



NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW - TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

November 3, 2022 5:30 PM

MEETING - Civic Centre

Microsoft Teams meeting

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Page

1. Call to Order

2. Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof

3. Approval of Previous Committee Minutes

2 - 3 3.1 October 4, 2022

4. New Business

4.1 Elect Chair & Vice-Chair

4.2 Introductions

4 - 16 4.3 WSP Project Overview

17 - 129 4.4 Q&A/Feedback on Draft Community Background Report

5. Information

130 - 131 5.1 Terms of Reference - Final Approved

6. Adjourn / Next Meeting Date



**NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

October 4, 2022 5:30pm

Meeting Location: Fort Frances Civic Centre – Committee Room

Attendees: Cody Vangel, Duane Cridland, Cathy Emes, Geoff Gillon, Caryn Myers,
Sarah Noonan

- 1. Call to Order – 5:31pm**
- 2. Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof - none**
- 3. Approval of Previous Committee Minutes – N/A**
- 4. New Business**
 - 4.1. Project Introduction**
 - Cody Vangel provided an overview of the project, reiterating the presentation that WSP had presented to Council.
 - Cody to send link to project website, current official plan and current zoning by-law to the Committee.
 - 4.2. Draft Committee Terms of Reference**
 - Cody presented draft terms of reference to the Committee for comment. No concerns at time, all in favour to move to Council.
 - 4.3. Community Background Report**
 - Cody presented in general and provided context to the Committee on the Community Background Report. Cody requested that the Committee review the document and compile notes/comments to bring forward to WSP at our future meeting of the Committee.
 - 4.4. Public Open House #1 – October 13, 2022**

- The Committee informed Cody Vangel that the Chamber of Commerce would be hosting a municipal electoral candidate debate the same evening as the proposed Public Open House #1.
- Cody was not aware prior to this meeting and would seek various options to mitigate conflict and promote attendance while maintaining the same date.

5. Outstanding Items – N/A

6. Information – N/A

7. Adjourn/Next Meeting Date – Adjourned 6:14pm



Image Source: WSP, 2022

TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1

Thursday November 3, 2022, 5:30 – 6:30 pm

Fort Frances Civic Centre, Room ###

Presenters:

Jill MacDonald, MCIP, RPP – WSP, Planner

William Turman – WSP, Planner

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. Introductions – All**
- 2. TAC Terms of Reference - All**
- 3. Project Overview – WSP**
 1. What is an Official Plan and Zoning By-law?
 2. Need for New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law
 3. Project Timeline
- 4. Q&A / Feedback on Draft Community Background Report – All**
- 5. Next Steps and Conclusion – Town Staff, WSP**

PROJECT TEAM INTRODUCTIONS



Town of Fort Frances

Township staff will be responsible for coordinating with the consultant team, reviewing project deliverables, and organizing public events.



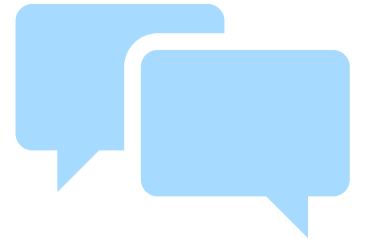
WSP

WSP will act as project manager for the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Review. WSP will prepare all project deliverables and will be responsible for delivery of the community engagement program and events.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

- Purpose of the Technical Advisory Committee:

To provide background information, identify key issues to be considered, review draft reports and provide technical input and analysis at key project milestones during the development of the Town of Fort Frances New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law.



- TAC Terms of Reference – any questions?

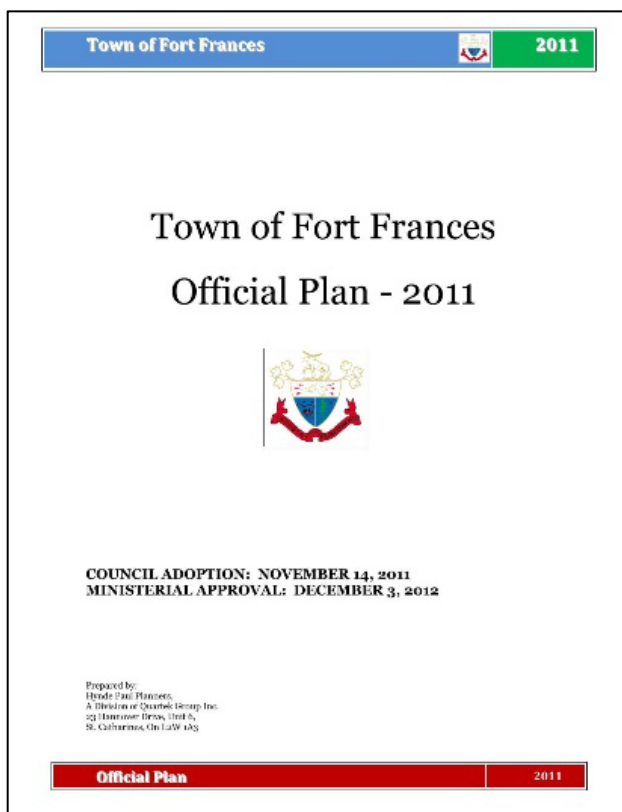
WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL PLAN?



An Official Plan is a planning policy document that:

- Vision for growth and development
- Details strategic objectives to implement the vision
- Guides where land uses (e.g. residential, retail, office, industrial, parks) should be located
- Directs what natural and cultural heritage features should be protected and/or enhanced
- Identifies future roads and new infrastructure
- Reflects Provincial and local interests and values

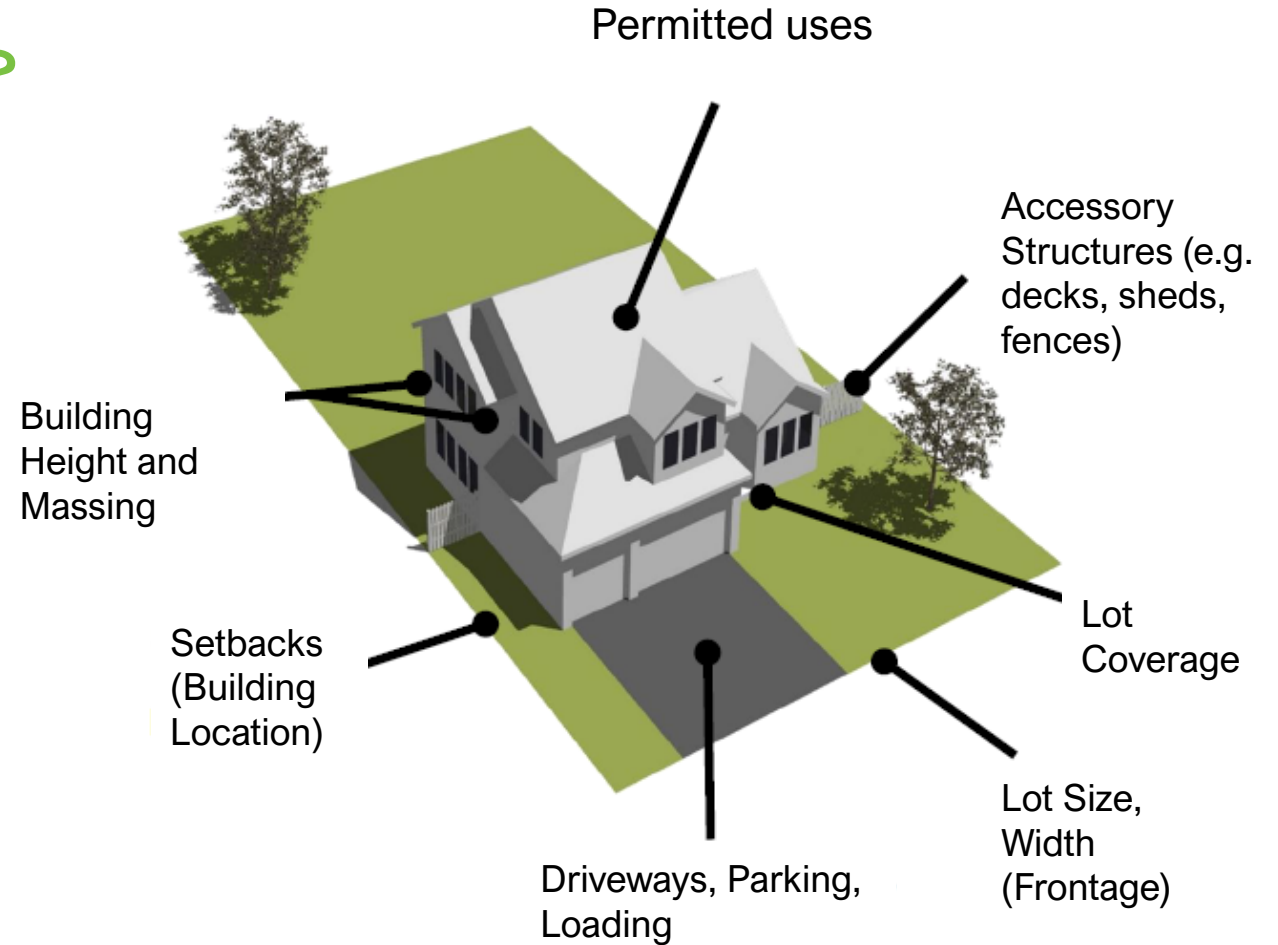
WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL PLAN?



- The Official Plan will be developed in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act, with engagement and input from the municipality, technical agencies, Indigenous communities, and local community.
- The Town's current Official Plan was adopted by Council in 2011 and received Ministerial Approval on December 3, 2012.

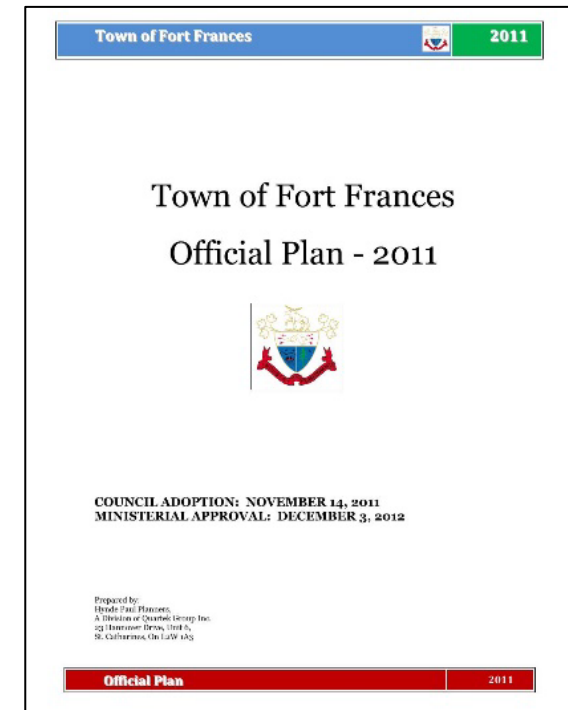
WHAT IS A ZONING BY-LAW?

- A legal document that regulates the use of land and built form.
- Implements the land use objectives and policies of a community's Official Plan and helps manage potential conflicts between land uses.
- Provides detailed standards for how a property may be developed.



NEED FOR NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW

- Comprehensive review / update in accordance with Section 26 of the Planning Act and the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS).
- Comprehensive review will involve ensuring consistency with in-effect Provincial legislation and policy.
- Community Engagement and External Agency Process.
- After Town Council adoption, the New Official Plan will be sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for approval.
- New Official Plan would not need to be reviewed for 10 years.



Town of Fort Frances New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review 2022 - 2024

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1 | November 3, 2022

WORK PLAN



Engagement Milestone

Project Deliverables

- Virtual Council Briefing
- Town Project Webpage Launch

- Community Engagement Strategy (submitted to Town for approval)
- Pre-Consultation with MMAH (August 17, 2022)

- Town Staff / TAC Meeting #1
- In-Person Public Open House #1 and Online Survey
- Meetings with Indigenous Communities

- Community Background Report

- Town Staff / TAC Meeting #2
- In-Person Public Open House #2
- Meetings with Indigenous Communities
- Special Meeting of Council

- Policy Directions and Recommendations Report

- Town Staff / TAC Meetings #3, 4, 5
- In-Person Public Open House #3
- Meetings with Indigenous Communities
- Special Meeting of Council
- Combined Statutory Public Open House

- Draft New Official Plan
- 90-day MMAH Review
- Zoning By-law Discussion Paper
- Draft Zoning By-law

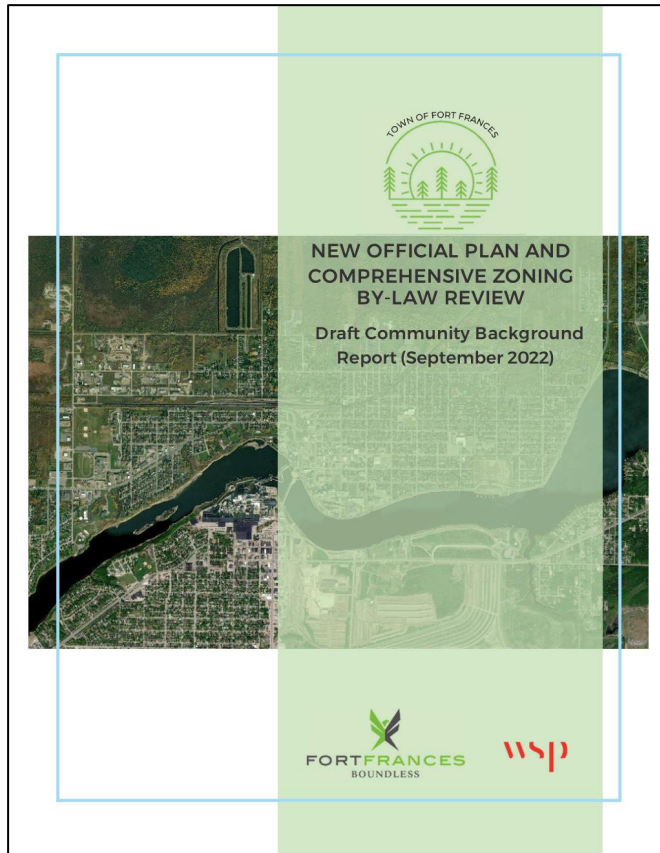
- Town Staff / TAC Meeting #6
- Meetings with Indigenous Communities
- Statutory Public Meeting (New Official Plan)

- Final New Official Plan
- Council Adoption
- Submit Final New Official Plan to MMAH for Approval

- Meetings with Indigenous Communities
- Statutory Public Meeting (Zoning By-law)

- Final Zoning By-law
- Council Adoption

DRAFT COMMUNITY BACKGROUND REPORT

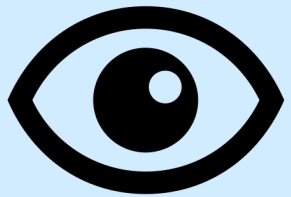


Key Topics:

1. Community Context
2. Planning Framework (Provincial and Municipal)
3. Engagement and Indigenous Engagement
4. Key Issues and Trends in Fort Frances
5. Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 Conformity Review

Q & A / FEEDBACK

- Any questions or comments on the Draft Community Background Report?
- Visioning – When you envision Fort Frances, 5, 10, 20 years from now, what does it look like in the future?
- Are there additional local issues or topics that should be explored as part of the Review?



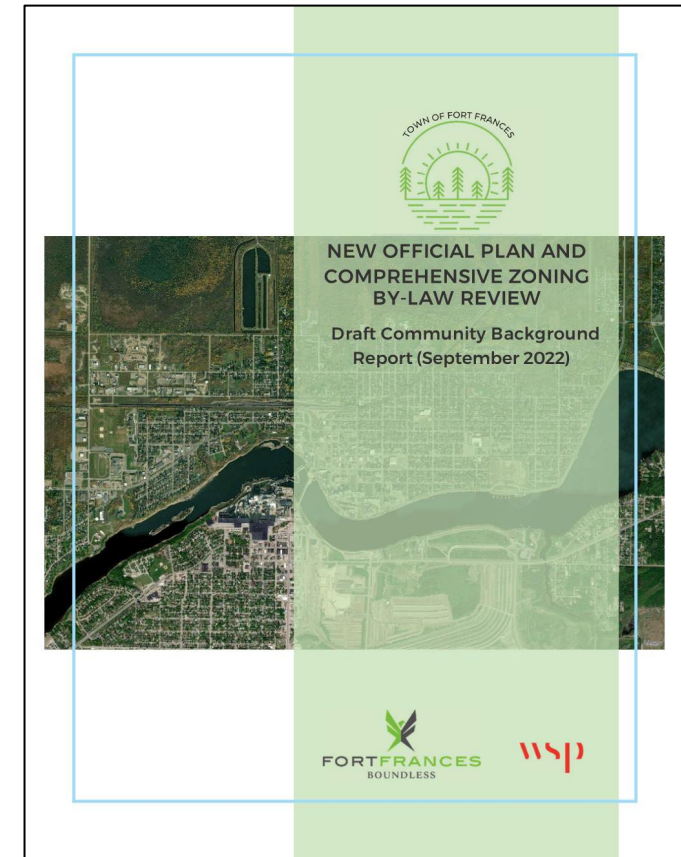
**Consider how you see
Fort Frances, today and
in the future...**



Image Source: WSP, 2022

NEXT STEPS

- Final Community Background Report and survey findings (Early November 2022)
- Draft Policy and Recommendations Report (December 2022)
- Draft New Official Plan (Winter 2023)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!



NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND
COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

Town Contact:

Cody Vangel, Transportation Superintendent

Town of Fort Frances

Email: planning@fortfrances.ca

Phone: (807) 274-9893, ext. 1312

For more information, check out the project webpage at:

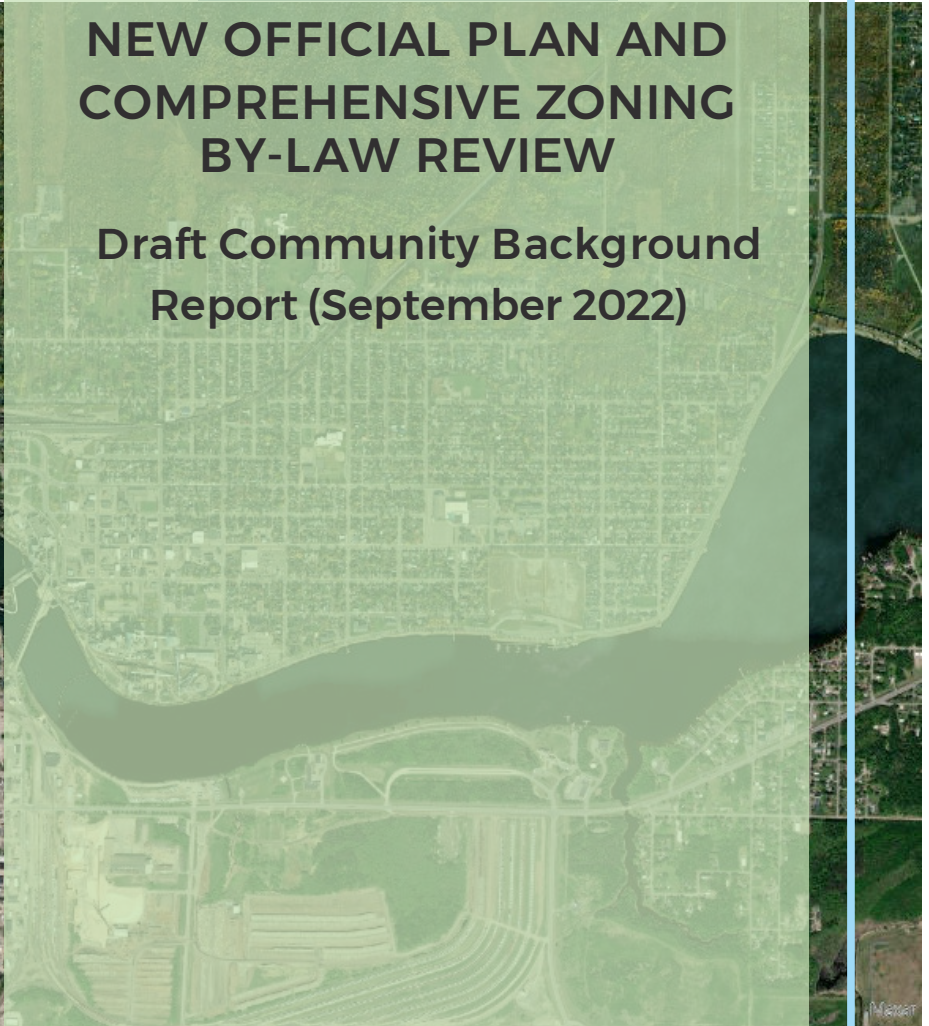
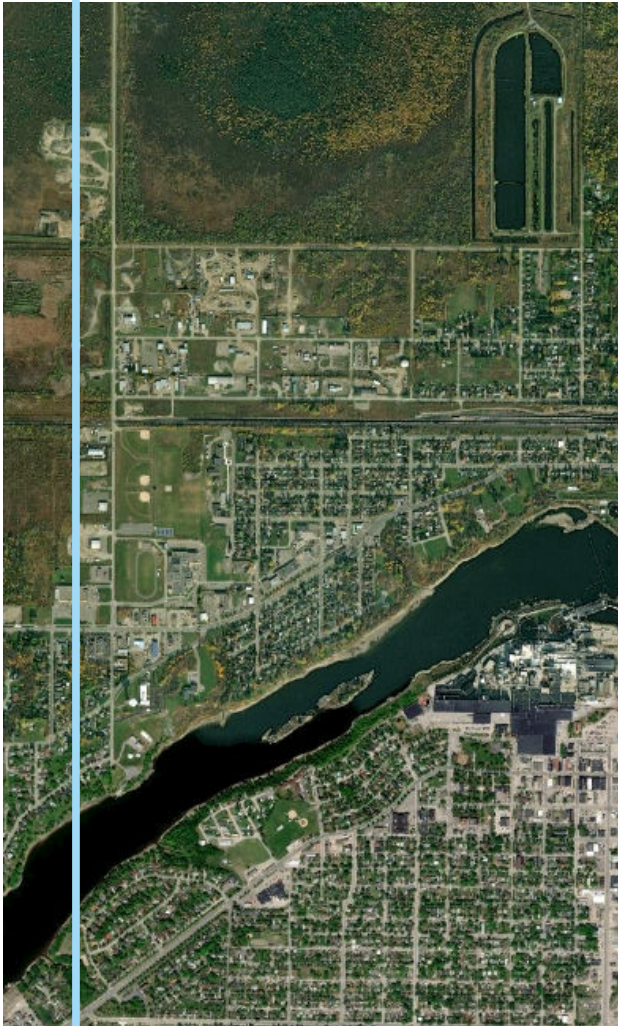
<https://fortfrances.ca/town/planning-development/new-official-plan-and-zoning-by-law>

Be sure to check back for updates!



NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

Draft Community Background
Report (September 2022)





NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW REVIEW

Draft Community Background Report (September 2022)

Prepared For:

Cody Vangel, Transportation Superintendent

Town of Fort Frances

320 Portage Avenue

Fort Frances, ON, P9A 3P9

Prepared by:

WSP

2611 Queensview Drive, Suite 300

Ottawa, ON K2B 8K2

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1. Introduction

The Town of Fort Frances is undertaking the legislated review of its Official Plan and Zoning By-law pursuant to the Sections 17, 26, and 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended. The Planning Act is the Provincial legislation that sets out the legal framework and requirements for land use planning in Ontario. The current Official Plan was adopted on November 14, 2011, and subsequently received approval by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) on December 3, 2012. The current Zoning By-law in effect (03/14) was adopted by Town Council on January 27, 2014 and was last amended in July 2022.

1.1 What is an Official Plan?

An Official Plan is a policy document adopted by Council under the provisions of the Planning Act. As such, it must reflect and be consistent with matters of provincial interest and applies to all lands within the Town of Fort Frances. The Official Plan expresses a vision and objectives for the community. It also identifies land use designations to help guide and direct growth, and development over a planning horizon of up to 25 years.

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) directs municipalities to be able to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment, and if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development. Where new development is to occur, municipalities must maintain a three-year supply of land with servicing capacity to accommodate residential units on land that is suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans. Planning for growth and development beyond 25 years is not required, as population projections and associated residential land needs may change over time.

For specific areas, Council may also adopt more detailed secondary plans and community improvement plans which build on the Official Plan policies. The Official Plan directs where development should be located, how infrastructure and public works are to be planned, and how cultural and natural heritage features and areas are to be protected and conserved. All public infrastructure spending and construction must conform to the Official Plan. The use and development of individual parcels of

lands is influenced by the Official Plan, which establishes specific policies related to lot creation, zoning, and site plan control.

1.2 Why is the Official Plan being reviewed?

The Official Plan is being reviewed to ensure that the most current provincial and municipal planning policy objectives are reflected. Since the current Town of Fort Frances Official Plan was approved, a new PPS has been issued, and there have been other legislative changes that are described in this Community Background Report. Through the Review process, municipalities can also revise existing policies to adapt to local changes and reflect the vision and planning goals for the Town, as identified by residents and Council.

The Review process also provides an opportunity to consolidate previously approved Official Plan Amendments. Some of the Town's key areas of interest for policy updates include direction for growth, environmental protection, additional residential units, integration of current municipal plans and studies, and future redevelopment of the Shevlin Woodyard and Fort Frances Mill Properties.

1.3 How does the Official Plan relate to the Zoning By-law?

The Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law will be reviewed concurrently. However, the Zoning By-law will not be approved until the Official Plan has been approved by MMAH. The Zoning By-law is a legal document that regulates the use of land and future development in a community. It implements the policies of the Official Plan by establishing detailed land use permissions, and lot and building requirements, and helps to manage potential conflicts between land uses. It sets out general provisions for development that apply to all properties in a municipality, as well as permitted uses and performance standards (e.g., setbacks, heights, parking) for properties within specific Zones.

Some of the Town's key areas of interest for updates include definitions, business development areas, parking, tent and camping provisions, well and septic special provisions, group homes, mobile homes, and recreational use trailers, Rainy Lake Islands, and railway setbacks, among others.

The New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review process will result in a new Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law for the entire Town of Fort Frances, and the current Official Plan and Zoning By-law 03/14 will be repealed. The existing Official Plan and Zoning Schedules (i.e., maps) will also be replaced. However, where appropriate, existing Official Plan policies and zoning provisions and requirements will be maintained.

1.4 Review Process

The New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review process will be undertaken over six (6) phases and is anticipated to be completed by Winter 2024. The project process and key community engagements are illustrated in **Figure 1** and described as follows:

Phase 1 – Project Initiation: Background Study and Review

- In coordination with Town staff, a Community Engagement Strategy will be developed, which will identify the processes and methodology for engaging with Town departments, Indigenous communities, Technical Advisory Committee, external technical agencies and groups (e.g., Northwestern Health Unit, Rainy River District School Board, Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce), and the public.
- A project webpage will be launched on the Town's website to raise project awareness and provide opportunities to the public to provide feedback on the New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review.
- Pre-consultation with MMAH will be initiated as required as part of the Official Plan Review.
- A presentation will be made to Council in late Summer 2022 that introduces the project, proposed timelines, and key issues and opportunities to be addressed.

Phase 2 – Community Exploration and Initial Engagement

- During this stage, the current Official Plan and Zoning By-law will be reviewed to determine required changes, based on initial consultations with Town staff, internal committees, Indigenous communities, Technical Advisory Committee, external agencies and interest groups, and the public.

- The first Public Open House will be held in-person in Fall 2022 to introduce the project and seek input on key issues included in the Draft Community Background Report. A Public Online Survey will also be conducted to seek community input on a refreshed vision for Town growth and development for the next 25 years.
- A Final Community Background Report, including an “As We Heard It” section to summarize the public input received at the meeting, public survey and via the webpage. will be prepared, integrating feedback received through engagement activities in Phase 2.

Phase 3 – Technical Review, Research, and Issues

- A Draft Policy Directions and Recommendations Report will be prepared to build on the Community Background Report by outlining a series of recommendations for changes to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. The Report will also include a proposed template for the new documents, and an approach to reviewing site-specific exceptions included in the current Zoning By-law.
- The Policy Directions and Recommendations Report will be reviewed with Town staff and the Technical Advisory Committee and finalized based on input received. The Report will be made available on the Town’s project webpage, for information.
- A Special Meeting of Council in accordance with Section 26(3) of the Planning Act will be held to present the key findings of the Policy Directions and Recommendations Report and to seek Council input as to how to proceed with the preparation of the Draft New Official Plan.

Phase 4 – Preparation of Draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law

- Based on the recommendations set out in the Policy Directions and Recommendations Report, the Draft Official Plan will be prepared in coordination with Town staff, including Draft Official Plan Schedules (i.e., maps).
- The Draft New Official Plan will be submitted to MMAH for a 90-day review as required by Section 17(1) of the Planning Act. The Notice of Statutory Public Meeting cannot be issued until the MMAH’s 90-day review is complete.
- A Zoning By-law Discussion Paper will be prepared at this time. The Paper will assess the existing Zoning By-law and conformity to the Town’s New Draft Official Plan.

- The Draft Zoning By-law will be prepared in coordination with Town staff, including Draft Zoning By-law Schedules.
- The Draft New Official Plan and Draft Comprehensive Zoning By-law will be presented at a combined in-person Statutory Public Open House under Section 34(12)(b) of the Planning Act, to introduce the new documents to the public. Prior to the in-person Statutory Public Open House, the Draft New Official Plan and Draft Comprehensive Zoning By-law and supporting materials will be made available on the project webpage.

Phase 5 – Finalizing of the New Official Plan

- The Final Draft New Official Plan and Schedules will be prepared based on comments from MMAH and in coordination with Town staff.
- The Final Draft Official Plan will be presented to Council at an in-person Statutory Public Meeting in accordance with Section 17(17) of the Planning Act.
- The Final New Official Plan will be considered by Council for adoption and then submitted to MMAH for approval. As per the Planning Act, MMAH is required to make a decision within 120 days upon receipt of the Adopted New Official Plan unless it decides to suspend this timeline. Once the New Official Plan is approved by MMAH, there can be no appeals on the decision by the Minister, however the Minister is permitted to refer all or parts of the New Official Plan to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) for recommendation or a decision. The Town will not be required to undertake an update for a 10-year period after the New Official Plan comes into effect.

Phase 6 – Finalizing of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law

- A Final Draft Zoning By-law and Zoning Schedule will be prepared, with consideration for all input and feedback received through the virtual Statutory Public Open House.
- The Final Draft Zoning By-law will be presented at an in-person Statutory Public Meeting, as required under Section 34(12)(a)(ii) of the Planning Act.
- A Final Zoning By-law will be prepared to address comments received at the Statutory Public Meeting and will be presented to Council for consideration of adoption.

- Following Council adoption, the Town will prepare a Notice of Decision in accordance with Section 34(18) of the Planning Act, to be issued within 15 days of Council's adoption of the new Zoning By-law, which triggers a 20-day appeal period. Members of the public, community associations, or other parties who have made an oral or written submission before Town Council during the public process may appeal the decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). If no appeals are received, the Zoning By-law will be in full force and effect.

Figure 1: New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review Project Process

Phase		Engagement Milestone	Project Deliverables
1	Project Initiation: Background Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Council Briefing Town Project Webpage Launch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement Strategy (submitted to Town for approval) Pre-Consultation with MMAH (August 17, 2022)
2	Community Exploration & Initial Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Staff / TAC Meeting #1 In-Person Public Open House #1 and Online Survey Meetings with Indigenous Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Background Report
3	Technical Review, Research & Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Staff / TAC Meeting #2 In-Person Public Open House #2 Meetings with Indigenous Communities Special Meeting of Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Directions and Recommendations Report
4	Draft New Official Plan & Zoning By-law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Staff / TAC Meetings #3, 4, 5 In-Person Public Open House #3 Meetings with Indigenous Communities Special Meeting of Council Combined Statutory Public Open House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft New Official Plan 90-day MMAH Review Zoning By-law Discussion Paper Draft Zoning By-law
5	Final New Official Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Staff / TAC Meeting #6 Meetings with Indigenous Communities Statutory Public Meeting (New Official Plan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final New Official Plan Council Adoption Submit Final New Official Plan to MMAH for Approval
6	Final Comprehensive Zoning By-law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings with Indigenous Communities Statutory Public Meeting (Zoning By-law) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Zoning By-law Council Adoption

1.5 Community Background Report Overview

This Draft Community Background Report has been prepared to direct the Town of Fort Frances New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review and includes the current community profile and identifies policies and provisions that may be missing or require updating. The planning horizon for the Official Plan must conform to the 25-year planning horizon set out in the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020.

This Draft Community Background Report is organized as follows:

- **Section 2** of this report provides a **community overview of the Town of Fort Frances** and its land use characteristics;
- **Section 3** describes the **regulatory planning framework** applicable to the Town of Fort Frances, including recent revisions to the PPS, 2020, and other key provincial legislation and regional policies;
- **Section 4** provides an overview of the **local municipal planning context**, including a summary of the existing Official Plan and Zoning By-law, as well as other municipal documents that must be considered when updating the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan and Zoning By-law;
- **Section 5** provides an **overview of key planning issues** to be addressed through the Review; and
- **Section 6** provides a **conclusion** to the Draft Community Background Report.

Appendix A contains a detailed analysis of the policy issues to be addressed in the Town of Fort Frances New Official Plan, based on a review of the PPS, 2020. **Appendix B** contains WSP's Community Engagement Strategy (July 22, 2022).

1.6 Government Agencies, Interest Groups, Indigenous, and Community Engagement

A Community Engagement Strategy was prepared by WSP on July 22, 2022 and is included as **Appendix B** to this report. The Community Engagement Strategy elaborates the approach, methods, and specific tools to undertake a comprehensive review of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law for the Town, including:

- Indigenous Community Engagement;

- Project Branding;
- Project Webpage, Email, and Mailing List;
- Project Awareness Campaign;
- Technical Advisory Committee;
- Community Dialogue;
- Managing Comments;
- Individual Property Owner Consultation;
- Accessibility and an Age-Friendly Approach; and
- Online Public Engagement.

The project process and key community engagement events are illustrated in **Figure 1**.

2 Community Context

2.1 Background

The Town of Fort Frances is in the Rainy River District in Northwestern Ontario, between the Ontario-Manitoba border and Thunder Bay. As shown **Figure 3**, the Town is situated on the northern shoreline of Rainy River and is connected by the Fort Frances-International Falls International Bridge to the City of International Falls, Minnesota, marking it as the main gateway to Northwestern Ontario from the United States. Fort Frances has a land area of approximately 7.29 km² (790 hectares) and is the fourth largest municipality in the region after Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Dryden (2021 Census).

First settled by Europeans in 1731 in connection with the fur trade, Fort Frances was established through the commissioning of Fort Saint Pierre, which was used as a fur trade post. The current Canada-United States border was defined following the War of 1812 and shortly after, the North West Company built a new fort in the area called Fort Lac La Pluie. In 1821, the North West Company merged with the Hudson's Bay Company and Fort Lac La Pluie became a trading post for the Hudson's Bay Company. It was later renamed Fort Frances in 1830, in honour of Frances Ramsay Simpson, the wife of the Hudson's Bay Company Governor at the time.

On April 11, 1903, the Town of Fort Frances was incorporated. The Fort Frances pulp and paper mill, as shown in **Figure 2**, which was formerly owned and operated by Resolute Forest Products until its closure 2014, was opened in the early 1900s.



Figure 2: Former Fort Frances Pulp and Paper Mill (Image Source: Northern Ontario Business)

Figure 3: Town of Fort Frances Key Map (WSP, 2022)



2.2 Population

Fort Frances has experienced some decline in population and household growth over the years. The Statistics Canada 2021 Census lists the population of the Town of Fort Frances as approximately 7,470. This represents a decrease of 3.5% from the previous census in 2016; a decreasing trend that has been ongoing since at least 1996, at which time the Town's population was approximately 8,790 (1996 Census).

The 2021 Census reports the following age distribution in Fort Frances: 15% of residents are 9-14 years; 61% of residents are aged 15- 64 years; and 23% of residents are aged 65 years and older. Of the 23% aged 65 years and older, 17% are aged 85 years and older. This growing cohort of older adults has specific needs that must be met to ensure that they can continue to fully engage and participate in the community, including the provision of services and infrastructure that cater to all ages and mobilities.

In the 2021 Census, 94.2% of Fort Frances residents (6,600) identified English, 0.01% (75) identified French, and 4% (255) identified a non-official language as their mother tongue. Non-official languages were identified as the mother tongue of 255 residents and included German, Ukrainian, Cantonese, Italian, Spanish, and other languages. The Indigenous languages of Ojibway and Swampy Cree were identified as the mother tongue of approximately 60 residents.

Approximately 530 people in Fort Frances identified as Indigenous in 2016, with 435 residents identifying as First Nations single identity and 90 people identifying as Métis single identity. There are 375 residents who identified as being immigrants to Canada.

2.3 Housing

The 2021 Census documented approximately 3,315 households within the Town of Fort Frances. Of these, approximately 76% of these were single-detached dwellings (2,525) 22% (720) were attached dwellings (i.e., semi-detached, row house, apartment in a duplex, or apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys), and 0.01% (30) were movable dwellings.



With respect to tenure, according to the 2021 Census, 72% of households in Fort Frances are homeowners and 28% are rental. Of 3,330 occupied private dwellings in 2016, only 125 dwellings were built in the period from 2001 to 2016. Approximately half of all dwellings were constructed before 1960.

2.4 Land Use

The Town has largely developed along the northern shoreline of Rainy River and east of Oakwood Road. Land use in Fort Frances is largely residential, with existing commercial, recreational, and institutional uses located throughout the Town. There are existing and former industrial and light industrial lands dispersed throughout the built-up area as well, including the former Fort Frances Paper and Pulp Mill (previously operated by Resolute Forest Products), former Shevlin Woodyard (both of which are discussed in Subsection 5.2.2 of this Report) and the Canadian National Railway Company Train Yard,

Residential development in Fort Frances is primarily low-rise and compact and is based on a traditional grid network of streets. There is little development in the rural area of the Town and limited farm operations.

2.5 Recreation and Community Facilities

There are a variety of recreation opportunities, picnic areas, green spaces, play structures, and public-access waterfront areas that are owned by the Town, including:

- Legion West End Park;
- Lillie Avenue Park;
- Logging Tug Hallett and Lookout Tower;
- McIrvine Rotary Park;
- Lion's Millenium Park and Fountain;
- Phair Avenue Park;
- Point Park, Rainy Lake;
- Royal Canadian Legion Park;
- Rainy Lake Square (Figure 4); and
- Sorting Gap Marina (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Rainy Lake Square (Source: 931 The Border)



Other community facilities include:

- Fort Frances Library and Technology Centre; and
- Fort Frances Museum and Tourism Information Centre;
- Memorial Sports Centre.

Figure 5: Sorting Gap Marina (Source: Town of Fort Frances)



Public and Catholic elementary and secondary schools within the Town include:

- Fort Frances High School;
- J.W. Walker School;

- Robert Moore School; and
- St. Mary School.

Post-secondary opportunities in Fort Frances include the Rainy River District Campus of Confederation College.

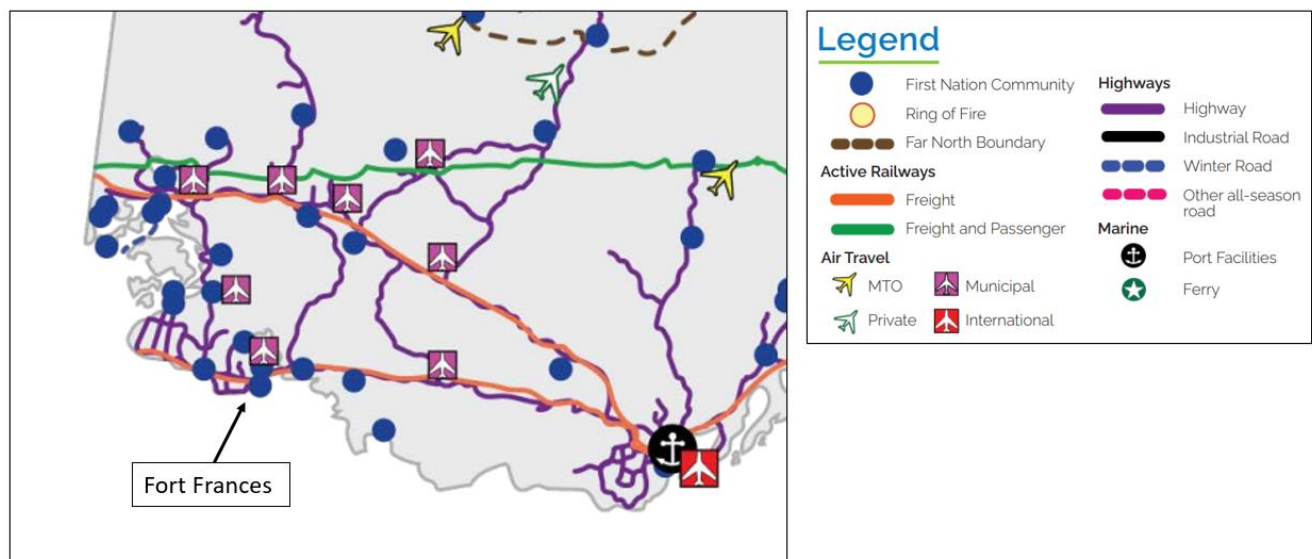
2.6 Transportation

King's Highway 11, or Ontario Highway 11, and Ontario Highway 71 are the two major highways that run through Fort Frances. Both highways are part of the Trans-Canada Highway. Highway 71 connects Fort Frances to the City of Kenora in the north, and Highway 11 provides connections to Devlin, Emo, and Rainy River to the west and to Atikokan and Thunder Bay to the east.

The Fort Frances-International Falls International Bridge is a toll bridge that links the Town and the City of International Falls, Minnesota, south across the Rainy River. The bridge also provides a Canadian National Railway link to the United States.

Fort Frances and the surrounding area are also serviced by the Fort Frances Municipal Airport, which is located north of downtown, as shown in **Figure 6**. Fort Frances is also served by Fort Frances Handi-Van Transit, which is a provincially funded service operated by the Town.

Figure 6: Excerpt from Figure 1: Northern Ontario's Transportation Infrastructure (Connecting the North: A Draft Transportation Plan for Northern Ontario, December 2020)



As part of the Official Plan Review, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation Guidelines for Municipal Official Plan Preparation (April 2009) will be reviewed against the existing Town Official Plan policies for Provincial Highways (Subsection 3.3.2.2. of the current Official Plan).

2.7 Economy

At the time of writing this Report, the 2021 Census data for labour was not available. In the 2016 Census, the Town of Fort Frances reported a labour force of 3,745 people, a labour participation rate of 61.5%, an employment rate of 93% (3,480), and an unemployment rate of 7% (265). According to 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) data from the 2016 Census, the employment sectors with the greatest proportion of the labour force include:

- Health care and social assistance (745 jobs);
- Retail trade (600 jobs);
- Educational services (375 jobs);
- Accommodation and food services (340 jobs);

Other sectors with less than 300 jobs include:

- Public administration (295 jobs);
- Construction (230 jobs);
- Transportation and warehousing (175 jobs);
- Other services (except public administration) (145 jobs);
- Manufacturing (125 jobs);
- Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services (120 jobs); and
- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (115 jobs).

2.8 Cultural Heritage



Figure 7: Fort Frances Museum and Cultural Centre (Image Source: Destination Fort Frances)

The Town of Fort Frances Museum and Cultural Centre at 259 Scott Street was founded in 1978 and is in downtown Fort Frances (**Figure 7**). The property at 259 Scott Street was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act on February 28, 2000. The Museum is home to permanent galleries with a focus on local and regional history and maintains the Logging Tug Hallett and Lookout Tower, both of which are located on the waterfront.

The Town of Fort Frances Museum Advisory Committee advises Town Council on policies and procedures related to the Fort Frances Museum and Cultural Centre. The Committee is also responsible for business development for the museum and provision of advice on acquisition, preservation, and exhibition of the museum's collection.

While the Town does not have a Municipal Heritage Register of designated properties or Committee that is mandated with advising on municipal heritage matters, Town Council adopted a Heritage Policy Statement in 2004. The Heritage Policy Statement states:

- The Town of Fort Frances recognizes the value of its cultural heritage to its own community and to visitors to the community;
- We recognize the value of maintaining, protecting, and presenting the legacy left by our predecessors for our children and in turn, their children;
- We recognize the value of presenting our story to visitors from both educational and entertainment perspectives to optimize tourism opportunities;
- The Town of Fort Frances is committed to maintaining, protecting, preserving, and promoting its cultural heritage.

2.9 Natural Heritage Features and Areas

Fort Frances and the Rainy River District are characterized by a beautiful natural environment, in particular Rainy River, Rainy Lake and the Rainy Lake Islands, which is comprised of 2,200 islands; 2,000 of which are located on the Canadian side of the border. In the United States, Voyageurs National Park is southeast of Fort Frances in Minnesota.

According to the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MNDMNR) online Natural Heritage mapping, there are no Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs) in Fort Frances. However, there are unevaluated wetlands and woodlands within the Town's municipal boundary, as shown in

Figure 8.

The Rainy Lake Islands Conservation Reserve was established on April 28, 2003 as part of the Province's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy that was released in July 1999. The Reserve is managed under the jurisdiction of the Rainy Lake Area Supervisor, Fort Frances District, MNDMNRF, and is regulated under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006.

The Town of Fort Frances does not belong under the jurisdiction of a Conservation Authority. As per Section 3.1 of the current Official Plan, MNF, now MNDMNRF, is responsible for reviewing and approving the delineation of significant wildlife habitat, mitigation measures, and species at risk screening.

