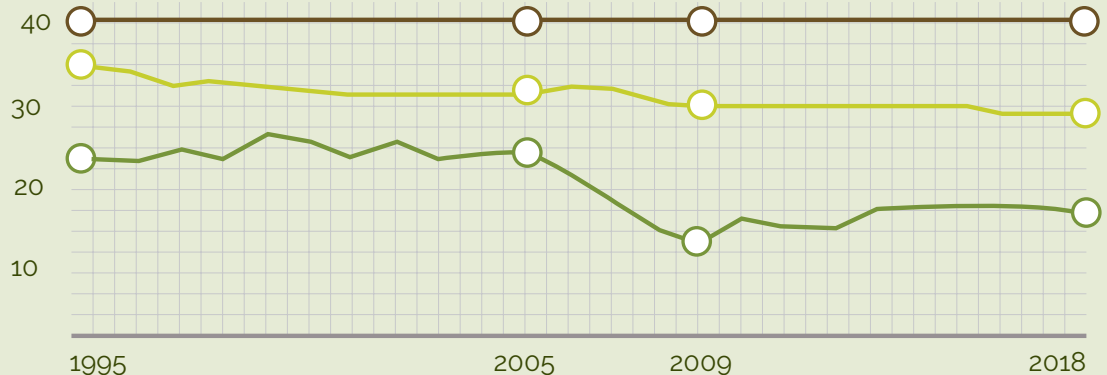


Netherlands

### Crown Forest Average Annual Growth

Crown Harvest  
Available vs.  
Actual Harvest

- Growth
- Available
- Actual



### In Ontario there are...

**71.1M** hectares of forest

**27.7M** hectares of  
managed Crown  
forests

**1.6M** hectares of disturbance area  
annually (fire, insect, diseases,  
wind throw)

**0.1M** hectares of Crown forest harvested  
annually (less than 0.5% of the  
managed Crown forest)



# Forest Industry By The Numbers

## 2018 Annual Stats

**\$4.3B**

contribution to  
the provincial GDP



**\$18B**

total revenue of  
the forest sector



**72.6M+**

trees planted



**\$6.7B**

forest sector exports  
including **\$869M**  
in wood furniture  
exports



**147,000\***

direct + indirect +  
induced jobs



\*2019 data

**221M+**

seeds in aerial seedling renewal



## Direct Jobs



\*2019 data

## Wood in Your Everyday Products



### PPE and hygiene products

Personal Protective Equipment  
and other hygiene products  
utilize pulp



### Toothpaste

Contains wood components  
like cellulose gum and xylitol



### Ice cream

Soft ice cream uses cellulose  
to help keep its shape



### Nail polish

Uses nitrocellulose for  
strength and quick-drying



### Towels

Some are made with rayon  
which is produced from a  
wood component cellulose



### Gum

Uses wood chemicals like  
rosin esters



### Mass timber

New category enabling  
production of taller and  
larger scale wood buildings

## Proportion of Volume Harvest by Product



**56%**

sawmills



**29%**

pulp &  
paper



**13%**

composite



**2%**

fuelwood

# Ontario's Forest Sector: Exploring Opportunities

Ontario's forest industry is producing innovative wood products to meet current and future environmentally-conscious consumer choices which include:

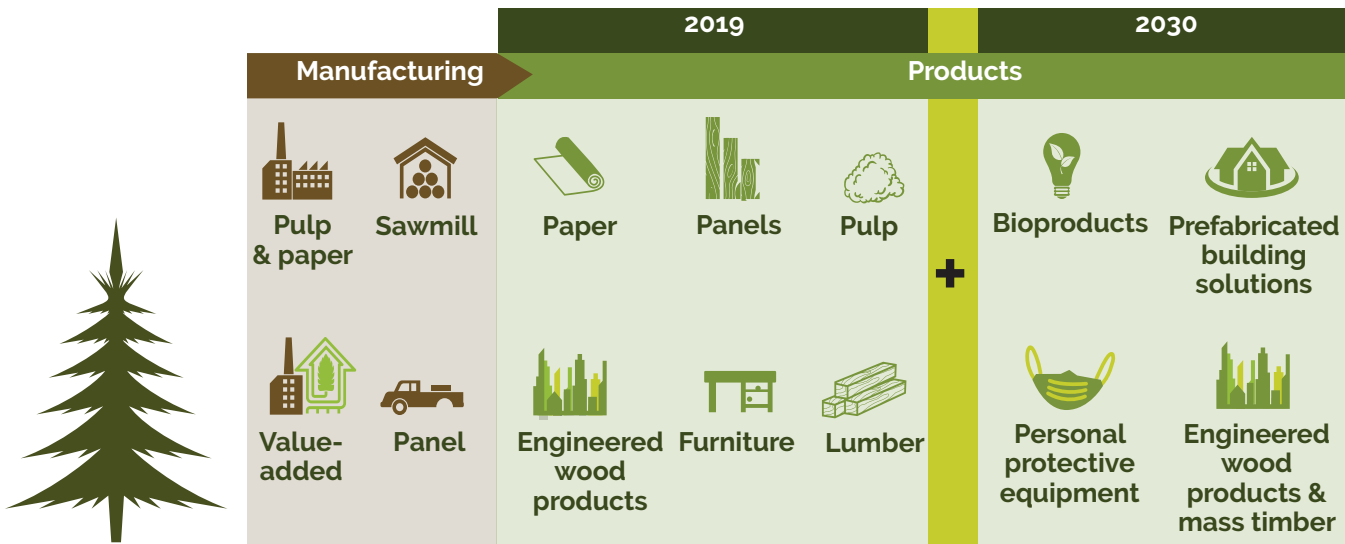
## Expanding Markets for Wood Products

*Ontario is utilizing only half of the wood that it could sustainably harvest*

Approximately 15 million cubic metres of wood is not being used and could be available for attracting investments in new domestic and international markets. Approved forest management plans for Ontario's Crown forests identify about 30 million cubic metres of wood supply that can be sustainably harvested annually, an amount that is significantly less than the 38 million cubic metres of growth our managed forests currently produce annually. Less than half of one per cent of managed Crown forests is harvested each year. Ontario is looking to expand to new markets for its forest products, while working to strengthen existing businesses. Many new and innovative forestry products depend on raw materials from primary producers of lumber, oriented strand board, veneer, and pulp. Demand for materials in producing these innovative new products helps to strengthen existing supply chains. By putting this wood to work we are providing for expanded economic opportunities for Indigenous and other Ontario communities that are dependent on forests.

Global trends indicate a movement away from the construction of single-family homes to multi-family homes greater than 3 storeys. New advances in technology and innovation using mass timber can help Ontario play a greater role in the multi-family, multi-storey homes and tall wood building construction markets, both domestically and internationally. Currently, several mass timber towers are being constructed in Toronto.

### Forestry & the Emerging Green Economy



More and more uses are being discovered for wood fibre: from face masks to bio-active papers, from clothing to car parts, from cosmetics to chemicals to advanced construction systems and as a natural replacement for single-use plastics. As Ontario's industry innovates and transforms, new products and new markets will provide solutions to the province's underutilized wood supply.

## Increasing Indigenous Participation in the Forest Sector

Ontario acknowledges that Indigenous communities have an important relationship with the land, and exercise Aboriginal and treaty rights in forests. Ontario is committed to continuing to build strong, mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships with Indigenous communities across the province. Indigenous communities are seeking greater involvement in the management of forests and the use of Traditional Ecological Knowledge in forest management, direct economic benefits and opportunities to create more Indigenous businesses in the forest sector.

There is a growing Indigenous youth population that could participate in the future labour force and provide leadership in developing new forest entrepreneurial businesses that directly benefit their communities and develop capacity within communities to participate in all facets of the forest economy. Ontario will also work with the forest industry and Indigenous communities to explore opportunities to further share the benefits of sustainable forest management.

## Lowering Costs

To make Ontario's forest industry more competitive, the high costs of regulatory burden, delivered wood, energy, equipment, transportation, and forest management planning need to be reviewed and where possible reduced. This is why Ontario will continue to investigate opportunities to reduce barriers and costs, such as recent updates to modernize Ontario's regulated Forest Management Manuals, Independent Forest Audit process, and environmental assessment requirements for forest management. The updates recognize Ontario's comprehensive sustainable forest policy framework and provide time and cost savings for the forest industry.

## Building Resilience to Manage Business Uncertainties

About 96% of Ontario's wood products exports are destined for the U.S. Ontario's dependency on exports to the U.S. is both a great advantage when prices and demand are strong, and trade is open and fair, and a major challenge when they are not.

Ontario can be better equipped to manage these fluctuations by enabling innovation in manufacturing, product diversification, increasing domestic use and developing new export markets. In 2019, Ontario announced funding for the province's first cross laminated timber mill. Once operational, this St. Thomas mill will use northern lumber to produce a new product that can increase the range and type of buildings made out of wood. Ontario is also working to encourage the public to shop for local wood products through the development of the Ontario Wood brand that producers can use on their products and in their marketing. In addition, Ontario is working to help open new international opportunities, including emerging international markets like India, through leading export missions and supporting inbound buyers' missions.

## Promoting Forestry Career Pathways

To address labour shortages, Ontario will support forest education and encourage young adults to pursue careers in the forest sector. This includes highlighting the vast array of career opportunities within the forest sector and building awareness that Ontario's forests are managed sustainably and responsibly. Recognizing that Indigenous communities hold a significant connection to the land and natural resources, Indigenous youth in particular could play a critical role in growing the future forestry workforce and contributing to a strengthened forest sector.

Ontario has supported forestry training through the SkillsAdvance Ontario program, a sector-focused workforce development program that provides employers in specific sectors with access to skilled workers that meet their workforce development needs. SkillsAdvance Ontario also provides jobseekers and workers with sector-focused employment and training services to help them obtain, succeed and advance in employment. The SkillsAdvance Ontario projects that support the forest sector include three initiatives: two with Confederation College, one based in the Northwest and the other based in the Northeast; and a project based in the Greenstone area, the Nishnawbe Forestry Operation and Apprenticeship Training Program led by Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: the Wenjack Education Institute. Over 200 forestry workers and job seekers will be trained through SkillsAdvance Ontario projects in 2020.

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# Ontario's Forest Sector: Seizing Opportunity

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## Sustainable Forest Management

Our public (Crown) forests are vast and provide many economic, social and environmental benefits to the people of Ontario. Crown forests provide biodiversity, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities, while helping address the effects of climate change. Through sustainable harvesting, Crown forests also support a forest industry that creates needed products and good jobs.

We know that for Ontario's forest industry to remain strong and vibrant in the long term, we need our Crown forests to remain healthy, diverse, and productive. Thanks to our robust forest policy framework, Ontario's Crown forests are diverse and resilient, and the wood we harvest from them is sustainably sourced and renewable.

Ontario's sustainable forest policy framework is globally recognized for its effective management of Crown forests. It is a robust system, rooted in the best available science, and founded on an adaptive management approach of planning, implementing, monitoring, and re-planning based on performance and the evaluation of new information, science, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

The foundation of the sustainable forest policy framework is the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*. It provides for the sustainable management of Crown forests in a manner that must have regard for plant and animal life, including species at risk, as well as water, soil, air and social and economic values.

The framework includes mechanisms and tools that maintain oversight and protect the environment and biodiversity in our managed Crown forests. These include:

1. The **Forest Management Planning Manual** prescribes a rigorous process which determines an approved level of harvesting and renewal, and protects natural, cultural and Indigenous values. This process requires consultation with the public and Indigenous communities.
2. **Forest management guides** provide silvicultural practices and methods to conserve biodiversity and protect wildlife habitat, watersheds, cultural heritage and recreation. These guides are required to be reviewed at least once every 10 years so that the latest science, consideration of evidence and expert advice is incorporated into forest management. They direct the type, arrangement and ages of forest on the landscape. This helps forest managers maintain habitat for wildlife, birds, fish, and plants - including species at risk. Guides also determine if forest operations need to be modified to retain special features like decaying trees, protect sensitive habitats like bird nests, lakes, streams and wetlands, and support the conservation of water and soil resources.
3. **Forest trusts** provide dedicated funding for renewing harvested and naturally disturbed forests.
4. A **compliance program** ensures that forest management operations align with approved forest management plans.

5. An **independent forest audit program** confirms whether forests are being managed sustainably and in compliance with all regulations.
6. **Reporting** on the status of forests and forest management provides transparency and informs adaptive management.
7. **Information management systems** collect and maintain information on natural resource values and features, forest resources inventory and forest growth to support analysis and modelling of harvest scenarios, and long-term changes to future forest condition and habitat.

These critical steps in the framework are part of the adaptive management cycle, as shown below, that is repeated every 10 years on each forest management unit in the province and provide for several public and Indigenous consultation opportunities throughout the PLAN portion of the cycle.

### Example of adaptive management cycle

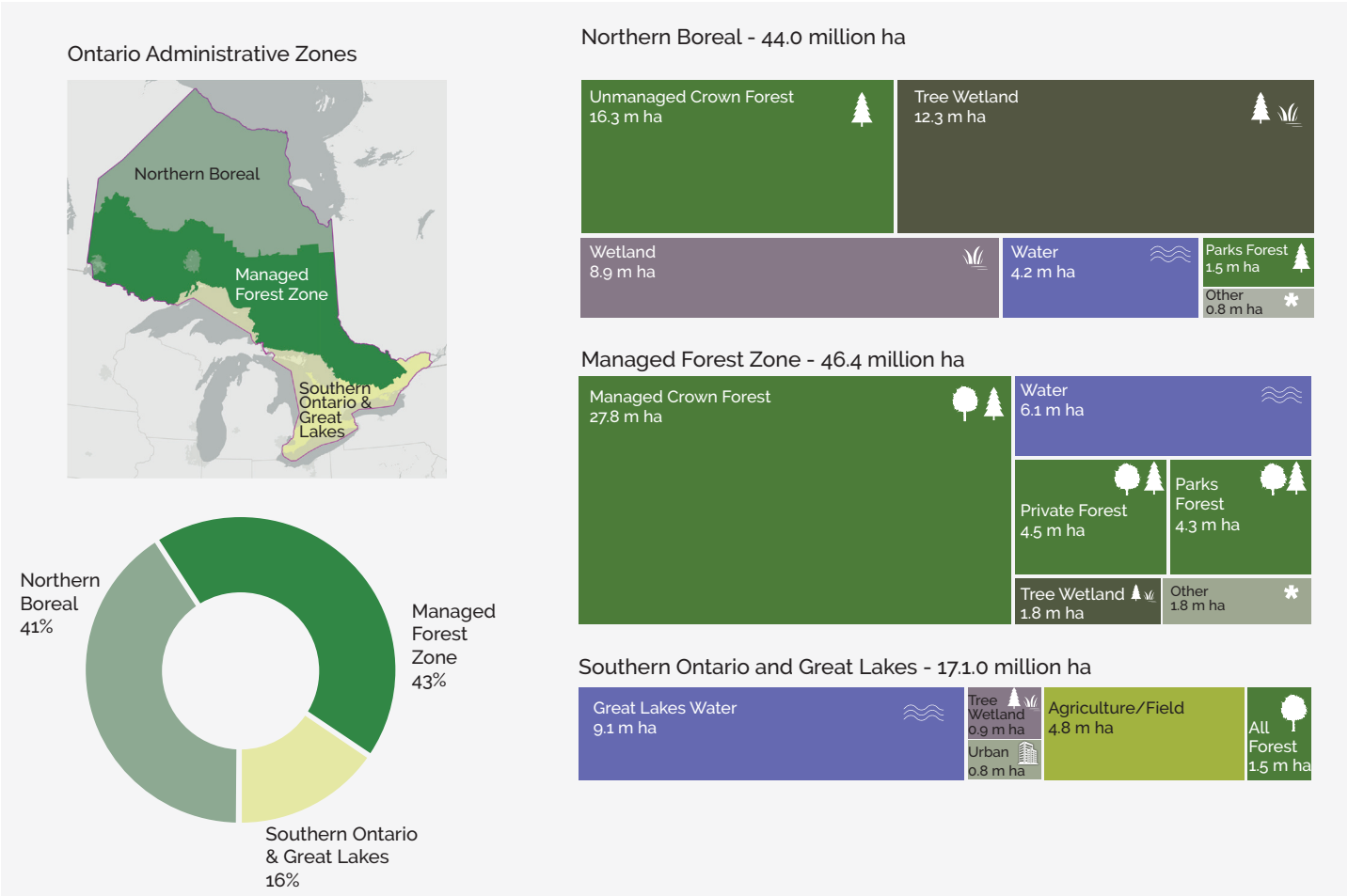


In addition to Ontario's rigorous forest policy framework, much of Ontario's forest industry uses internationally recognized third-party forest certification systems. Forest certification systems applicable in Ontario have been developed by the Canadian Standards Association, the Forest Stewardship Council, and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. As of January 2018, a total of 26.2 million hectares in the province were certified by one or more of these certification systems. This equates to 77 per cent of the Crown forests managed in Ontario. By law, forest managers must renew and maintain all harvested areas to provide for the sustainability of Crown forests. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), industry and independent third parties monitor and assess the implementation of sustainable forest management practices, including renewal activities. Compliance inspections and independent forest audits conducted at the management unit level help to ensure that forest operations follow approved forest management

plans. Information about Ontario's forests is regularly collected by MNRF using a combination of ground surveys, aerial surveillance, satellite imagery and research programs. The ongoing collection of forest information is essential for continuous learning and adaptive management.

Ontario also regularly monitors and studies threats to forest health. Information about forest health is used to develop policies that help to minimize the impacts of natural disturbances and climate change. The responsibility for maintaining long-term forest health is shared among government, industry, Indigenous peoples and local communities. Ontario collaborates with these groups and others in developing provincial policy and setting broad objectives, preparing forest management plans, and acquiring the science and information needed to support decision making.

Ontario's forests encompass a wide spectrum of landscapes, including 58,000 square kilometres of parks and protected areas. The province's approach to planning, with a balance of managed forests and protected areas, provides for healthy ecosystems to support biodiversity, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities, while helping to mitigate the effects of climate change.

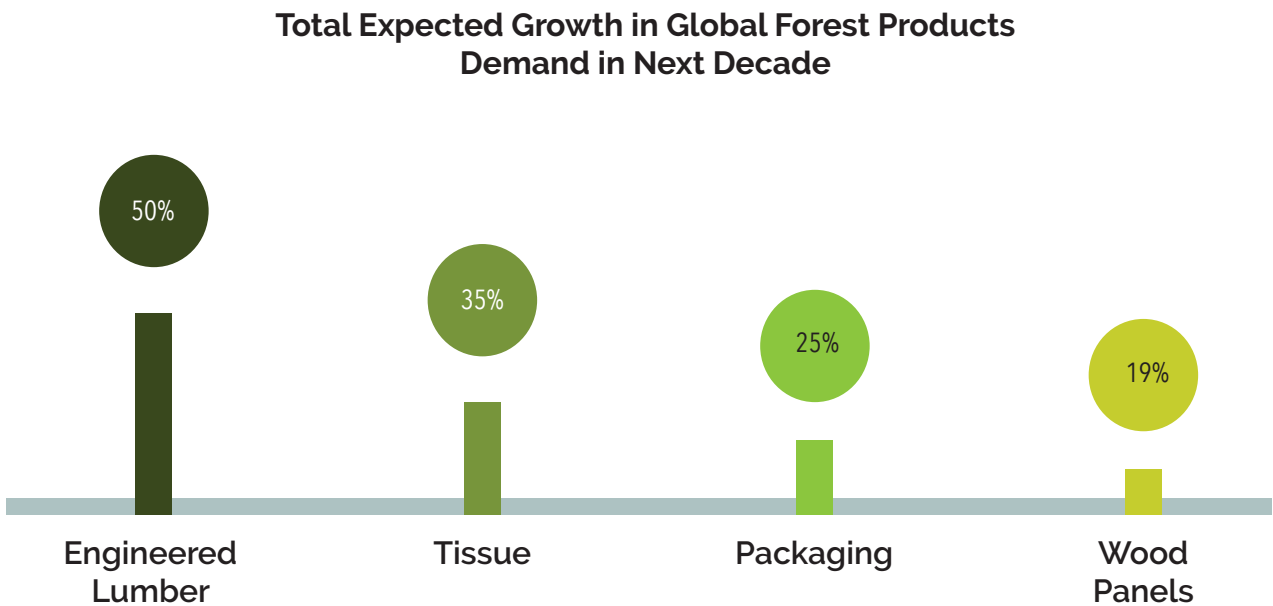


# Wood Supply and Future Demand

Forest management plans provide for sustainability by including objectives for forest values, such as wildlife habitat and biodiversity, as well as for the supply of wood. Harvesting within the approved level and consistent with the practices in the approved forest management plan means we are managing our forest resources sustainably.

