



# District of Wells

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## Draft Official Community Plan

Summer 2023



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**DIISTRIC OF WELLS**

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The District of Wells respectfully acknowledges the community of Wells and the surrounding area are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Southern Dakeh Nations: Lhtako Dene First Nation and Northern Shuswap: Xat'sull First Nation.

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We appreciate the time you have taken from your busy schedules to contribute to the development of this Plan. Your input was critical to ensuring that the new Official Community Plan reflects the vision, values, and opportunities in the District of Wells.

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## GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

**Active Transportation.** Non-motorized forms of transportation, such as walking, cycling, and rolling via wheelchair, scooter or other micromobility device.

**Brownfield.** Land previously used for industrial purposes, or certain commercial uses, and that may be contaminated by low concentrations of hazardous waste or pollution and have the potential to be reused after remediation.

**Bylaw.** A law passed and adopted by the District under the powers granted by the *Local Government Act*.

**Density.** Density is used to describe the number of dwelling units per hectare or acre.

**Development Permit Area.** An area designated in the Official Community Plan requiring council approval; before a building permit can be issued.

**Encourages.** The municipality may create policies, programs, procedures, and bylaws to facilitate the efficient implementation of certain initiatives.

**Ensures.** The municipality shall create policies and enforceable bylaws.

**Heritage Registry.** A property that has been recognized by Council as having heritage value.

**Land Use.** Category of activity present or permitted on a specific property or area.

**Local Government Act.** The *Local Government Act* is the primary legislation for regional districts and local municipalities setting out the framework for structure and operation, as well as the main powers and responsibilities.

**Official Community Plan.** A general statement of broad objectives and policies of the local government respecting the form and character of existing and proposed land use and servicing requirements in the jurisdiction.

**People of All Ages and Abilities.** The term refers to all people regardless of physical or mental abilities and is age independent.

**Supports.** The municipality may provide support through funding, programming, technical support, and/or through facilitating collaboration between levels of governments or community entities.

**Traffic Calming.** Measures taken to mitigate negative impacts of vehicle traffic. (e.g., speed humps, curb bump outs, pavement markings, etc...)

**Universal Design.** Design of products and environments to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

**Urban Design.** Urban Design considers the arrangement, appearance, and function of specific areas, buildings, and public spaces. The primary role of Urban Design is to enhance the quality of public spaces.



**Zoning.** The division of the District by bylaw into discreet areas in which density, land use, and other considerations are regulated.

**ACRONYMS:**

**CRD:** Cariboo Regional District

**FRPA:** Forest & Range Practice Act

**OCP:** Official Community Plan

**LGA:** *Local Government Act*

**DPA:** Development Permit Area

**UPA:** Units per acre

**WATS:** Wells Area Trails Society

DRAFT

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION



**Figure 1: District of Wells Town Centre**

The District of Wells is nestled near the end of Highway 26, 78 kilometres east of Quesnel. The District is known for its colourful, quaint historical buildings and murals that decorate the community, creating a sense of place that inspires creativity. Outside of the Wells Townsite area, the District of Wells is surrounded by wild spaces and forested slopes. The community is also famous for its role in the Cariboo Gold Rush and is the gateway to two major tourist attractions: Barkerville Historic Town & Park and the Bowron Lakes provincial park canoe circuit. The community is also home to a vibrant arts community that includes several organizations, festivals, and events, including Island Mountain Arts (est. 1977), galleries, and year-round live performance spaces like the Sunset Theatre and SARRAS (Stage and Recording, Retreat and Sanctuary).

As a community, the District of Wells has proven time and time again that it is hard-working and diverse. As a small community at the end of the road, the residents wear many hats and don't shy away from a challenge. For many years, the District of Wells has seen limited population growth. While much of the economy has transitioned to tourism and the arts, the District has lacked a primary economic engine that can attract new families to live and work in the town. A proposed new mining development presents opportunities for population growth and revitalization, and this Plan seeks to provide a framework for the District of Wells to grow in a way that complements its unique character.