Map of Wetlands and Woodlands

Legend

- Unevaluated Wetland
- Woodland

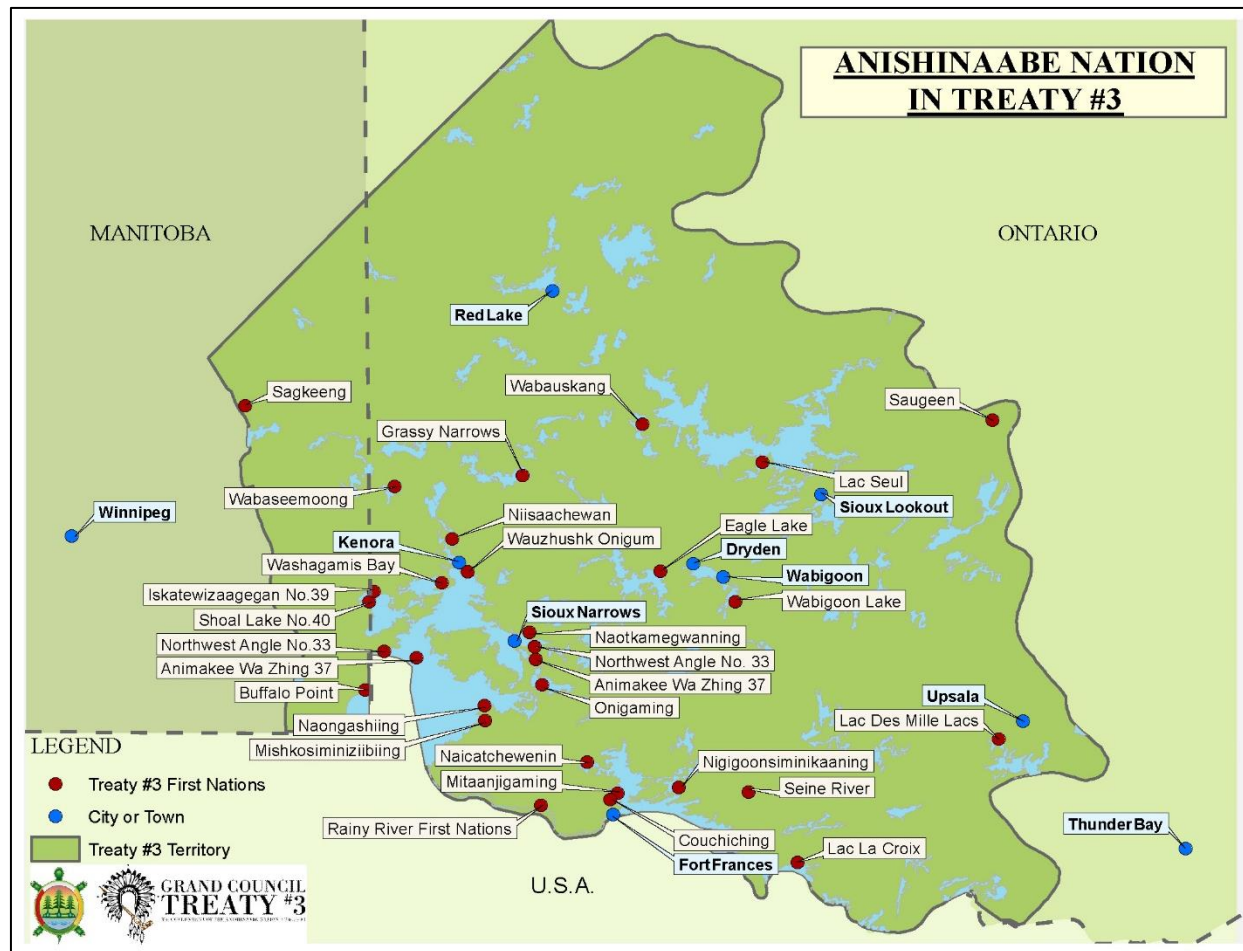
Map Labels:

- Fort Frances
- Hwy 11
- Hwy 169
- McIlwaine Rd N
- McIlwaine Rd S
- 8th St W
- 8th St E
- 6th St W
- 5th St W
- 3rd St E
- 1st St E
- 2nd St E
- Church St
- Nelson St
- Front St
- Victoria Ave
- Ida Wild Dr
- Agency 1
- 17046
- 602
- 71
- 53
- 16

The Town of Fort Frances is part of Treaty 3 that was signed by the Saulteaux Tribe of the Ojibbeway Indians and the Government of Canada on October 3, 1873. Treaty 3 is also referred to as the North-West Angle Treaty. As shown in

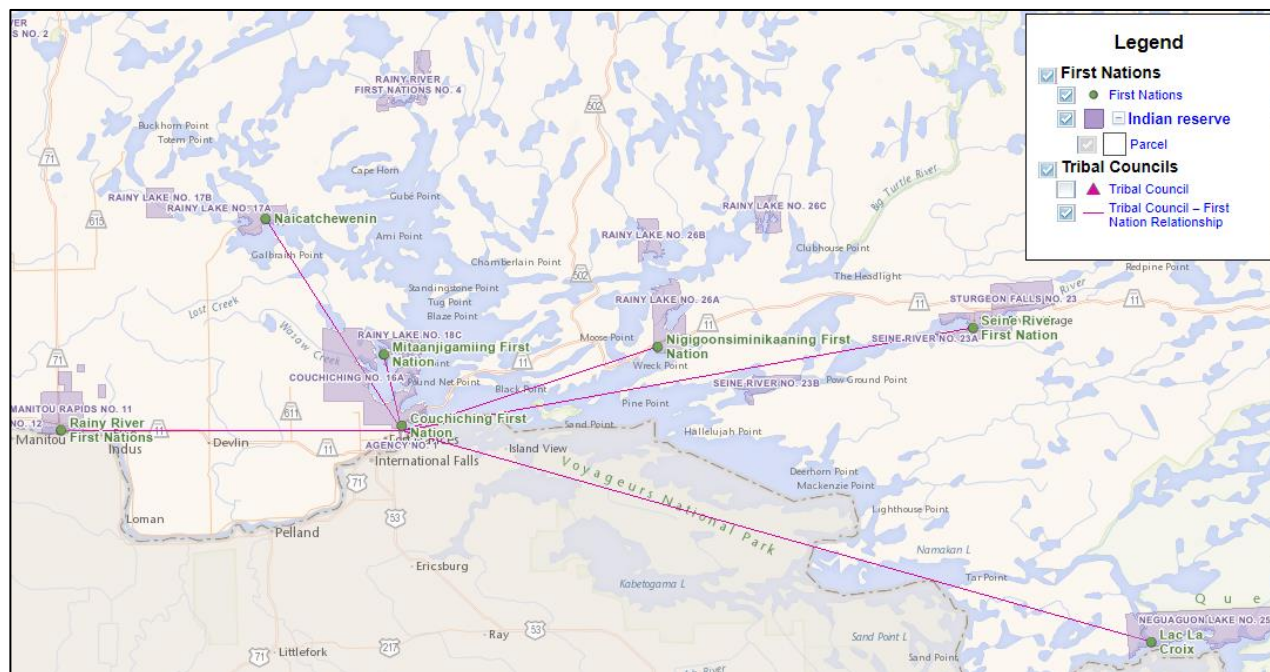
Figure 9, Treaty 3 lands span from west of Thunder Bay to north of Sioux Lookout, and west to the Manitoba border. It is made up 28 First Nation communities, with a total population of approximately 25,000. Grand Council Treaty #2 serves as the traditional government of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty 3, with one elected Grand Chief and several advising Councils, including the Elder's Council, Youth Executive Council, Women's Council, Men's Council, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Council.

Figure 9: Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 (Image Source: Grand Council Treaty #3)



As shown in Figure 10, Fort Frances is nearby to the Indigenous communities of Naicatchewenin First Nation, Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation, Couchiching First Nation, Mitaanjigaming First Nation, Seine River First Nation, Rainy River First Nation, the Lac La Croix First Nation, and the Metis Nation of Ontario. In addition to these communities are multiple reserves. The Couchiching Indian Reserve No. 16A and the Agency Indian Reserve No. 1 are both within the municipal boundary of Fort Frances. The Agency Indian Reserve No.1 is shared by Couchiching First Nation, Mitaanjigaming First Nation, Naicatchewenin First Nation, and Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation.

Figure 10: First Nations and Indian Reserves close to Fort Frances (Image Source: First Nation Profiles Interactive Map <https://geo.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/cippn-fnpim/index-eng.html>)

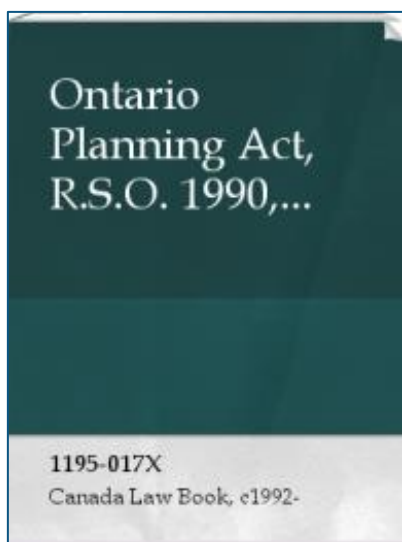


3 Regulatory Planning Framework

Planning at the municipal level is undertaken within a framework established by the Province of Ontario, specifically the Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). The Town of Fort Frances Official Plan enables several planning tools to be used to implement the policies of the Plan, including, but not limited to, community improvement plans, zoning by-laws, and site plan control.

Local land use policies are required to be consistent with the policies of the PPS and must reflect current provincial legislation. Therefore, it is the intent that the Official Plan Review set out the appropriate framework for land use planning in the Town. Furthermore, Zoning By-laws must conform to the Town's Official Plan in addition to Provincial policies. Other local studies may also include important issues and opportunities that can be addressed through the New Official Plan and Zoning By-law. This section describes the legislative and policy context under which the new Town of Fort Frances Official Plan and Zoning By-law is being prepared.

3.1 Planning Act



The Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, is the primary legislation that establishes how municipalities in Ontario may plan, manage, and regulate land use. It outlines matters of provincial interest and enables the Province to issue Policy Statements to provide direction to municipalities on these matters.

The Planning Act enables municipal Councils to pass a variety of tools to plan and regulate the use of land and the placement of buildings and structures on a lot. Under Section 16 of the Act, most municipalities, including the Town of Fort Frances, are required to prepare and adopt Official Plans in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Official Plans contain a vision, objectives, and policies

to guide decision making on land use planning matters. Municipal decisions, by-laws and public works are required to conform to the policies of the Official Plan (Section 24(1)).

The 20 matters of provincial interest that municipal councils “shall have regard to” when carrying out their responsibilities under Section 2 of the Act, including the preparation and adoption of an official plan, are as follows:

- 1) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions;
- 2) the protection of agricultural resources of the Province;
- 3) the conservation and management of natural resources and the mineral resource base;
- 4) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest;
- 5) the supply, efficient use and conservation of energy and water;
- 6) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services and waste management systems;
- 7) the minimization of waste;
- 8) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities;
- 9) the accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters to which this Act applies;
- 10) the adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities;
- 11) the adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing;
- 12) the adequate provision of employment opportunities;
- 13) the protection of the financial and economic well-being of the Province and its municipalities;
- 14) the co-ordination of planning activities of public bodies;
- 15) the resolution of planning conflicts involving public and private conflicts;
- 16) the protection of public health and safety;
- 17) the appropriate location of growth and development;
- 18) the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be pedestrian-oriented;

- 19) the promotion of built form that, a) is well designed b) encourages a sense of place, and c) provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive, and vibrant; and
- 20) the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to a changing climate.

The matters of provincial interest are presented in no particular order, and, depending on the context, are not intended to indicate that provincial interests have varying levels of importance

Section 34 of the Planning Act enables Councils to pass Zoning By-laws to regulate the use of land and the location, height, bulk, size, floor area, spacing, character and use of buildings and structures, as well as parking and loading requirements, and lot requirements. Additionally, Zoning By-laws may be used to prohibit the use of land or erection of buildings and structures within:

- Significant wildlife habitat, wetlands, woodlands, ravines, valleys, or areas of natural and scientific interest;
- Significant corridors or shorelines of a lake, river, or stream;
- Significant natural corridors, features, or areas; and
- Sites of significant archaeological resources.

In accordance with Section 24(1), municipal decisions, by-laws (including Zoning By-laws), and public works must conform to the Official Plan and be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. Zoning By-laws are viewed as one of the primary tools to implement the policies of the Official Plan.

Zoning By-laws are legally enforceable documents with requirements to regulate development for each property in the municipality. A property owner is not entitled to obtain a building permit unless their proposed building, structure, or change in land or building use complies with the requirements of the Zoning By-law. Further, persons who have erected a building or structure, or changed the use of land or a building in a manner that does not comply with the Zoning By-law may be subject to penalties as outlined in the Planning Act.

If a person wishes to use their property or construct a building or structure in a manner that does not comply with the Zoning By-law, they may apply for a Minor Variance or a Zoning By-law Amendment.

Minor variances may be granted by a municipality's Committee of Adjustment, in accordance with Section 45(1) of the Planning Act, provided that the variance satisfies the four tests under the Act:

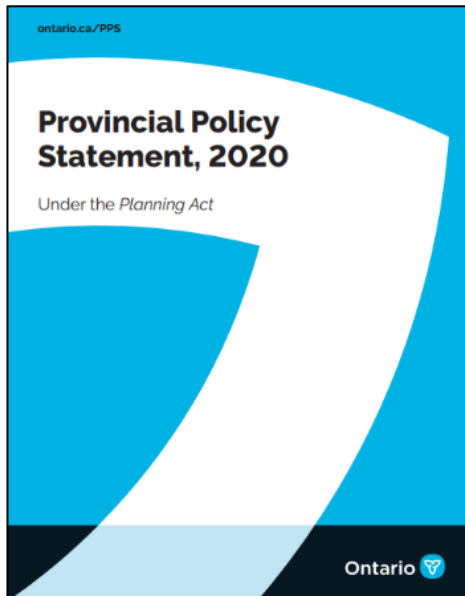
1. Is the application minor in nature?
2. Is it desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building, or structure?
3. Is it in keeping with the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?
4. Is it in keeping with the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

Major deviations from the requirements of the Zoning By-law, such as change of use to one that is not permitted in the applicable Zone, would require an amendment to the By-law.

Two Year Period – No Application for Amendments

Under Section 34(10.0.0.1) of the Planning Act, if Council carries out the requirements of subsection 26(9) by simultaneously repealing and replacing all the Zoning By-laws in effect in the municipality, no person or public body will be able to submit an application for an amendment to any of the by-laws before the second anniversary of the day on which Council repeals and replaces them. However, this does not apply if the Council has declared, by resolution, that such an application is permitted. Council may pass such a resolution on a site-specific basis for individual Zoning By-law Amendment applications, or a blanket resolution to permit all such applications within this two-year period.

3.2 Provincial Policy Statement, 2020



The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) came into effect on May 1, 2020 and sets the policy foundation that guides Ontario's land use planning system. It provides for appropriate development while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and quality of the natural environment. It focuses growth and development within urban and rural settlement areas, while supporting the viability of rural areas.

The PPS contains specific policies for the following: community development; employment areas; housing; public space; infrastructure; economic development; energy; resource management; agriculture; natural heritage; cultural heritage; and

public health and safety. It directs that settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development, and promotes their vitality and regeneration to ensure healthy, liveable, and safe communities are sustained (Policy 1.1.3.1). It empowers planning authorities to identify appropriate locations and opportunities where intensification and redevelopment can be accommodated (Policy 1.1.3.3) and directs that planning authorities shall establish and implement minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built-up areas, based on local conditions (Policy 1.1.3.5).

It is intended that Official Plans are the primary vehicle for implementation of the PPS (Policy 4.6). Zoning By-laws are also recognized as an important tool for implementing the PPS and must be kept up to date with the PPS and Official Plans (Preamble).

The PPS 2020 was prepared as part of the province's "More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan." The goal of the Action Plan is to increase the mix and supply of housing and to streamline the development approvals process. Key policies in the PPS which may have an impact on the Town's Official Plan land use policies and the Zoning By-law Review include:

Housing

- The new Provincial Policy Statement provides greater detail regarding the diversity of housing types and options (building types and living arrangements) that should be employed to facilitate residential intensification:
 - Planning authorities are encouraged to permit and facilitate a range of housing options, including new development as well as residential intensification, to respond to current and future needs (Part IV).
 - A new definition for “housing options” has been added: “a range of housing types such as, but not limited to single-detached, semi-detached, rowhouses, townhouses, stacked townhouses, multiplexes, additional residential units, tiny homes, multi-residential buildings. The term can also refer to a variety of housing arrangements and forms such as, but not limited to life lease housing, co-ownership housing, co-operative housing, community land trusts, land lease community homes, affordable housing, housing for people with special needs, and housing related to employment, institutional or educational uses.” (6.0 Definitions)
 - A revised definition for “residential intensification” is included: “intensification of a property, site or area which results in a net increase in residential units or accommodation and includes:
 - a) redevelopment, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;
 - b) the development of vacant or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
 - c) infill development;
 - d) development and introduction of new housing options within previously developed areas;
 - e) the conversion or expansion of existing industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings for residential use; and
 - f) the conversion or expansion of existing residential buildings to create new residential units or accommodation, including accessory apartments, additional residential units, rooming houses, and other housing options.” (6.0 Definitions)

- Planning authorities are required to provide adequate land for a 25-year planning horizon, rather than the 20-year horizon in the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (Policy 1.1.2).
- Planning authorities are also required to maintain at all times a minimum 15-year supply of lands which are designated and available for residential development (Policy 1.4.1 a), and land servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans (Policy 1.4.1 b). Upper-tier and single-tier municipalities may choose to maintain land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a five-year supply of residential units (Policy 1.4.1).
- Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents by permitting and facilitating “all housing options required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents [...]”, and “all types of residential intensification, including additional residential units, and redevelopment [...]” (Policy 1.4.3).

Employment Lands

- Employment areas planned for industrial and manufacturing uses shall provide for separation or mitigation from sensitive land uses to maintain the long-term operational and economic viability of the planned uses and function of these areas (Policy 1.3.2.2).
- Employment areas planned for industrial, or manufacturing uses should include an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment areas (Policy 1.3.2.3).

Consultation/Coordination

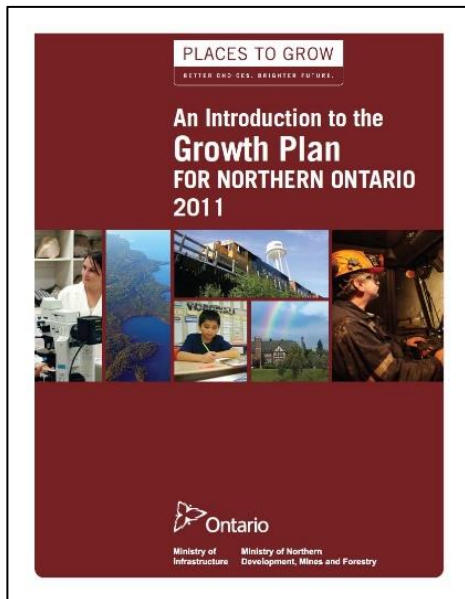
- An increased emphasis on the importance of Indigenous consultation, including direction that planning authorities “shall engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use matters” (Policy 1.2.2).

Implementation

- Zoning and development permit by-laws are recognized as important for implementing the Provincial Policy Statement, and planning authorities are required to keep them up to date with their official plans and the Provincial Policy Statement.

A Conformity Review examining the current Town of Fort Frances Official Plan against the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 is included in **Appendix A** of this Report.

3.3 Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (2011)



The Growth Plan for Northern Ontario is a 25-year plan that came into effect in 2011. This Growth Plan was prepared under Ontario's Places to Grow Act (2005), which provides that the Province may identify and designate areas for which strategic growth plans can be developed. The Growth Plan focuses on attracting and sustaining growth in northern communities and is intended to be used as a strategic framework that will guide decision-making in Northern Ontario for the next 25 years.

The Growth Plan is structured around six key policy areas which contribute to the region's long-term sustainability and prosperity: Economy; People; Communities; Aboriginal Peoples; Infrastructure; and

Environment. The Growth Plan is focused on the following six key guiding principles:

- Creating a highly productive region, with a diverse, globally competitive economy that offers a range of career opportunities for all residents.
- Developing a highly educated and skilled workforce to support an evolving knowledge-based economy and excellence in the trades.
- Partnering with Aboriginal peoples to increase educational and employment opportunities.
- Delivering a complete network of transportation, energy, communications, social and learning infrastructure to support strong, vibrant communities. •

Demonstrating leadership in sustainable growth and environmental management.

- Establishing innovative partnerships to maximize resources and ensure this Plan achieves its ambitious vision and is fiscally sustainable.

Economy

The Plan supports the development of a strong, resilient, and more diversified northern economy through policies which are intended to support growth and diversity in the region's traditional resource-based industries, as well as the development of new and emerging economic sectors that have the greatest potential to result in job growth and opportunities in the North. Economic development strategies will focus on existing and emerging priority sectors, including:

- Agriculture, mining and manufacturing;
- Exportable services (higher order education and health care, business services); and
- Tourism services (retail sales, accommodation, food, recreation, entertainment).

People

The Growth Plan identifies people as Northern Ontario's most important resource and focuses on supporting under-represented groups such as youth, displaced workers, Francophones, Aboriginal peoples, newcomers, and persons with disabilities. The policies of the Plan are intended to create new opportunities for all residents to contribute to their communities, including increased accessibility and relevance of education and training and access to health care services.

Communities

The policies of the Growth Plan support community planning that balances the priorities of human, economic, and environmental health. Official Plans, community economic plans and participating in community planning efforts are identified as effective tools to ensure the future economy and long-term sustainability of communities reflects the views of citizens and businesses. Municipalities are encouraged to align their Official Plans with strategies which focus on achieving the following objectives:

- Economic, social, and environmental sustainability;
- Accommodation of the diverse needs of all residents, now and in the future;
- Optimized use of existing infrastructure;
- A high quality of place; and
- A vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive community identity that builds on unique local features (Policy 4.2.1).

Indigenous Peoples

The Growth Plan recognizes the unique role of Indigenous peoples in the development of the region and seeks to involve Indigenous communities and organizations in economic development and to improve the capacity of these communities to participate in economic development planning. The Growth Plan encourages Indigenous participation and knowledge-sharing in existing land use planning and policy processes (Policy 7.5.1).

Infrastructure

The Growth Plan supports efficient and modern infrastructure as being critical to the future of Northern Ontario. The Plan requires that infrastructure planning, land use planning and infrastructure investments are coordinated (Policy 5.2.1), and emphasizes optimizing the transportation system, increasing access to education and training, investing in information and communications technology, maintaining the reliability of energy transmission and distribution systems, and accommodating renewable energy generation. The Plan also requires that infrastructure planning and investments contribute to a culture of conservation by utilizing approaches and technologies that reduce energy and water use, increase efficiencies, and promote intensification and brownfield site redevelopment, whenever feasible (Policy 5.2.4).