Currently there is nearly 15 million cubic metres of available wood supply that existing industry is unable to harvest and that could potentially support further investment in the forest sector. Increasing the harvest within the limits of what can be sustainably removed can be accomplished while maintaining Ontario's high standards for managing its forests responsibly.

Utilizing our available wood supply will allow us to expand future markets, both domestic and international, without impacting the sustainability of our forests. The future looks promising; over the next decade, global demand for pulp is expected to increase due to the growth of packaging by 25 per cent and tissue by 35 per cent. Demand for lumber and panel products is also projected to grow, especially wood panels by 19 per cent and engineered lumber by 50 per cent. Replacing single-use plastics with paper options is still too new to forecast but has the potential to vastly improve growth numbers in the pulp and paper sector. Further to this, a 2018 study prepared for the United Nations Forum on Forests<sup>1</sup> forecasted that over the next 30 years, global consumption of products derived from pulp is projected to increase by more than 100 per cent. Over this same period, consumption of solid wood products is expected to grow by about 50 per cent, and bio-based products are expected to make up 50 per cent of consumer products.



<sup>1</sup> Duncan Brack, United Nations Forum on Forests and Global Forest Goals. [Sustainable consumption and production of forest products](#), April 2018



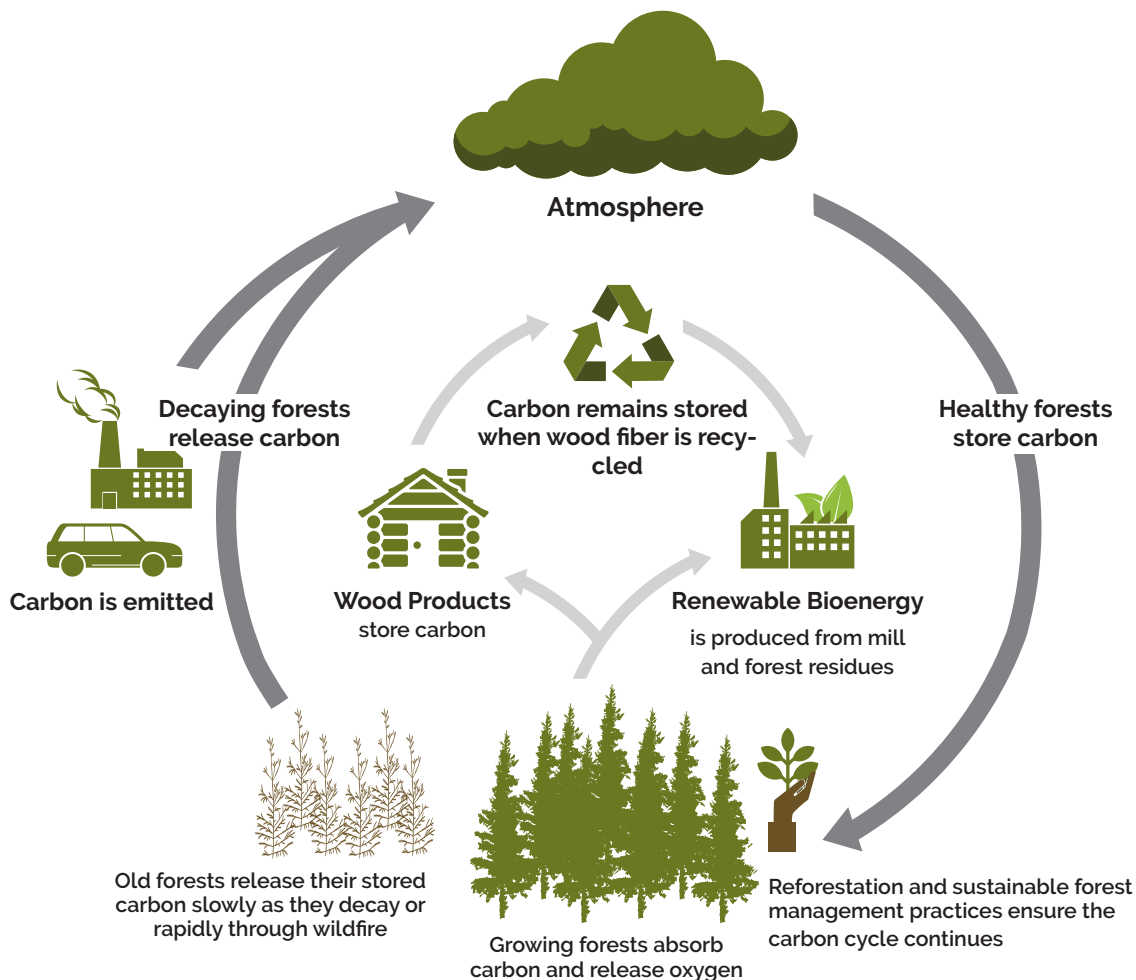
## Responding to a Changing Climate

There is growing interest from Ontario's forest industry, Indigenous communities and stakeholders in how to consider climate change in forest management activities in a way that is evidence-based, compatible with management of other values on the land, and consistent with national and international best practices.

Making management decisions that maintain healthy and diverse forests help the province endure many threats, including climate change. Ontario's sustainable forest policy framework provides for the long-term health of its forests. Sustainable forest management provides for forests that are resilient to the impacts of climate change, while playing a vital role in capturing and storing carbon dioxide. Applying forest management practices to encourage forest growth and productivity may also result in opportunities to increase the amount of carbon sequestered.

The managed forest carbon cycle (as shown in the diagram that follows) includes: the absorption of carbon from the atmosphere by growing forests; release of carbon during harvest; the storage of some of that carbon in wood products that are harvested from sustainably managed forests; and the decrease in carbon emissions to the atmosphere by replacing fossil fuels with energy from wood biofuels that are made from wood by-products.

### Sustainable Forest Management and Carbon Storage An Ontario boreal forest example with wildfire suppression



Wildlife and vegetation have evolved to depend on the natural process of forest disturbance. Ontario will continue to strategically manage and suppress wildland fires across the province. Harvesting followed by forest regeneration, as required by Ontario law, emulates these natural processes across the landscape that result in healthy, well managed forests. Well managed forests can reduce the risk and severity of extreme climate change events like large wildland fires.

## Opportunities for Innovation

Thunder Bay's forest bioeconomy cluster is home to world class research facilities, pilot manufacturing sites and demonstration facilities including: the [Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bioeconomy \(CRIBE\)](#), [FPIInnovations'](#) Bioeconomy Technology Centre (host of the Lignoforce and TMP-Bio Pilot Plants), Lakehead University's [Biorefining Research Institute](#), Green Chemistry Lab, [Wood Science Testing Laboratory](#), [Fire Testing and Research Laboratory](#), and Confederation College's [OPG BioEnergy Learning and Research Centre](#).

The "TMP-Bio" project in Resolute Forest Products' Thunder Bay pulp and paper complex is adding new products such as refined lignin and sugars to this facility's product mix and revenue streams – and is the next generation of innovative products from wood.

There are many different uses from wood such as:

**3D Printing:** Wood fibre has the potential to play a major role in the largest manufacturing revolution of this century by using lignin, an affordable and renewable by-product of the paper making process, as an input for 3D printers.

**Cosmetics and food:** Products such as lipstick, nail polish, creams and a wide range of beauty products can be produced from trees. Cellulose, derived from wood pulp, is added to many foods to provide structure and reduce breakage. Essentially, it adds fiber to the food. Other common foods that have a component of wood or are derived from trees include liquid smoke, maple syrup, gum, fruits, medicines, and nuts.

***Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Medical Hygiene Products: The pulp and paper industry is a supplier of PPE (including surgical masks, gowns, and caps), as well as medical-grade paper and, hand sanitizers, toilet tissue and other hygiene products. Producing PPE in Ontario avoids reliance on others for critical medical supplies.***

**Green chemicals:** Methanol produced as a by-product of pulp mills can be used in windshield wiper fluid, plastics, glues and fabrics, or be blended with gasoline to fuel cars. There are almost endless opportunities for bio-based chemicals from wood.

**New wood-based composites:** Cellulose products can be used as a substitute for glass fibres in reinforced plastics, such as eyeglass frames. Research is underway to find ways to make carbon fibre from lignin that could be used in high-end sporting equipment such as bicycles, golf clubs and tennis racquets. Sugar streams generated from wood can be used in a range of bio-plastics and provide alternatives to single-use plastics.

**Energy Alternatives:** Many forest companies have become energy self-sufficient in the form of electricity, heat, steam and fuel. This removes the need for fossil fuels by using mill by-products (e.g., bark, sawdust and shavings) and forest biofibre to produce renewable electricity and biocrude which avoids sending material to landfills. Locally sourced and sustainable wood and its by-products can be used to heat homes and buildings in northern, rural and Indigenous communities that do not have access to natural gas or depend on diesel fuel that is transported great distances at very high cost. A Forest Biomass Action Plan is being developed by the province to support economic development through the use of mill by-products and underutilized forest biofibre.

## **Spotlight: Promoting Forest Product Innovation and Diversification**

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Building with wood is not new; building with innovative wood products is. Through collaboration and investment, Ontario is promoting the use of mass timber. Mass timber refers to structural engineered building materials made from wood that can be used in place of steel and concrete in many kinds of buildings: houses, industrial, commercial, institutional and mid-rise buildings up to and over six storeys; and bridges.

Using mass timber creates new jobs for professionals and skilled tradespeople, and significantly reduces construction times leading to reduced overhead, financial and on-site labour costs. Mass timber construction sites are quieter and tidier than traditional sites. Mass timber also sequesters carbon pulled from the atmosphere by our forests and requires less energy to produce than other common building materials. Research has proven that mass timber products offer equal and sometimes superior thermal resistance in comparison with concrete and steel alternatives. Mass timber construction integrates both steel (fastening systems) and concrete (foundations) in construction.

The Province has supported four tall wood demonstration projects that are in various planning and development stages, including:

- » George Brown College's 12-storey Arbour development in Toronto;
- » The 14-storey Academic Tower at the University of Toronto;
- » A 12-storey residential condominium building to be developed by Green-vision Developments in North Bay;
- » And the 77 Wade Avenue development, an 8-storey office building to be built in Toronto. Please see illustration on page 20.

In addition, a wooden truss highway bridge in North Bay, originally built in 1937, is being replaced using mass timber. Ontario is working with Nipissing First Nation to create opportunities for skills development and job creation while building innovative infrastructure.

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Rendering of bridge over Duchesnay Creek – North Bay

University of Toronto Academic Tower



Wade Ave development

# The Future of Ontario's Forest Sector

Ontario is recognized globally for our wood products that are produced from sustainably managed forests, and we will continue to work hard to maintain this reputation. This advantage has resulted in consumer preferences to purchase our wood products, and this will only grow as more uses are discovered for wood.

This section outlines a series of actions for driving economic growth, promoting innovation, overcoming obstacles, and securing the long-term prospects of Ontario's forest sector and the communities that depend on it. These actions are grouped under four pillars:

- » Promoting stewardship and sustainability;
- » Putting more wood to work;
- » Improving Ontario's cost competitiveness; and,
- » Fostering innovation, markets and talent



The Arbour, George Brown College's mass timber building



# Promoting Stewardship and Sustainability

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## Goals

### By 2022

- Enhance recognition of Ontario's sustainable forest management practices.
- Establish and strengthen partnerships with Indigenous peoples and forestry businesses.
- Expand Resource Revenue Sharing with Indigenous communities.
- Improve collaboration in managing forests.
- Identify opportunities for Ontario's forests to help in our fight against climate change.
- Make information available to individuals, communities and forest managers on how they can consider climate change in their forest strategies and plans.

### By 2030

- Modernize and adapt forest management planning process to maintain the sustainability of Ontario's Crown forests.
- Take steps to help Ontario's forests adapt to a changing climate.
- Encourage climate change mitigation opportunities through relevant sustainable forest management policies, guidance and manuals.

## Initial Areas for Action

### Earning Recognition for Our Sustainable Forest Management Practices

Recognized as a leader in sustainable forest management, Ontario's forest sector operates under the requirements of the forest policy framework to conserve the ecological processes and biological diversity of our forests while providing for economic opportunities. In global markets, Ontario collaborates with the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers' *"Forest in Mind Program"* to address market challenges by providing international customers with facts about Ontario's strong record of sustainable forest management.

In Ontario, we have the third-party "It Takes a Forest" initiative that is helping to make the public aware of our strong record of sustainable forest management. Our youth are Ontario's future and we are increasingly becoming an urban province, so to support students' understanding of Ontario's forests and the role of the forest sector, Forests Ontario has produced a series of educational tools including lesson plans and immersive educational experiences like Forestry in the Classroom and Forestry Connects. Educators may choose to use these, and other resources, to help students learn about forestry in their classrooms.

Ontario will continue to work with the forest industry, Indigenous communities and other partners to maintain and adapt the forest policy framework including the forest management planning process

to sustainably manage Ontario's forests and enable a strong and vibrant forest industry now and into the future. Ontario will pursue strategic alliances with ongoing third-party certification systems to take advantage of extensive marketing tools to reach key groups.

Ontario will undertake reporting that provides transparency to the public about the status of forest resources and forest management activities. Reporting also supports ongoing adaptive management efforts to improve forest practices.

## Conducting Applied Research and Best Science

Ontario will continue to support applied research and monitoring to inform evidence-based decision-making and policy, and will work with Indigenous peoples to incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge in forest management. We will continue to use the best science and information to support forest management planning, including growth and yield, ecological land classification and forest inventories. Consistent with the principle of adaptive management, Ontario will continue to advance and make available forest research on the impacts of a changing climate on future forest growth, wildland fire, and carbon storage in trees.

## Establishing and Strengthening Partnerships with Indigenous Peoples

Ontario will continue working with Indigenous communities, organizations, and businesses, along with the forest industry and municipalities to further share the economic benefits from forestry by:

- » Building the capacity of Indigenous businesses and workers to participate in the forest sector by providing training opportunities and supporting Indigenous business development
- » Promoting increased involvement through collaborative business partnerships
- » Exploring options to expand resource revenue sharing with more Indigenous communities and Northern municipalities

## Improving Collaboration in Managing Forests

Ontario will continue to implement forest tenure modernization supported at the local level, and amalgamate management units by working in collaboration with industry, community, and Indigenous partners. This action will provide greater local and Indigenous community involvement in forest management, business development, and capacity building. Similarly, Ontario will engage the public, industry, communities, and Indigenous partners when reviewing and revising elements of the forest policy framework.

## Respecting Aboriginal Rights and Protecting Forest Values

Ontario recognizes that Indigenous communities hold Aboriginal and treaty rights, and many rely on healthy forests to exercise those rights. Ontario also acknowledges the cultural significance of forests to many Indigenous communities. Forest management will continue to be sustainable and carried out in a way that respects Aboriginal and treaty rights and cultural values. The protection of Indigenous values identified through forest management will continue to contribute to the sustainability of Ontario's forests.

Ontario will continue to prevent and mitigate losses and minimize the economic and social disruption caused by wildland fire events. Ontario's wildland fire management program seeks to balance the ecological role of wildland fire in maintaining healthy forests with ensuring public safety and protecting infrastructure. Throughout the province, Ontario works with Indigenous communities in an effort to protect communities, train individuals, support fire on the landscape, and utilizes and supports the role of Indigenous firefighters to support its wildland fire management program.

Living in Ontario means having the ability to fish, hunt, and enjoy world-class outdoor recreation opportunities. Ontario protects these values and promotes these activities and the economic opportunities they offer while continuing to be a world leader in managing Ontario's natural environment for future generations.

## Determining Effects of a Changing Climate

Ontario will be undertaking a Provincial Climate Change Impact Assessment that will include looking at how a changing climate is likely to impact the forest sector across the province over the next several decades. The results of the assessment will provide a basis for considering options to help the sector become more resilient and support its competitiveness and sustainability.

We will work with industry to further reduce emissions from forests and increase carbon storage in both forests and harvested wood products. Adaptive management practices will continue to enable productive and resilient forests into the future. Ontario will also promote the use of renewable forest biomass by industry and as an energy source to provide heat and potentially both heat and power for northern, rural and Indigenous communities.

As committed in the Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan, Ontario will also work to improve data and information on greenhouse gas emissions and carbon storage from forests and the changing landscape. The province's seed transfer policy will be updated to support the long-term success of regeneration activities in a changing climate.

## Future Action Areas

### Responding to a Changing Climate to Mitigate its Effect

Ontario will continue to advance our understanding of the role of sustainable forest management in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Ontario is also committed to adapting to and mitigating the effects of existing and future climatic changes by helping to build resiliency in forests, and by reducing the potential impacts from wildland fires.

Ontario is developing strategic direction to enhance its response to forest pest outbreaks, protect forest health and improve the resiliency of forests. A more resilient forest can endure many threats and helps protect Ontario's wood supply now and in the future. Ontario will also develop strategic direction to protect critical forest access road infrastructure, to provide access to wood supply. Exploring opportunities to encourage afforestation on private lands that are not productive for agriculture will increase forested area.



# Putting More Wood to Work

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## Goals

### By 2022

- Modernize and improve Ontario's forest inventory
- Remove barriers to accessing wood
- Evaluate ways to grow more wood
- Provide wood supply certainty
- Increase use of available wood supply

### By 2030

- Harvest the sustainable wood supply
- Improve estimates of quantity and quality for unused wood supply
- Establish targets for forest growth and harvest
- Establish intensive forest management areas
- Explore ways to encourage harvest on private lands

## Initial Areas for Action

### Investing in Advanced Remote Sensing Technologies

Ontario will invest \$84.5 million to enhance the forest inventory. More accurate information about Ontario's wood supply will be achieved by using Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), an advanced remote sensing technology. The enhanced forest inventory will better inform forest management planning and decision-making. Ontario will improve the quality of forest information by capitalizing on advanced remote sensing technology to provide timely information.

### Removing Policy Barriers to Accessing Wood

Policy barriers to accessing wood will be removed while maintaining the rigour of our sustainable forest policy framework. This can be accomplished by eliminating redundancy and overlap in legislation, providing a consistent interpretation of forest policy and implementation practices through training and knowledge transfer. Ontario is pursuing a long-term approach to addressing species at risk in Crown forest management that would remove unnecessary regulatory duplication while continuing to provide protection for species at risk and their habitat.

### A Path to Increase Forest Growth

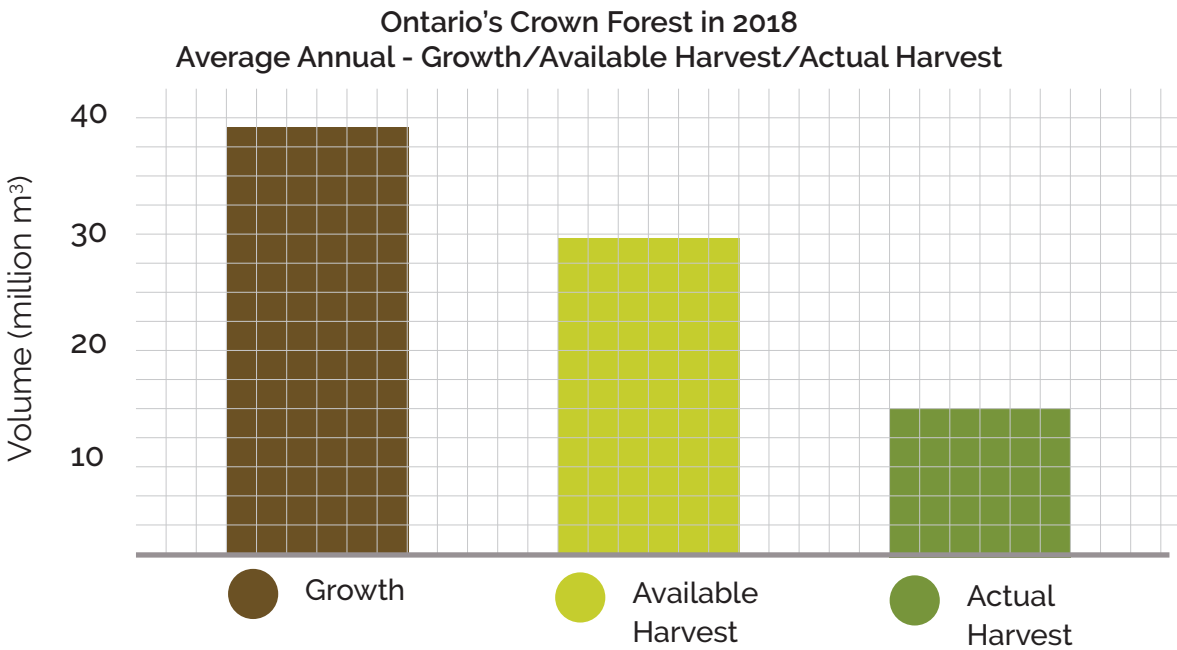
Ontario is investing in enhanced forest resource inventory to provide better and more timely information about the status of Ontario's Crown forests. Forest managers need accurate and timely information about the growth and development (e.g. response to various silvicultural treatments) of regenerating young forest following harvest in order to make decisions about the effectiveness of renewal programs. Improved information about this public asset is also vital for identifying opportunities to increase the growth and value of our forests. This information will provide the foundation for strategic analyses to help determine

the most effective means (e.g. silvicultural techniques and treatment areas) to increase forest growth rates and achieve other objectives of this strategy.