This plan embodies the vision of the District of Wells residents and charts a land use framework designed to guide community development for the next 20 years. The plan provides a balanced approach and direction for land use development and other key policies that will shape how the District of Wells grows and adapts in the face of an always-changing future.



The idea of sustainable development suggests that it is possible to achieve economic growth without damaging environmental, or social systems. In addition, the concept of resiliency has also gained traction and importance in the community in the face of climate change. Wells was heavily impacted by wildfire in 2017 and it highlighted the need to rethink how the community prepares and plans for a future with increasing risk from extreme weather events.



The District's Capital Deferral Plan outlines critical infrastructure risk priorities and costs. The plan includes both immediate and deferred costs to the District which is essential information needed for budgeting and fundraising purposes. This risk-based approach ensures that plans are in place to address high priority issues and that solutions are implemented proactively. The District's proactive approach facilitates sustainability financially, socially and environmentally through risk mitigation.

### 1.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Through the planning and engagement process, several common themes emerged. These common themes were synthesized into Seven Guiding Principles that have guided the development of the OCP and will guide future planning and decision-making.

- i. Develop a community that is both environmentally and economically sustainable.*
  - The District envisions a community that values and protects its natural assets and visually interesting landscapes, while also supporting sustainable economic growth that aligns with the community's vision.
- ii. Invest in infrastructure upgrades that will promote community and environmental health.*
  - Infrastructure upgrades including but not limited to water systems, right-of-way improvements, and efficient waste management are essential to developing a cost-effective, safe, and connected community.
- iii. Strike a balance between arts, culture, heritage, and industry.*
  - As the District experiences economic growth, particularly in industrial activities, decisions must be guided by the principle of retaining and enhancing Wells' unique arts, culture, and heritage.
- iv. Diverse and affordable housing options for residents and seasonal workers.*
  - Developing a diversity of permanent and temporary housing types and tenures will be important for the economic and population growth of the community. Increased diversity in the housing stock will be needed to accommodate future growth in economic activity, tourism, and permanent population growth.
- v. Maintain Wells' unique character and pedestrian-first, compact design.*

- Creating a pedestrian oriented community through a compact land use structure and high-quality pedestrian facilities will provide residents and visitors with a variety of key benefits including improved health and safety, and enhanced social cohesion.

*vi. Create an inclusive, self-sufficient community.*

- Developing key residential, commercial, and recreational uses will be an important consideration to ensure that Wells' is able to fulfill the short- and long-term needs of its diverse and inclusive population.

*vii. The District of Wells will continue to be a peaceful and quiet community.*

- Through sustainable economic development, enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities, and well-designed residential and commercial growth Wells can retain its unique character as a peaceful and quiet community.

*viii. Develop a community that is designed to be fully accessible for people of all ages and abilities.*

- Through key infrastructure upgrades and new developments based on the concept of universal design, Wells' will be a community that is inviting for all people. By enhancing the accessibility of Wells residents will be more easily be able to age-in-place rather than needing to relocate.

## 1.4 PURPOSE OF THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

An Official Community Plan (OCP) provides the framework and direction for the development and evolution of a community. The OCP is a Council-endorsed and adopted document that serves as a municipality's highest level of policy guidance. Typically, OCPs are updated every five to ten years. The District of Wells' current OCP was last updated in 2010.

### What is an OCP for and who uses it?

The OCP is a municipality's highest-level policy document. The OCP answers the question **"where will new development go and what will it look like?"** but it also provides direction for a variety of important topics, including:

- Recreation and Parks
- Social Development (education, equity and inclusion, culture, poverty, etc.)
- Environmental Protection and Hazards (areas that should not be developed)
- Climate Change and Community Resilience
- Infrastructure (roads, sewer, water, electricity, and telecommunications)

- Economic Development
- Housing
- Community Safety
- Design and Architecture
- Location of Land Uses (residential, park, industrial, commercial, etc.)

Citizens, landowners, businesses, and developers use the OCP to guide property and investment decisions. Council and staff use it to guide municipal decisions such as budgeting, servicing, capital projects, land use, and development proposals. The School District and other agencies use it to guide facility planning, as well as program and service delivery.