Environment

The Growth Plan supports the sustainable development of natural resources with a balanced approach to environment, social and economic health, and recognizes the need for climate change mitigation and adaptation, which is of particular importance to the North. The Plan also reflects the values and benefits that the natural environment in the North provides to people, the Northern economy and the province. Policies include protecting surface water features and groundwater features (Policy

6.3.2); incorporating climate change mitigation and adaptation considerations (Policy 6.3.3); protecting air quality, water quality and quantity, and natural heritage (Policy 6.3.4); and fostering a culture of conservation and demonstrating environmental leadership through the adopting of sustainability practices (Policy 6.4.1).

3.4 Recent Legislative Changes

The following section discusses recent legislative changes that may impact changes to the Town's New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

3.4.1 Bill 245 – Accelerating Access to Justice Act, 2021

On June 1, 2021, the Province of Ontario's Bill 245 (Accelerating Access to Justice Act, 2021) received Royal Assent. Through Bill 245, the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, Environmental Review Tribunal, Board of Negotiation, Conservation Review Board, and the Mining and Land Tribunal were amalgamated into a new single tribunal, the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) through enactment of the Ontario Land Tribunal Act, 2021. The former Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2019 is now repealed. The City of Toronto Act, 2006 and the Municipal Act, 2001 have been amended to incorporate the provisions of the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2017 with regards to the jurisdiction of the OLT over municipal matters and public utilities.

Section 2 of the Ontario Tribunal Act, 2021 establishes the OLT, its jurisdiction and powers, and specifies the practices and procedures that apply with respect to matters before it.

3.4.2 Bill 108 – More Housing, More Choice Act, 2019

The Province of Ontario's Bill 108 (More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019) received Royal Assent on June 6, 2019. The Bill amends 13 different pieces of legislation that impact municipalities and land use planning processes. These include, among others, the Planning Act, Development Charges Act, Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act (now repealed), and Ontario Heritage Act.

Local Planning Decisions and Timelines

Bill 108 introduced an amendment to the Planning Act to expedite local planning decisions by establishing:

- A 120-day timeline for decisions on Official Plan Amendments (instead of 180 days);
- 90 days for Zoning By-law Amendments (instead of 150 days); and
- 120 days for Plans of Subdivision (instead of 210 days).

Additional Residential Units

Amendments to Planning Act provisions for additional residential units (formerly referred to as secondary units) are described in greater detail in **Section 5.2.1** of this Draft Community Background Report.

Heritage Planning

Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act establish new, mandatory standards for designation by-laws and new time limits for confirming complete alteration and demolition applications, as well as designation decisions. Municipal decisions on designations and alterations are subject to appeals to the former Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (now Ontario Land Tribunal), whose decisions will be binding. The intent is to provide greater certainty when it comes to timelines and local decision-making.

3.4.3 Bill 109 – More Homes for Everyone Act

The Province of Ontario's Bill 109 (More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022) received royal assent on April 14, 2022. The Bill makes various changes to the Development Charges Act, 1997, the New Home Construction Licensing Act, 2017, the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act, and the Planning Act. The intent of this Bill is to hasten the planning process to build new housing and it accomplishes that by creating more authorities for the Minister, providing new tools for municipalities, and implementing penalties for failure to process applications quickly.

Minister's Authority Regarding Official Plans

Changes to Section 17 of the Planning Act give new discretionary authorities to the Minister to suspend the time period to make a decision on Official Plans and Amendments. In addition, the Minister may, before making a decision on an Official Plan or an amendment, refer all or parts of the Official Plan to the OLT for either a recommendation or a decision. Regarding the creation of the New Official Plan for the

Town and the Official Plan Amendment Applications, this new authority should be acknowledged as a potential to introduce significant uncertainty in the conclusion of the project.

Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator

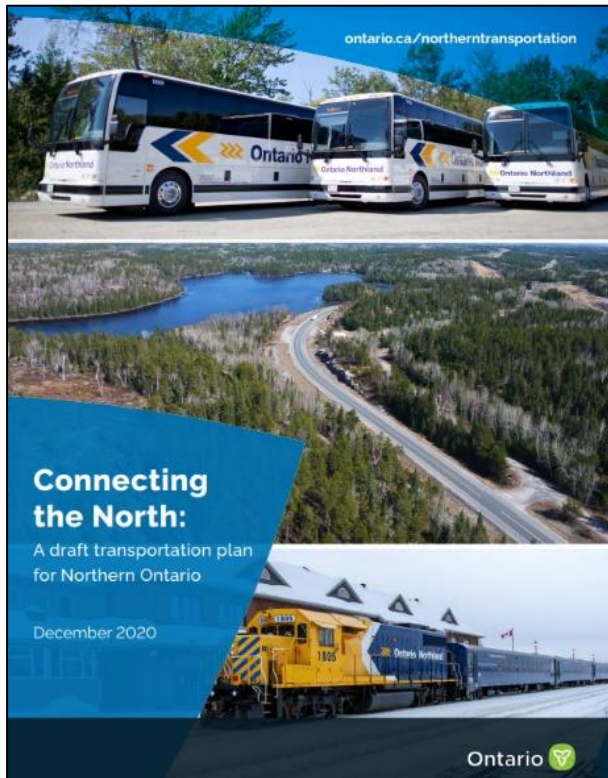
Changes to Section 34 of the Planning Act now permit municipalities to request a Minister's Zoning Order, subject to and conditional upon the Minister implementing guidelines. As part of these changes, municipalities are permitted to pass a resolution to make a request. Municipalities are also empowered to determine the process and requirements for giving notice and for consulting. This new tool for municipalities might be considered an alternative approvals process, but it remains to be seen how the Minister will choose to implement it. The implementation of this tool may occur during this project.

Approvals Process and Fees Refund

Changes to Section 34 of the Planning Act now requires municipalities to refund development application fees for Official Plan amendments, Zoning By-law amendment and Site Plan applications that are not processed within the prescribed timelines. The required refunds increase from 50% to 100% over time, meaning that the longer the municipality takes to provide a decision on these applications, the more it will cost the municipality.

To address this, the Town should be very clear in defining the application process and what counts as a "complete application", as the timeline until refunds are required starts when an application is "deemed complete". To encourage certain kinds of development and avoid the risk of refunds, the changes also permit municipalities the power to define a class or classes of development which are exempt from site plan approvals.

3.5 Connecting the North: A Draft Transportation Plan for Northern Ontario (December 2020)



“Connecting the North: A Draft Transportation Plan for Northern Ontario” was developed by the Ministry of Transportation and released in 2020. The Draft Northern Ontario Transportation Plan is intended to serve as a guide for building a modern and sustainable transportation system in the North. The Plan identifies a vision and 67 actions, which include the widening of sections of Highway 69, 11/17, and 17, addition of new Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ONTC) bus routes between White River, Thunder Bay, and Winnipeg, investment in remote airports in the region, COVID-19 economic recovery supports, and advancing track audit work along the northeastern rail corridor that is serviced by ONTC and Algoma Central Railway.

4 Existing Local Municipal Planning Context

In addition to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, numerous documents prepared for, and by the Town of Fort Frances contain policy recommendations or conclusions that should be considered in the New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review. This section summarizes the structure of the current Official Plan, as well as the available documents listed below and identifies recommendations to be incorporated into Official Plan policies:

- Town of Fort Frances Strategic Plan (November 2020 – November 2022);
- Town of Fort Frances Community Improvement Plan (MAH Approved: With modifications September 8, 2003, Modified: December 22, 2008);
- 2018 Asset Management Plan for the Town of Fort Frances; and
- Town of Fort Frances Active Transportation Plan (December 2007).

4.1 Town of Fort Frances Strategic Plan (November 2020 – November 2022)



The Town of Fort Frances developed a November 2020-November 2022 Strategic Plan, which establishes a clear mission, vision, values, and key objectives, as well as a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis, review of competitive position, implementation, and measure of results to guide decision-making for the 2020-2022 period. As the municipal election will be held in October 2022, a new Strategic Plan will be prepared for the new term of Council.

The vision for the Town of Fort Frances, as stated in Section 3.1 of the Strategic Plan is:

“The Town of Fort Frances will be a welcoming community with Boundless opportunities”.

This vision would be reviewed as part of the community engagement designed for the project to confirm whether this vision remains valid or whether it should be revised.

The Town's mission is to:

"Through partnerships we will create a safe, inclusive, sustainable and attractive community that enhances quality of life and promotes growth and prosperity".

The seventeen (17) values that will guide the Strategic Plan include:

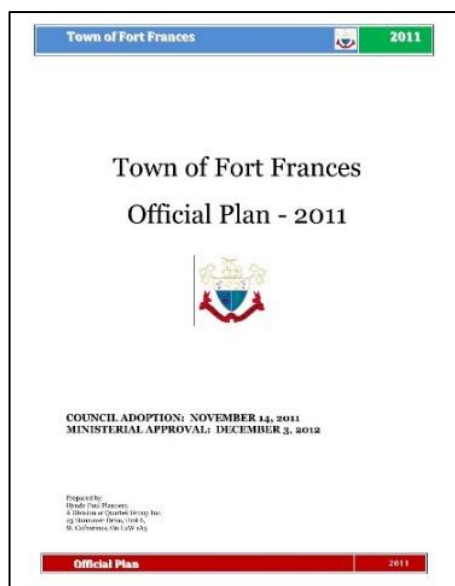
- Stewardship;
- Collaboration;
- Inclusivity and Equity;
- Proactive Planning;
- Safety and Security;
- Fostering Growth;
- Managing Change;
- Creativity;
- Service Oriented;
- Personal Growth;
- Effective Communication;
- Transparency;
- Responsible Leadership;
- Community and Youth Engagement;
- Working Conditions;
- Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability; and
- Workplace Safety.

The Town has established the following **key objectives**:

1. Attracting new industry and attracting investment for local business development.
2. Promotion of tourism / destination tourism.
3. Develop a plan for the Shevlin Woodyard.
4. Undertake succession planning and talent management.
5. Improve relationships with neighbouring communities.
6. Establish Partnerships with nearby First Nation communities.
7. Complete review of governance model and key procedures.
8. Undertake Asset Management Planning / Address Budgetary Gap for infrastructure / Develop a preventative approach to maintenance.
9. Create Positive Workforce Culture.
10. Examine opportunities to generate additional revenue.
11. Undertake residential development.
12. Develop Business Plans for Community Services.
13. Maintain / Enhance Existing Levels of Service.
14. Work to secure long-term survival of privately owned international bridge.
15. Support recruitment and retention of Health Human Resources, and advocate for appropriate service levels for health care in our community.
16. Mitigate risks of climate change.
17. Improve Transportation Linkages.
18. Continue to promote and support Fort Frances Seniors Centre.
19. Improve information technology capacity.
20. Develop a disaster recovery plan.
21. Continue Advocacy regarding Forest Management and Enhanced Sustainable Forest Management License.
22. Improve Communications / Consider establishment of a communications position.
23. Work with community partners to more effectively address social issues such as homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health issues.
24. Encourage Immigration to Town of Fort Frances.

25. Preserve Power Agreement and support Fort Frances Power Corporation.
26. More effectively engage our youth, young professionals, and seniors.
27. Develop strategy to recruit and retain part time firefighters.
28. Continue to promote post-secondary education opportunities in Fort Frances area.

4.2 Town of Fort Frances Official Plan – 2011 (Ministerial Approval: December 3, 2012)



The existing Town of Fort Frances Official Plan – 2011 was adopted by Town Council on November 14, 2011 and approved by MMAH on December 3, 2012. The main purpose of the Official Plan is to provide a land use vision for future growth within the Town and a broad set of strategic community directions for regulating the development and use of land over a 20-year planning period, to the year 2031. The Official Plan states that it will achieve its long-term vision by implementing a range of local, district, and provincial policies, plans, and strategies. In accordance with the requirements of Section 26 under the Planning Act, the Official Plan will be revised every five years, but it may be amended by the Town at any time to reflect

changing circumstances or new priorities.

Section 2 of the Official Plan identifies a vision statement for the Town of Fort Frances, which was established from the Town's Community Based Strategic Plan (2008):

"The Corporation of the Town of Fort Frances provides the leadership to deliver services in a responsible and efficient manner.

By working together, we are creating a safe, sustainable, and attractive community with a vibrant, growing economy that promotes economic growth, prosperity and improves our quality of life."

Section 2 further establishes a series of guiding principles in support of the vision statement for the community. These include policy statements and direction related

to complete communities, sustainability, and safety, health, and accessibility in the Town.

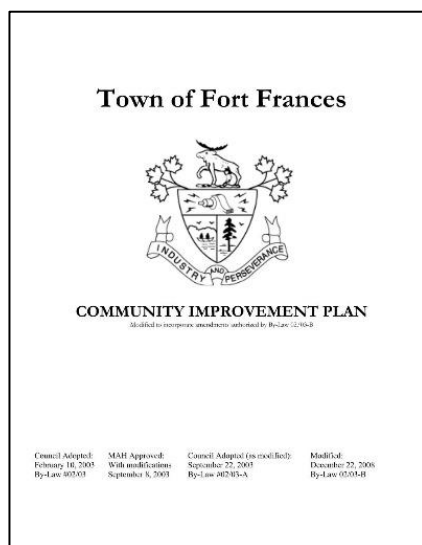
Section 3 of the Official Plan outlines overarching goals and policies that affect the Town more broadly. These goals and policies relate to topics such as: the environment, arts, culture, and heritage, transportation, infrastructure and utilities, gateway and urban design principles, and Special Study Areas.

Section 4 of the Official Plan establishes the land use designations in the Town of Fort Frances and associated policies. The land use designations in the Official Plan include:

- Living Areas;
- Employment Areas;
- Recreational Areas; and
- Resource Development Areas.

The land use designations and associated policies in the current Official Plan will be reviewed to determine what may be appropriate to carry forward in the New Official Plan, and what may need to be replaced or revised based on changes to the Planning Act, PPS, 2020, and other updates to legislation.

4.3 Town of Fort Frances Community Improvement Plan (MAH Approved: With modifications September 8, 2003, Modified: December 22, 2008)



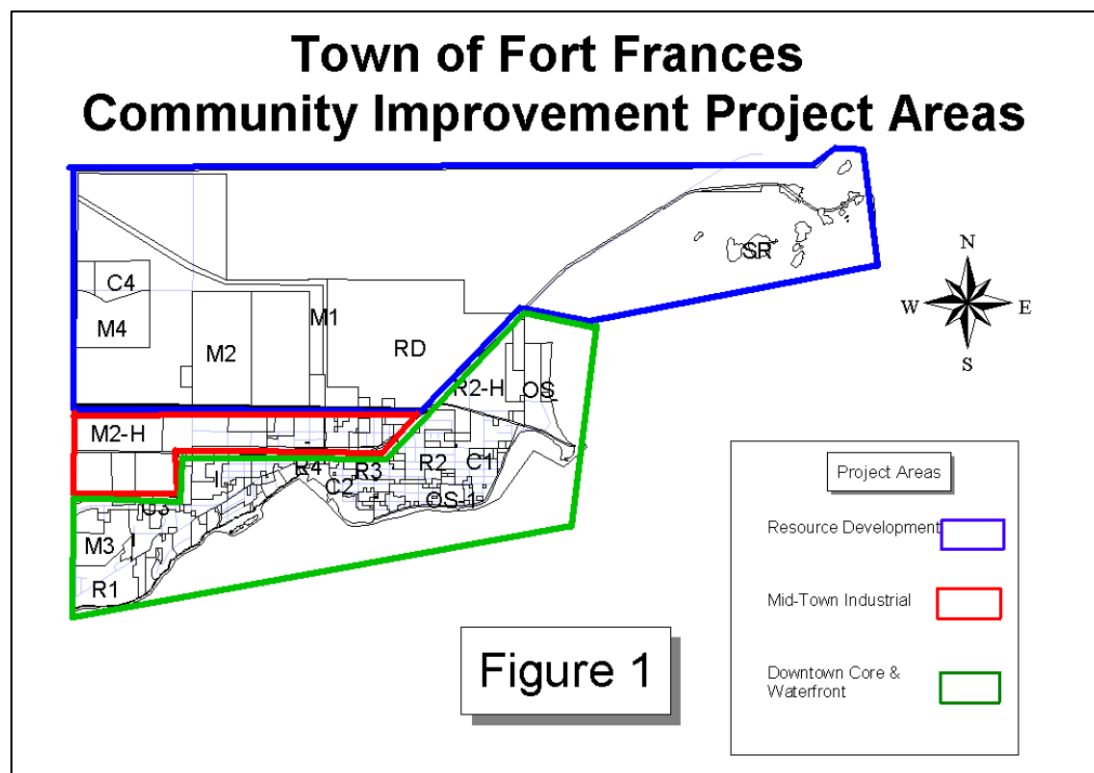
Under Section 28 of the Planning Act, municipalities that have enabling Official Plan policies in place may create Community Improvement Plans for a designated Community Improvement Project Area (which may include an entire municipality or a targeted area), where community improvements are needed to address “age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason.” Through a Community Improvement Plan, a Council may acquire land, rehabilitate, and improve buildings, sell or lease land

and buildings, and make grants or loans to owners / tenants within a designated Community Improvement Project Area.

The Town's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) was adopted by Council on February 10, 2003 and was approved by MMAH with modifications on September 8, 2003. The CIP was last modified on December 22, 2008 to incorporate amendments authorized by By-law 02/03-B. As directed by Section 5.9 of the Town's Official Plan, the Community Improvement Plan is intended to "provide incentive programs which stimulate redevelopment of lands as a means to maintain the vitality of the municipality".

The Town's Community Improvement Plan applies to the Community Improvement Project Areas (C.I.P.A.) as illustrated in Figure 1 of the CIP, as shown in **Figure 11**. The lands within the C.I.P.A.s consist of lands part of the following designations per Schedule 'A' of the Town's Official Plan: Working, Resource Development, Recreation, Living Area, and Downtown Business Area. These lands are zoned as Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Resource Development as per Schedule 'A' of the Town's former Zoning By-law #8/98, which has since been repealed and is no longer in effect.

Figure 11: Figure 1 - Town of Fort Frances Community Improvement Project Areas (Town CIP, 2008)



Section 2 sets out the objectives of the CIP:

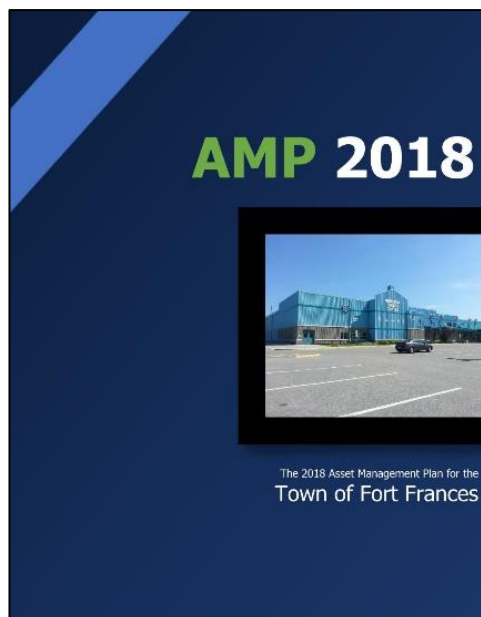
- Facilitate the efficient and orderly implementation of the community improvement policies of the Official Plan of the Town of Fort Frances;
- Identify and describe the Community Improvement Project Areas to which the CIP relates;
- Provide rationalization and the fundamental basis of the Community Improvement Project Areas;
- Confirm the commitment of the Town 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; and
- Provide sufficient flexibility to Council to make minor changes to the CIP without formal amendment.

Currently, there are four (4) programs available under the Town of Fort Frances Municipal Initiatives:

1. Store Front Loan Program;
2. Brownfield Grant;
3. Diversification Grant; and
4. Property Value Revitalization Grants.

The Official Plan policies for Community Improvement Plans will need to be updated to reflect changes made in Section 28 of the Planning Act.

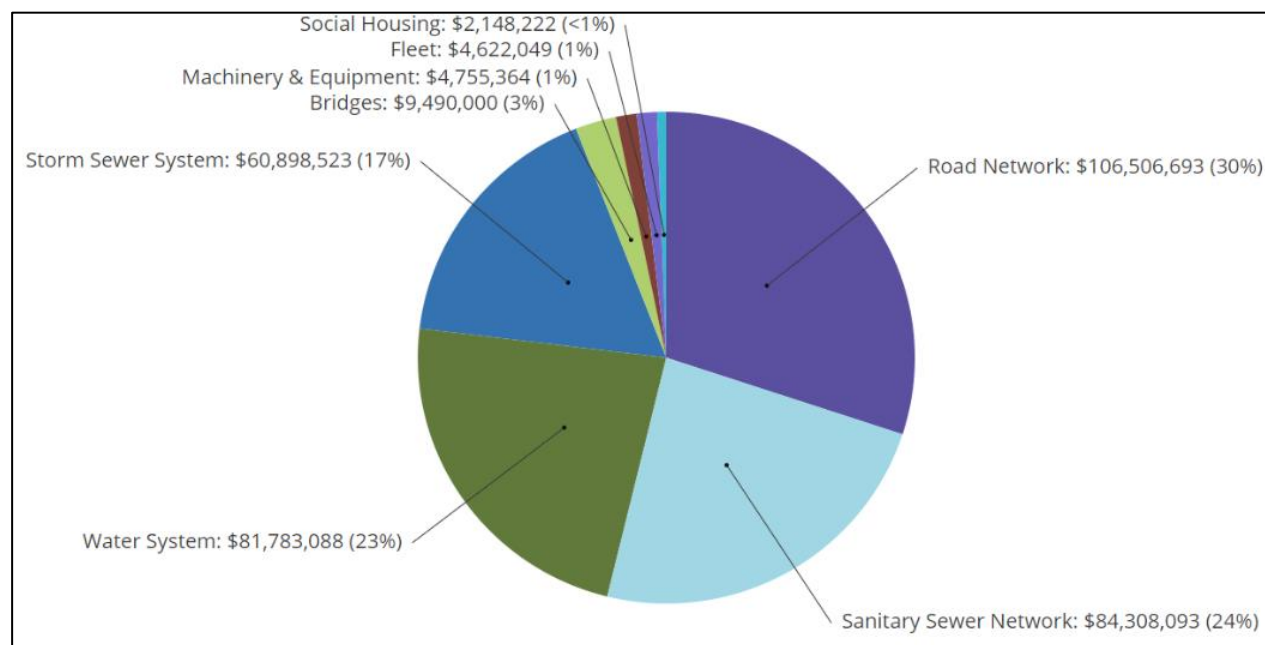
4.4 2018 Asset Management Plan for the Town of Fort Frances



The 2018 Asset Management Plan for the Town of Fort Frances was prepared by Public Sector Digest (PSD) in 2018. The purpose of this Plan is to assist the Town of Fort Frances in managing their infrastructure needs while ensuring timely investments to minimize repair and rehabilitation costs and maintain municipal assets.