## Providing Wood Supply Certainty, Ensuring Use and Attracting New Investment

A range of actions to support existing forest operations that encourage the use of wood and facilitate its availability will be developed, including strategies to support these actions. More effective and efficient mechanisms will be considered to see wood utilized and made available in a way that supports existing mills and forest operators, but that also attracts new business and new investment for underutilized wood supply. As an example, the feasibility of centralized processing yards will be assessed, and species restrictions on wood use at facilities will be removed to help increase wood use and attract investment while supporting existing mills and forest operators. Efforts will also be made to work with forest managers and mills that have wood supply commitments so that wood supplies are used and available to support continued mill operations or are made available for others to use.

## Future Action Areas



## Harvesting Our Sustainable, Available Wood Supply

Forest management plans provide for sustainability by including objectives for forest values, such as wildlife habitat and biodiversity, as well as for the supply of wood. Harvesting within the approved level and consistent with the direction in the approved forest management plan means we are managing our forest resources sustainably.

Approved forest management plans for Ontario's Crown forests identify about 30 million cubic metres of wood supply that can be harvested annually. Recent provincial harvest levels, however, have only reached 15 million cubic metres per year. Managed Crown forests have less than half of one per cent of wood harvested each year.

*Our managed forests currently produce more than 38 million cubic metres of growth annually. The target harvest level of 30 million cubic metres is significantly less than annual forest growth.*

There is a significant opportunity to increase harvest levels up to the 30 million cubic metres while meeting the objectives (e.g. biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk, etc.) laid out in forest management plans. Providing for the sustainability of our forests is a key principle of Ontario's forest policy framework and a legislative requirement of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.

Reaching the allowable sustainable harvest of about 30 million cubic metres by 2030 will require quantifying the types and locations of unused wood supplies by volume, location, species and quality with estimations of costs. Ontario is working with the Centre for Research & Innovation in the Bioeconomy to develop an economic fibre supply model that will help investors and communities identify options for expanding existing forest production and finding new markets.

## Establishing Targets for Forest Growth

Strategic analyses of current growth, harvest and natural disturbances are required to determine the types of actions that would be most effective in increasing the growth potential of our forests. Realizing greater growth and/or product quality can take many forms: from ensuring timely and effective establishment of fully stocked stands following harvest, to protecting the forest from losses to wildland fire and pests and investing in intensive treatments. In setting forest growth targets, Ontario commits to growing more wood, and maintaining our ability to balance biodiversity, conservation of natural resources, habitat, and cultural values while respecting Aboriginal and treaty rights and society's growing need for wood products from sustainably managed forests.

## Boosting Our Forest's Productivity

Strategic investments in intensive forest management activities are required to realize the growth potential of the forest. A strategic analysis conducted to establish growth targets would identify the type of intensive forest management activities as well as where and when conducting those activities would have the desired outcome.

## Enhancing Private Land Harvesting

Ontario will consider the use of various tools to responsibly encourage greater timber production on private lands.

# Improving Ontario's Cost Competitiveness

## Goals

### By 2022

- Increase efficiencies to help reduce costs for the forest sector
- Consider strategic investments in forest access roads
- Encourage use of under-utilized species and log qualities
- Streamline forest management requirements
- Reduce duplication and modernize approvals processes

### By 2030

- Continue to improve global competitiveness for the forestry sector
- Foster a business climate that attracts investment
- Realize benefits from forest inventory investments
- Create a business climate that attracts investment

## Initial Areas for Action

### Reviewing Energy Costs

Energy costs remain a key input for the forest sector. In April 2019, Ontario launched consultations with industry stakeholders about the design and effectiveness of industrial electricity pricing and programs, including the Industrial Conservation Initiative and the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program.

### Maximizing the Use of Mill By-products

Ontario developed its own provincial policy as an alternative to the federal output-based pricing system to reduce carbon emissions, which recognizes the use of mill by-products (e.g. bark, sawdust and shavings) to provide sources of biomass heat, steam and energy for manufacturing in place of fossil fuels. Maximizing use of mill by-products reduces the need for more carbon intensive energy-based fuels and avoids unnecessary pressures on landfills. In turn, this supports the highly integrated supply chains between pulp and paper, lumber and panel mills, where one mill's by-product (which also provides a revenue stream), supports another mill's wood supply and internal energy requirements. These mill by-products also offer an opportunity to develop new and innovative value-added products. To help address this action area, Ontario is committed to putting a Forest Biomass Action Plan in place that secures jobs and encourages sustainability in the forestry sector, while supporting economic development through the use of mill by-products and forest biofibre.

*Between 1990 and 2018, the pulp and paper industry in Ontario reduced total greenhouse gas emissions by 56%. (Source: Canada's Official Greenhouse Gas Inventory – IPCC GHG tables.)*

## Lowering Taxes

Ontario is paralleling federal measures that allow businesses to accelerate write-offs of capital investments. These measures apply to assets acquired after November 20, 2018, which become available for use before 2028.

## Making Strategic Investments in Forest Access Roads

Ontario invests in forest access roads because of the broad benefits to many Indigenous communities, tourism operators, cottagers, hunters, gatherers of food and medicines, the forest sector and other industries like rail, energy utilities, mining as well as emergency first responders. Ontario is reviewing the overall effectiveness of the program so that critical forest access road infrastructure continues to meet the diverse needs of many forest users.

## Reviewing Certain Components of Stumpage

Ontario's timber pricing system is responsive to market trends. Elements of the timber pricing system could be strategically reviewed with our industry partners to encourage greater timber utilization and the harvest of species and lower quality logs that currently have no markets.

## Reducing Regulatory Burden/Streamlining

Ontario is working to deliver further red tape and regulatory burden relief for the forest sector, including streamlining the process for permits and approvals, removing duplication, modernizing the forest management planning process and the approach to independent forest audits. All of this will reduce costs to industry and government while continuing to support the sustainable management of our forests.

## Future Action Areas

### Enhancing the Alignment of the Trusts

Ontario will leverage the silviculture funding available through the Forestry Futures Trust and the Forest Renewal Trust to further support the objectives of the forest sector strategy. We will explore ways of enhancing forest management within the province with actions that increase available wood supplies and contribute to cost competitiveness.

### Realizing Benefits from Forest Inventory Investments

Ontario's investment in advanced remote sensing technologies, such as LiDAR, also creates opportunities to undertake better analysis and can help automate planning and reporting requirements, which will reduce costs.

## **Forest Renewal Trust**

*The Forest Renewal Trust provides dedicated, sustainable funding for eligible forest renewal work carried out on Crown lands in Ontario.*

## **Forestry Futures Trust**

*The Forestry Futures Trust serves as an insurance policy for the province, ensuring that forest renewal activities can be carried out in the event of natural depletions of the forest or when a major licensee becomes insolvent.*

*Both the Forestry Futures Trust and Forest Renewal Trust operate under the terms of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. These trusts are a significant part of Ontario's forest management program.*

*For more information on the trusts please go to: [Forest Renewal Trust and Forestry Futures Trust webpage](#)*



Investment in Infrastructure - Roads



# Fostering Innovation, Markets and Talent

## Goals

### By 2022

- Redesign the business support program to modernize and innovate
- Invest in the next generation of forestry products
- Increase the use of Ontario wood in construction and heating
- Increase awareness of Ontario's forest sector and sustainable forest management
- Encourage the use of wood in low-rise commercial, mid-rise, tall buildings and bridges in Ontario
- Release a carbon calculator tool

### By 2030

- Assess the use of autonomous harvesting and transportation technologies
- Grow the diversity of international markets for Ontario wood products
- Increase the use of wood in Ontario's building and bridge infrastructure
- Update the Ontario Tall Wood Building Reference and the Ontario Wood Bridge Guide

## Initial Areas for Action

### Making Strategic Investments

The sector's business support program has been redesigned to help make Ontario open for business, deliver maximum value and create broader opportunities for businesses, taxpayers, and communities across the province. The Forest Sector Investment and Innovation Program will support industry in building competitiveness and encourage investment in strategic projects in Ontario's forest sector. The program will advance the modernization of the industry and encourage innovation to diversify the sector and build on the integrated nature of the industry.

Ontario is also ensuring the forest sector in Northern Ontario remains open for business. Through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), Ontario is investing in projects with the private sector that are building critical harvesting, transportation and processing capacity across the forest industry. These investments are creating jobs, supporting key manufacturing employers and building reliable raw material supply chains. Through these investments, Ontario's forest sector will continue to provide long-term sustainable opportunities for the region's labour force and supply and services sectors.

### Promoting Innovation

Ontario is working with industry leaders, the Centre for Research & Innovation in the Bioeconomy (CRIBE), FPInnovations, and universities and colleges to support the commercialization of innovative forest products and processes. By linking the northern fibre supply with southern biochemical producers and engineered wood products manufacturers, renewable products can be produced that displace

non-renewables and support job creation across Ontario. By encouraging a shift towards innovative modern construction methods such as prefabricated and modular construction, Ontario can support the use of wood while helping to reduce building costs and construction time.

To accelerate commercialization of next generation forest products and technologies, and to support efforts to add the maximum possible value locally, Ontario will work with CRIBE, industry, Indigenous communities and other partners to develop value chain roadmaps.

## Increasing Wood Use

Ontario is creating opportunities to increase the use of wood in construction where it has not traditionally been used before. For example, using more wood in low-rise, mid-rise and taller residential, commercial and institutional buildings, and to build bridges is good for the economy, the supply of available housing and the environment. By working with our partners, including the Canadian Wood Council, to align codes and standards, and to develop tools, research and educational resources, we will enable a shift toward the increased use of wood in our infrastructure.

Ontario is working, through efforts such as our government's Housing Supply Action Plan, to harmonize the Ontario Building Code with national codes. Harmonization of the Ontario Building Code with the National Building Code of Canada may expand opportunities to use mass timber in Ontario buildings, opening new markets for manufacturers and providing stimulus to the broader forest sector.

Correctly designed, constructed and maintained mass timber buildings last for many decades. Even in the harsh Canadian climate, they will exceed the 50-year design service life contemplated by various Canadian building codes. By encouraging the consideration of wood for public infrastructure projects, Ontario can lead by example and reduce the carbon footprint of our public buildings and bridges across government. To further encourage the use of wood in private sector construction, Ontario will engage with key municipalities in the effort to develop economic incentives encouraging low-carbon construction.

We can further promote and facilitate opportunities for mass timber building systems by mapping the mass timber value chain, identifying linkages and improving integration from forest to mill, manufacturer, developer and on to the consumer. This work supports our government's Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan.

Ontario is improving the business and policy environments to enable the use of sustainable and renewable biofuels for heat in Ontario. The Ontario Bioheat Initiative supports the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan by promoting bioheat as a heating option for northern, rural and Indigenous communities that currently depend on fossil fuels.

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### ***What are biofuels and bioheat?***

*Biofuels are fuels processed from biomass, such as wood processing residues, that can be used to produce heat and/or power. Bioheat is thermal energy generated from the conversion of solid, liquid and gaseous biofuels. Today's modern bioheat systems have similarities in efficiency, performance and emissions to fossil fuel and electric heating systems.*

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## Reaching New Markets

Ontario will encourage small and medium-sized enterprises to access growing global export markets by providing strategic advice and market intelligence, and by supporting participation in trade missions in emerging markets.

## Addressing Barriers to Trade

Given our geography, our ability to export forest products to the United States is of critical importance. We are working together with our industry, governments across Canada and with partners in the U.S. to promote open and fair trade in forest products.

## Making Ontario Wood the Natural Choice



Ontario is also growing the domestic market, making it easier for consumers to find and purchase local wood products. When consumers purchase a product with the [Ontario Wood](#) logo, they will be assured that it was made from sustainably managed forests that were harvested in Ontario and manufactured here in the province. Working with our partners, we will increase public awareness about how Ontario's forest industry supports local economies and the environment through sustainable forest management practices.

## Collaborating on Carbon Analysis

Ontario will work with Quebec to finalize the development of a tool that can be used by building designers to estimate greenhouse gas emissions from various building designs, and help them make the best use of various wood products and the inherent ability of wood to store carbon. By making this tool publicly available, the government will provide a means by which the private sector, municipalities and provincial entities can account for the carbon footprint of their building assets.

## Growing Talent in the Forest Sector

Forestry, like many industries, is suffering from labour shortages in a variety of roles – from harvesting and log hauling operations, mill operations, to skilled trades, truck drivers, and supervisors. Addressing this challenge requires collaborative efforts by associations, industry, Ontario and the federal government. Identifying training opportunities for Indigenous youth will also be important for the sector's future. Together, we can develop and implement the required attraction, retention and training strategies to address labour shortages.

Ontario's educational framework will continue to expose students to forestry through existing programs like the Specialist High Skills Major. This program reaches secondary students and exposes young adults to the opportunities available in forestry. The program, along with dedicated funding support for experiential learning for students in kindergarten to grade 12, are key program supports for Ontario's education and career/life planning as outlined in Creating Pathways to Success.

In addition to Ontario's educational framework, the province supports the delivery of a suite of employment and skills training programs and services through Employment Ontario. These programs and services are designed to meet the local skills and training needs of workers and employers, including those in the forestry sector.

Ontario will work with interested organizations to address gaps in training through innovative, interactive and experiential learning methods, like heavy equipment simulators and mobile or online classrooms.

Through the NOHFC, Ontario will support Northern Ontario employers, including the forest sector, in addressing skilled labour shortages in the region. Through the NOHFC's internship program, employers will be eligible to seek support when hiring individuals that will be trained to fill skilled labour gaps in the region. With these investments, Ontario will support the north's labour force to meet the needs of employers.

## Future Action Areas

### Adopting New Technologies

5G networks will radically affect various industries throughout our economy, including the forest sector. It will enable the adoption of a range of automation technologies that can improve supply chain management and allow manufacturers to adapt quickly to changing market demands. Smart manufacturing technologies will enable the industry to thrive in this new environment, make the best use of our forest resources and maximize their productivity.

Ontario is working with the forest industry, the Centre for Research Innovation and the Bioeconomy, FPIInnovations, and others to explore mechanisms for enhancing competitiveness, including the adoption of innovative tools that optimize industrial processes, harvesting, renewal, and road building operations.

In support of the government's Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan, cost-effective biomass energy alternatives for industry and communities will be assessed based on modelling delivered fibre costs and examining integrated solutions for heat and power.

### Testing Automated Vehicles

Ontario is facing a shortage of truck drivers to haul wood to mills and product to markets. Working with our partners, Ontario will explore the applicability of highly automated vehicles to the forestry sector and support the testing of these vehicles to help address this need.

## Supporting Innovation in Construction

Most buildings are still individually designed and constructed as one-off projects and are built almost entirely on-site. Increasing the adoption of modular building construction and prefabrication using advanced engineered wood products from Ontario's forests can help the industry innovate. As one of the largest sectors globally, a shift in the way building projects are delivered towards faster, more efficient, more cost-effective and more sustainable construction can have a major impact. This is another way that we can help to meet the objectives of the Housing Supply Action Plan.

By updating publications such as the [Ontario Tall Wood Building Reference](#) and the [Ontario Wood Bridge Guide](#) to capture enhancements to building and construction codes and scientific advancements, Ontario will highlight opportunities to increase the use of wood in applications where it is best suited.



New technologies allow for truck platooning

## The Road Ahead

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The forest sector is an important part of Ontario's history and a critical part of the province's future. That is why we will continue to work with our partners to support its continued growth and prosperity for many years to come. This province has a unique combination of forest enterprise, secondary manufacturing and technology expertise, giving us a major economic advantage that we will continue to build on.

This strategy sets out key goals and actions to transform the forest sector over the next 10 years. To achieve the goals in this strategy we will need to work with industry, Indigenous communities, municipalities, the federal government as well as research, innovation and education institutions.

Clearly our biggest asset and greatest advantage is our forests, which is why forest sustainability needs to remain a key principle as we implement Ontario's forest sector strategy. There are few natural resource sectors that can grow back and replenish what they take in a manner that supports forests that remain healthy and available for future generations.

## Working with Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities and their members are important contributors, economic players and leaders in the forest sector and have constitutionally protected rights that are exercised in Ontario's forests. Ontario will continue to engage and consult with affected communities as elements of the Forest Sector Strategy are developed.

## Advisory Committee

A Forest Sector Strategy Advisory Committee will support the development of an implementation plan for the various actions contained within this strategy. In partnership with the province, the advisory committee will provide advice on the implementation of the strategy and will support the development of key performance indicators to measure the progress on implementing the actions and the success of this strategy. The advisory committee will also be responsible for reporting annually on the progress made in achieving the actions listed under each pillar.

## Key Performance Indicators

To assist with monitoring progress on the strategy, Ontario will commit to developing key performance indicators where possible for the actions identified under each pillar. Key performance indicators will include direct measures (outputs) that monitored over time will track changes and trends to help assess how effective the various actions have been (outcomes) towards meeting the goals under each pillar.

Together, we can build a bright future for the forest sector and the many people and communities who rely on it by utilizing our most important and valued asset – a sustainably managed forest.





# Forest Biomass Action Plan

March 2022



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# Minister's Message

The forest industry has always been a vitally important part of Ontario's economy. Today, it generates \$18 billion in annual revenue and supports more than 148,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Forestry is a source of prosperity in Northern, Indigenous, and rural communities in our province. Our government is committed to doing everything we can to support job growth, attract investment, and secure the long-term future of this essential renewable industry. In fact, Ontario can sustainably harvest twice as much wood annually than the sector does today. We must find more economical uses for excess biomass so the forestry sector can reach its full potential.

Our roadmap for prosperity in the forest industry, *Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy*, was released in August 2020. The strategy maps out dozens of actions to grow the industry and guarantee responsible forestry practices.

Since the strategy's release, we have been busy implementing its actions and honouring our commitments to the sector and its workers. One of the signature commitments in *Sustainable Growth* is the development of a Forest Biomass Action Plan. This plan includes working with the private sector to encourage innovation to develop new uses for forest



biomass that would support more sustainable harvesting in Ontario.

Ontario's forest industry excels at producing manufactured goods from timber such as lumber, furniture, packaging, and paper products. These value-added products are the mainstay of the province's forest industry, enjoying a well-deserved international reputation for their high quality and sustainability standards.

Throughout the production cycle, from harvest to delivery, this manufacturing process generates by-products including bark, shavings, and sawdust – along with uncommercial trees and tree parts. These resources are referred to collectively as forest biomass.

A lesser-known but important segment of Ontario's forest industry commercializes forest biomass that might otherwise be discarded. Skilled operators manufacture an impressive array of products – ranging from

landscaping products and food additives to building materials and electricity.

The potential for biomass products is ever-expanding; emerging biomass uses include medicine, bioplastics, 3D printing, mass timber products, biodiesel, and jet fuel, to name a few. Biomass innovations are a sustainable alternative to carbon-intensive products and an exciting new frontier for Ontario's forest sector.

Deriving added value from forest biomass ensures the industry operates at its most sustainable and efficient level. With by-products from one industry segment feeding demand from another, we have the basis for a circular economy – an economy where nothing is wasted and no opportunity is unrealized.

I am pleased to introduce our Forest Biomass Action Plan, the culmination of extensive collaboration with ministry staff and forest industry partners. It is a comprehensive assessment of our forest biomass advantages,

the challenges affecting this sector, and how we can promote increased use of forest biomass in Ontario.

The plan prescribes actions under five objectives: reaching new markets, supporting increased demand, cutting red tape, boosting Indigenous participation and promoting stakeholder awareness. Our government will implement these actions over the next five years. By implementing the plan, we will unlock the enormous potential of Ontario's forest biomass, drive further prosperity in the forest industry, and support job growth, investment, innovation, and sustainability.



**The Honourable Greg Rickford,**

Minister of Northern Development, Mines,  
Natural Resources and Forestry



# Introduction

As part of *Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy*, the Government of Ontario committed to putting a Forest Biomass Action Plan in place that secures jobs and encourages sustainability in the forest sector, while supporting economic development through the use of forest biomass. Actions identified in this plan will help to realize the goals and vision set out in *Sustainable Growth*.