In January 2021, the District of Wells began the process of creating a new OCP. The project comes at a timely opportunity as the proposed mining project proposes an underground gold mine, concentrator facility, offices, work camp, and associated facilities within the District of Wells. The proposed mine has an anticipated life span of 12 – 16 years or longer and is expected to employ an estimated 460 employees in the region plus contractors and consultants (and approximately 250 workers during peak construction).

The proposed mining project has the potential to change the demographic makeup of the community and provide new employment opportunities. Understanding the values and priorities of current, long-term residents in the District of Wells is important in the context of a changing community.

## 1.5 INTERPRETATION & ADMINISTRATION

An OCP is an Official Community Plan as referred to in the Local Government Act (LGA) and as adopted by the District of Wells (hereafter referred to as the District), in accordance with the requirements of the LGA.

The following section provides an overview of the administrative procedures for implementing the District of Wells OCP:

1. This OCP comes into effect as of the date of formal adoption by the District.
2. This Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis and, so that the document continues to reflect the long-range planning objectives of the District accurately, it is recommended that the Plan undergo a comprehensive review every seven to ten years.
3. The OCP can only encourage senior levels of government to act; it cannot force or require senior governments to act. Furthermore, although the OCP cannot commit the District to specific expenditures, the District cannot enact bylaws or undertake works that are contrary to it without amending the Plan.
4. No one Goal, Objective or Policy contained within this Plan should be read in isolation from the others to imply a particular action or consequence.

## 1.6 AUTHORITY

In British Columbia, municipalities have the authority to adopt OCPs through Part 14 of the BC LGA). This legislation stipulates what can and must be included in an Official Community Plan, as well as adoption procedures. This District of Wells OCP has been prepared in compliance with this legislation.

It should also be noted that the LGA provides local governments authority over land use, but not resource extraction. This means that activities such as mining, quarrying and forestry are not subject to local government bylaws. However, mineral processing and sawmills are considered use of the land and fall under the provisions of the LGA.

This authority to regulate land use does not extend to the Federal or Provincial Governments for the use of lands owned by these governments. However, it does extend to leases of Provincial Crown land (although not Federal land). Therefore, some permits and tenures issued by the Provincial Government may be subject to local government land use approvals, as well as Crown approvals. These include:

- Special use permits – new applications (not including forestry and other resource extraction activities)
- Power projects
- Land sales (future owner will be subject to local bylaws)
- Quarries (extraction is not subject to local regulation, but processing may be)
- Agriculture
- Community / institutional uses
- Transportation (some facilities/structures are subject to zoning)
- Communication site (some structures may be subject to local regulations)
- Industrial activities
- Commercial/recreation tenures
- Aquaculture / mariculture
- General commercial
- Film production

## 1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

The OCP is organized into the seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the purpose and authority of the OCP, the structure of the OCP and most importantly the community's future vision and guiding principles. The vision and seven principles are woven through the entire OCP. Chapter 2 provides useful context for the OCP and lays out key background information on demographics, the economy, environment and projections for future growth. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the planning process and the steps taken to engage with the community.

In Chapter 4 the plan shifts focus to the future and presents the land use designations that will guide development over the next 20 years. Chapter 5 includes social, environmental, and economic policies and objectives. Chapter 6 includes critical information on development permits.

The OCP concludes with a chapter focused on Implementation, which contains policies for Development Permits, Temporary Use Permits and a framework for implementing and monitoring the progress of the OCP. The proposed monitoring framework is linked closely to the Vision & Principles to ensure that the community continues to work towards their overarching goals.

The details presented in this plan consist of two main components: one component contains the force of the bylaw and the other is provided only for information and convenience. The sections that have the force of the bylaw include:

1. Objectives
2. Policies
3. Land Use Designations
4. Schedules A and B – Future Land Use Maps

All other sections including introductory text and background information are provided for information only.