The Plan identifies a series of classes for the Town, which as shown in **Figure 12**, have a total asset valuation of \$355 million (2018), of which Road Networks comprised 30%, followed by the Sanitary Sewer Network (24%), and the Water System (23%).

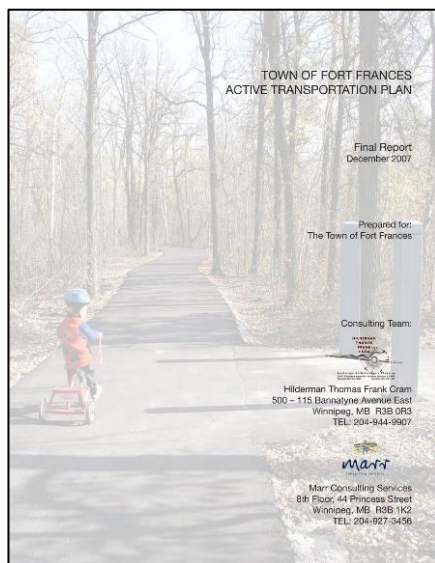
Figure 12: Asset Replacement Value – All Asset Categories



The Plan offers strategic recommendations for the continuous improvement of program activities and outputs. Those which are relevant to the New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law review include:

- Social Housing
- Climate Change
 - Develop policies that outline a commitment to consider the impact of climate change on existing infrastructure and future development.
 - Develop disaster mitigation plans in the event of infrastructure failure.

4.5 Town of Fort Frances Active Transportation Plan (December 2007).



The Town of Fort Frances Active Transportation Plan (ATP) was prepared by HTFC Planning & Design and Marr Consulting Services in December 2007. The purpose of the ATP was to develop a plan for a continuous parkland and trail system in the community of Fort Frances, provide linkages between the waterfront park and the Town's west end and north end residential areas, and to identify needs for parkland development, as well as identify underutilized parks. The ATP included an overview of existing active transportation conditions in the Town, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, future needs analysis based on local demographics and current facilities use, vision, and

recommended next steps.

The vision contained in the ATP is focused on the active transportation network, infrastructure, amenities, and legislation/policies, education and marketing, and funding. The items from the ATP that are relevant to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Review are summarized:

Active Transportation Network

- Pathways should be developed to encourage use for recreation, sightseeing and routes to and from workplaces.

- Develop dedicated bike lanes on main streets.
 - Routes should enable cyclists to travel throughout Fort Frances; to be able to get from residential areas to workplaces, schools, parks, and recreation centres without interruption to these travel routes.
- Crosswalks and connections between path systems should be well marked, either with lighted signals, universal signage or safety barriers as required in each situation.

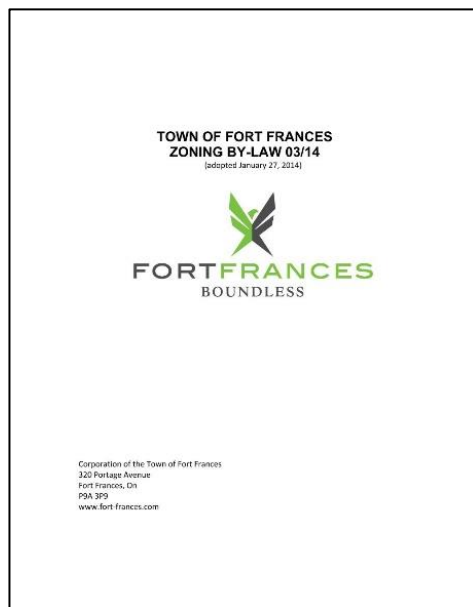
Infrastructure

- Active Transportation signs should be coordinated with existing signage, either as new signs or with AT information incorporated onto existing signage
- Safe storage of bicycles, cross-country skis, canoes, and other equipment should be considered.

Education and Marketing

- Encourage developers and businesses should be encouraged to remove barriers to AT and to build new facilities in the case of developers) or associated infrastructure (e.g., bike racks in front of businesses that include advertising opportunities)

4.6 Town of Fort Frances Zoning By-law 03/14 (Adopted January 27, 2014)



The current Town of Fort Frances Zoning By-law 03/14, as amended, was adopted on January 27, 2014 and consists of five (5) sections, which must be read and interpreted in their entirety to identify the applicable zoning provisions for a particular property. The Zoning By-law sections include:

- **Section 1 – Administration**, which establishes the title and scope of the Zoning By-law, as well as information related to the administration of the Zoning By-law, including establishment of the Zoning Schedules, penalties, and its effective date.
- **Section 2 – Definitions**, includes definitions applicable to all Zones, including key terms used in the Zoning By-laws and definitions of permitted uses.
- **Section 3 – General Provisions**, contains general provisions applicable to all Zones, specific use regulations which relate to matters such as accessory buildings structures, and uses, height exceptions, holding provisions, parking area and loading space regulations, setback provisions (which are in addition to setbacks identified under the individual Zones), non-conforming and non-complying uses, and provisions regarding specific uses.
- **Section 4 – Zones**, sets out the classification for the Zone categories, including: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Open Space, and Resource Development. Section 4 also establishes performance standards (e.g., building and lot requirements, such as minimum yard dimensions and setbacks, maximum building heights, maximum lot occupancy); landscaping requirements. Some Zones contain special provisions for specific uses or lot and buildings requirements.
- **Section 5 - Exceptions**, contain the site-specific exceptions, exception zone provisions, and “notwithstanding” provisions which generally apply to specific properties and reflect where site-specific Zoning By-law Amendments have been approved.

Table 1 identifies the six (6) Zone categories, which are further divided into 14 operative Zones.

Table 1: Summary of Existing Zone Categories and Corresponding Zones

Residential	Commercial	Industrial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Type One Zone (R1) Residential Type Two Zone (R2) Residential Mobile Home Zone (R3) Seasonal Residential Zone (SR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Commercial Zone (C1) General Commercial Zone (C2) Enterprise Zone (E) Tourist Commercial Zone (TC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light Industrial Zone (M1) Heavy Industrial Zone (M2) Waste Disposal Industrial Zone (M3)
Open Space	Institutional	Resource Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Space Zone (OS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional Zone (I) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource Development Zone (RD)

The Town's current Zoning By-law 03/14 will be explored in further detail as part of the preparation of the Zoning By-law Discussion Paper in Phase 4 - Preparation of Draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law, of the project.

5 Key Issues and Trends

The following section discusses key local issues, trends and opportunities for improvements to the current New Official Plan that have been identified, based on background review and initial consultation with Town staff. These issues, and others that may be identified over the course of the Official Plan Review process, will need to be addressed in preparing the New Official Plan.

5.1 Document Format and Structure

While a primary objective of the Official Plan Review is to respond to recent Provincial policies, and the outcomes of current municipal plans and studies, there is also an opportunity to address other general and housekeeping updates. These might include any technical errors or omissions, grammatical errors, updating outdated terminology, and ensuring that the New Official Plan is user-friendly. Certain references throughout the Official Plan, such as the preambles for the different land use designations may require modification to reflect current conditions.

Preparing a New Official Plan also presents an opportunity to re-visit the overall structure of the Official Plan and consider changes to streamline interpretation and improve the overall readability of the document and interpretation by a broad audience, including Council, municipal staff, agencies, developers, and residents. As such, the following subsections describes changes and considerations that have been identified for further refinement and implementation in subsequent stages of the project.

5.1.1 Accessibility

As a result of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, organizations are required to train workers for providing service to persons with disabilities, and to develop policies and procedures in this regard. Accessibility should be considered in the format and layout of the Official Plan and Schedules (maps).

The key potential barrier for accessibility regarding the Official Plan document is that people with disabilities may find it difficult to read. To help address this challenge, the template for the New Official Plan document should use fonts of a legible and consistent style and size, avoid the use of italics and excessive capitalization, and incorporate colours and images that provide high contrast and clarity. Images which

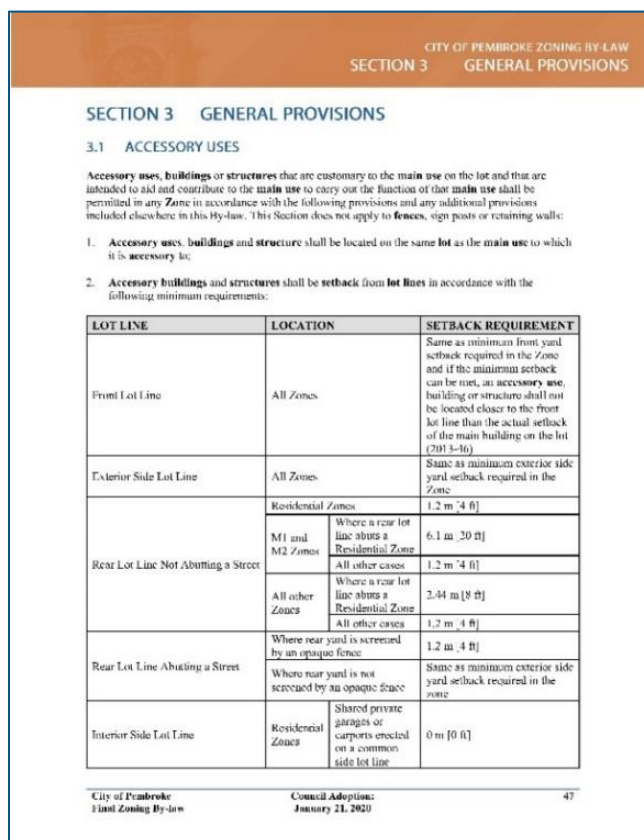
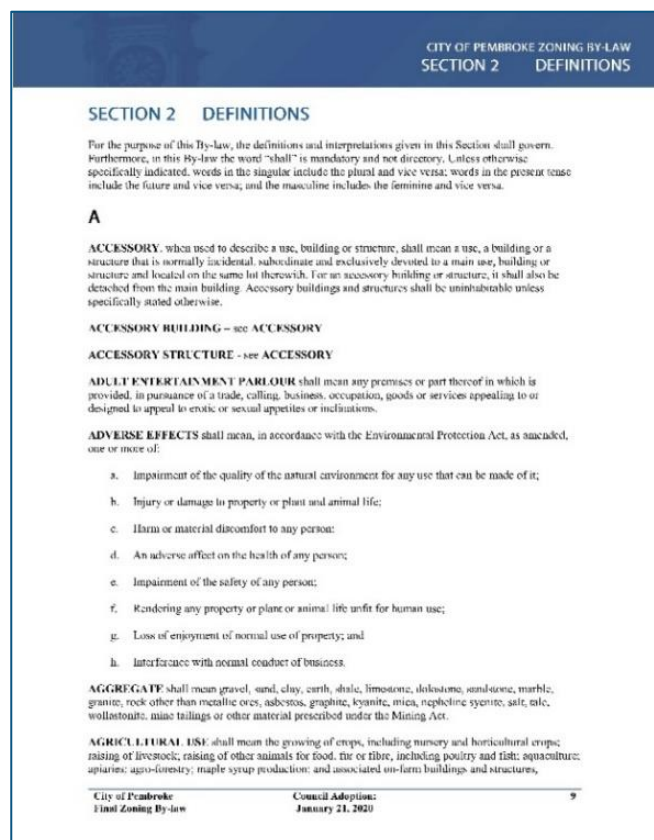
illustrate certain zoning provisions to provide for better clarity when interpreting zoning requirements are also a tool to achieve a more accessible document. Official Plan Schedules should similarly ensure legibility and clarity, to the extent possible; however, this is often constrained by the scale at which Official Plan Schedules must be produced.

5.1.2 A User-Friendly Document

The structure and format of the current Official Plan can be modernized and improved to create a more user-friendly document that is easy to navigate and interpret by residents, developers, and agencies, and to administer by Town staff. Formatting considerations for the New Official Plan include:

- Introduce coloured section dividers and icons to promote easier navigation and wayfinding through the document, as illustrated in Figure 13;

Figure 13: Use of coloured headers (City of Pembroke Zoning By-law, January 2020)



- Maintain the use of digital hyperlinks to sections of the document in the Table of Contents, for ease of navigation when the Official Plan is being viewed in a digital format;
- Number policies consistently throughout the document. Consideration should be given to renumbering policies under each section as follows: Section 1; 1. main policy; a) sub-policy; i) secondary sub-policy. This will allow for clear references to the Official Plan in other planning documents and development applications, such as “Section 1(1)(a)(i)”;
- Limit the number of policies which require the reader to jump between sections in the document;
- Each land use designation should include a preamble which describes the general purpose and intent of the designation;
- There is an opportunity to establish a consolidate section of ‘policies for specific uses’ which provides additional detailed policy guidance for certain types of land uses. For example, there are several instances of policies for home occupations for each land use designation that could be consolidated into one section to improve readability and streamline future Official Plan edits; and
- The mapping / Schedule template can be made consistent between the various Schedules and Figures.

5.2 Local Issues

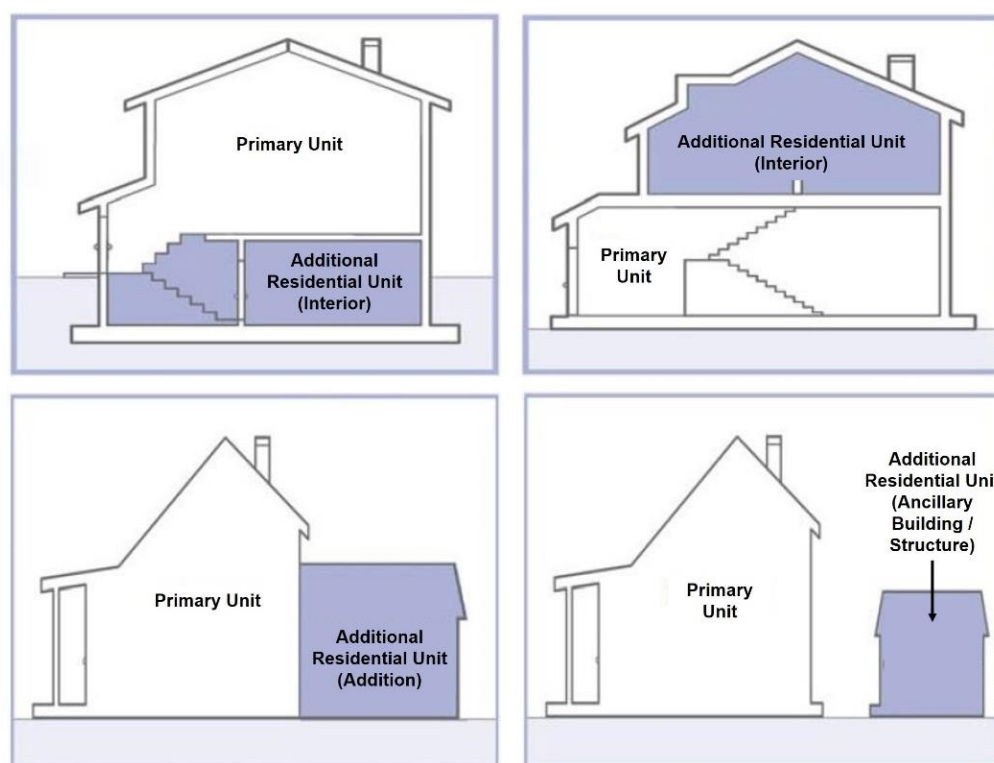
This section of the Draft Background Report summarizes the planning issues to be addressed through the Official Plan Review as identified by Town staff and external agencies.

5.2.1 Additional Residential Units

“Additional residential units” are self-contained residential units with a private kitchen, bathroom facilities, and sleeping areas, within dwellings or within structures ancillary to a dwelling (e.g., a garage), as illustrated in **Figure 14**. These units were previously referred to as “second units”, prior to Planning Act changes, and have commonly been referred to by other terms, such as “secondary dwelling units” and “accessory apartments”.

The Province is encouraging additional residential units to increase affordable housing options, provide independent living for a family member, and generate income for homeowners. Under the Planning Act, municipalities must authorize additional residential units in their Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. Additional residential units require a Building Permit, and must comply with the Ontario Building Code, Fire Code, municipal Zoning By-laws, and other municipal by-laws (e.g., Property Standards By-law).

Figure 14: Examples of additional residential unit locations (Adapted from Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2019)



The Strong Communities Through Affordable Housing Act, 2011, amended the Planning Act to require that municipalities authorize second units in their Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. The changes took effect on January 1, 2012.

As a result, Section 16(3) of the Planning Act required municipal Official Plans to authorize second units in detached, semi-detached and row houses if an ancillary building or structure does not contain a second unit, and in a building or structure

ancillary to these housing types provided that the primary dwelling does not contain a second unit.

Under Bill 108 (More Homes, More Choices Act, 2019), the term “second units” was replaced with “additional residential units”. Permissions have been extended to authorize additional residential units in detached, semi-detached and row houses, in both the primary dwelling and ancillary buildings or structures (e.g., a coach house, above a laneway garage, or in-law suite). In effect, this permits a total of three (3) residential units: two (2) residential units in a detached, semi-detached or row house (e.g., the primary residential unit and a basement apartment), as well as one (1) additional residential unit in an ancillary building or structure (e.g., a detached garage).

The associated Regulations (Ontario Regulation 299/19) sets out requirements and standards to remove barriers to the establishment of additional residential units, as follows:

- If the primary residential unit requires a parking space, one (1) parking space for each of the additional residential units must be provided;
- A parking space for an additional residential unit may be provided through tandem parking;
- Where a Zoning By-law is passed that sets a parking standard lower than a standard of one (1) parking space for each of the additional residential units, the municipal Zoning By-law parking standard would prevail.

Currently, the Town’s Official Plan per Section 4.1.8(j), allows the development of second units (i.e., additional residential units) in detached, semi-detached or row houses and ancillary buildings and structures to a residential unit subject to the below conditions:

- One (1) second unit is permitted in the primary dwelling as long as there are no ancillary buildings or structures that contain residential units; and
- One (1) second unit in an ancillary building or structure is permitted provided the primary dwelling contains only one (1) residential unit.

The current Zoning By-law includes general provisions for “second units”, “second dwelling units”, and “secondary dwelling units” (i.e., additional residential units). Under Section 3.29, one (1) secondary dwelling unit is permitted per lot. The Zoning By-law



also includes provisions related to maximum gross floor area, location of the dwelling, lot coverage for ancillary buildings, parking, servicing, and registration.

The New Official Plan and Zoning By-law for Fort Frances will need to be updated to conform to the recent legislative changes, subject to appropriate servicing and other relevant planning considerations.

Under the “More Homes, More Choice: Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan” (2019), the Province has also published a helpful resource to assist property owners who are considering adding an additional residential unit to their property, entitled “Adding a Second Unit in an Existing

House: Ontario Building Code Information” (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2019).

Example: City of Ottawa Coach Houses

For example, in accordance with the Planning Act requirements to permit additional residential units, the City of Ottawa introduced Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law provisions to permit the development of coach houses on residential lots which contain a detached, semi-detached, duplex, or townhouse dwelling unit. In the Zoning By-law, coach houses are defined as “a separate dwelling unit that is subsidiary to and located on the same lot as an associated principal dwelling unit but is contained in its own building that may also contain uses accessory to the principal dwelling.”

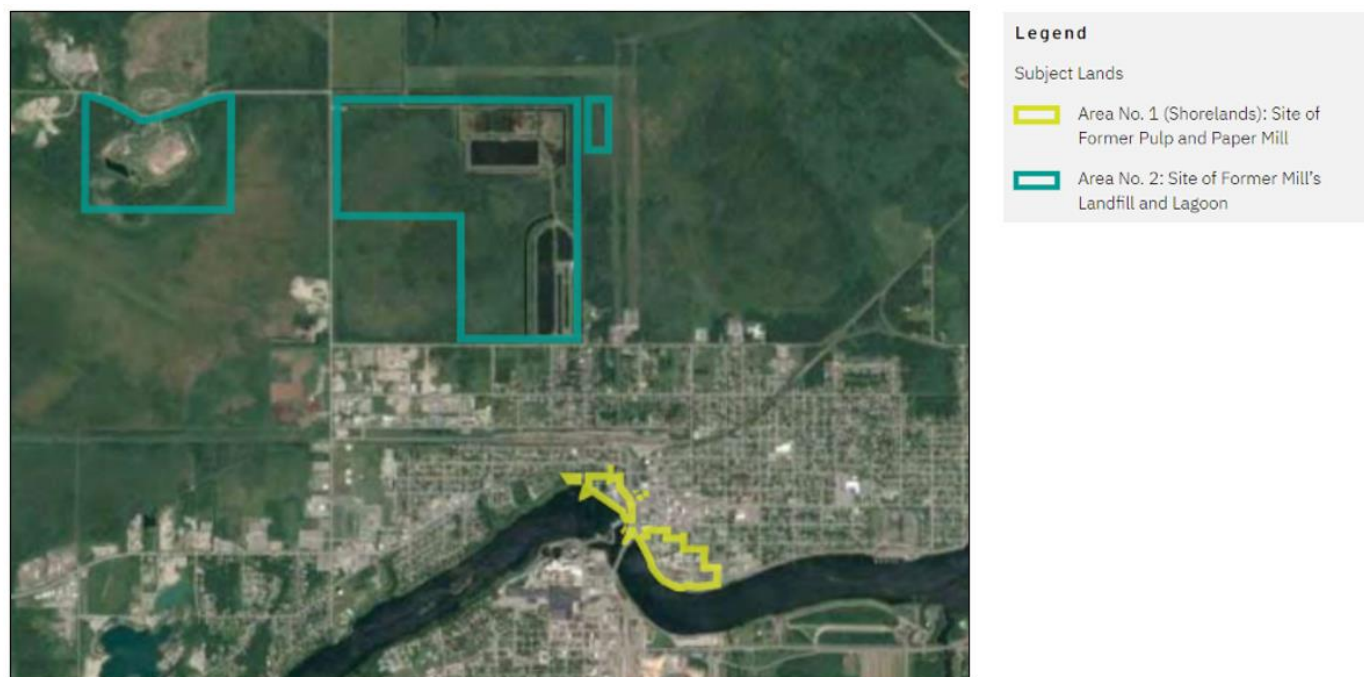
5.2.2 Local Development Opportunities

Historically, the economy of Fort Frances has been primarily rooted in traditional industries, most notably the former Resolute Pulp and Paper Mill. More recently, there have been new acquisitions by the Town such as the Shevlin Wood Yard lands, which offer the Town an opportunity to re-invent lands traditionally used for industry as a destination for residents and visitors, and to re-imagine the under-utilized waterfront

Fort Frances Mill Properties

The Fort Frances Mill properties are approximately 294 hectares (725 acres) in land area. As shown in **Figure 15**, Area No. 1 is the former site of the Resolute Pulp and Paper Mill, which closed in 2014, and is located west of downtown Fort Frances on the northern shoreline of the Rainy River. This property is approximately 25 hectares (61 acres) in size. Area No. 2 is located northwest of downtown and previously provided utility services to the Pulp and Paper Mill, including a sewage lagoon (203 hectares; 501 acres) and a landfill site (66 hectares; 163 acres).