Given continued global demand for forest products, consumer interest in sustainable products, and movement to a more circular economy, there is immense potential to increase the use of Ontario's sustainable forest biomass resources. Under the right operational and economic conditions, new business opportunities and projects that use forest biomass can play an important role in growing the economy and further supporting existing forest sector businesses. In addition to supporting Ontario's economy, effective use of forest biomass can also contribute to the province's forest management and environmental objectives. As an active partner in research and collaborative networks, the government looks forward to engaging with stakeholders and community partners to investigate ways forest biomass can be utilized that

support sustainability and unlocks the full benefits from Ontario's biomass potential.

This action plan was developed in collaboration with a Forest Biomass Action Plan Working Group (the Working Group) comprised of partners from across the forest biomass supply chain. The action plan highlights Ontario's forest biomass advantages, recognizes challenges and seeks to identify means to increase the use of forest biomass. Valuable insights from the Working Group members highlighted the importance of bioenergy to existing forest product supply chains. Maintaining and transitioning the province's existing bioenergy infrastructure will create a foundation for future forest biomass investment opportunities and increase support for Ontario's forest dependent communities.

Building on Ontario's strengths and progress to date, this document concludes with a set of actions based on five objectives. Actions identified in this plan will be coordinated over five years with expert oversight from the Working Group in the first year and the Forest Sector Strategy Committee in subsequent years.

# Forest biomass advantage

The versatility and range of applications for wood presents numerous opportunities for forest biomass. Utilizing the four main components of wood (cellulose, hemicellulose, lignin and extractives), a wide range of products can be made that meet the demands of numerous established and emerging industries. In addition to more familiar forest products like lumber, pulp and paper, or particleboard, the examples highlighted below demonstrate current and emerging products that can be derived from wood, including forest biomass.


**Chemicals**



**Current uses**

- Fertilizers and soil amendments
- Aromatic compounds
- Thickening agents
- Emulsifiers
- Binders
- Food additives
- Fragrances
- Flavouring
- Activated charcoal

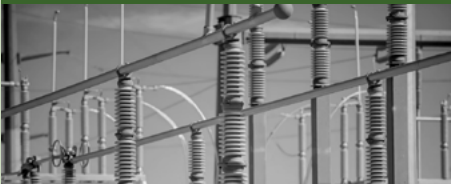
**Materials**



**Current uses**

- Pulp and paper products
- Packaging
- Personal protective equipment
- Timber products
- Veneer
- Particleboard
- Rayon fibres
- Landscaping products

**Energy**



**Current uses**

- Pellet, wood chip, and cordwood heating
- Combined heat and power
- Drying and industrial processes
- Grid electricity

**Emerging uses**

- Sugars and alcohols
- Green solvents and chemicals
- Resins, binders and adhesives
- Medicines and pharmaceuticals
- Paints and dyes
- Plastics and polymers
- Biocoal and bio-coke

**Emerging uses**

- Mass timber products
- Composites
- Textiles
- Carbon fibre
- 3D printing
- Biochar and carbon
- Cellulose nanocrystals and nanofibrils
- Battery energy storage filaments

**Emerging uses**

- Renewable natural gas
- Modern wood heating
- Biodiesel and liquid biofuels
- Community and district energy systems
- Green hydrogen
- Jet fuel



## What is Forest Biomass?

Forest biomass is a broad term that has multiple meanings depending on the intent of its use and the discipline or industry using it. In the most general sense, forest biomass refers to all biological material (living and dead) in forested landscapes.

Consistent with Ontario’s sustainable forest management framework, this action plan focuses on two types of forest biomass that can be converted into bioproducts through new and existing industrial processes:

- **Forest biofibre:** Composed of forest resources (trees or above-ground tree parts) that are not normally used for conventional forest products, and that are made available from Ontario’s provincial forests under an approved forest management plan, or sourced from private woodlots and other forested lands.
- **Mill by-products:** Composed of residues generated from forest product manufacturing (e.g., bark, shavings, sawdust).

In Ontario, the most common use of forest biomass is for bioenergy in the form of heat, power, and combined heat and power (CHP). Use of forest biomass for bioenergy has long been integrated into forest product operations. Mill by-products and forest biofibre are often used as a renewable fuel to provide the necessary heat or electricity to make forest products or to generate electricity for Ontario’s electrical grid. This often leads to diverting mill by-products destined for landfill sites and the utilization of forest biofibre. Ontario is also home to manufacturers which make wood pellets and wood chips for use in domestic, commercial, institutional, and industrial heating systems.



### Spotlight

#### Ontario’s forest biomass sector – a place to grow

Another common and longstanding use of forest biomass is in the province’s landscaping sector, which creates jobs and sustainable products through the use of Ontario’s mill by-products. Gro-Bark, a subsidiary of Walker Industries, has processed bark, wood chips, and log ends generated by the

forest industry to make soil, composting, and mulch products since the 1980s. Its current operations across Ontario’s Golden Horseshoe, eastern, and northeastern regions serve the domestic and U.S. markets for landscaping products by adding value to leftover mill materials. As Ontario looks to recover from

the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and support clean growth, the long success of companies like Gro-Bark serves as an example of the sustainable business opportunities and industry linkages generated as a result of efficient use of forest biomass.

While there are opportunities to diversify the use of Ontario’s forest biomass beyond the province’s current conventional bioenergy and landscaping applications, newer uses also pose technical and operational challenges. Emerging and future products from forest biomass often use specific components of wood, making consistency in feedstocks key to their development and commercial deployment. To convert wood into consistent feedstocks, processes like biochemical refining or thermochemical refining can be

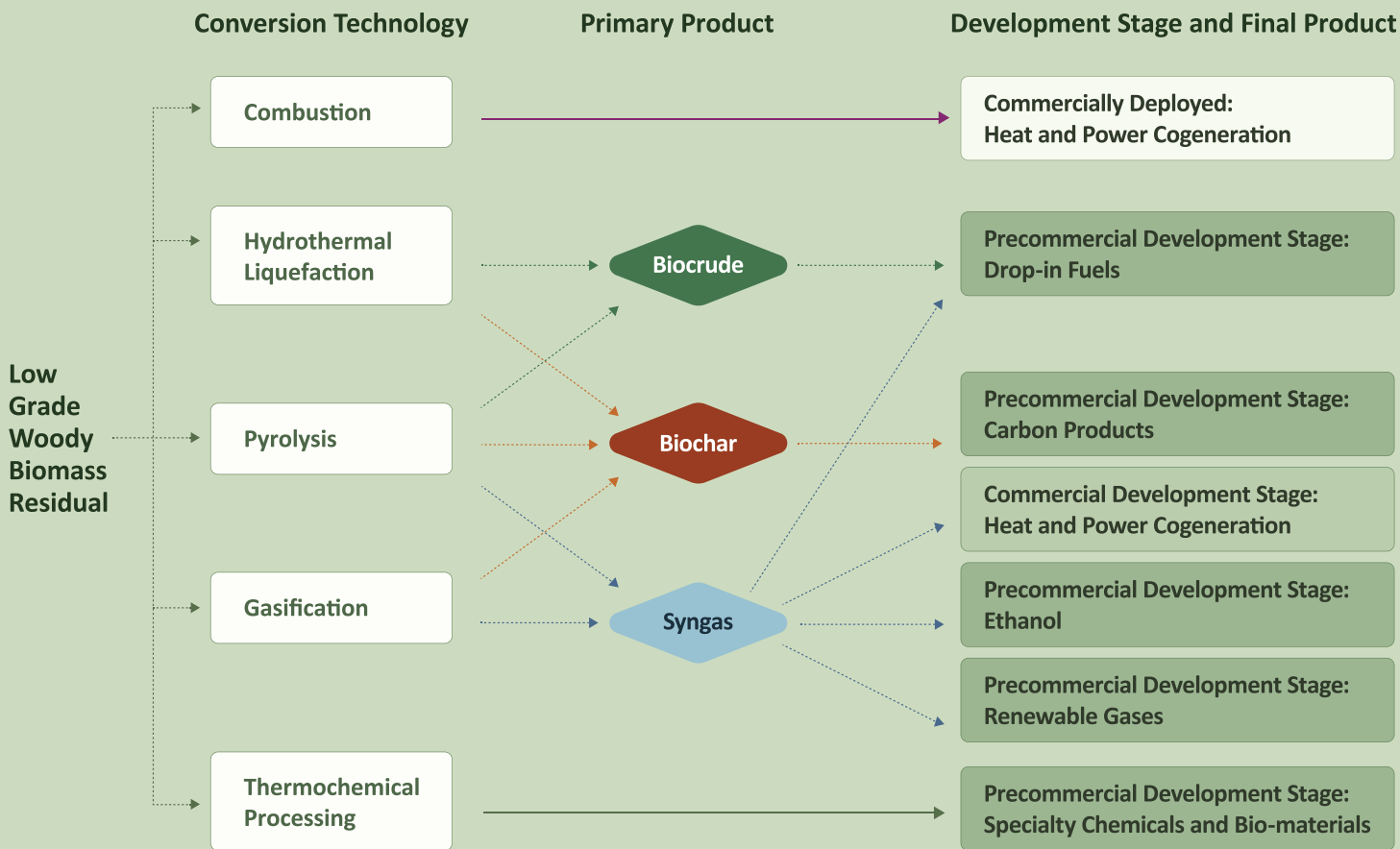
applied. These conversion processes present opportunities for bioproduct creation; however, additional work is needed to make these opportunities commercially viable.

Figure 1 illustrates the technical and commercial readiness of various established and emerging uses for low-grade forest biomass in the form of bark. This demonstrates that new uses for low-grade forest biomass require significant investments in pre-commercial development.

**Figure 1.** Deployable technology pathways for low grade forest biomass such as bark.

# Deployable technology pathways for low grade biomass\*

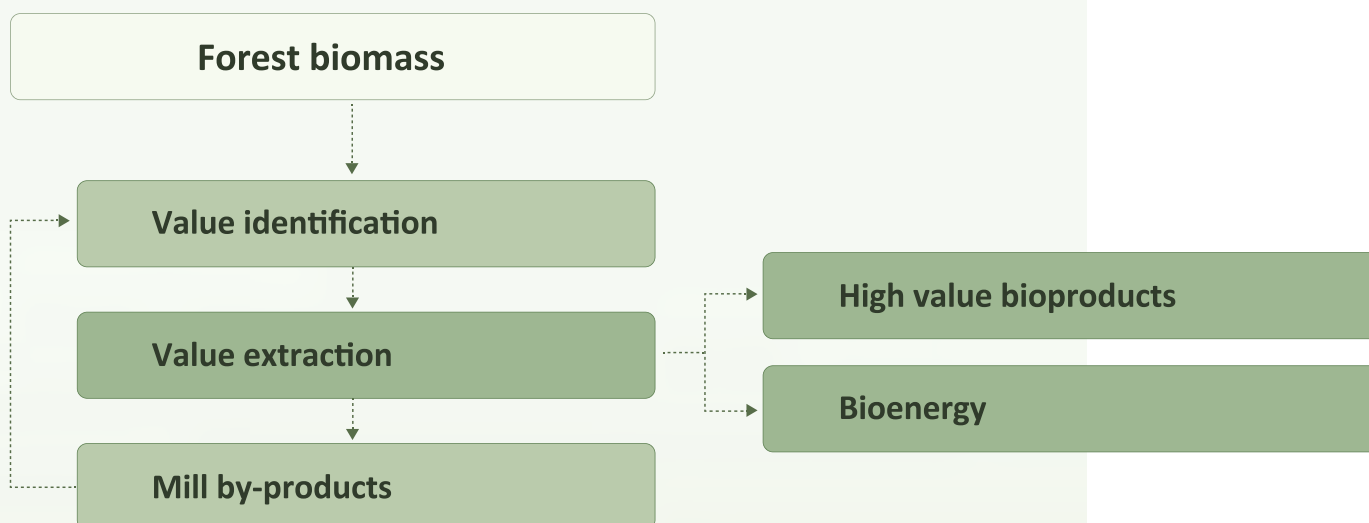
\*adapted from technology benchmarking conducted by CRIBE (Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bioeconomy) in September 2020



Bioenergy production from low-grade forest biomass can support existing and new uses of wood. Figure 2 illustrates the process that aims to maximize value from forest biomass through generation of high value bioproducts and bioenergy. At the value identification phase, feedstocks are assessed for their use

and prepared for processing. Value extraction refers to the processes used to convert forest biomass into high value bioproducts, bioenergy, or both. Production of bioenergy plays an important part in enabling the economic case to produce high value bioproducts by creating a market pathway for low-grade forest biomass.

**Figure 2.** Value identification and extraction from forest biomass. Adapted from FPIInnovations Bio-energy and Bio-chemicals Synthesis Report (2011).



## Spotlight

### Contributing to Ontario's low-carbon hydrogen strategy

As Ontario explores options for a **provincial low-carbon hydrogen strategy**, there is emerging interest in the development of green hydrogen from forest biomass. Green hydrogen is a gaseous low-carbon fuel made from renewable energy sources that has a wide range of potential applications and uses. Increased use of green hydrogen in sectors of the economy like transportation and heating can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while maximizing

value from Ontario's forest biomass resources.

There are multiple technology pathways to produce green hydrogen from forest biomass:

- Gasification and pyrolysis are mature conversion technologies that use controlled application of heat, steam, and oxygen to create renewable syngas which can be processed into green hydrogen. In some cases, the by-products from these processes can be

further refined to create additional products like biocrude or biochar (See Figure 1).

- Electrolysis involves the use of electricity to produce green hydrogen and oxygen from water. As a source of renewable bioenergy, forest biomass can be used to power electrochemical processes that create low-carbon hydrogen gas.



# The case for using forest biomass

Use of forest biomass supports a resource-efficient forest products sector and has advantages over other feedstocks because of the significant contributions it can make to Ontario’s economy, communities, and environment.

Building a resilient economy	Supporting communities and livelihoods	Improving environmental stewardship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diversifies product and revenue streams for the existing forest industry</li><li>• Attracts new business and investment in Ontario’s forested regions</li><li>• Creates new markets and trade opportunities</li><li>• Supports cost competitiveness for new uses of wood</li><li>• Increases revenues and grows the provincial Gross Domestic Product</li><li>• Helps to reduce facility energy and disposal costs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creates more local jobs than fossil fuels imported from outside of Ontario</li><li>• Contributes to community capacity and resilience through training opportunities and local business opportunities</li><li>• Supports Indigenous community heat and energy self-sufficiency</li><li>• Supports opportunities for increased Indigenous participation in forest sector supply chains</li><li>• Provides energy security and enables other infrastructure investments</li><li>• Contributes to production of essential products, such as personal protective equipment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduces waste and disposal of mill by-products in landfills</li><li>• Helps to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by reducing reliance on fossil fuels</li><li>• Creates sustainable, renewable and low-carbon consumer products</li><li>• Avoids use of toxic and ecologically damaging fuels and chemicals</li><li>• Helps to reduce wildland fire risk in the wildland-urban interface</li><li>• Contributes to forest management objectives</li><li>• Promotes healthy and resilient forests by enhancing the forest ecosystem condition through improved forest renewal and maintenance efforts (i.e., silviculture practices)</li></ul>



# Ontario's forest biomass advantage

## Leadership in the green economy

The forest sector is a leader in the emerging green economy. In fact, in the early parts of the 20th century, the forest industry was already producing a range of energy services and bioproducts using mill by-products from both solid wood processing and pulp and paper operations. Until lower-cost petroleum products were introduced in the 1950s, the wood pulping industry was one of the largest suppliers of specialty chemicals in the world.

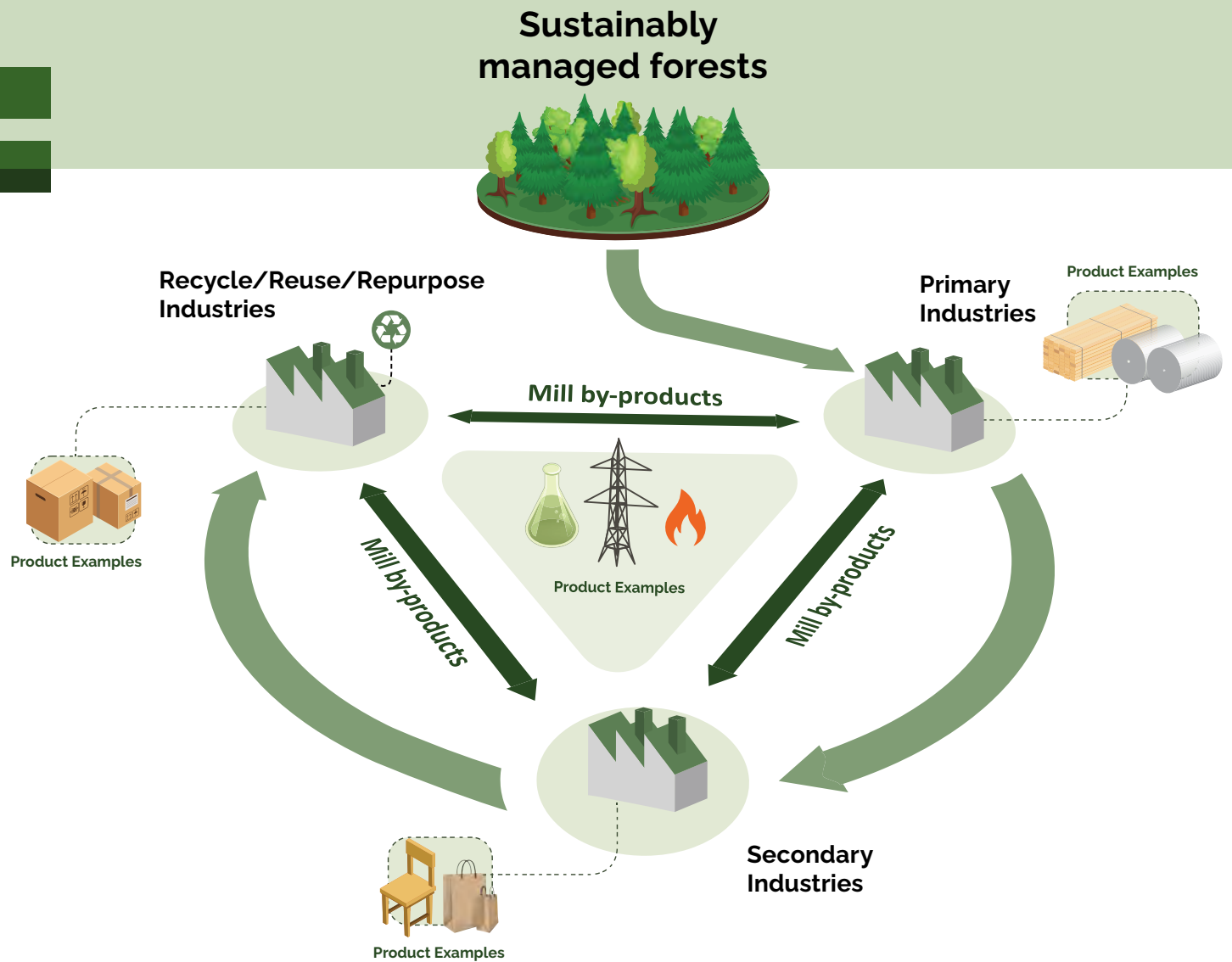
The forest sector supported Ontario's phase out of coal for electricity generation. Following a switch from coal to wood pellets at Ontario Power Generation's Atikokan facility, Ontario is home to North America's largest forest biomass-only electricity generating station. This action demonstrated how Ontario's forest sector can contribute to economic and environmental objectives while positioning the province as a leader in the low-carbon economy.

Ontario's forest sector is highly integrated. For example, mill by-products from one facility serve as the feedstock to produce energy for

another, helping to reduce waste and promotes a circular economy. Figure 3, below, is a simple illustration of how forest biomass (biofibre and mill by-products) supports integration and interconnectivity between forest product industries. The result is a robust set of efficient supply chains that create a diverse range of sustainable industry and consumer products.

The existing infrastructure for manufacturing forest products provides a solid foundation to leverage future investments for the development of new bioproducts and revenue streams while avoiding added pressure on landfills. As other sectors of the economy transition away from fossil fuels and toward more circular and sustainable alternatives, the forest sector can provide valuable supply chain benefits to participants in the emerging green economy.

**Figure 3.** A flow chart illustrating the integration and interconnectivity of forest biomass use within the forest product sector.



## Spotlight

### Integrating biomass in Resolute Forest Products' Northwestern Ontario operations

Resolute's Northwestern Ontario operations are an example of moving towards a circular economy. In a circular economy, resources gain value through process improvements, waste reduction and repurposing. This creates new and innovative business opportunities while reducing a product's environmental footprint.

Wood is harvested to produce pulp and paper at Resolute's Thunder Bay mill and for lumber at their sawmills in Thunder Bay, Atikokan and Ignace.

Wood chips generated from their lumber mills feed their pulp mill; sawdust generated from their lumber mills is used to create wood pellets at their Thunder Bay pellet mill; and wood shavings feed their wood drying kilns. Other sawmill residues, harvest residues and unmarketable trees are consumed by their BioEnergy Generating Station, producing heat for the pulp mill and paper mills and electricity for the provincial grid. Ash leftover from the combustion process is used

by local farmers for soil nutrient enhancement. The BioEnergy Generating Station is the heart of this integrated model allowing Resolute to utilize renewable biomass and be at the forefront of a cleaner more competitive circular economy.

## Sustainable forest policy framework

Ontario is a leader in sustainable forest management. The provincial forest managed under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSa) (Managed Forest) is governed by a robust forest policy framework consisting of legislation, regulations, manuals and guides that provide for long-term forest health. The CFSa provides for the sustainable management of the Managed Forest

in a manner that must have regard for environmental, social and economic values.

Forest management plans (FMP) are developed in accordance with the Forest Management Planning Manual and forest management guides. FMPs provide direction on forest management activities such as road use and construction, where harvest



can occur and the regeneration of trees within all harvested areas. Preparing an FMP includes Indigenous community, public and stakeholder involvement at all stages of plan development.

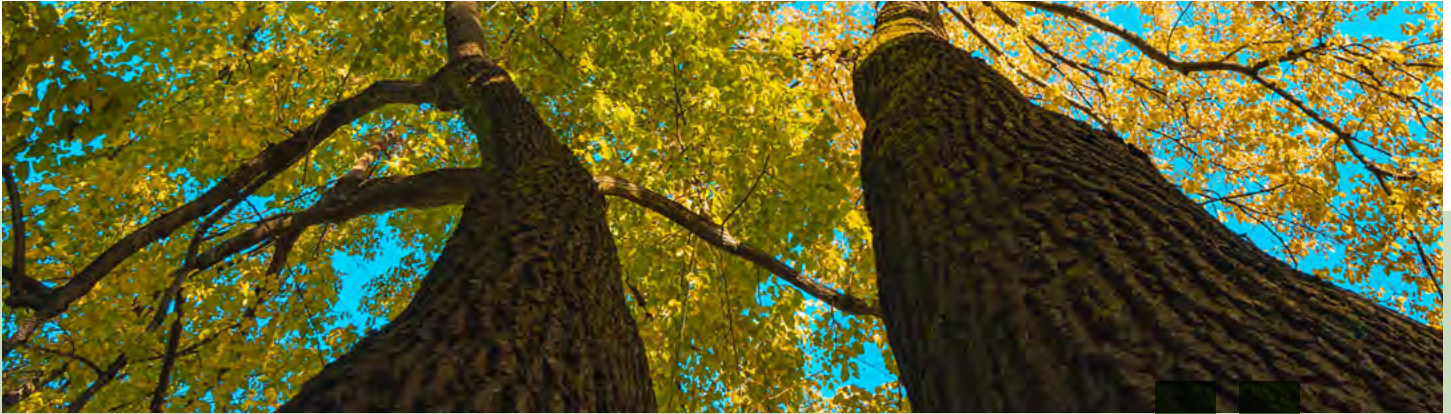
Ontario's forest policy framework uses an adaptive management approach. Through the forest management planning process, forestry professionals gather knowledge (traditional, scientific, and social), plan, implement, monitor, report, evaluate and re-plan forest management activities based on achievement of FMP objectives and the evaluation of new information, science, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

The forest management guides are based on the best available science with the overall objective of forest sustainability. This is achieved by emulating natural disturbance (e.g., wildfire, insect outbreaks, windthrow) and landscape patterns (e.g., young, mature, and old forest patches on the land) while protecting forest values such as soil health, water quality, and biodiversity. The guides provide direction to support the sustainability of forest biomass

harvesting, which can also promote site productivity (e.g., soil quality, tree growth). This approach means that the conservation, allocation and utilization of Ontario's provincial forests, for all forest products, is ecologically sustainable.

Forest management can also occur on private land. Ontario's private woodlots and other forested lands can provide a source of sustainable forest biomass. Ontario supports good forestry practices on private woodlots through initiatives like the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP). The MFTIP provides a property tax incentive for landowners to work with a certified Managed Forest Plan Approver to put in place a Managed Forest Plan for their property, which may include sustainable harvesting according to good forestry practices. When a landowner is preparing for a commercial harvest, to ensure it follows good forestry practices, they should have a prescription prepared by a qualified member of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association such as a Registered Professional Forester (R.P.F.) or a qualified Associate R.P.F.





## Spotlight

### Forest biomass and the Managed Forest carbon cycle

Ontario's forest policy framework supports a healthy and diverse Managed Forest that can withstand the impacts and reduce the effects of climate change, while providing a sustainable supply of renewable wood products (Figure 4). The framework also provides the flexibility to implement forest management actions that can influence the amount of carbon released from or stored in forests and harvested wood products.

Forest ecosystems can moderate the impacts associated with climate change by sequestering carbon from the atmosphere and storing carbon (temporarily) in trees, soil and dead organic matter. The amount of carbon stored in forest ecosystems depends on the balance among forest conditions and

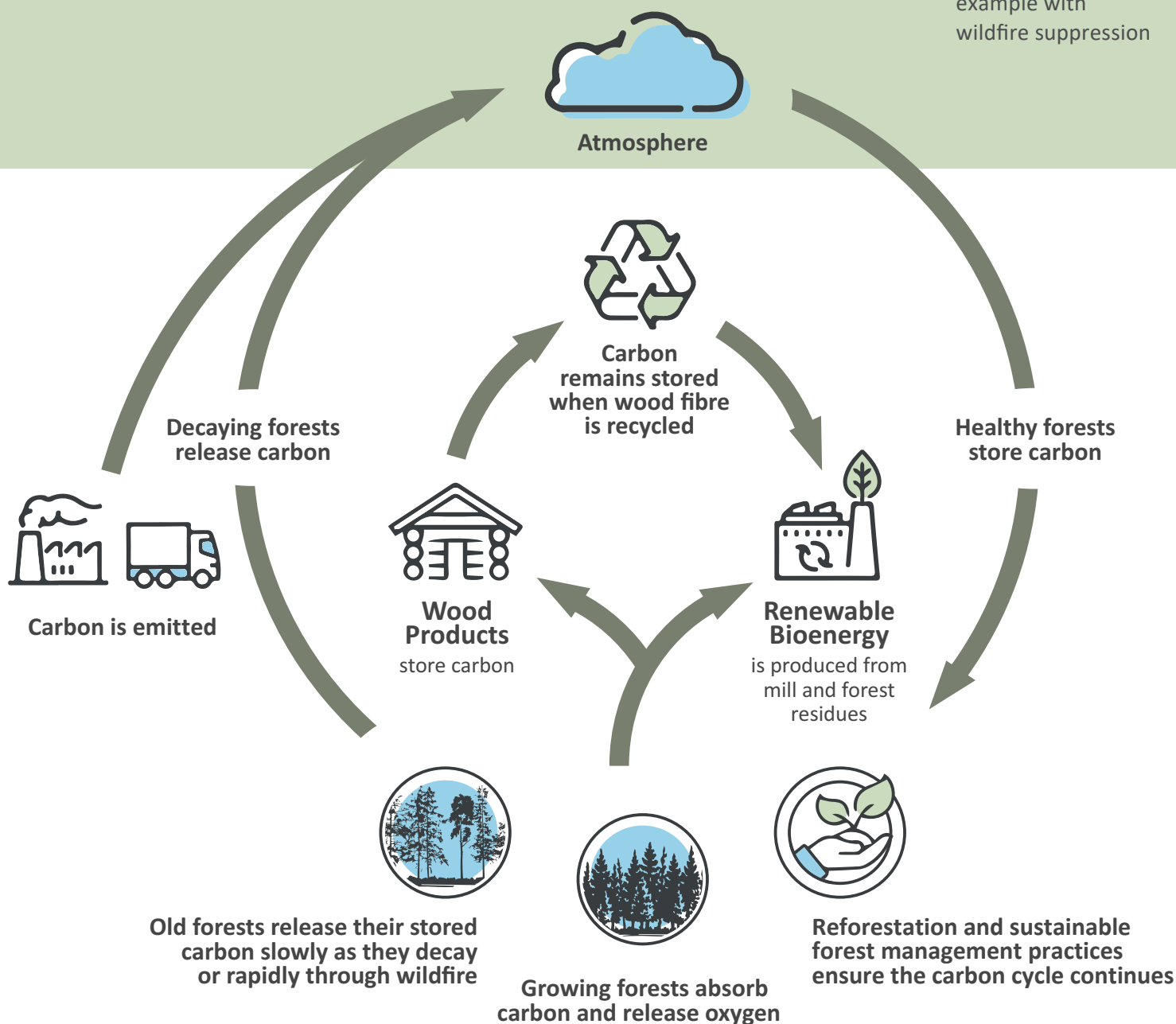
productivity, forest management activities, and the frequency and extent of natural disturbances such as fire, insects, and windthrow. In the long term, maintaining or increasing the amount of carbon stored in forest ecosystems and in wood products can provide carbon and greenhouse gas emission mitigation while also providing other environmental, social and economic services.

As part of approved forest management plans, the harvest and use of forest biomass can provide carbon and other benefits. Harvesting forest biofibre can contribute to good silviculture practices by helping to develop natural and desirable growth conditions for tree species. It can enhance forest utilization, reduce waste, and contribute to the

use of lower quality logs that currently have no markets. Using sustainably-sourced forest biofibre and mill by-products can provide carbon and climate benefits by substituting carbon-intensive products in buildings and construction, providing renewable feedstocks for industries such as steel, lime, and cement, and when replacing fossil fuels used to generate heat and power. As new data and information become available, Ontario's adaptive management approach provides for the long-term sustainability of forest biomass harvesting and use.



**Figure 4.** Sustainable forest management and carbon storage using an Ontario boreal forest example with wildfire suppression



## Available supply

Approved forest management plans for Ontario's Managed Forests identify 30 million cubic metres of wood supply that can be harvested annually. Currently, approximately 15 million cubic metres of wood supply is harvested per year. The unused wood supply could potentially support further investment in the forest sector. Increasing the harvest within the limits of what can be sustainably used can be accomplished while maintaining Ontario's high standards of forest management. In particular, forest biomass harvesting offers opportunities for the forest industry to further utilize the available supply identified in approved

forest management plans. By helping to reduce the cost of accessing stands and encouraging more natural and desirable growing conditions, forest biomass harvesting can play a unique role in supporting cost competitiveness and putting Ontario's available supply of wood to work.

Opportunity also exists to utilize forest biomass on private woodlots and other forested land. Furthermore, mill by-products from forest product manufacturing operations provide an additional supply of sustainable materials that can be used in new product and revenue streams.

## Spotlight

### Whitesand Bioeconomy Centre

Whitesand First Nation, in Northwestern Ontario, is preparing for the construction of a Bioeconomy Centre to support new forest biomass and wood processing facilities. The Centre will include a 6.5-megawatt combined heat and power plant, a wood pellet plant, and a wood processing and merchandizing yard. The project will create approximately 77 direct and 55 indirect full-time jobs in the communities of Whitesand First Nation and Armstrong Station,

and represents a decade long development partnership between Ontario, Canada and Whitesand.

Whitesand First Nation has partnered with Resolute Forest Products on wood supply management. Once their pellet plant and co-generation plant are in operation, they will be using 264,128 cubic metres of forest biofibre per year, sourced from hardwood and underutilized softwood (undersized trees

and tree tops) from the Wabadowgang Noopming and Black Spruce Forests. Utilizing these unmarketable species and parts of trees will allow the sustainable harvest of additional low-sawlog-quality stands that were previously considered uneconomical to harvest. This will result in an additional 154,200 cubic metres of softwood logs being feasible for harvest and use by Resolute's Thunder Bay mills.

# Innovation networks

Innovation and collaboration will be key to transforming the forest sector and increasing the use of available forest biomass resources. Fortunately, Ontario is home to a growing cluster of expertise in forest product innovation and the forest bioeconomy. In 2009 the province established the Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bio-Economy (CRIBE) to support new job and business creation in the bioeconomy using forest biomass. Alongside other forest innovation stakeholders like FPInnovations and industry associations, CRIBE supports research and development and contributes to the knowledge base around Ontario’s

forest resources and forest product supply chains. Building from regional and provincial strengths in forestry, CRIBE established Nextfor, an industry-led ecosystem of collaborators aiming to accelerate new technologies and next generation forest products in Ontario.

In 2021 Ontario’s bioeconomy took another step forward with the beta release of ForestEDGE, a web-based geo-spatial platform developed by CRIBE to help communicate information about Ontario’s available forest resources and to attract investments in new and cutting-edge uses of wood.



## Spotlight

### Thunder Bay’s Forest Bioeconomy Cluster

In addition to hosting CRIBE, Thunder Bay is emerging as a regional cluster of expertise through the development and commercialization of forest biomass.

**Research and demonstration facilities:** Lakehead University is building research strengths in wood product processing and transformation through demonstration facilities and research labs such as its

Biorefining Research Institute (BRI), Green Chemistry Lab, Wood Science Testing Laboratory, and Fire Testing and Research Laboratory. The BRI creates research and development opportunities, new technology models and jobs, and value-added products from renewable resources that can ultimately lead to reduced dependence on fossil fuels and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

**Piloting innovative new processes and products:** Thunder Bay is home to the TMP-Bio Plant, an FPInnovations supported project in Resolute Forest Products’ local pulp and paper complex. TMP-Bio can treat 100 metric tonnes of biomass annually and produces lignin and sugars that will be used to develop new bioproducts, diversifying Resolute’s product mix and adding new revenue streams.

## Growing community support for forest biomass

Across Ontario there is growing interest in leveraging the province's forest biomass resources to meet community energy needs, create local jobs and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Community heating and energy projects like the Wiikwemkoong Wood Heating Initiative are being pursued by several groups, including Indigenous communities looking to implement forest biomass projects and become active partners in forest product supply chains.

In other parts of Ontario, the use of wood pellets, generated from sawdust and mill shavings, and wood

chips provides an affordable and reliable source of heating that displaces imported carbon-intensive fuels. As Ontario's communities explore options for local climate-friendly infrastructure, many are looking to the example set in northern European countries, where centrally located bioenergy producers feed clean heat and power to efficient, multi-building district energy systems.

### Spotlight

#### Wikwemikong's Bioheat Initiative

Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory in northern Ontario is undertaking a Bioheat Initiative to become energy self-sufficient and to create forest bioeconomy-related jobs. The Bioheat Initiative involves vertically integrating Wikwemikong's community wood heating project with their Nairn Centre Wood Pellet Plant project.

The community wood heating project is modernizing homeowners' existing wood heating stoves with high-efficiency wood heating appliances and reducing the use of fossil fuels in heating

community buildings and residences. So far, this project has seen eight community buildings and 102 homes converted to wood pellet heating. A further 40 residences are slated for complete switching from fossil fuels to pellet heating.

Sourcing their own fuel is the next step for Wikwemikong's Bioheat Initiative through the Nairn Centre Wood Pellet Plant project. The project is to construct a pellet mill next to EACOM's Nairn Centre sawmill, their wood supply partner. The new plant will have the capacity to produce 150,000 tonnes of



premium wood pellets annually to supply the community, Northeastern Ontario, and export markets.



# Unlocking Ontario's potential

In Ontario, forest biomass is primarily used to produce heat, power, or CHP and it is a feedstock for the manufacture of wood pellets and landscaping products. There are several obstacles that complicate diversification of forest biomass, making it likely that heat, power or CHP will remain the primary end-use for Ontario's forest biomass in the short-term. To enable new uses for forest biomass the province must begin to lay the groundwork for commercialization of new bioproducts to be ready for future opportunities as they emerge.

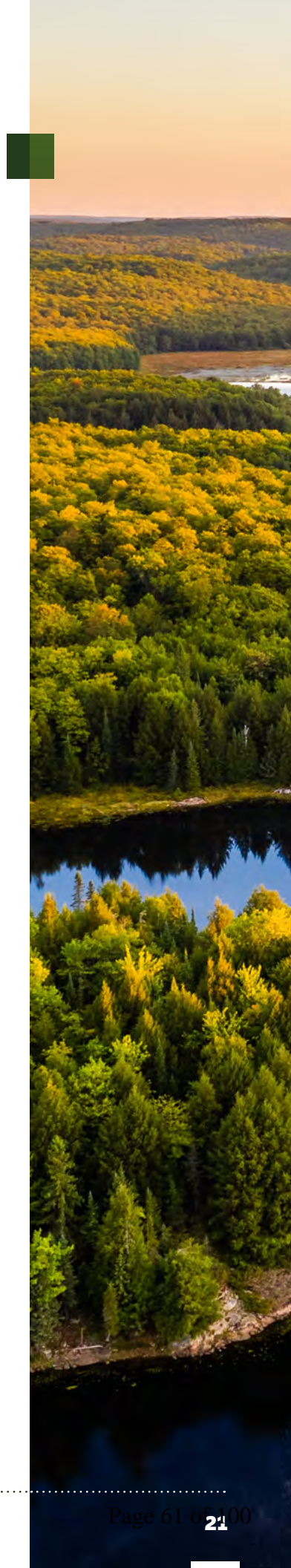
According to Statistics Canada the five most cited obstacles faced by biomass establishments are difficulty entering the commercial marketplace, cost of biomass, cost and timeliness of regulatory approvals, lack of financing, and unreliable quantity of biomass.<sup>1</sup> Considering these barriers and recommendations from the Working Group, this action plan addresses

areas Ontario can most influence, as indicated by the objectives in the following section.

The Government of Ontario has taken initial steps to encourage the use of forest biomass. Forest biofibre is managed according to the province's rigorous sustainable forest management framework. Projects that use forest biomass are considered in economic development and industry support programs. Ontario has streamlined regulations for wood combustors and adopted world-class standards into the province's air quality regulatory framework to enable the use of forest biomass in heating applications. The province's climate policy and Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan recognize the role that forest biomass can play in reducing emissions when used as a bioenergy feedstock for other industries (e.g., steel, lime, cement) and as a heating fuel for homes and communities.

<sup>1</sup> Rancourt, Y., C. Neumeyer and N. Zou. 2017. [Results of the Bioproducts Production and Development Survey 2015](#). Statistics Canada. Accessed September 2, 2020.

**Note:** refers to agricultural and forest biomass





## Spotlight

### Reducing regulatory burden

The Government of Ontario has made advancements to improving the policy environment for the use of forest biomass for heat and combined heat and power (CHP), including:

- Creation of Guideline A14: Guideline for the Control of Air Emissions from Small Wood-Fired Combustors (< 3 MW), to streamline approvals and reduce burden for low-risk wood-fired combustion systems and by adding certified small wood-fired combustors into the Environmental Activity Sector Registry.
- Introduction of new alternate rules under the Operating Engineers Regulation that reduce unnecessary burden on bioheat and CHP system operating engineers while maintaining public safety standards.
- [Ontario is helping more communities and businesses benefit from combined heat and power \(CHP\) technologies that use wood biomass as fuel](#) by exempting certain low-impact CHP systems from requiring an environmental approval and better aligning the required level of provincial approval with other comparable energy technologies, and with the level of environmental impact.

As part of the 2021 Fall Economic Statement, Ontario is proposing to fund the above-market costs of near-term re-contracting of existing biomass electricity generators in Northern Ontario through the Renewable Cost Shift initiative. Funding these contracts would support clean electricity generation, while maintaining electricity rate stability for businesses and households. Taking this approach will provide time for the execution of actions listed in the following section of this plan.

To unlock Ontario's forest biomass

potential, collaboration between all forest sector partners, including federal, provincial, and local governments, industry, Indigenous communities, and research organizations, will be essential. A strong and growing bioproduct sector will also require an engaged public, which understands and values the environmental, social, and economic contributions that forest biomass can deliver for Ontario. Under the right conditions, co-operation will help to diversify the forest sector's product mix, augment existing markets for





forest biomass with new users, expand supply chains, and build public awareness. By leveraging the province's advantages and existing economic base, there are significant opportunities to support supply chain integration with other large industrial and manufacturing operations.

Community-based renewable energy, low carbon fuels, bio-based plastics and packaging, sustainable chemicals, and natural consumer products also present new opportunities to attract investment and create jobs across the province.