Figure 15: Location Map (Former Fort Frances Mill Properties: Conceptual Land Use Plan - Final Report, May 20, 2022)



The Town of Fort Frances is part of an Advisory Committee to undertake strategic planning for the Mill lands. The Advisory Committee also has members from Aazhogan Renewal (a joint venture between BMI Group and the Rainy River First Nations (RRFN)), Ziibi Anishinaabe Investments Inc. (Ziibi Investments), and the Rainy River Future Development Corporation. Ziibi Investments is the operating entity that has been assigned by the RRN to act on its behalf for the Mill property redevelopment project.

The Conceptual Land Use Plan for the Mill Properties – Final Report was released by the Mill Properties project team on May 20, 2022. The vision for the Mill properties is:

“The redevelopment of the former Mill site is a monumental project for Aazhogan Renewal, Fort Frances and the surrounding district. Ushering in a new, sustainable future for the region, the redevelopment should be a model for economic regeneration, urban revitalization, and inclusive community building that transforms the former Mill site and reopens the waterfront in particular. It should be a home for innovation, bold ideas, and experimentation in design and land use.”

Next steps for the redevelopment of the Mill properties may include the undertaking of the required technical engineering studies. The Final Report recommends that the Mill properties be identified as a Special Study Area as part of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Review. The current Town Official Plan identifies several Special Study Areas; however, it does not provide specific policy direction regarding future planning of these areas. The Final Report also notes that the vision for the Mill properties may be best implemented by way of a Secondary Plan. **Through the Official Plan Review, opportunities will be explored to include enabling policies to implement the preferred land use vision for the Mill properties.**

Shevlin Wood Yard and Gateway

The findings of the Land Use and Economic Development Feasibility Study for the Redevelopment of the Shevlin Wood Yard and Gateway to Fort Frances Report prepared by HTFC in February of 2021. The Report was endorsed by Council on February 8, 2021 and provides an implementation plan for the future development of these lands based on community engagement and financial considerations.

As shown in **Figure 16**, the study area is comprised of two (2) properties: the former Shevlin Wood Yard (9.2 hectares; 22.7 acres), which served as the wood storage area for the former Resolute Pulp and Paper Mill ; and the Gateway site (6 hectares; 15 acres), which is the area on the Fort Frances side of the Fort Frances-International Falls International Bridge.

Figure 16: Figure 1 – Study Area (Land Use and Economic Development Feasibility Study for the Redevelopment of the Shevlin Wood Yard and Gateway to Fort Frances Report, 2021)



Public feedback suggested that there is a place for these lands to provide a balanced range of amenities and to recognize the waterfront as an asset. The implementation plan in the Report specifically identifies a preference for the lands to be developed privately, and the Report details that Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments are necessary to bring the plan to fruition.

5.3 Consolidation of Official Plan Amendments

As part of the Official Plan Review process, all Official Plan Amendments that have been adopted since the enactment of the current Official Plan will be consolidated and included in the New Official Plan.

5.4 Schedule Mapping Updates

Municipal Official Plans contain maps, typically referred to as Schedules, which illustrate the applicable land use designation for each property located in a municipality. The current Official Plan includes two (2) Schedules - Schedule A – which establishes the location of Zones throughout the municipality, and Schedule B – which illustrates environmental information layers in the Town. Schedule A and B are currently available on the Town of Fort Frances website as PDF documents along with the current Official Plan.

Updated Schedules A and B, and any other new Official Plan Schedules as a result of the Official Plan Review will be made available as a printable PDF formats. All efforts will be made to ensure legibility and clarity of the Schedules.

6 Conclusion

This Draft Community Background Report is intended to provide background information to guide the preparation of the New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law. The recommendations of the numerous completed studies that have identified in this report will be carried forward into the New Official Plan as policies, as appropriate. New and updated Official Plan policies will be implemented through the Zoning By-law Review, which will be undertaken concurrently with the Official Plan Review. In addition, other key provincial legislation and policy direction, including the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020, will need to be reflected in the New Official Plan.

The Draft Community Background will be made available on the Town's project webpage for public review and will be presented to the community in Fall 2022 through the first Public Open House.

This Community Background Report, once finalized, will form the basis for preparing the Policy Options and Recommendations Report, which will delve deeper into specific policy issues, outline a series of recommendations for potential changes to the New Official Plan, and include a proposed document template. The Draft Policy Options and Recommendations Report will be reviewed by Town staff and the Technical Advisory Committee to receive feedback and input into the recommendations on zoning approaches. The Policy Options and Recommendations Report will then be finalized and posted on the project webpage for public review, and circulated to Indigenous communities, internal departments and committees, external agencies and interest groups for information. Together, the Community Background Report and the Policy Options and Recommendations Report will form the basis for preparing the New Official Plan.



Appendix A

Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 Review Table

Appendix B

Community Engagement Strategy (July 22, 2022)

Appendix A: Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 – Review Table

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) replaced the PPS, 2014 and came into effect on May 1, 2020. It is our understanding that the Town of Fort Frances Official Plan (OP) was adopted by Town Council in November 2011 and approved by MMAH in December 2012.

The following table summarizes new and/or revised PPS policies that are relevant to the Town and identifies applicable sections of the Town's in-effect Official Plan.

The **blue** text in the 'PPS, 2020 Section and Policy' column indicates significant new information added, as per the PPS, 2020 update. The ~~strikethrough~~ text notes text from the PPS, 2014 that has been removed, as per the PPS, 2020 update.

The 'Issues to be Addressed' column identifies PPS policy issues to be addressed through the Official Plan Review. The text in **red** are proposed policy issues to be addressed through the Official Plan Review.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
1.0 Building Strong Healthy Communities		
1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns		
1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by: b) accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing , affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs; [...]	2.0 Vision & Guiding Principles 4.1 Living Areas 4.3 Recreational Areas	<p>Update Vision and Guiding Principles to reflect current realities.</p> <p>Review policies for the Living Area designation and Recreational Areas designation to support more housing options and better provision for recreational areas. Consider renaming the Living Area designation.</p> <p>Strengthen language for affordable and accessible housing.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
e) promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit supportive development, intensification, and infrastructure planning to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs; [...]	2.0 Strategic Directions 4.1.8 Additional Residential Policies	Review the strategic directions in 2.1 and 2.2 and consider language that promotes intensification and the integration of facilities. Consider adding a mixed-use designation.
i) preparing for the regional and local impacts of a changing climate	2.3 A Sustainable Town 3.1 The Environment 3.1.6 General Environmental Policies 3.1.7 Air Quality and Climate Change Schedule B – Environmental Information Map	Review the Guiding Principles in Section 2 to more directly address changing climate. Review OP environmental and climate change policies mapping for opportunities to strengthen approach to preparing for a changing climate.
1.1.2 Sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 25 years, informed by provincial guidelines. However, where an alternate time period has been established for specific areas of the Province as a result of a provincial planning exercise or a provincial plan, that time frame may be used for municipalities within the area.	1.1 Purpose of the Official Plan	Update language to reflect 25-year planning horizon.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>Within settlement areas, sufficient land shall be made available through intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, designated growth areas.</p> <p>Nothing in policy 1.1.2 limits the planning for infrastructure, public service facilities and employment areas beyond a 25-year time horizon</p>		
<p>1.1.3.2 Land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:</p> <p>d) prepare for the impacts of a changing climate; e) Support Active Transportation;</p> <p>Land use patterns within settlement areas shall also be based on a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment in accordance with the criteria in policy 1.1.3.3, where this can be accommodated.</p>	<p>3.1.7 Air Quality and Climate Change 3.3.2 Transportation Policies</p>	<p>Consider including policies to reduce or minimize the adverse impacts associated with climate change.</p> <p>Review transportation policies to reflect the recommendations of the Town's Active Transportation Plan. Consider strengthening policies to support active transportation.</p>
<p>1.1.3.3 Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for transit-supportive development, accommodating a significant supply and range of housing options through intensification and redevelopment</p>	<p>4.1 Living Areas 4.3 Employment Areas</p>	<p>Consider including enabling policies to encourage intensification. Consider creating a “mixed-use” designation.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including brownfield sites, and the availability of suitable existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities required to accommodate projected needs.</p> <p>Intensification and redevelopment shall be directed in accordance with the policies of Section 2: Wise Use and Management of Resources and Section 3: Protecting Public Health and Safety.</p>		
<p>1.1.3.8 A planning authority may identify a settlement area or allow the expansion of a settlement area boundary only at the time of a comprehensive review and only where it has been demonstrated that:</p> <p>a) sufficient opportunities to accommodate growth and to satisfy market demand are not available through intensification, redevelopment and designated growth areas to accommodate the projected needs over the identified planning horizon;</p> <p>In determining the most appropriate direction for expansions to the boundaries of settlement areas or the identification of a settlement area by a planning authority, a planning authority shall apply the policies of Section 2: Wise Use and Management of</p>		<p>OP does not identify growth projections. Include Growth Projections and details for the undertaking of a comprehensive review and settlement area boundary changes.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>Resources and Section 3: Protecting Public Health and Safety:</p> <p>In undertaking a comprehensive review, the level of detail of the assessment should correspond with the complexity and scale of the settlement boundary expansion or development proposal.</p>		
<p>1.1.3.9 Notwithstanding policy 1.1.3.8, municipalities may permit adjustments of settlement area boundaries outside a comprehensive review provided: a) there would be no net increase in land within the settlement areas; b) the adjustment would support the municipality's ability to meet intensification and redevelopment targets established by the municipality; c) prime agricultural areas are addressed in accordance with 1.1.3.8 (c), (d) and (e); and d) the settlement area to which lands would be added is appropriately serviced and there is sufficient reserve infrastructure capacity to service the lands</p>	Schedule A – Land Use Plan	OP has no policy for settlement area. Include policies that lay out direction for settlement area and servicing requirements. Update Schedule A to reflect new settlement area policies.
<p>1.1.5.2 On rural lands located in municipalities, permitted uses are: a) the management or use of resources; b) resource-based recreational uses (including recreational dwellings);</p>	4.4 Resource Development Schedule A – Land Use Plan	<p>Review the policies of the Resource Development areas and update to be consistent with PPS.</p> <p>Review the undesignated lands within the Municipal boundary. .</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
c) residential development, including lot creation, that is locally appropriate; d) agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses and normal farm practices, in accordance with provincial standards; e) home occupations and home industries; f) cemeteries; and g) other rural land uses.		
1.2 Coordination		
1.2.1 A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies and boards including: a) managing and/or promoting growth and development that is integrated with infrastructure planning; h) addressing housing needs in accordance with provincial policy statements such as the Policy Statement: Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Plans.	Various	No change required
1.2.2 Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters.	5.15 Requirements to Consult	Add policies directing engagement and consultation with Indigenous communities.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>1.2.6 Land Use Compatibility</p> <p>1.2.6.1 Major facilities and sensitive land uses shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.</p> <p>1.2.6.2 Where avoidance is not possible in accordance with policy 1.2.6.1, planning authorities shall protect the long-term viability of existing or planned industrial, manufacturing or other uses that are vulnerable to encroachment by ensuring that the planning and development of proposed adjacent sensitive land uses are only permitted if the following are demonstrated in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) there is an identified need for the proposed use; b) alternative locations for the proposed use have been evaluated and there are no reasonable alternative locations; c) adverse effects to the proposed sensitive land use are minimized and mitigated; and 	<p>3.3.2.5 Railways</p> <p>4.2.3 industrial uses</p> <p>5.10.9 Noise and/or vibration study</p>	<p>OP must include policies that reflect the policies of the PPS regarding land use compatibility and the priority to avoid conflicts.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
d) potential impacts to industrial, manufacturing or other uses are minimized and mitigated.		
1.3 Employment		
<p>1.3.1 Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:</p> <p>a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs;</p> <p>c) facilitating the conditions for economic investment by identifying strategic sites for investment, monitoring the availability and suitability of employment sites, including market-ready sites, and seeking to address potential barriers to investment;</p> <p>d) encouraging compact, mixed-use development that incorporates compatible employment uses to support liveable and resilient communities, with consideration of housing policy 1.4; [...]</p>	<p>3.5 Gateway Policies</p> <p>3.6.1 Special Study Area 1: Downtown Area</p> <p>3.6.2 Special Study Area 2: Shevlin Woodyard</p> <p>4.2 Employment Areas</p>	<p>Review the policies for Gateway and Employment Areas to ensure that the availability and suitability of employment lands is monitored.</p> <p>Create policies for the Downtown Area and Shevlin Woodyards that considers a mix of uses.</p>
<p>1.3.2.2 At the time of the official plan review or update, planning authorities should assess employment areas identified in local official plans to ensure that this designation is appropriate to the planned function of the employment area.</p>	<p>4.2 Employment Areas</p> <p>4.4 Resource Development</p>	<p>Section 4.4 recognizes the need to separate some uses from sensitive land uses. Employment Areas do not and permit industrial uses adjacent to residential uses.</p> <p>Review Employment Policies for the inclusion of land use conflict mitigation policies. Consider the inclusion of a</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
Employment areas planned for industrial and manufacturing uses shall provide for separation or mitigation from sensitive land uses to maintain the long-term operational and economic viability of the planned uses and function of these areas.		commercial designation or buffering policies within the employment area policies to reduce conflicts.
1.3.2.3 Within employment areas planned for industrial or manufacturing uses, planning authorities shall prohibit residential uses and prohibit or limit other sensitive land uses that are not ancillary to the primary employment uses in order to maintain land use compatibility. Employment areas planned for industrial or manufacturing uses should include an appropriate transition to adjacent non employment areas.	4.2 Employment Areas 4.4 Resource Development	Section 4.2 contains recommendations to separate industrial uses from residential and sensitive land uses. Review and update sections 4.2 and 4.4 to include specific direction for prohibiting residential uses and other sensitive land uses within employment or manufacturing areas. Include direction for an appropriate transition from employment to non-employment uses.
1.3.2.4 Planning authorities may permit conversion of lands within employment areas to non-employment uses through a comprehensive review, only where it has been demonstrated that the land is not required for employment purposes over the long term and that there is a need for the conversion. 1.3.2.5 Notwithstanding policy 1.3.2.4, and until the official plan review or update in policy 1.3.2.4 is undertaken and completed, lands	4.2 Employment Area 4.4 Resource Development	Strengthen direction on conversions of employment areas and the metrics provided by the PPS for instances in which conversion shall be permitted.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>within existing employment areas may be converted to a designation that permits non-employment uses provided the area has not been identified as provincially significant through a provincial plan exercise or as regionally significant by a regional economic development corporation working together with affected upper and single-tier municipalities and subject to the following:</p> <p>a) there is an identified need for the conversion and the land is not required for employment purposes over the long term;</p> <p>b) the proposed uses would not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area; and</p> <p>c) existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities are available to accommodate the proposed uses.</p>		
<p>1.3.2.7 Planning authorities may plan beyond 2025 years for the long-term protection of employment areas provided lands are not designated beyond the planning horizon identified in policy 1.1.2.</p>	1.1 Purpose of the Official Plan	Update language to reflect 25-year planning horizon.
1.4 Housing		
<p>1.4.1 To provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of</p>	4.1 Living Areas	There is no policy detailing growth forecasts, or available land.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>current and future residents of the regional market area, planning authorities shall:</p> <p>a) maintain at all times the ability to accommodate residential growth for a minimum of 15 years through residential intensification and redevelopment and, if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development; and</p> <p>b) maintain at all times where new development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.</p> <p>Upper-tier and single-tier municipalities may choose to maintain land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a five year supply of residential units available through lands suitably zoned to facilitate residential intensification and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.</p>		<p>Include policy and language for land supply to be provided for the period specified in the PPS.</p>
<p>1.4.3 Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs</p>	<p>4.1.3 Residential Development</p>	<p>The policies call for new development to reflect a range of lot and housing sizes. Update the language to include a range of housing to address affordability and market-based housing needs.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
of current and future residents of the regional market area by: a) establishing and implementing minimum targets for the provision of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income households and which aligns with applicable housing and homelessness plans.		
1.6 Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities		
1.6.4 Infrastructure and public service facilities should be strategically located to support the effective and efficient delivery of emergency management services, and to ensure the protection of public health and safety in accordance with the policies in Section 3.0: Protecting Public Health and Safety.	3.3 Transportation 3.4 Infrastructure and Utilities	Review policies of the OP for consistency with the PPS.
1.6.6.1 Planning for sewage and water services shall: a) accommodate forecasted growth in a manner that promotes the efficient use and optimization of existing: ... b) ensure that these systems are provided in a manner that: 1. can be sustained by the water resources upon which such services rely; 2. prepares for the impacts of a changing climate;	3.4 Infrastructure and Utilities	OP acknowledges forecasted growth. Include language concerning climate change, and include the language provided in the PPS pertaining to servicing options and conditions.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
3. is feasible and financially viable over their lifecycle ; and ... e) be in accordance with the servicing hierarchy outlined through policies 1.6.6.2, 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4 and 1.6.6.5. For clarity, where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available, planned or feasible, planning authorities have the ability to consider the use of the servicing options set out through policies 1.6.6.3, 1.6.6.4, and 1.6.6.5 provided that the specified conditions are met.		
1.6.6.3 Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services are not available, planned or feasible, private communal sewage services and private communal water services are the preferred form of servicing for multi-unit/lot development to support protection of the environment and minimize potential risks to human health and safety.	3.4.3 Water and Sanitary Sewerage	OP includes policy for communal services. Review and update the OP policy for PPS consistency.
1.6.6.4 Where municipal sewage services and municipal water services or private communal sewage services and private communal water services are not available, planned or feasible , individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used provided that site conditions are suitable for the long-term	3.4.3 Water and Sanitary Sewerage	Review the policies of the OP to include the language used in the PPS.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>provision of such services with no negative impacts. In settlement areas, individual on site sewage services and individual on-site water services may be used for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development.</p> <p>At the time of the official plan review or update, planning authorities should assess the long-term impacts of individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services on the environmental health and the character of rural settlement areas. Where planning is conducted by an upper tier municipality, the upper-tier municipality should work with lower-tier municipalities at the time of the official plan review or update to assess the long-term impacts of individual on-site sewage services and individual on-site water services on the environmental health and the desired character of rural settlement areas and the feasibility of other forms of servicing set out in policies 1.6.6.2 and 1.6.6.3</p>		
<p>1.6.6.5 [...] Where partial services have been provided to address failed services in accordance with subsection (a), infilling on existing lots of record in rural areas in municipalities may be permitted where this would represent a logical and financially viable</p>	3.4.3 Water and Sanitary Sewerage	<p>Include policy to address partial services being permitted where private services have failed.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>connection to the existing partial service and provided that site conditions are suitable for the long term provision of such services with no negative impacts. In accordance with subsection (a), the extension of partial services into rural areas is only permitted to address failed individual on-site sewage and individual on-site water services for existing development.</p>		
<p>1.6.6.7 Planning for stormwater management shall: a) be integrated with planning for sewage and water services and ensure that systems are optimized, feasible and financially viable over the long term; b) minimize, or, where possible, prevent increases in contaminant loads; c) minimize erosion and changes in water balance, and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate through the effective management of stormwater, including the use of green infrastructure; d) mitigate risks to human health, safety, property and the environment; e) maximize the extent and function of vegetative and pervious surfaces; and f) promote stormwater management best practices, including stormwater attenuation and re-use, water conservation and efficiency, and low impact development.</p>	<p>3.4.4 Stormwater</p>	<p>Update the OP policy to reflect the language and changes to the PPS.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
<p>1.6.8 Transportation and Infrastructure Corridors</p> <p>1.6.8.5 The co-location of linear infrastructure should be promoted, where appropriate.</p>	3.3 Transportation	Include an objective to promote the co-location of linear infrastructure.
<p>1.6.11 Energy Supply 1.6.11.1 Planning authorities should provide opportunities for the development of energy supply including electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, district energy, and renewable energy systems and alternative energy systems, to accommodate current and projected needs.</p>	<p>3.4.6 Power Generation Facilities and Green Energy 3.4.7 Energy Conservation</p>	<p>OP language include support for District Heating and energy conservation.</p> <p>Include language to provide energy for projected needs.</p>
1.7 Long-term Economic Prosperity		
<p>1.7.1 Long-term economic prosperity should be supported by: ... b) encouraging residential uses to respond to dynamic market-based needs and provide necessary housing supply and range of housing options for a diverse workforce; i) sustaining and enhancing the viability of the agricultural system through protecting agricultural resources, minimizing land use conflicts, providing opportunities to support</p>	<p>4.1 Living Areas 3.1 The Environment 4.4 Resource Development Schedule</p>	<p>The OP currently supports housing options. The language can be strengthened to clarify the required housing needs specified by the PPS.</p> <p>Include policies that speak to agricultural activities in Fort Frances and support agri-food network. This might include fishing, food storage, maple-syrup, and other horticultural crops, or livestock.</p>

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
local food, and maintaining and improving the agri-food network ; j) promoting energy conservation and providing opportunities for development of renewable increased energy systems and alternative energy systems, including district energy supply ;		
1.8 Energy Conservation, Air Quality and Climate Change		
1.8.1 Planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate through land use and development patterns which: e) encourage transit-supportive development and intensification to improve the mix of employment and housing uses to shorten commute journeys and decrease transportation congestion f) promote design and orientation which maximizes energy efficiency and conservation, and considers the mitigating effects of vegetation and green infrastructure ; and	3.1.7 Air Quality and Climate Change 3.4.6 Power Generation Facilities 3.4.7 Energy Conservation 4.1 Living Areas	OP currently provides direction to support energy conservation and sustainable development. This policy could be strengthened. OP contains several policies directing around active transportation. The Living Areas designation also provides opportunities for a limited mix of uses and some direction for infill and intensification. Opportunity to strengthen intensification and mixed-use policies.
2.0 Wise Use and Management Resources		
2.2 Water		
2.2.1 Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by:	3.1.6 General Environmental Policies Schedule B – Environmental Information Map	Include language in the OP to support the evaluation and preparing for changes to water resource systems at the watershed level due to Climate Change. Update the mapping in Schedule B.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
c) evaluating and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate to water resource systems at the watershed level;		
2.3 Agriculture		
2.3.2 Planning authorities are encouraged to use an agricultural system approach to maintain and enhance the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the agri-food network.	4.4 Resource Development	Include policies supportive of agricultural system approach and support for the agri-food network.
2.3.3.3 New land uses in prime agricultural areas, including the creation of lots and new or expanding livestock facilities, shall comply with the minimum distance separation formulae.	4.4 Resource Development	N/A. No prime agricultural areas.
2.5 Mineral Aggregate Resources		
2.5.2.4 Mineral aggregate operations shall be protected from development and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact. Existing mineral aggregate operations shall be permitted to continue without the need for official plan amendment, rezoning or development permit under the Planning Act. Where the Aggregate Resources Act applies, only	4.4 Resource Development	Language in the OP to be reviewed to reflect changes in the PPS.