## Spotlight

### Collaboration in the forest

Ontario recognizes that Indigenous communities have an important relationship with the land, and exercise Aboriginal and treaty rights in forests. In *Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy*, the province committed to continuing to build strong, mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships with Indigenous communities across the province. This Forest Biomass Action Plan is intended to help deliver on that commitment and can contribute to reconciliation between Indigenous people and the province.

As Ontario works toward securing jobs and ensuring sustainability through the use of forest biomass, our government recognizes the need to focus on capacity building, partnerships

and community readiness. These actions will help build holistic, culturally relevant pathways for Indigenous community involvement in biomass use.

Reconciliation, in the context of this action plan, empowers Indigenous communities to take a leadership role in developing a collaborative working model to better participate in community biomass use. Collaboration may take various forms, including: providing information, dialogue, use of Traditional Ecological Knowledge and working with communities to support their use of biomass. Actions taken through this plan will be collaborative as opposed to prescriptive, in order to reflect the vision, capacities and priorities of individual communities.

# Objectives and actions

The goals of the Forest Biomass Action Plan are to secure jobs, support economic development, and encourage sustainability in the forest sector through the use of Ontario's

forest biomass. To support these goals, we have identified five objectives, each with a set of actions that will be pursued over the five-year term of this action plan:

- Objective 1:** Identify pathways to markets for forest biomass.
- Objective 2:** Support demand for forest bioenergy and bioproducts.
- Objective 3:** Improve the business and regulatory environments for the use of forest biomass.
- Objective 4:** Support holistic, culturally relevant pathways for Indigenous community involvement in forest biomass value chains to support reconciliation between Indigenous communities and the Crown.
- Objective 5:** Communicate, collaborate, and inform on forest biomass opportunities.

In the short term, we aim to have a better understanding of Ontario's forest biomass resources and determine where our forest biomass opportunities are in the emerging green economy. Over the longer term, this understanding will assist in stimulating new investments and complement government efforts to support demand and improve the business and policy environments for forest biomass use. Acknowledging Indigenous leadership in the

development of Ontario's forest biomass resources, Ontario will work collaboratively to increase Indigenous participation in, and benefits from, forest biomass supply chains. As the actions in this plan are implemented, Ontario will actively engage a broad range of partners and stakeholders to overcome barriers and help realize new and innovative uses for the province's forest biomass resources.





## **Objective 1:**

### **Identify pathways to markets for forest biomass.**

**Action 1.1:** Further refine Ontario's inventory of forest biomass using tools such as CRIBE's Economic Fibre Supply Model.

**Action 1.2:** Publish a report that summarizes the types of forest bioproducts and their technological and commercial readiness.

**Action 1.3:** Publish a report that describes the current and future market demand for bioproducts made from Ontario's forest biomass.

**Action 1.4:** Complete a jurisdictional scan to inform bioproduct development and commercialization approaches for Ontario's forest biomass.

**Action 1.5:** Develop a life cycle inventory for traditional and non-traditional wood products (material/energy inputs and emissions), study biomass carbon dynamics, and refine lifecycle impact assessment models to build understanding of the environmental performance of forest biomass.

**Action 1.6:** Support development of regional clusters that increase value generation from the use of forest biomass.

**Action 1.7:** Conduct collaborative research studies on soil quality, stand development, productivity, and biodiversity to ensure long-term ecological sustainability of forest biomass harvesting to inform policy under Ontario's Policy Framework for Sustainable Forests.

## **Objective 2:**

### **Support demand for forest bioenergy and bioproducts.**

**Action 2.1:** Ensure that existing facilities that consume biomass for electricity generation and are approaching the end of their contract are provided the opportunity to negotiate a new contract with the Independent Electricity System Operator, balancing the benefits to the forestry sector and regional economies with value for the ratepayer and taxpayer.

**Action 2.2:** Publish a report that quantifies the financial contribution of forest biomass to individual facilities and the entire forest sector, and its socio-economic contribution to local communities and the provincial economy.

**Action 2.3:** Provide resources for the development of community-led projects that use forest biomass.

**Action 2.4:** Develop a provincial bioheat strategy to increase the production and domestic consumption of biofuels for heat, drawing from expertise of the Ontario Bioheat Initiative and input from a range of partners and stakeholders.

**Action 2.5:** Engage with potential industry users to integrate forest biomass into supply chains.



### **Objective 3:**

## **Improve the business and regulatory environments for the use of forest biomass.**

**Action 3.1:** Review and update Ontario's Forest Biofibre Directive.

**Action 3.2:** Streamline permitting and reduce regulatory burden for all sectors that use forest biomass.

**Action 3.3:** Look for opportunity to make forest biomass projects eligible in relevant economic development and business support programs.

**Action 3.4:** Integrate the benefits of forest biomass use in provincial Emissions Performance Standards and relevant provincial strategies.

**Action 3.5:** Advocate on behalf of Ontario's forest biomass users and provincial interests during the creation and implementation of national climate change initiatives, such as the Clean Fuel Standard.



#### **Objective 4:**

### **Support holistic, culturally relevant pathways for Indigenous community involvement in forest biomass value chains to support reconciliation between Indigenous communities and the Crown.**

**Action 4.1:** As part of readiness building, provide opportunities for Indigenous businesses to build capacity and knowledge in the use of forest biomass. This includes understanding of:

- where biomass feedstocks are available and where they present feasible opportunities;
- how to optimize location to create best opportunities for success;
- complexity in forest product supply chains;
- Ontario's regulatory environment for forestry activities; and
- how to access forest biofibre through the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.

**Action 4.2:** Work with Indigenous communities to take a stepwise approach to bring about greater Indigenous involvement and benefit from the use of forest biomass:

- create network connections;
- foster partnerships with industry; and
- encourage agreements between industry and Indigenous communities.

**Action 4.3:** Support Indigenous participation in forest biomass project investments through provincial funding programs and explore additional opportunities for enabling investments through capacity building, skills training, access to expertise, and knowledge transfer.

**Action 4.4:** Support Indigenous community applications to federal funding programs for projects that use forest biomass.

**Action 4.5:** Facilitate preferred access to forest biomass for proposals with Indigenous participation, where and when forest biomass is available.

**Action 4.6:** Support Indigenous communities in Ontario's Far North in the development of cost effective bioenergy systems to replace base load power generation using diesel fuels with local forest biomass.

## Objective 5:

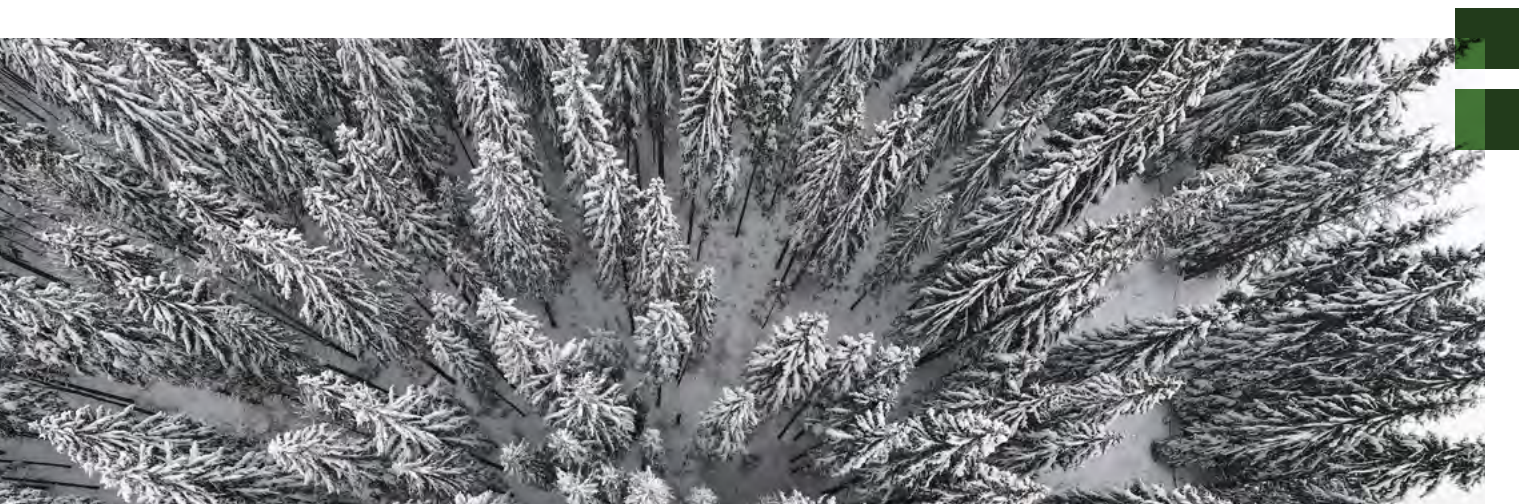
# Communicate, collaborate, and inform on forest biomass opportunities.

**Action 5.1:** Create information, communication, and marketing materials to support prospective forest biomass users.

**Action 5.2:** Support and participate in forest sector innovation networks that aim to deliver solutions for challenges to using forest biomass.

**Action 5.3:** The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry will facilitate discussions between other ministries, federal agencies, investors, technology providers, and forest sector partners to increase the use of forest biomass.

**Action 5.4:** Engage with partners and stakeholders to ensure alignment between regional, provincial and federal initiatives.



# The road ahead

This action plan is an important component of achieving the vision identified in *Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy*. Four pillars of action were identified in the Strategy: promoting stewardship and sustainability, putting more wood to work, improving our cost competitiveness, and fostering innovation, markets and talent.

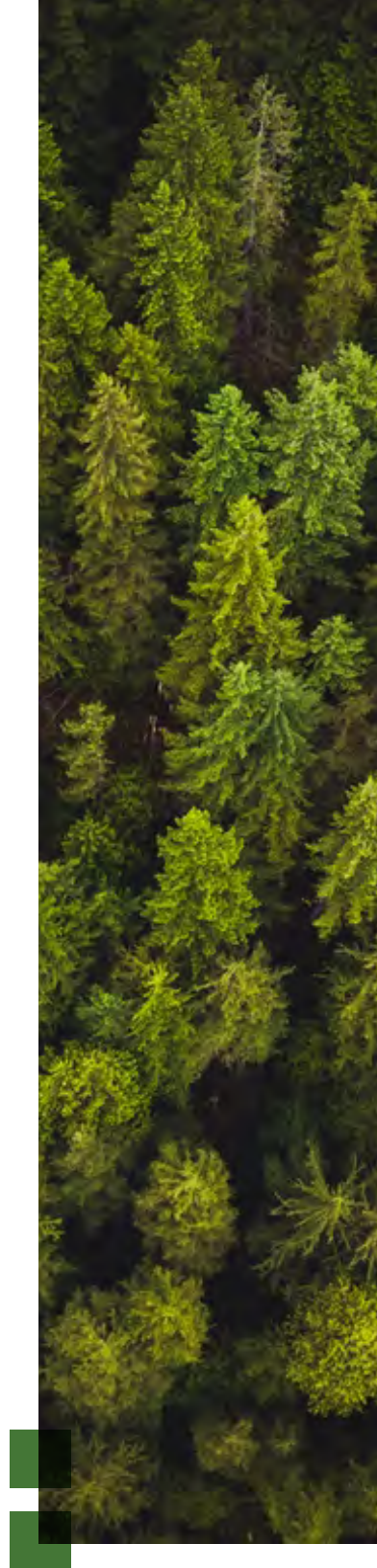
As Ontario looks to strengthen its position as a world leader in making and selling sustainable and renewable forest products, it is clear that the actions listed in the province's Forest Biomass Action Plan will play a role in supporting and reinforcing each of the key pillars of *Sustainable Growth*.

The ongoing sustainability of Ontario's forests depends on good stewardship and effective forest management that is adaptive, collaborative, and relies on the best available science together with Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

Integration of forest biomass into the province's various industrial sectors is key to the long-term viability of Ontario's forests in light of a changing climate. By taking action to increase forest biomass use, the province can realize significant economic and environmental benefits while putting its available supply of wood to work for the people and communities of Ontario.

Faced with changing markets and strategic challenges, enhancing the cost competitiveness of our forest sector will also require effective uses and markets for all forest resources, including forest biofibre and mill by-products generated by existing facilities.

By supporting our government's priorities of job creation, reducing administrative burden, and promoting growth and prosperity, the Forest Biomass Action Plan will contribute



**The ongoing sustainability of Ontario's forests depends on good stewardship and effective forest management.**

to our government's vision for a resilient forest sector that fosters innovation and sustainable markets, and engages and inspires the best talent.

Actions laid out in this plan will be implemented over the course of five years. The Appendix provides a summary of the actions and their estimated timeframes. Progress and completion of these actions will be tracked through an interim (2023)

and final report (2026) to be published on Ontario.ca.

Indicators for each objective are identified below. They will be used to track progress on objective achievement. To achieve the objectives set out in this action plan our government looks forward to the continued contribution and advice provided by the Working Group.

### **Objective 1:**

## **Identify pathways to markets for forest biomass.**

### **Indicators:**

- Information regarding Ontario's forest biomass characteristics. For example, types, quality, quantity, geography and economics
- Potential forest biomass markets, commercial and technological readiness

### **Objective 2:**

## **Support demand for forest bioenergy and bioproducts.**

### **Indicators:**

- Socio-economic contribution of forest biomass to local communities and the provincial economy
- Use of forest biomass in operations and supply chains
- Regional interest and implementation of forest biomass projects

### **Objective 3:**

## **Improve the business and regulatory environments for the use of forest biomass.**

### **Indicators:**

- Regulatory environment for the use of forest biomass
- Biomass projects receiving supports from federal and/or provincial funding programs
- The role of forest biomass in climate change initiatives and programs

### **Objective 4:**

## **Support holistic, culturally relevant pathways for Indigenous community involvement in forest biomass value chains to support reconciliation between Indigenous communities and the Crown.**

### **Indicator:**

- Communities have the capacity, knowledge, and ability to participate in the use of forest biomass

### **Objective 5:**

## **Communicate, collaborate, and inform on forest biomass opportunities.**

### **Indicators:**

- Materials to support prospective forest biomass users
- Participation in stakeholder discussions, industry innovation network events and workshops



# Appendix

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## Actions to be completed by 2022

- **Action 1.2:** Publish a report that summarizes the types of forest bioproducts and their technology and commercial readiness.
- **Action 1.4:** Complete a jurisdictional scan to inform bioproduct development and commercialization approaches for Ontario's forest biomass.
- **Action 2.1:** Ensure that existing facilities that consume biomass for electricity generation and are approaching the end of their contract are provided the opportunity to negotiate a new contract with the Independent Electricity System Operator, balancing the benefits to the forestry sector and regional economies with value for the ratepayer and taxpayer.
- **Action 2.2:** Publish a report that quantifies the financial contribution of forest biomass to individual facilities and the entire forest sector, and its socio-economic contribution to local communities and the provincial economy.

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## Actions to be completed by 2023

- **Action 1.1:** Further refine Ontario's inventory of forest biomass using tools such as CRIBE's Economic Fibre Supply Model.
- **Action 1.3:** Publish a report that describes the current and future market demand for bioproducts made from Ontario's forest biomass.
- **Action 3.1:** Review and update Ontario's Forest Biofibre Directive.

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## Actions to be completed by 2026

- **Action 1.5:** Develop a life cycle inventory for traditional and non-traditional wood products (material/energy inputs and emissions), study biomass carbon dynamics, and refine lifecycle impact assessment models to build understanding of the environmental performance of forest biomass.
- **Action 1.6:** Support development of regional clusters that increase value generation from the use of forest biomass.
- **Action 2.3:** Provide resources for the development of community-led projects that use forest biomass.

- **Action 2.4:** Develop a provincial bioheat strategy to increase the production and domestic consumption of biofuels for heat, drawing from expertise of the Ontario Bioheat Initiative and input from a range of partners and stakeholders.
- **Action 2.5:** Engage with potential industry users to integrate forest biomass into supply chains.
- **Action 3.2:** Streamline permitting and reduce regulatory burden for all sectors which use forest biomass.
- **Action 3.3:** Look for opportunity to make forest biomass projects eligible in relevant economic development and business support programs.
- **Action 3.4:** Integrate the benefits of forest biomass use in provincial Emissions Performance Standards and relevant provincial strategies.
- **Action 3.5:** Advocate on behalf of Ontario's forest biomass users and provincial interests during the creation and implementation of national climate change initiatives, such as the Clean Fuel Standard.
- **Action 4.1:** As part of readiness building, provide opportunities for Indigenous businesses to build capacity and knowledge in the use of forest biomass. This includes understanding of:
  - where biomass feedstocks are available and where they present feasible opportunities;
  - how to optimize location to create best opportunities for success;
  - complexity in forest product supply chains;
  - Ontario's regulatory environment for forestry activities; and
  - how to access forest biofibre through the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.
- **Action 4.2:** Work with Indigenous communities to take a stepwise approach to bring about greater Indigenous involvement and benefit from the use of forest biomass:
  - create network connections;
  - foster partnerships with industry; and
  - encourage agreements between industry and Indigenous communities.
- **Action 5.1:** Create information, communication, and marketing materials to support prospective forest biomass users.



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## Operational actions to be sustained

These are actions that will continue through the duration of the Forest Biomass Action Plan and into the future.

- **Action 1.7:** Conduct collaborative research studies on soil quality, stand development, productivity, and biodiversity to ensure long-term ecological sustainability of forest biomass harvesting.
- **Action 4.3:** Support Indigenous participation in forest biomass project investments through provincial funding programs and explore additional opportunities for enabling investments through capacity building, skills training, access to expertise, and knowledge transfer.
- **Action 4.4:** Support Indigenous community applications to federal funding programs for projects that use forest biomass.
- **Action 4.5:** Facilitate preferred access to forest biomass for proposals with Indigenous participation, where and when forest biomass is available.
- **Action 4.6:** Support Indigenous communities in Ontario's Far North in the development of cost effective bioenergy systems to replace base load power generation using diesel fuels with local forest biomass.
- **Action 5.2:** Support and participate in forest sector innovation networks that aim to deliver solutions for challenges to using forest biomass.
- **Action 5.3:** NDMNRF will facilitate discussions between other ministries, federal agencies, investors, technology providers, and forest sector partners to increase the use of forest biomass.
- **Action 5.4:** Engage with partners and stakeholders to ensure alignment between regional, provincial and federal initiatives.





# Town of Fort Frances



## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Modified to incorporate amendments authorized by By-Law 02/03-B

Council Adopted:  
February 10, 2003  
By-Law #02/03

MAH Approved:  
With modifications  
September 8, 2003

Council Adopted (as modified):  
September 22, 2003  
By-Law #02/03-A

Modified:  
December 22, 2008  
By-Law 02/03-B



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3. Proposed Looping of Infrastructure

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- A. Economic Development Financial Incentive Programs

## **1.0 PLAN BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. Foundation and Basis**

The Town of Fort Frances has undertaken a number of studies in recent years that recognize the changing role of the Town towards economic development and the need to facilitate a broader and more diverse range of uses throughout the community.

Various and significant areas of the community are available for development and although the permitted uses generally exemplify the current and anticipated uses, it is recognized that the opportunity exists to attract and broaden potential prospective developers to the Town of Fort Frances through innovative and unprecedented methods.

In June 2002 Council considered and approved in principle, the establishment of various financial incentive programs as a means toward attracting development to the community.

This Community Improvement Plan was adopted by Council and represents a strong indication by Council to the community that the future health and vitality of the Town is important and that the Community Improvement Project Areas identified, and defined by by-law, are deserving of special attention.

The Planning and Development Division will administer this Community Improvement Plan, with assistance provided by various other Departments and Divisions assigned the responsibility for specific implementation of projects.

### **1.2. Strategic Plan**

In the fall of 2001, Council for the Town of Fort Frances initiated a series of strategic planning sessions geared toward establishing a common set of priorities for the community. Facilitated by Margaret Wanlin with assistance from community members and staff, the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of the community were identified and recommendations made to utilize, remedy, achieve and reduce those issues defined.

Strategic planning sessions continue on an ongoing basis to determine the specific steps necessary to facilitate the established priorities and with further analysis of the Strategic Plan appearing to indicate a number of goals and objectives directly and indirectly related to economic development, this community improvement plan is a means to that end.

The Strategic Plan of the Town of Fort Frances, adopted by Council on November 26, 2001, contained the following goals and action strategies together with recommendations towards achievement:

- To deliver core services in an efficient and effective manner
- To have in place a level of information technology that is competitive within the region

and country

- To work in collaboration with neighbouring First Nations on issues of economic development and other areas of mutual interest
- To examine and, where appropriate, implement strategies which generate revenues from within the Town and as a result of partnerships outside the Town
- To be proactive and flexible in attracting and maintaining the commercial/industrial tax base
- To complete the waterfront development project to meet community needs
- To be proactive in design and marketing to attract tourists and become a tourist destination.
- To optimize the opportunity of our location on the border and proximity to American markets

### **1.3 Official Plan and Zoning By-Law**

The project areas subject to this Community Improvement Plan consist of those areas designated as “Working”, Resource Development”, “Recreation”, Living Area” and “Downtown Business” Areas” shown on Schedule “A” of the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan and more specifically zoned as commercial, industrial and resource development on Schedule “A” of Town of Fort Frances Zoning By-Law #8/98.

It is intended that future development of the Town provide increased opportunities for public access, encourage a greater mix of land uses, and recognize and protect existing key natural features.

This Community Improvement Plan constitutes the legislative basis and context for the implementation of these ongoing programs and has been developed in accordance with Section 28 of The Planning Act (R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13.), as amended. The Town of Fort Frances Official Plan was approved by MMAH on August 19, 1998. Section 3.1.8. thereof (entitled “Community Improvement”) designates the entire Town of Fort Frances as a community improvement area and, in addition to policy statements contained throughout, describes the Town’s policies for community improvement pursuant to Part IV of The Planning Act (R.S.O. 1990, c.P13).

## **2. COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

### **2.1 Introduction and Purpose**

The Community Improvement Project Areas (C.I.P.A.) of the Town of Fort Frances were designated by By-law # 01/03 of Council on February 10, 2003 in accordance with Section 28 of

The Planning Act (R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13.). A public meeting of Council to consider this Community Improvement Plan was held on October 28, 2002, notices of which were published in the Fort Frances Times on October 7, 2002, October 9, 2003 and October 23, 2002.

This Community Improvement Plan will accomplish the following:

- Facilitate the efficient and orderly implementation of the community improvement policies of the Official Plan of the Town of Fort Frances
- Identify and describe the Community Improvement Project Areas to which this plan relates
- Provide rationalization and the fundamental basis of the Community Improvement Project Areas
- Confirm the commitment of the Town of Fort Frances to encourage and support continued economic growth and investment in the community geared toward rehabilitation, renovation and relocation through utilization of unprecedented and innovative means.
- Provide a brief and general outline of the Incentive Programs endorsed by the Town of Fort Frances.
- Provide sufficient flexibility to enable Council to make minor changes to the Plan without formal amendment.

## **2.2 Identification of Community Improvement Project Areas**

The boundaries of the Community Improvement Project Areas are shown on Figure 1 attached to and forming a part of this Community Improvement Plan.

It is the intent of Council that opportunities for development not be limited to a specific area of the municipality and, to that end, has designated three distinct project areas that collectively represent the entire municipality. Specific projects, distinct to a Project Area have been identified as well as general projects that relate to the municipality in its entirety. Specific projects must be within a designated Community Improvement Project Area to qualify for financial incentives offered in accordance with this Plan.

Amendments to the boundaries of the Community Improvement Project Areas may be enacted by by-law of the Town of Fort Frances Council in conformity with the community improvements policies of the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan.

## **2.3 Selection Criteria**

The location of the project areas are consistent with the Town's Official Plan policies and

satisfies, in particular, the following community improvement **goals and objectives** of the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan:

- To provide for a variety of housing types to meet the demands of the present and future inhabitants of the Town
- To provide opportunities to develop a diverse range of employment opportunities for present and future residents of the Town
- To ensure there are sufficient lands designated for development opportunities at all times
- To ensure there is sufficient flexibility to adapt to change and opportunities quickly
- To provide for attractive development that will encourage investment in Fort Frances
- The Town will consider incentives to encourage the continued viability of the Downtown Business Area
- To provide areas for residents to enjoy leisure activities and the environment
- To develop a continuous parkland and trail system throughout the Town
- To ensure sufficient land and facilities are available to provide for flexibility and variety in recreational opportunities, and
- To ensure that land uses within the undeveloped portions of the Town do not limit the long term use of the lands for the logical extension of urban services and development

Other key factors that resulted in the selection of the identified Community Improvement Project Areas included:

- An assessment of economic growth and the recognized need for diversification of employment opportunities in the Town as detailed in the Official Plan Background Study prepared by The Planning Partnership; and
- The detailed and stated objectives, obstacles, visions and strategies of the Community Strategic Plan entitled Tomorrow as prepared by The Tomorrow Committee;
- A number of years ago the Waterfront Development Committee, now known as the LaVerendrye Parkway Advisory Committee, was formed. This committee of citizen volunteers was interested in economic, residential and tourist development along the waterfront, specifically enhancing the waterfront area through improvements such as a bicycle path, shoreline rehabilitation, energy efficient lighting and improvements toward ensuring the area is a permanent attraction site.



- The objectives of the Re-Inventing Fort Frances Committee to determine the viability of Fort Frances as a tourism destination and the establishment of the town as a wide area (including the USA) regional center for servicing that industry; to provide a complete strategy and action plan for achieving a viable tourism industry for the benefit of the Fort Frances area; and to evaluate existing tourism infrastructure and make recommendations on refinements of such infrastructure – i.e. signage, parking, historical buildings, etc.

## **2.4 Project Areas**

### **2.4.1 Town Wide Improvements**

The deficiencies and associated opportunities for improvement in the Community Improvement Project Areas, identified in previously referenced documents, and through other investigations, include:

- The development of a municipal wide recreational trail and parks system with an emphasis on the waterfront area
- Improvements to sidewalks and road surfaces to enable safe and comfortable travel by pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles
- The development of a by-pass traffic route for large trucks to reduce conflicts in the core
- Improvements to the water system to provide for sufficient fire flows
- Encourage residents, business owners and service groups to participate in tree planting and street beautification programs
- Developing a menu of available and innovative financial incentives to stimulate development
- Develop a strategy in cooperation with First Nations for Point Park development and explore mutual opportunities and needs.
- Investigate advances in “wire” and “wireless” technology.
- Improve municipal infrastructure to property line and community services where physically and economically feasible.
- Improve the quality of housing stock and stimulate community pride in ownership and occupancy.

- The provisions of grants or loans to registered or assessed property owners for such purposes as façade improvement, subject to municipal authority under the Planning Act, the Municipal Act and/or any other applicable legislation.
- The rehabilitation of municipal properties and/or the sale, lease or other disposition of municipal land as provided for in the Municipal Act and the Planning Act and/or any other applicable legislation.

## **2.4.1 Specific Project Areas**

For the implementation of this plan, the Town of Fort Frances three “Community Improvement Project Areas have been designated by By-Law. They are the “Resource Development Project Area”, the “Mid-Town Industrial Project Area” and the “Downtown Core & Waterfront Project Area”. The boundaries of the community improvement project areas are shown on Figure 1, which forms a part of this plan. Amendments to the boundaries of the Community Improvement Project Areas may be enacted by by-law of the Town of Fort Frances Council and will require an amendment to this Plan.

Each Project Area is described below along with existing land uses, building condition and potential for development and specific projects relative to each area.

Not all Financial Incentive Programs apply to all Community Improvement Project Areas. Information in this regard can be found in the detailed information found in Appendix “A” attached to and forming part of this Community Improvement Plan.

### **2.4.1.1 Resources Development Project Area**

The Resources Development Project Area, as shown on Figure 1, is comprised of a mixed range of land uses primarily resource development and industrial mixed with a small amount of commercial. The most northerly portion of this area is swampy marsh inaccessible by existing municipal roadways. The project area is approximately 3100 hectares in size. The boundaries of the Resource Development Area can be generally described as the municipal boundary on the north southwest along the CNR Railway line to Eighth Street then west to the boundary line between the Town and the Township of Alberton as shown on Figure 1 attached to and forming part of this Community Improvement Plan.

#### **2.4.1.1.1 Existing Land Uses**

The majority of property zoned as Resource Development is vacant with dispersed residential dwellings. Currently the only active industrial use in this project area is a wastewater treatment facility owned and operated by Abitibi-Consolidated, a major pulp and paper company.

The only industrial use currently in the Resource Development Project Area is an

Ontario Hydro One transmission station together with a line which extends from Eighth Street north then proceeding both to the northwest to service the municipalities to the west of Fort Frances, and east to service those areas east of the municipality.

#### **2.4.1.1.2 Existing Building Condition and Potential for Development**

To date, no buildings have been identified for demolition or rehabilitation.

In early 1800's subdivision plans were surveyed and laid out in this project area on Frenette Avenue off of Eighth Street north of the CNR railway line. The subdivision has never been pursued and the potential exists for development. Development of this area would result in the current infrastructure (water and sewer systems) being looped that would, in turn, provide a more efficient system and reduce maintenance costs of the municipality as indicated on Figure 3 attached to and forming a part of this Community Improvement Plan.

The municipality is the current registered owner of the property.

#### **2.4.1.1.3 Specific Projects**

##### **2.4.1.1.3.1 Truck Route**

A Town By-Pass or Truck Route, outside residential areas does not currently exist and transports and other large trucks must utilize streets in residential areas. The potential exists for the establishment of a truck route/by-pass either along or north of Eighth Street to access McIrvine Rd.

Development of a truck route is an identified project in the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan and would eliminate disruption to residents and provide easier and more efficient access to the industrial park area where the majority of transports deliver goods.

##### **2.4.1.1.3.2 Core Services - Infrastructure**

The majority of property located in the Resource Development Project Area is hindered by the lack of core services such as water and sewer.

The extension of core services via McIrvine Road would greatly increase the potential for development.

#### **2.4.1.2 Mid-Town Industrial Project Area**

The Mid-Town Industrial Project Area is comprised of approximately 400 hectares. With the exception of a block of land approximately 100 metres from Highway 11/71 to approximately 200 metres west of McIrvine Road, the Mid-Town Industrial Project Area

can be generally described that the area lying south of Eighth Street and north of the CNR railway line and east of the municipal boundary between the Town and the Township of Alberton as shown on Figure 1 attached and forming part of this Community Improvement Plan.

#### **2.4.1.2.1 Existing Land Uses**

The Mid-Town Industrial Project Area is comprised, generally of industrial and residential uses. Approximately two-thirds of this project area, on the westerly side, is comprised of industrial uses with the remainder primarily residential with intermittent site-specific commercial uses.

#### **2.4.1.2.2 Existing Building Condition and Potential for Development**

This area is commonly referred to as the prime industrial park of the community. New industrial uses have been directed to this area whenever possible. Of the properties identified as industrial, approximately one-half are municipally owned and generally, available for development.

There have been no buildings identified as requiring demolition or reconstruction to date. Although no specific development projects have been identified in the process of preparing this, there is great potential for development should an interest by an outside party be shown and it is the intent of this plan to open the opportunities for development to Council through the programs outlined elsewhere in this document. Incentive programs may be available where rehabilitation is required.

#### **2.4.1.2.3 Specific Projects**

##### **2.4.1.2.3.1 Industrial Park Development**

Municipal properties in the industrial park area, specifically fronting Fifth Street West, require backfilling to bring the properties up to grade prior to being available for resale and development.

Municipal properties along Seventh Street West also have great potential for re-development but lack the core services necessary (ie. water and sewer) to attract development.

Enhancements to these areas in the industrial park would attract new industrial uses to as well as encourage existing industrial uses in other less appropriate areas to relocate.

This project satisfies the policies of the Official Plan that “all industrial uses shall be developed on the basis of full municipal services” as outlined in Section 2.2.3.

### **2.4.1.3 Downtown Core and Waterfront Project Area**

The Downtown Core and Waterfront Project Area are approximately 1400 hectares in size. The area covered extends from the west boundary of the municipality approximately 100 metres north of Highway 11/71 to approximately 200 metres west of McIrvine Road where it proceeds north to the CNR railway line. From that point, the north limit of the project area is the railway tracks to the point where it meets with Mill Road on the northeast portion of the municipality. From this northerly project area boundary line it takes in the entire south part of the Town as shown on Figure 1 attached to and forming part of this Community Improvement Plan.

#### **2.4.1.3.1 Existing Land Uses**

The majority of property located in the Downtown Core and Waterfront Project Area is mixed residential uses. This project area does contain two primary industrial uses, a quarry located to the northwest of this project area and, in the center, the pulp and paper mill. Of incidental use is the property located immediately adjacent to the north boundary of this project area, specifically along the CNR railway line.

Notwithstanding intermittent commercial properties along Scott Street, there are two primary commercial areas contained within this project area. The first commences from the west boundary of the municipality, along the Highway 11/71 corridor, extending to Keating Avenue, and the second covers from Second Street at Central Avenue south to Church Street at Armit Avenue, which is known as the “Downtown Business Core”.

#### **2.4.1.3.2 Existing Building Condition and Potential for Development**

In the industrial zones, specifically, the quarry and the pulp and paper mill, there do not appear to be any structures of interest or concern. However, the structure commonly known as the “Old CN Station” on Fourth Street does have the potential for redevelopment, rehabilitation and revitalization and appears to fit with the general intent of this Plan and the incentive programs to be implemented.

The commercial areas of this project area appear to offer the most significant potential for development, specifically along the Highway 11/71 corridor and in the downtown business area. Over the past few years, business have either located or relocated to the highway corridor resulting in a number of new structures. As such, there is no concern or special interest in any of the existing buildings at this time. There is, however, the potential for new and continued development in this area, as there exists sufficient vacant land along Highway 11/71 right through to the east limit of Town.

Of specific interest in the downtown core is an abandoned high school. This structure became vacant approximately four years ago when a new high school was constructed



in the west end of the community. This property appears to possess considerable possibilities for redevelopment and rehabilitation.

In the downtown core, there also exist various structures that have potential for rejuvenation and restoration. It is anticipated that incentive programs will encourage property owners to focus property improvement on the street appearance of the building as well as upgrade structural repairs.

Located in this Project Area is approximately 9 hectares of land owned by Abitibi-Consolidated, the local pulp and paper company. This property currently zoned as Open Space “OS” and is used for storage of pulp for mill processing purposes. There is potential, once this property is no longer required for this purpose, that it would be available for remediation, if required, and re-development.

The Pithers Point Park is located in this project area. This park is used for tourism and recreational purposes and possesses the potential for betterment through private/public partnerships.

The Rainy River District School Board currently owns approximately 37 hectares of vacant land on Shevlin Avenue at Sixth St. East. This property is zoned as open space in the zoning by-law and as Recreation Area of the Official Plan. This property appears to have great potential for either housing or soft municipal development such as institutional use. Uses compatible with adjacent properties will be encouraged but will require an amendment to the Official Plan if not permitted in the Official Plan.

### **2.4.1.3.3 Specific Projects**

#### **2.4.1.3.3.1 Waterfront Development**

Now known as the LaVerendrye Parkway Advisory Committee, the Waterfront Development Project was initiated a number of years ago through a group of citizen volunteers interested in economic, residential and tourist development along the waterfront. Enhancements to this area include a bicycle path, shoreline rehabilitation, energy efficient lighting and improvements toward ensuring the area is a permanent attraction site. Funds provided by the Heritage Foundation and capital budget for the current year and the five-year forecast will facilitate this project.

This project will satisfy the following works, identified in the Official Plan:

- Additional tree planting and other landscaping within road allowances and/or in public open space areas
- New energy-efficient luminaries along streets and/or in public open spaces and pole replacement/relocation as required.

- The development of recreational trail and bike path
- Improvements to sidewalks to enable safe and comfortable travel by pedestrians and bicycles.

#### **2.4.1.3.3.2 Street Beautification**

The entrances to town limits has been a topic of much discussion in the past and, as a means toward encouraging residents and business owners to improve the appearance of these areas, the Town has taken the initiative to proceed with permanent methods of beautification. A budget of \$40,000 has been allocated for cosmetic improvements with the goal of substantive capital improvements over the next two to three years.

The Official Plan encourages, at section 3.1.3, that “entrances to Town shall be designed to create a positive first impression to visitors and residents”. This project will satisfy this objective.

#### **2.4.1.3.3.3 Sidewalk and Road Re-Surfacing**

Through identification of repairs to sidewalks and streets throughout all of the Community Improvement Project Areas, the objections of Section 3.1.8 (ii) of the Official Plan relating to safe and comfortable travel by pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles are met. Operations staff identifies, on an ongoing basis, areas requiring attention, and work is completed as capital budget permits.

#### **2.4.1.3.3.3 Re-Inventing Fort Frances Initiative**

The Re-Inventing Fort Frances Committee was formed to determine the viability of Fort Frances as a tourism destination and to provide a complete strategy and action plan for achieving a viable tourism industry for the benefit of the Fort Frances area. Through this initiative, the existing tourism infrastructure will be evaluated and recommendations made on refinements of such infrastructure – i.e. signage, parking, historical buildings, etc. The contract for this project has been awarded and will commence from August 1, 2002 to July 31, 2003.

### **2.5 Economic Development Financial Incentive Programs**

In May of 2001 Council considered a report outlining various Economic Development Financial Incentive Programs and, directed further investigation by various Committees of Council. Financial incentives were further discussed throughout the strategic planning sessions and a recommendation brought forward by the steering committee to Council to proceed. Council ratified the Strategic Plan on November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

On June 10, 2002, Council, by resolution, authorized the initiation of a Community Improvement Plan process in parallel with the Economic Development Financial Incentive Plan as a priority project and, thus approved, in principle the incentive programs outlined and considered previously.

The re-development of vacant and under-utilized properties has been identified as a significant issue in many North American municipalities. These sites often possess substantial redevelopment potential and, in many instances, would result in a significant community benefit if rehabilitated and reused. In addition, the more efficient use of land, increased tax assessment, creation of additional jobs and better utilization of infrastructure would be realized.

It is anticipated that redevelopment in the project areas would complement and strengthen the area as well as support surrounding uses currently in existence.

The Municipal Act prohibits “bonusing” through giving or lending money or property, guaranteeing borrowing, leasing or selling property at below fair market value or giving an exemption from a levy, charge or fee. Providing tax relief to an area or granting exemption from any development fees would generally constitute “bonusing”. However, an exception is made in the Municipal Act when municipalities are exercising powers within the context of a Community Improvement Plan, prepared in accordance with the Planning Act and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

If a financial incentive program is established through a Community Improvement Plan, the Town may make grants or loans to the owners of lands and buildings to pay for the cost of rehabilitating such lands and buildings, and would not be considered “Bonusing”.

For the implementation of this Plan, the Town of Fort Frances has been divided into three parts, the “Community Improvement Project Areas”, which have each been defined and designated by by-law as a Community Improvement Project Area. This Community Improvement Plan has been prepared to implement the community improvement works identified in the Official Plan as well as enable the Town to offer development grant or loan programs to encourage development, redevelopment, revitalization and rehabilitation throughout the community, specifically, to allow the value of future increases in tax revenues as a result of increased assessment to pay the costs associated with site remediation, demolition of structures existing on the date the Plan is approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. .

A range of municipal financial and planning incentive programs has been included in Appendix “A” of this Community Improvement Plan. These programs may be considered by Town Council in the future to encourage redevelopment, revitalization and improvement of the existing and future development in the Community Improvement Project Areas. Council’s discretion in implementing one or more of these programs will be dependent on the need for the program, the potential benefits and costs, establishing an effective implementation framework and the availability of budget. Programs that are not authorized by Section 28 of The Planning Act do not constitute part of the Community Improvement Plan but are intended to augment the Community Improvement Plan programs.

It is proposed that the incentive programs commence on the date this Plan is approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The Treasurer will prepare an Incentive Program Status Report on an annual basis for Council Review. The Financial Incentive Programs outlined will continue as the annual budget permits and Council directs. Owners of properties participating in any of these programs may be eligible for the grant subject to eligibility requirements of the program and specific limiting legislation.

Although a specific program may have additional eligibility requirements, the following general requirements apply for all programs:

- a) The applicant must be the registered owner or tenant of the property or have an equitable interest in the property. An Agent may act on behalf of the applicant with required authorization.
- b) Applications shall be submitted, on forms provided and supported by documentation as required, to the Administering Department of the program in question.
- c) All applications for assistance under this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding and upon approval of Council.
- d) The properties must be located within one of the identified Community Improvement Project Areas to which the grant or loan program applies.
- e) The property shall be developed such that the amount of the work undertaken is sufficient to result in the re-assessment of the property;
- f) In the case of development of vacant or cleared sites within a project area for new buildings, to determine the pre-development assessment base for these projects, the assessment shall be based upon the assessment roll of the previous year, as last revised, used for the current taxation year;
- g) The subject property shall not be in a position of property tax arrears at the time of application nor throughout the term of the program, including utility charges;
- h) The total value of funding under any and all programs to any individual site shall be limited to the total value of the rehabilitation, renovation or conversion undertaken.
- i) Property owners who have previously defaulted under any Town loan program will not be eligible.
- j) Grants/loans will not be given retroactively to recognize projects that have begun without application to the program. Applications must be received prior to any works being done to the associated building or property.