PPS, 2020 Section and Policy	Relevant Existing OP Section	Issue to be Addressed
processes under the Aggregate Resources Act shall address the depth of extraction of new or existing mineral aggregate operations. When a license for extraction or operation ceases to exist, policy 2.5.2.5 continues to apply.		
2.6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology		
2.6.5 Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.	3.2 Arts, Culture and Heritage	OP contains no requirement to engage with Indigenous communities. Create new policy requiring engagement with Indigenous community in matters pertaining to identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.
3.0 Protecting Public Health and Safety		
3.2 Human-Made Hazards		
3.2.3 Planning authorities should support, where feasible, on-site and local re-use of excess soil through planning and development approvals while protecting human health and the environment	3.1.7 Air Quality and Climate Change	Create a new policy to support the local re-use of excess soil in developments.
4.0 Implementation and Interpretation		
Some policies have been removed/revised. However, no significant changes to notes	n/a	No change required.
5.0 Figure 1 Natural Heritage Protection Line		
n/a	n/a	n/a
6.0 Definitions		
Numerous definition changes.	7 Definitions	Ensure policies and definitions align with the new PPS definitions and that existing definitions are updated accordingly.



TO: Cody Vangel, Chief Building Official / Municipal Planner and Transportation Superintendent, Town of Fort Frances

FROM: Justyna Garbos, MCIP, RPP, Project Manager, WSP

SUBJECT: **Town of Fort Frances New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review – Final Community Engagement Strategy**

DATE: July 22, 2022

The Town of Fort Frances has initiated the development of a New Official Plan (OP) and Comprehensive Zoning By-law (ZBL) (the “Project”) and has retained WSP Canada Inc. (“WSP”) to undertake this work. In accordance with Task 1.1 and the approach described in Section 6.1 of WSP’s Proposal, this Community Engagement Strategy (the “Strategy”) has been prepared to elaborate on our proposed approach, methods, and specific tools to undertake community and Indigenous engagement as part of the development of the New Official Plan (“OP”) and Zoning By-law (“ZBL”) Review.

1 Introduction

This Community Engagement Strategy has been developed to identify a comprehensive, accessible, creative, and meaningful approach to consultation, engagement, and communication over the course of the Project.

The Strategy that has been developed for the Project is meant to be a living, flexible document; its contents and recommendations may change depending on how the technical work program progresses, the evolving impacts of COVID-19, as well as other engagement opportunities or challenges that emerge. The contents are not meant to be prescriptive but a point of reference during the Project, which will help to shape the outreach, promotion, communication, and engagement undertaken with various interest groups and audiences.

As identified in Task 1.2 of our Proposal, this Draft Engagement Strategy will be discussed at the Virtual Project Initiation Meeting with Town staff to confirm our proposed Strategy and assumptions. The Engagement Strategy will be finalized in Task 1.3 following the Project Initiation Meeting.

2 Indigenous Engagement

The Crown has a duty to consult with Indigenous communities on issues that may affect Section 35 Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada under the Constitution Act, 1982, and land claims. Although the Duty to Consult is ultimately the responsibility of the



Province, procedural aspects of this duty have been delegated to municipalities in land use planning matters where the use of land or natural resources could be impacted. The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 recognizes the importance of consulting with Indigenous communities on planning matters. Our approach to Indigenous Engagement follows a two-step process.

Step 1: Develop an Interim Indigenous Communities Contact List

WSP understands that a number of Indigenous communities are located in the Rainy River District will be engaged throughout the project, and that the Town will provide a contact list of other Indigenous communities in the area, if required. The Indigenous communities in the area would also be confirmed via pre-consultation with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) in Task 1.5.

In accordance with Task 2.4A, we will reach out to the Indigenous communities and maintain a Record of Indigenous Engagement for the duration of the project. The Record will include details of when and how the communities were contacted, as well as a summary of any comments received.

The contact list of the Indigenous communities that are within the Rainy River District that we propose contacting, is listed in **Table 1**.

Step 2: Initiate Contact with Indigenous Communities

WSP will lead the Indigenous engagement and conduct outreach to inform Indigenous communities of the project initiation and seek their input on whether and how they would like to be engaged and consulted. Following the confirmation of the Engagement Strategy by the Town in Task 1.2, we will call each community confirmed by the Town and follow up with an email. In Task 2.4B, we could be available to attend one (1) in-person meeting on the land of an interested community, COVID-19 protocols permitting, to discuss the Project and to obtain feedback on the Draft Background Report. Should provincial health restrictions due to COVID-19 prohibit in-person meetings, we would also be available to hold this meeting in a virtual format.

Any additional meetings would be considered extra work outside the current scope of the work plan. As noted in our Proposal, should in-person meetings with Indigenous communities be required, we would hope to schedule these meetings to coincide with the in-person trips to Fort Frances to hold other engagement events, i.e., public open houses and meetings. We recognize that this may not always be possible due to the needs and seasonal activities of each community.

Step 3: Maintain Contact with Indigenous Communities

As deliverables are completed and made publicly available, and as consultation opportunities are scheduled, we will contact the Indigenous communities who have expressed an interest in being involved to keep them apprised of project progress and the opportunity to provide comments.



Table 1: Indigenous Communities Contact List

Indigenous Community	Contact Name / Title	Address	Phone	E-mail
Big Grassy River First Nation	Mr. Daryl Archie, Comprehensive Community Plan Coordinator	410 Anishinabe Way, Morson, ON P0W 1J0	(807) 488-5614 ext. 1002	ccpcoordinator@biggrassy.ca
Big Island First Nation (Anishinaabeg of Naongashiing)	Ms. Verna Big George, Lands Management	Box 335, Morson, ON P0W 1J0	(807) 488-5602	landsmanager@naongashiing.ca
Couchiching First Nation	Mr. Allan Yerxa, Lands & Resources Coordinator	RMB 2027, R.R. #2 Fort Frances, ON P9A 3M3	(807) 274-9013 ext. 202	allanyerxa@vianet.ca
Lac La Croix First Nation	Ms. Ariel Geyschick, Receptionist	104 Main Street, Neguaguon Lake IR 25D	(807) 485-2431 ext. 2221	reception@llcfn.ca
Métis Nation of Ontario	Lands, Resources & Consultations	66 Slater Street, Suite 100, 11th Floor, Ottawa, ON K1P 5H1	(613) 798-1488	consultations@metisnations.org
Mitaanjigaming First Nation	Mr. Chris Matheson, Consultation Coordinator	P.O. Box 609, Fort Frances, ON P9A 3M9	(807) 274-2188 ext. 301	nrf@mitaanjigaming.ca
Naicatchewenin First Nation	Ms. Connie Smith, Secretary and Receptionist	PO Box 15 RR 1, Devlin, ON P0W 1C0	(807) 486-3407 ext. 201	connie.smith@bellnet.ca
Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation	Band Office	P.O. Box 68, Fort Frances, ON P9A 3M5	(807) 481-2536	ea@nigig.ca
Objibways of Onegaming	Ms. Brenda Kelly, Secretary	703 Ketemiikana Drive, Nestor Falls, ON	(807) 484-2299 ext. 23	brenda.kelly@onigaming.ca
Rainy River First Nations	Ms. Kiley Shebagegit, Lands and Natural Resources Manager	Box 450, Emo, ON P0W 1E0	(807) 482-2479 ext. 237	k.shebagegit@rrfns.com
Seine River First Nation	Mr. Tony Marinaro, Director of Services	P.O. Box 124, Mine Centre, ON P0W 1H0	(807) 599-2224 ext. 2006	srfndos@bellnet.ca

3 Community Consultation Foundations

To enhance the overall process and with the intent of consensus building and buy-in in mind, we believe that the project would significantly benefit from the use of the process identified by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2), as referenced in our Proposal in the WSP White Paper on Online Public Engagement & Collaboration (April 2020). The IAP2 process recognizes that engagement should achieve project-specific objectives and also be tailored to the consultation and communication preferences of those who will be involved in the development of the project deliverables.

Not all interest groups and stakeholders may have the same level of involvement, commitment, interest, and decision-making ability and thus should be engaged at different points in the process in different ways. Throughout the Plan, the IAP2 “level” will be identified for both the audience group as well as the engagement tactics (**Figure 1**).

For example, in the case of the Fort Frances New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review, the decision maker is Town Council. Given this context, no other stakeholder group will be ‘empowered’ to make the ultimate decision. This reality in no way diminishes the importance of stakeholder engagement throughout this project but is intended to frame expectations and guide the selection of engagement tactics.

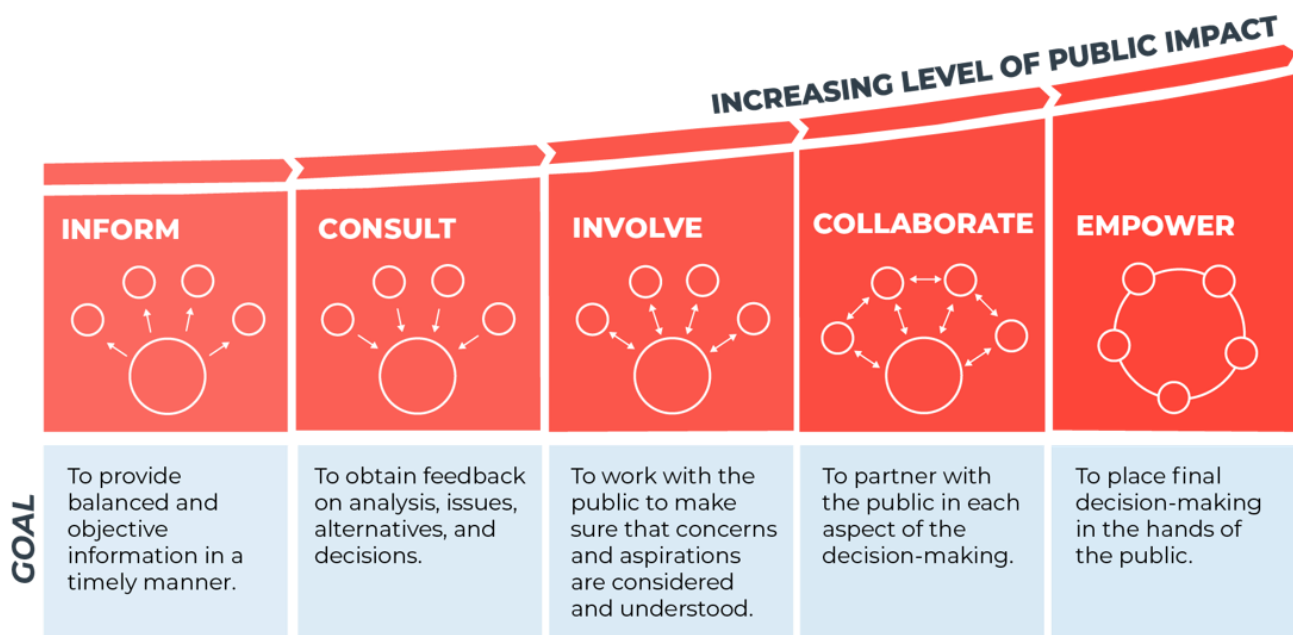


Figure 1 - IAP2 Spectrum of Participation

At a high level, the overall project will adhere to and aim to achieve the following objectives:

- **Foster collaboration** among Town departments, Indigenous communities, external agencies, and relevant organizations;
- **Build trust** between the Town, Indigenous communities, and the public;

- **Gain informed, meaningful input** by providing stakeholders with the information and tools they need;
- **Build awareness** of the importance of the Town's New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law and how it will affect the future development of the Town;
- Demonstrate that the Town is **committed to new engagement approaches and technologies**, while providing a range of engagement options to meet the needs of the community;
- Provide a **range of opportunities** for the community to be involved and engaged in a manner that is proactive, invested, and true to the project objectives;
- Fulfill the **statutory consultation requirements** under the Planning Act; and
- **Minimize risk of future appeals** of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

4 Project Branding and Awareness

WSP proposes to establish a consistent and easily recognizable project logo for the New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review project, which would be carried forward throughout all engagement events, the Town's website materials, and the OP and ZBL project documents. The project brand and logo will attract attention and contribute to building awareness of the project throughout the Town. The preparation of major deliverables will be consistent with the colours, fonts, and formatting chosen for project branding, subject to Town approval.

As shown in **Figure 2**, two (2) options are presented for consideration by Town staff and were developed to reflect the Town of Fort Frances branding and colours as identified in the Town of Fort Frances Brand Standards Guide (2014). At the project initiation meeting held on July 7, 2022, Option 1 was selected by Town staff as the preferred project logo option.

Figure 2: Project Logo Options



5 Online and In-Person Engagement and Consultation



Now more than ever, online public engagement is being considered as a positive and inclusive format of providing opportunities for community members to participate in public decision-making. While it has been commonly used to support or enhance in-person engagement processes for years, online public engagement was rarely seen as a standalone tool. Our new reality of physical and social distancing is shifting the way we think about public engagement, as we look to online tools for reaching a wide audience and continuing to move municipal projects forward.

Through some of our recent project work, we have found online public engagement to enhance our ability to reach a wider audience. It allows community members to choose where and when they want to engage. Where we might have seen 20 people attend an in-person Public Open House, we are now seeing 100+ people watch a video presentation and respond to an online survey. With a wider audience, projects benefit from more community voices being heard and informing decision-making.

As a result of provincial and municipal restrictions due to COVID-19, we have proposed meetings with Town Staff and relevant organizations take place via video conference calls throughout the project process. Per our Proposal and current lifting of health restrictions, we have also proposed in-person options for the two (2) Public Open Houses, Statutory Public Open House, and Statutory Public Meetings, which will allow us to be nimble in our community engagement approach. Meetings with Indigenous communities are to be conducted in-person, unless requested otherwise. Online engagement events and meetings will be held using virtual meeting platforms such as Microsoft Teams.

6 Technical Advisory Committee

In accordance with our Proposal, the project will involve the establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) by the Town to help guide and inform the development of the New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

We anticipate that the TAC will be comprised of Town representatives from relevant committees (e.g., Planning & Development Executive Committee), and departments (e.g., Planning & Development, Operations & Facilities, Community Services), as well as relevant external agencies. The TAC will be engaged to provide background information, identify key issues to be considered, review major deliverables and reports, and provide technical input and analysis at key project milestones. Teleconference meetings are proposed to obtain feedback from TAC members following circulation of deliverables and reports for their review.



WSP anticipates that the Town will be responsible for the identification and coordination of the TAC, establishment of a Chair (if required), and creation of a Terms of Reference (if required). These items will be confirmed at the virtual Project Initiation Meeting to be held on July 7, 2022 (Task 1.2).

7 Stakeholder Management Plan

Based on the requirements set out in the RFP, relevant internal/external stakeholder groups have been identified. It is our understanding that at the Virtual Project Initiation Meeting in Task 1.2, the Town will advise of other relevant groups to be engaged with and/or invited to participate in the project as part of the Technical Advisory Committee.

Table 2 provides an overview of each of the groups, a brief description including background/context regarding the group, and an overview of recommended individuals and/or organizations that would be contacted to participate in the project. The information contained within the table is meant to be a starting point from which WSP will work with Town staff to confirm the preferred contacts. Not all members of the groups identified in **Table 2** will be required to participate in every engagement opportunity. The specific contacts will be confirmed with the Town prior to notification.

Table 2 - Stakeholder Management Plan

Group & IAP2 Level	Description	Membership
Members of Fort Frances Council Up to Empower	Members of Council will be the final point of approval and will ultimately be responsible for the endorsement of the OP and ZBL. They have a detailed understanding of the politics and a high level of understanding of internal process, roles and responsibilities, priorities and budget impacts. They may be driven by the interests of their constituents and may not always have a cohesive or consistent perspective on community needs and priorities.	All members of Town Council (currently sitting) are considered part of this group.
Town Staff Project Team / Internal Department Stakeholders / TAC Up to Collaborate, and at times Empower	Town Staff Project Team members will be a decision maker and senior leadership sounding board / approval body and the liaison between the consultant team and Council. Project Team members and internal department stakeholders will be engaged to review deliverables and	Town Project Team: Cody Vangel, Chief Building Official/Municipal Planner and Transportation Superintendent Internal Department Stakeholders: Faisal Anwar, CAO



Group & IAP2 Level	Description	Membership
	provide guidance and direction. They understand the internal politics, technical issues and opportunities, the budget expectations and strategic directions that the Town wishes to go in.	Travis Rob, Manager of Operations & Facilities Tyler Young, Recreation & Culture Manager (*Town Staff Project Team to circulate deliverables to other internal department stakeholders as required, for review and written comment. Internal department stakeholders may also join meetings with Town staff and WSP to review key deliverables, as needed.)
Members of the Public Primarily Inform & Consult	People who live, work and play within the Town of Fort Frances. They come from a wide range of socio-demographic and political backgrounds which means that their consultation preferences are varied.	Residents of the Town of Fort Frances
External Technical Agencies and Stakeholder Groups / TAC Up to Collaborate (Fort Frances Municipal Heritage Committee) Consult (Others)	Technical agencies and stakeholder groups may hold significant interest in the Project outcomes. The TAC will be a committee authorized by Council. In order to demonstrate transparency and support Project outcomes, this group should be notified by Town staff at key junctures to present recommendations and options and gain targeted feedback.	Planning & Development Executive Committee Community Services Executive Committee Economic Development Executive Committee Committee of Adjustment Rainy Lake Island Conservation Reserve Fort Frances Power Corporation Northwestern Health Unit Local Development Community

We recommend the Town develop and maintain a Project Contact List. It will serve as a resource for the circulation of Project notifications and the availability of key deliverables to members of the public and relevant organizations who have expressed interest in keeping informed about and participating in the Project. The contact list will build upon the information contained within this document to identify:

- Key stakeholder contact information (name, email, phone number, address);
- Any stakeholder-specific requirements (preferred means of contact); and



- Stakeholder-specific interests in the project.

Town staff will be the primary contact with the public and relevant organizations and will provide acknowledgement of comments received. WSP will manage a comments matrix to organize input and comments received from the various stakeholder groups on a thematic basis. If required, we will work with the Town to prepare written responses to comments.

8 Engagement Approach

The following section outlines the Engagement Approach for the project, which ties in with the Stakeholder Management Plan to identify the high-level objectives and outcomes for each phase of the Project.

8.1 Overview of Consultation Milestones

As shown in **Table 3**, the specific elements of the Engagement Approach have been informed by the requirements and expectations of the Town (as detailed in the RFP), alignment with critical decision-making points, technical task expectations and required inputs.

Table 3 - Engagement Approach

Project Phase	Consultation Objectives	Consultation Tactics
Phase 1: Project Initiation	<p>To prepare the Engagement Strategy and prepare for the launch of engagement.</p> <p>To brief Council on the project and field any questions.</p> <p>To conduct pre-consultation with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).</p>	<p>1 Start-up Meeting with Town Staff</p> <p>2 Virtual Meeting with Council</p> <p>3 Email to MMAH for Pre-Consultation</p> <p>4 Project Website Launch</p>
Phase 2: Pre-consultation and Community Exploration	<p>To establish relationships with stakeholders, Indigenous communities, and the public, and to introduce the project and information about future opportunities to engage and provide feedback.</p> <p>To engage in dialogue with stakeholders, Indigenous communities, and the public to inform and produce the Background Report.</p> <p>To identify social, political, geographic, and cultural context relevant to the OP and ZBL processes.</p>	<p>5 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #1</p> <p>6 Preliminary Outreach to Indigenous Communities</p> <p>7 In-person Meetings with Indigenous Communities</p> <p>8 In-person Public Open House #1</p> <p>9 Online Survey</p> <p>10 Project Website Updates</p>

Project Phase	Consultation Objectives	Consultation Tactics
Phase 3: Technical Review, Research, and Issues (OP)	<p>To focus engagement and feedback to issues that apply to the Official Plan process.</p> <p>To engage in dialogue with stakeholders, Indigenous communities, and the public to inform and produce a Policy Directions and Recommendations Report.</p> <p>To present and obtain feedback on the Policy Directions and Recommendations Report.</p> <p>To satisfy Provincial requirements under Section 26(3) of the Planning Act.</p>	<p>11 Project Website Updates</p> <p>12 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #2</p> <p>13 In-Person Meetings #2 with Indigenous Communities</p> <p>14 In-Person Public Open House #2</p> <p>15 Virtual Special Meeting of Council</p>
Phase 4: Draft OP and ZBL	<p>To solicit feedback on the Draft OP and the Draft ZBL.</p> <p>To solicit feedback on Draft Planning Application Forms.</p>	<p>16 Project Website Updates</p> <p>17 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #3</p> <p>18 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #4</p> <p>19 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #5</p> <p>20 In-Person Meetings with Indigenous Communities</p> <p>21 In-Person Combined Statutory Public Open House for the Draft OP and Draft ZBL</p>
Phase 5: Final Official Plan	<p>To address comments on the Draft OP.</p> <p>To educate stakeholders and Indigenous communities about the requirements and limitations of the planning process.</p> <p>To guide Council through the process of adopting the Final OP, satisfying the requirements of the Planning Act.</p>	<p>22 Project Website Updates</p> <p>23 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #6</p> <p>24 In-Person Meetings with Indigenous Communities</p> <p>25 In-Person Statutory Public Meeting for Final Draft OP</p> <p>26 Virtual Council Meeting for the Adoption of the Final OP</p> <p>27 Submit Final OP to MMAH for Approval</p>

Project Phase	Consultation Objectives	Consultation Tactics
Phase 6: Final Zoning By-law	<p>To address comments in the Final ZBL.</p> <p>To educate stakeholders and Indigenous communities about the requirements and limitations of the planning process.</p> <p>To guide Council through the process of adopting the Final ZBL, satisfying the requirements of the Planning Act.</p>	<p>28 Project Website Updates</p> <p>29 In-Person Meetings with Indigenous Communities</p> <p>30 In-Person Statutory Public Meeting for Final Draft ZBL</p> <p>31 Virtual Council Meeting for the Adoption of the Zoning By-law</p>

8.1.1 Public Open Houses, Public Meetings, and Council Meetings

Public Open Houses, Statutory Public Meetings, and check-ins with Town Council will be undertaken throughout the project process as follows:

- **Virtual Council Briefing (OP / ZBL):** A presentation to Council to introduce the project and confirm any specific Council priorities for the New OP and ZBL.
- **In-Person Public Open House #1 (OP / ZBL):** A Public Open House to that will serve as the first public touchpoint of the project, and will include an overview of the OP / ZBL Review, timelines, findings of the background review, and how to stay involved throughout the process. This is also an opportunity to receive direct feedback from the public on the project, advertise the Online Survey, and to inform the Final Community Background Report.
- **In-Person Public Open House #2 (OP):** A Public Open House to present the Draft Policy Directions and Recommendations Report to the public and solicit feedback and comments. Part of this introduction will be explaining the role of the Policy Directions and Recommendations Report in the drafting of the Official Plan, and the limitations of this process.
- **Virtual Special Meeting of Council (OP):** A meeting with Council to introduce the project and satisfy the requirements of Section 26(3) of the Planning Act.
- **In-Person Combined Statutory Public Open House (OP / ZBL):** A Combined Statutory Public Open House to introduce and describe the changes in the drafts of the OP and ZBL to Council and the public, and to give them an opportunity to ask questions and respond. This is also to satisfy the requirements of Sections 17(16) and 34(12)(b) of the Planning Act.
- **In-Person Official Plan Statutory Public Meeting:** A Statutory Public Meeting to present the Final Draft OP to Council and satisfy the requirements of the Planning Act. It is an opportunity for Council to ask questions and receive clarification on aspects of the Final Draft OP.