- k) Loan commitments are valid for a period of one year and will expire if the work proposed is not completed within that time period. Agreements may contain for extension of a further six-month period upon approval by Council.
- l) The Town, entirely at its own discretion, may enter into a new agreement with any subsequent owners of the property to receive outstanding payments under the program.
- m) The Town may discontinue any of the Financial Incentive Programs at any time; however, any participants in the program prior to its closing will continue to receive the grants as were determined through agreement for their properties.
- n) Development proposed shall comply with applicable zoning regulations or qualify for zoning amendment to be accommodated.

## **2.6 Alternate Community Improvement Projects**

Should any of the above projects not be feasible in the discretion of Council, or for other reasons of necessity, alternate community improvement projects and works may be undertaken without amending this plan. Such other works are set out in Appendix “B” attached to and forming part of this Community Improvement Plan. Specific municipal projects, in addition to those shown in Appendix “B”, may be added to this Plan by appendix and shall include the project and any sources of financing, recognizing that no sources of financing have been identified at this time.

## **2.7 Development Charges**

The Development Charges Act permits municipalities to give full or partial exemptions for some types of development. In accordance with the Development Charges Act, a municipality may exempt specific areas, including Community Improvement Project Areas from the application of a development charges by-law.

Currently the Town of Fort Frances does not charge development fees under The Development Charges Act. This is viewed by Council to be a valuable incentive toward encouraging development in the Town and, for this reason, has been included as promotional information in this document.

## **2.8 Implementation**

The implementation of this plan may, at times, require amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law and, through the process of the planning amendments, the Town will have regard for the Provincial Policy Statement; specifically in regards to such issues as contaminated sites, land use compatibility, natural heritage and cultural and archaeological resources, which will be addressed through the appropriate measures and studies.

### **2.8.1 Role of Council**

- i) To adopt this Community Improvement Plan and the corresponding Economic



Development Financial Incentive Plan in principle.

- ii) To promote development or re-development opportunities; and
- iii) Ensure appropriate funding, as a direct expenditure through the annual budget process and utilization of the Economic Development Reserve, to implement the initiative of the Community Improvement Plan and the Economic Development Financial Incentive Plan.

Other funding sources identified for the projects outlined in the Community Improvement Project Areas include, but may not be limited, to:

- Funding assistance opportunities such as provincial programs on a cost-sharing or grant basis with the Ministries of Culture, Tourism and Recreation, Environment and Energy, and Transportation, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.
- Fundraising initiatives of neighbourhood groups and service clubs, and
- Site specific improvements undertaken by property owners and arising either in part or wholly from improvements facilitated by this Community Improvement Plan

### **3. REVISIONS TO THIS PLAN**

This Plan is intended to be generic so that as additional municipal projects are identified, they can be undertaken without amendment to the Plan, as long as they meet the policies of the Official Plan and encourage revitalization and redevelopment throughout the community.

From time to time, Council for the Town of Fort Frances may review and amend any of the terms and eligibility criteria of the programs described in this Community Improvement Plan without amendment to the Plan.

Program additions to this Plan will require a formal amendment in accordance with Section 28(4) of The Planning Act, requiring notice of a public meeting of Council, adoption by Council, and in consultation with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

### **4. APPROVAL OF MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING**

In accordance with Section 28 of the Planning Act, RSO, 1990, c.P.13, this Community Improvement Plan and the Economic Development Financial Incentive Programs will not come into effect until approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

This Community Improvement Plan conforms to the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan and, more specifically, to the community improvement policies contained in Section 3.1.8.

The approval of this Community Improvement Plan will provide the legislative basis and context for incentive programs that have been identified to foster redevelopment and economic development and private sector investment in the Town of Fort Frances.

The amount the Town would pay back to property owners, through this program, has the potential to be significant. The Town would ultimately pay all costs associated with site remediation and the demolition of structures within the project area. However, these costs would be paid with revenue that might not have otherwise been realized if it were not for these programs. The incentive programs included and outlined in this plan are viewed as a long-term benefit to the Town as tax revenues would ultimately increase in the long run.

Issues outside the parameters of this Plan, but supportive of further development in the project areas, have been, and will continue to be examined and assessed as identified.

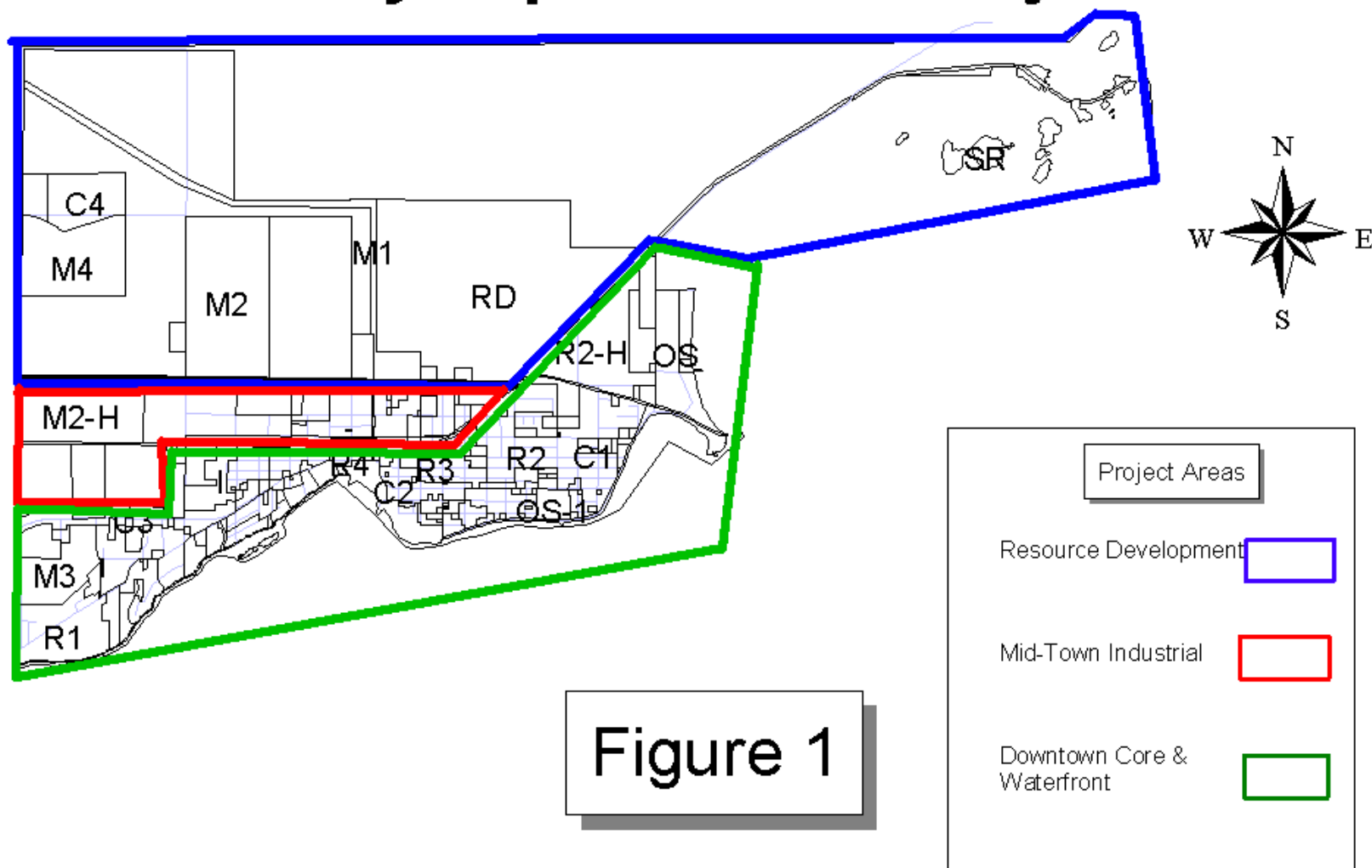
## **6. DEFINITIONS**

- 6.2. **“Building”** means a structure consisting of walls, roof and floor or a structural system serving the same purpose.
- 6.3. **“Community Improvement”** means the planning or re-planning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, reconstruction and rehabilitation, or any of them of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such uses, buildings, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary.
- 6.4. **“Community Improvement Plan”** means a plan adopted by Council and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for community improvement of a community improvement project area and constituting a schedule of works for the maintenance, rehabilitation, repair and/or development of public and privately owned facilities and lands,
- 6.5. **"Community Improvement Project Area"** means an area within a municipality, the community improvement of which in the opinion of the Council, is desirable for community improvement because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings, deficiencies or for any other reason.
- 6.6. **“Contaminated Site”** means derelict, dysfunctional or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.
- 6.7. **“Council”** means the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances.
- 6.8. **“Development”** means the construction, erection or placing of one or more buildings or structures on land or the making of an addition or alteration to a building or structure that

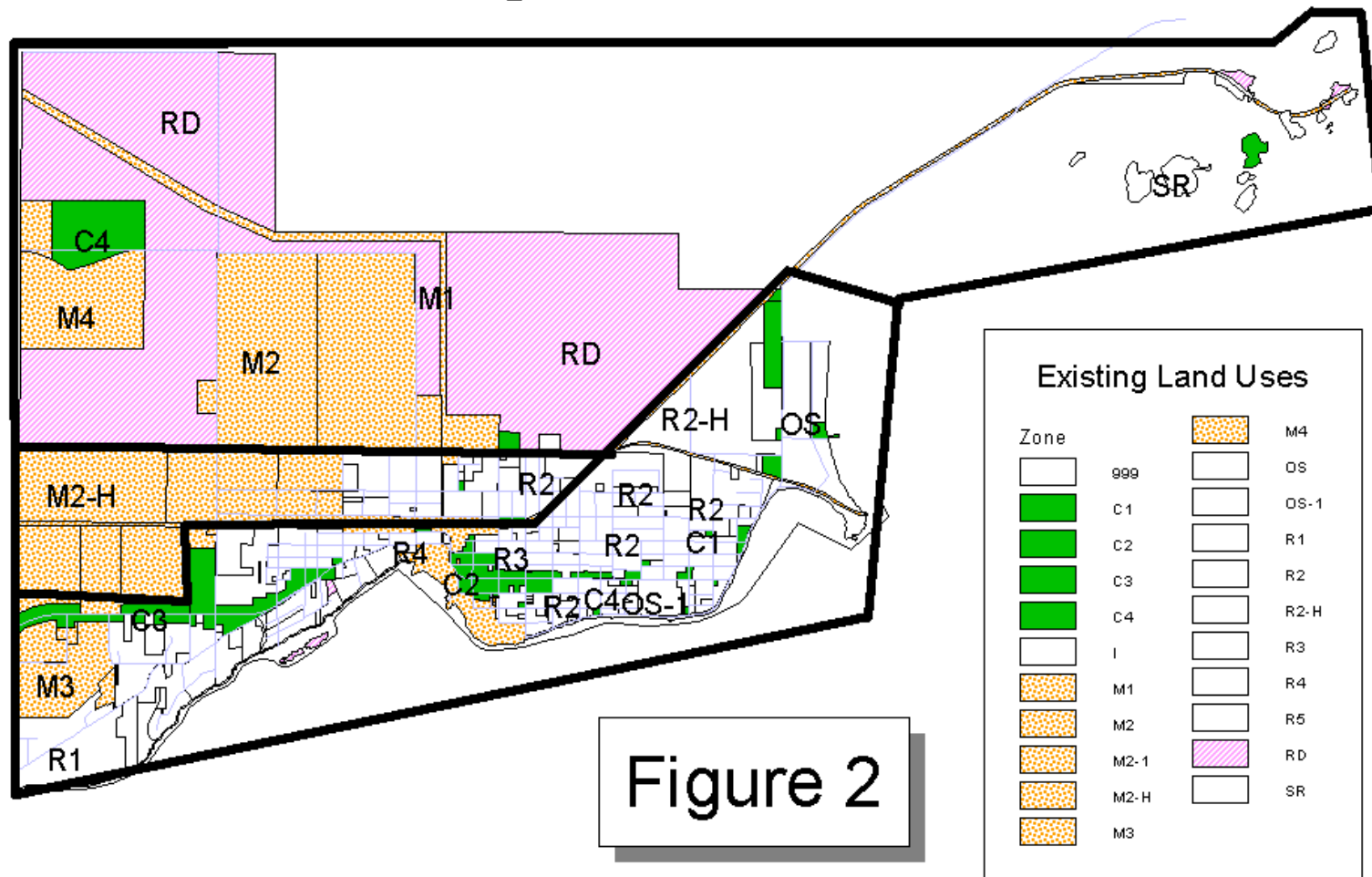
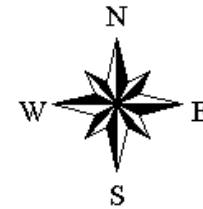
has the effect of increasing the size and usability thereof.

- 6.9. **“Economic Development Financial Incentive Plan”** means the document adopted by Council for the Town which sets out various incentive plans to encourage redevelopment, rehabilitation, renovation and restoration to properties within designated community improvement project areas.
- 6.10. **"Fill"** means material such as gravel, stone, soil, sand, etc. used to raise the elevation of an area.
- 6.11. **"Official Plan"** means a comprehensive long-range plan for land use which guides growth and land use change in a municipality. It usually contains a text setting out goals, objectives and policies and schedules showing proposed land uses and transportation routes.
- 6.12. **“Programs”** means incentives offered by Council to encourage economic growth in accordance with the Community Improvement Plan.
- 6.13. **"Redevelopment"** means the demolition of existing buildings for replacement with new.
- 6.14. **"Rehabilitation"** means to bring back to a former capacity or condition. For example, to improve a vacant or deteriorated building for occupancy.
- 6.15. **“Renovation”** means to restore to a former better condition. For example by repairing or rebuilding)
- 6.16. **"Restoration"** means to return a building to a prior condition. For example, the restoration of existing heritage buildings (not to be confused with redevelopment).
- 6.17. **“Town”** means the Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances

# Town of Fort Frances Community Improvement Project Areas

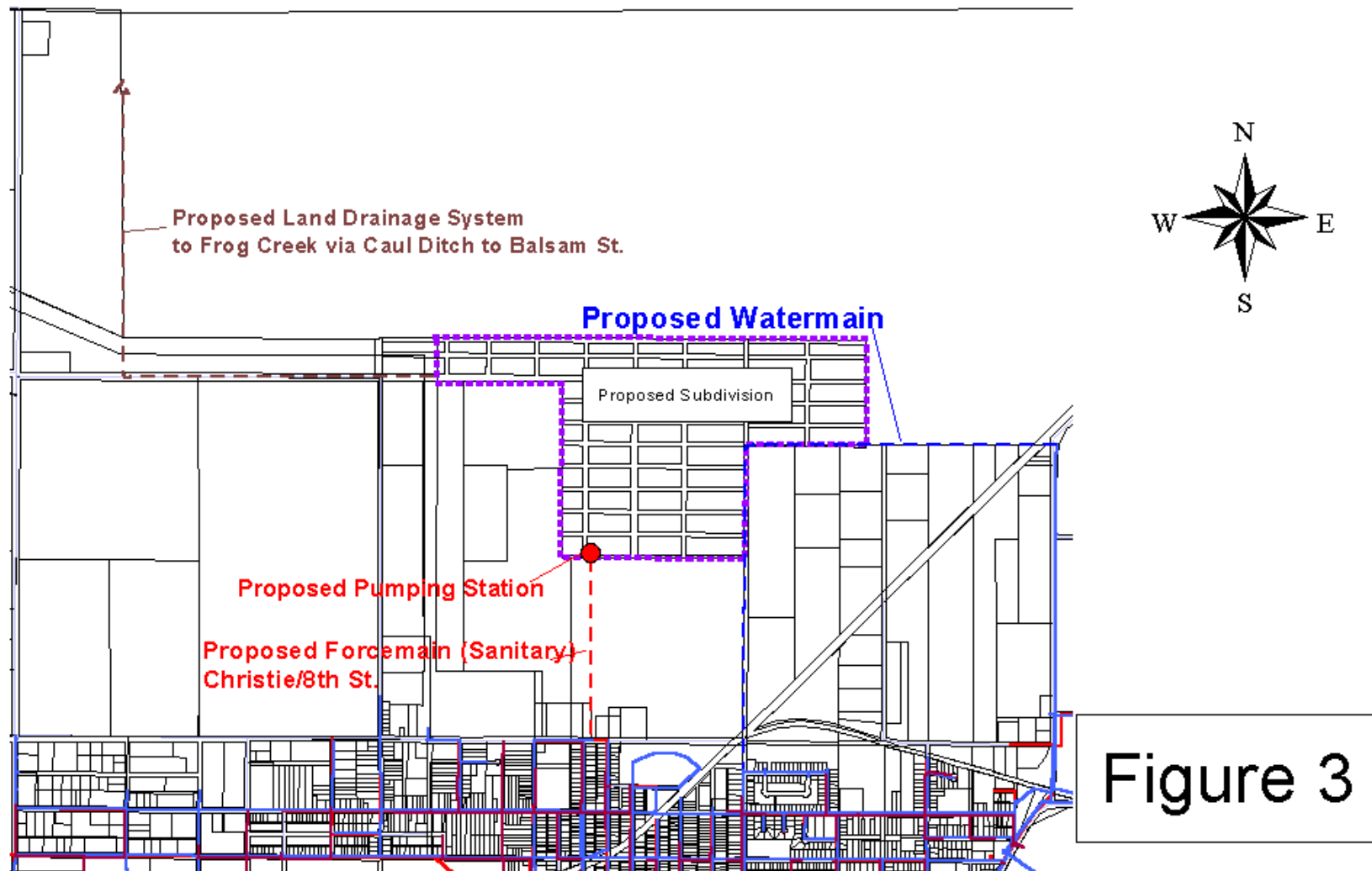


# Town of Fort Frances - CIPA Existing Land Uses





# Town of Fort Frances Looping of Infrastructure



## **APPENDIX “A”**

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

## **Programs:**

### **A. Property Value Revitalization Program (*Residential, Multi and Commercial Classes*)**

This program is designed to stimulate new development and the redevelopment of vacant or under-utilized lands and buildings. Developing and improving properties within existing serviced neighborhoods and commercial districts encourages community pride, improves property values for adjacent properties, and minimizes future infrastructure investments.

Applies to the:      Resource Development Project Area  
                             Mid-Town Industrial Project Area  
                             Downtown Core and Waterfront Project Area

### **B. Diversification Development Program**

This program is designed to encourage growth and stabilization in both jobs and municipal taxation revenue for the community. Developments or redevelopments of properties for commercial/industrial uses in sectors such as manufacturing, processing, machining, environmental or technology related businesses such as call centers and non-competitive professional services are eligible.

Retail businesses and most service-based businesses are not eligible.

Applies to the:      Resource Development Project Area  
                             Mid-Town Industrial Project Area  
                             Downtown Core and Waterfront Project Area

### **C. Brownfields Development Program**

This program is a joint initiative of the Province of Ontario and the Town of Fort Frances. It is designed to encourage and promote brownfields redevelopment. The program is designed to mitigate the costs of developing on brownfields by providing financial incentives to clean them up and replace them with productive economic land uses, thereby improving both economic opportunities and environmental conditions in the town.

Applies to the:      Resource Development Project Area  
                             Mid-Town Industrial Project Area  
                             Downtown Core and Waterfront Project Area

### **D. Façade Loan Program**

This program aims to improve upon the appearance of numerous commercial properties throughout the Town of Fort Frances. It is understood that smaller scale commercial activities contribute greatly to the economic vitality and health of the commercial sector within the town. This program builds upon these successes, resulting in long lasting physical improvements to the assets of commercial property owners/authorized tenants, and to bring about aesthetic improvements to the commercial areas.

Applies to the:      Resource Development Project Area  
                             Mid-Town Industrial Project Area  
                             Downtown Core and Waterfront Project Area

*Incentives for all listed programs will be awarded either through grants or in kind services. No tax rebates or in kind service agreements amounts will exceed the new generated tax revenue amounts resulting from the property improvements. Some programs may be offered in conjunction with external entities such as the Province of Ontario or the RRFDC.*

**“In-Kind” services** include but are not limited to contributions of staff, equipment or other services, such as

- Tipping Fees
- Grade Set Fee
- Fees for services connect
- Driveway Crossing approach/entrance fees
- Printing of Maps as may be required
- Application Fees for
  - Zoning Amendment
  - Official Plan Amendment
  - Minor Variance
  - Consent
  - Site Plan Control
  - Subdivision Agreement
  - Agreements such as
    - Easement
    - Encroachment
    - Other as may be required
- Building Permit Fees
- Sign Fees
- Plumbing Permit Fee
- Photocopies
- Business Licenses – as may be required for contractors, etc.
- Land Purchases at or below market value