- **In-Person Zoning By-law Statutory Public Meeting:** A Statutory Public Meeting to present the Final Draft ZBL to Council and satisfy the requirements of the Planning Act. It is an opportunity for Council to ask questions and receive clarification on aspects of the Final Draft ZBL.

8.1.2 Online Survey

The Online Survey will be used as a tool to inform the Final Background Report and Draft Policy Directions and Recommendations Report. It will be in addition to the In-Person Public Open House #1 and will provide an opportunity for those who cannot attend in person to provide their feedback. It will be accompanied by a PDF of the slideshow used for the Public Open House. It will also provide a more open-ended way to provide feedback, where participants can identify issues that may not be raised in the presentation.

8.2 Detailed Consultation Tactics & Tools

The previous section identified, at a high level, the major consultation and communication milestones that will inform the Project process. This Section details the specific consultation tools and tactics that could be used to facilitate conversation, solicit input, communicate key messages and establish buy-in to the various Project components. **Table 4** details the suggested consultation tools and facilitation tactics that are proposed to be considered / used for the various consultation milestones.

WSP is experienced in in-person and virtual consultation practices and protocols and is committed to working with the Town to identify tools that align with community preferences, level of technology comfort, and existing tools in use by the Town.

In addition to the core/primary meeting platforms and the Town's website, there is an opportunity to use other digital engagement tools based on the objectives and desired outcomes of the session. WSP has corporate subscriptions to these platforms, which are identified in **Table 4**.

Table 4 – Proposed Engagement Tools and Tactics

Engagement Tactics & Lead	Purpose	Milestone-Specific Tools
1 Start-up Meeting with Town Staff (Town)	To introduce the Project Team and confirm the Engagement Strategy and project schedule.	Microsoft Teams
2 Virtual Meeting with Council (Town)	To brief Council on the project and field questions	Microsoft Teams
3 Virtual Meeting with the Ontario Government (Town / WSP)	To perform Pre-Consultation	Email, Microsoft Teams



Engagement Tactics & Lead	Purpose	Milestone-Specific Tools
4 Project Website Launch (Town)	To develop project awareness and a public-facing information board for documents, engagement opportunities and contact information.	Town Website
5 Virtual Staff and TAC meeting #1 (Town / WSP)	To initiate the Technical Advisory Committee and explore background context, discuss the Draft Background Report	Presentation, Microsoft Teams, Menti (An online polling tool: www.menti.com)
6 Preliminary Outreach to Indigenous Communities (Town / WSP)	To inform of project initiation and establish relationship. To inform of future engagement opportunities and to seek input on any issues of interest for consideration in the Background Report.	Calls to be placed by WSP, with follow-up email if required
7 In-Person Meetings with Indigenous Communities (Town / WSP)	To establish a relationship. To inform of project initiation, project purpose, scope, and opportunities to participate and seek input on any issues of interest for consideration in the Research and Background Paper.	Per Indigenous community meeting protocol
8 In-Person Public Open House #1 (Town / WSP)	To inform and educate the public about the project and to solicit feedback on issues and priorities for the Background Report.	Presentation, display boards, comment response forms (printed)
9 Online Survey (Town / WSP)	Solicit further feedback and comments to inform the Background Report	Bang the Table or Survey Monkey.
10 Project Website Updates (Town)	To make the Background Report available, update on the progress of the project, and announce opportunities for engagement.	Town Website

Engagement Tactics & Lead	Purpose	Milestone-Specific Tools
11 Project Website Updates (Town)	To make the draft Policy Directions and Recommendations Report available, update on the progress of the project, and announce opportunities for engagement.	Town Website
12 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #2 (Town / WSP)	To review the Draft Policy Directions and Recommendations Report.	Presentation, Microsoft Teams
13 In-Person Meeting with Indigenous Communities (Town / WSP)	To introduce the Project and seek feedback on the Draft Research and Background Paper.	Per Indigenous community meeting protocol
14 In-Person Public Open House #2 (Town / WSP)	To introduce the Project and seek feedback on the Draft Policy Directions and Recommendations Report	Presentation, display boards, comment response forms (printed)
15 Virtual Special Meeting of Council (in accordance with Section 26(3) of the Planning Act)	To receive endorsement of the Final Policy Directions and Recommendations Report	Presentation, Microsoft Teams
16 Project Website Updates (Town)	To make the draft OP and ZBL available, update on the progress of the project, and announce opportunities for engagement.	Town Website
17 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #3 (Town)	To review the Draft OP.	Presentation, Microsoft Teams
18 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #4 (Town)	To review the Draft ZBL.	Presentation, Microsoft Teams
19 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #5 (Town)	To review the Draft Planning Application Forms.	Presentation, Microsoft Teams
20 In-Person Meeting with Indigenous Communities (Town / WSP)	To seek feedback on the Draft OP and Draft ZBL and provide information on the process.	Per Indigenous Community Meeting Protocol



Engagement Tactics & Lead	Purpose	Milestone-Specific Tools
21 In-Person Combined Statutory Public Open House for the Draft OP and Draft ZBL (Town / WSP) (in accordance with Section 17(16) and 34(12)(b) of the Planning Act)	To satisfy the requirements of the Planning Act, to solicit feedback from Council on the Draft OP and Draft ZBL.	Presentation, display boards
22 Project Website Updates (Town)	To make the Final Draft OP available, update on the progress of the project, and announce opportunities for engagement.	Town Website
23 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #6 (Town)	To review the Draft OP and provide direction for the Final Draft OP.	Presentation, Microsoft Teams
24 In-Person Meeting with Indigenous Communities (Town / WSP)	To present the Final Draft Official Plan and seek feedback.	Per Indigenous Community Meeting Protocol
25 In-Person Statutory Public Meeting (Town / WSP)	To present the Final Draft Official Plan, seek feedback, and satisfy the requirements of the Planning Act.	Presentation, Display Boards
26 Virtual Council Presentation (Town / WSP)	To present the Final OP to Council for adoption.	Per Town Virtual Council meeting protocol *Town staff to upload documentation to Town Website
27 Project Website Updates (Town)	To update the Town website after the Council Meeting.	Town Website
28 In-Person Meeting with Indigenous Communities (Town / WSP)	To present the Final Draft ZBL and seek feedback.	Per Indigenous community meeting protocol
29 In-Person Statutory Public Meeting (Town / WSP)	To present the Final Draft ZBL, seek feedback, and satisfy the requirements of the Planning Act.	Presentation, display boards



Engagement Tactics & Lead	Purpose	Milestone-Specific Tools
30 Virtual Council Presentation (Town / WSP)	To present the Final OP and ZBL to Council for adoption.	Per Town Virtual Council meeting protocol *Town staff to upload documentation to Town Website

9 Communication Plan

Communication is a core component of the project. Ensuring that the information provided is clear, consistent, and engaging can be a challenge. This Communication Plan is intended to be undertaken concurrently with the Engagement Approach developed in **Section 8** and meant to drive interest in the Project and engagement activities.

9.1 Communications Tactics

There are many potential communication tactics that can be adopted, both on an ongoing or milestone-specific basis, to widely promote, inform, and educate the target audiences. The following sections provide an overview of the tactics that will be used throughout this Project (**ongoing tactics**) and those leveraged ahead of a phase of consultation (**milestone-specific tactics**).

On-going Communication Tactics

1 Project Website – Municipal Website

A project website hosted on the Town's website will be launched shortly after project initiation and will be used to:

- > Allow members of the public to sign up for email notifications of project updates and next steps;
- > Provide information and project updates that outlines the project timeline;
- > Provide contact information of key contacts at the Town and with WSP;
- > Advertise all community engagement activities and post notices of Public Open Houses;
- > Provide documents, including draft and final versions of the Background Report, Policy Directions and Recommendations Report, Official Plan, Zoning By-law Discussion Paper, Zoning By-law, and Planning Application Forms. Documents should be available in a digital format for public download and review; and
- > Host online engagement tools such as online surveys.

The Town will also direct that written comments on this project be submitted at a dedicated Town project email address at OPZBLReview@FortFrances.ca. The Town project email address will also be listed publicly on the Town's project website.

If required, the Consultant Team will work with the Town to develop webpage content and regular updates at key project milestones, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

2 Social Media



We anticipate that the Town will encourage project awareness of the OP and Comprehensive ZBL project through the Town's website and existing social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) to advertise all community consultation activities, including public open houses, as well as key milestones and the available project documents.

The intent of any Town-led social media posts on Facebook will be to provide recurring “blasts” out into the community to promote the project, available deliverables for public review, and online engagement opportunities. Social media messages should be kept short with a thought-provoking image; they will not be used as an engagement tool, but rather for information sharing. Social media messages should be posted in line with key Project milestones to advertise engagement events and opportunities, and to inform the public of deliverables for public review. WSP can assist Town staff in drafting concise social media posts in conjunction with consultation milestones.

Milestone Specific Tactics

1 Project Contact List

The Project Contact List, managed by the Town, will catalogue the names and contact information for potential invitees and stakeholders, and serve as a record of those who attended consultation events. This list will include those who have signed up for updates through the project website.

2 Indigenous Engagement Record and Contact List

The Indigenous Communities Contact and Interest List, managed by WSP, will catalogue the communities contacted by the project and their preferred methods for engagement. It will include information of the point of contact with the community, a record of contact, their preferred method of engagement, and how they would like to be kept apprised of the process. This will inform and be a record of which communities we meet with, at which stages of the project, and in what method. A copy will be provided to the Town and MMAH upon project completion.



3 Public Notices

WSP assumes that public consultation events, including Public Open Houses, will also be advertised by the Town and will include local print and/or online news outlets, mailout flyers (e.g., with tax bills), notices in community or place of worship bulletins and at key community facilities (libraries, post offices). WSP will be responsible for preparing notices (i.e., Public Open House) in an accessible and age-friendly manner with simple language, clear headings, large type face, and high contrast. The Town will be responsible for the circulation of notices.

Notices and other advertisements for submission to the local newspapers will be submitted three (3) days in advance of the intended publication date. WSP will submit any draft notice or text for submission to a local paper to Town staff for review at least one (1) week in advance of the submission deadline.

Notices of the Public Open Houses would generally be published and transmitted electronically two (2) weeks in advance, with detailed instructions on how to register and participate in-person or virtually, as required.

4 Local Media

Traditional media plays a strong role in the Town – many community members rely on, and trust, these sources. There is potential to create more positive opportunities through strong relationships with the media to provide general promotional messages to the public through their respective avenues.

For example, Town representatives can be interviewed on popular radio show(s) to discuss the Project and an upcoming round of public consultation.

Should any media requests be received during the Project, WSP shall follow a strict media protocol, which defers any requests to the Town's Project Manager, Cody Vangel, for review and response.

5 Notifications & Newsletters

Using its existing channels of communication, the Town may wish to include information in local publications or outreach to key groups regarding specific outreach activities that are being undertaken using the source audience contact list. This could include an insert in property tax or similar municipal notices, or other Town mail/email circulations, such as newsletters.

These would be developed by Town staff with input from the WSP, as required.

6 Town Communications

The tactics identified above are only some of the options that are typically utilized. We understand that the Town's communications staff may have other avenues and opportunities to explore for wider communication and outreach. WSP is committed to working with staff to provide appropriate materials and messaging as needed to support those communication tools.



9.2 Communications Protocols

Communications protocols refer to who and how communication will be undertaken over the course of the project. Communication will occur in two ways – internally – between Town staff, members of the Consultant Team and key decision makers to appropriately manage and monitor the project, and externally – between WSP, Town and other stakeholder groups to inform the project process. A recommended approach and roles and responsibilities have been identified for internal and external communication below.

Internal

Ongoing communication and coordination are needed to ensure that the Project is efficiently and effectively undertaken. Should communication challenges, technical issues or opportunities for additional consultation / engagement arise over the course of the Project, there should be a clear process to determine the most appropriate course of action. Action can be identified by articulating the roles and responsibilities for critical staff including the Consultant Team's project manager, Town's project manager, and other staff members including:

- **Day to Day Coordination** | The Consultant Team has identified Cody Vangel, Chief Building Official / Municipal Planner and Transportation Superintendent, as the Town's primary day-to-day contact for all correspondence between the Town and WSP. This would include all matters related to project management, billing, project schedule, and other matters. WSP's Project Manager and Town staff will participate in informal monthly status calls to report on Project progress. An agenda for these meetings will be issued by WSP's Project Management one (1) week in advance. This call will be summarized in a follow-up email.
- **Deliverable Submission & Review** | WSP will generally issue deliverables to the Town via email five (5) business days in advance of virtual review meetings with the Town's project team and other staff, as required. The Town's Project Manager will consolidate comments received and send them to the Consultant Team.
- **Contact Management** | The Town's Project Manager (or staff delegate) will maintain a contact list throughout the Project and updated with contact information received through the Project Website and consultation events.
- **Comment Management** | Town staff and WSP will work closely to manage comments. Town staff will be the primary contact for all communications and will forward written correspondence and records of phone calls to the Consultant Team. Comments will be directed to the Town project email address at OPZBLReview@FortFrances.ca and will serve as a central point of contact. WSP will be responsible for maintaining comment documentation. As input is received, it will be compiled into a comment-response matrix and organized by theme. At the end of the Project (or at key milestones), the full database of input received and associated responses (where appropriate) would be provided to the Town's Project Manager for public release as a record of consultation.



External

The Town and WSP should work together to develop a transparent communications process and communications material. The communications tactics listed in **Table 5** will be led by the Town, with content input from WSP unless otherwise noted in the table. Town staff will manage registration for events; however, platforms such as Zoom allow for automatic registration, which can be used for engagement events to manage registration.

Table 5 - Communications Tactics

Consultation Tactics (Section 6.1)

	Public Communications	Other Communications
1 Start-up Meeting with Town Staff	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 1 week prior (WSP)
2 Virtual Meeting with Council	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 1 week prior (WSP)
3 Pre-Consultation with the Ontario Government	N/A	Email of the commencement of the project to the Province (WSP to draft / Town to send)
4 Project Website Launch	Social Media Blasts (Town) Town Website Update (Town)	N/A
5 Virtual Staff and TAC Meeting #1	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 2-3 days prior (WSP or Town to send externally)
6 Preliminary Outreach to Indigenous Communities (Town / WSP)	N/A	Introductory Call (WSP to call; and follow up with email if required)
7 In-Person meetings with Indigenous Communities.	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 1 week prior (WSP)
8 In-Person Public Open House #1	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post) Notice of Public Open House (WSP)	Local Media (Town) Newsletters & Notifications (Town) Town Communications (Town)



**Consultation Tactics
(Section 6.1)**

Public Communications

Other Communications

9 Online Survey	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post)	N/A
10 Project Website Updates	Project Website (Town)	N/A
11 Project Website Updates	Project Website (Town)	N/A
12 Virtual Staff and TAC meeting #1	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 2-3 days prior (WSP or Town to send externally)
13 In-Person meetings with Indigenous Communities.	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 1 week prior (WSP)
14 In-Person Public Open House #1	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post) Notice of Public Open House (WSP)	Local Media (Town) Newsletters & Notifications (Town) Town Communications (Town)
15 Virtual Special Meeting of Council	Project Website (Town) Notice of Special Meeting of Council (WSP)	Schedule Meeting and issue Agenda 1 week prior (Town)
16 Project Website Updates	Project Website (Town)	N/A
17 Virtual Staff and TAC meeting #3	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 2-3 days prior (WSP or Town to send externally)
18 Virtual Staff and TAC meeting #4	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 2-3 days prior (WSP or Town to send externally)
19 Virtual Staff and TAC meeting #5	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 2-3 days prior (WSP or Town to send externally)



**Consultation Tactics
(Section 6.1)**

Public Communications

Other Communications

20 In-Person meetings with Indigenous Communities.	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 1 week prior (WSP)
21 In-Person Statutory Meeting for the Draft OP and Draft ZBL	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post) Notice of Statutory Public Meeting (WSP to prepare / Town to post)	Local Media (Town) Newsletters & Notifications (Town) Town Communications (Town)
22 Project Website Updates	Project Website (Town)	N/A
23 Virtual Staff and TAC meeting #6	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 2-3 days prior (WSP or Town to send externally)
24 In-Person meetings with Indigenous Communities.	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 1 week prior (WSP)
25 In-Person Statutory Public Meeting	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post) Notice of Statutory Public Meeting (WSP to prepare / Town to post)	Local Media (Town) Newsletters & Notifications (Town) Town Communications (Town)
26 Virtual Council Meeting for the Adoption of the Final OP	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post) Notice of Statutory Public Meeting (WSP to prepare / Town to post)	Local Media (Town) Newsletters & Notifications (Town) Town Communications (Town)
27 Project Website Updates	Project Website (Town)	N/A
28 In-Person meetings with Indigenous Communities.	N/A	Schedule Meeting and Issue Agenda 1 week prior (WSP)



Consultation Tactics (Section 6.1)

	Public Communications	Other Communications
29 In-Person Statutory Public Meeting	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post) Notice of Statutory Public Meeting (WSP to prepare / Town to post)	Local Media (Town) Newsletters & Notifications (Town) Town Communications (Town)
30 Virtual Council Meeting for the Adoption of the Final ZBL	Project Website (Town) Social Media Blasts (WSP to prepare content / Town to post) Notice of Statutory Public Meeting (WSP to prepare / Town to post)	Local Media (Town) Newsletters & Notifications (Town) Town Communications (Town)

10 Roles and Responsibilities

We assume that the development of the New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law will be a significant initiative for the Town. Over the course of the project, it is vital to understand roles and responsibilities for consultation between WSP and the Town. Specifically, we anticipate that Town involvement will include the following items:

Internal and External Communications

- The Town's Project Manager, Cody Vangel, will be the primary contact for this Project via the dedicated Project email.
- The Town will manage day-to-day liaison between the public, Council, internal departments, and external agencies.
- Town staff will forward comments to WSP for tracking. The Town will also send acknowledgement emails to comments received. WSP can provide input into more detailed written responses, as required. WSP will track all comments.
- Any communications with the public and stakeholders should be forwarded to the WSP's Project Manager.
- WSP will be responsible for preparing engagement material. Town staff can post materials online.
- The Town will maintain the Project Contact List. Email will be primary method of contact.



Development of Materials

- WSP will be responsible for preparing all engagement materials including presentations, notices, and interactive activities. The Town may wish to supplement this with additional materials (e.g., tax mailout inserts), which would be prepared by the Town with inputs from the WSP, as required.
- WSP will share draft engagement materials with the Town for review and comment at least one week in advance of publication timelines.
- WSP will revise materials for final circulation and/or posting.
- The Town will circulate materials to invitees as needed.
- Town staff will prepare staff reports to Council, which introduce project deliverables (e.g., Draft Official Plan and Draft Zoning By-law) and WSP will prepare a presentation if required.

Coordination and Facilitation of Events

- WSP and the Town will work together to determine the preferred date and time for all engagement events.
- Town staff will coordinate the requirements for in-person (e.g., booking a venue, set-up) and virtual events (e.g., setting up virtual platform and a registration page, if required).
- The Town will manage registration for events, including the distribution of invitations, based on the Project Contact List.
- Town staff will issue public engagement notices, including those prepared by WSP.
- WSP will facilitate and lead meetings and public open houses.
- WSP will be responsible for attending all engagement events.
- Town staff will attend and participate in engagement events.

Documentation of Outcomes

- WSP will prepare meeting minutes for meetings with Town staff included in the Work Plan. Action items arising from monthly project check-in meetings will be confirmed by email.
- WSP will prepare an “As We Heard” section in the Final Background Report (Task 2.7) to summarize all input received on the Draft Background Report.
- WSP will integrate engagement summaries within other deliverables (e.g., the Policy Directions and Recommendations Report) as appropriate.



If you have any questions regarding our Community Engagement Strategy, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at (613) 690-7463 or Justyna.Garbos@wsp.com.

Sincerely,

WSP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Garbos'.

Justyna Garbos, MCIP, RPP
Project Manager

TOWN OF FORT FRANCES
NEW OFFICIAL PLAN AND COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Mandate

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will provide background information, identify key issues to be considered, review draft reports and provide technical input and analysis at key project milestones during the development of the Town of Fort Frances New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

Teleconference and/or in-person meetings are proposed to obtain feedback from TAC members following circulation of deliverables and reports for their review.

2. Composition

The TAC was struck by Council on August 8, 2022 where it was approved to be composed of Up to two members of administration, one member of the Committee of Adjustment, one member of the Economic Development Executive Committee, one member of the MAT Committee, one member of the BIA Board, up to four citizen members (local developers, stakeholders or general public and one member of the Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce. The TAC memberships will be filled by the following:

Membership	Name
TOFF – Administration	Cody Vangel
TOFF – Administration	Vacant
Committee of Adjustment	Donald Taylor
Economic Development Executive Committee	Geoff Gillon
Municipal Accommodation Tax Committee	Sarah Noonan
Business Improvement Area	Stacey Cridland
Public	Duane Cridland
Public	Caryn Myers
Public	Michael del Puerto
Public	Kyle Sigurdson
Chamber of Commerce	Cathy Emes

3. Appointments

The Members shall be appointed for a term to coincide with the term of project. The Project is expected to conclude in the winter of 2024.

4. Meeting Schedule

The TAC will meet as necessary and upon suitable notice at 5:30pm in the Town of Fort Frances Committee Room, or other locations or times as deemed necessary. Meetings, from time to time, may be proposed virtually via Microsoft Teams understanding the Town's Consultant is not located within Fort Frances, however, in-person meetings are preferred. It is anticipated that each TAC meeting will be approximately 2 hours in length.

5. Duties

The TAC shall be responsible for the following:

- a) Provide advice, guidance and recommendations to the consultant and Council of the Town of Fort Frances on the development of the Town of Fort Frances New Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning By-law;
- b) Review and provide input and comment on all draft reports and the various drafts of the proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

6. Reporting Structure

Minutes of the TAC meetings shall be recorded by the consultant team or designate and shall be approved by the TAC at the next meeting.

7. Other

The Terms of Reference for the TAC will be revised and revisited as necessary as the project progresses to ensure the Committee's role remains meaningful through the development.

September 28, 2022