# 2.0 BACKGROUND AND PLANNING CONTEXT

## 2.1 LOCATION AND PLANNING AREA

The District of Wells encompasses a large area totaling 159 square kilometres and is located on the North Slope of the Cariboo plateau 78 kilometres east of Quesnel. Much of this area is Crown land, and the Wells Townsite area only accounts for approximately 1.6 square kilometres near the District's Centre. While this plan applies to the entirety of the District's land area, most of its policies are focused on the Wells Townsite area where most activity occurs.

Neighbourhoods north of the highway are known as "North Wells" or "Uptown," and neighbourhoods to the south are known as "South Wells." North Wells includes the majority of the institutional uses, community amenities, and a mix of commercial and residential uses. South Wells includes a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

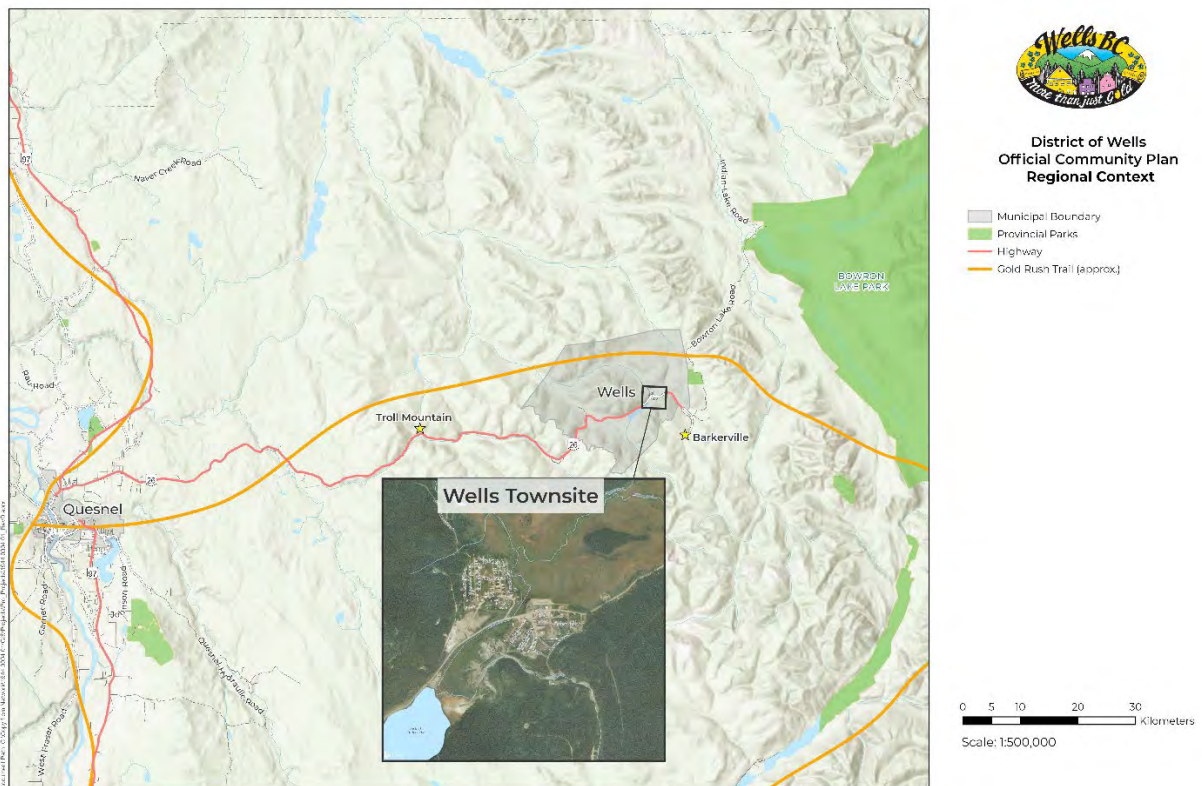


Figure 2: Regional Context Map

## 2.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT & MODERN HISTORY

The District of Wells is approximately 80 kilometres east of Quesnel, BC, on the Barkerville Highway (Highway 26). The District of Wells is an iconic community in the Cariboo region, located within Electoral Area C of the Cariboo Regional District. The District of Wells is situated in the Cariboo mountains at an elevation of 1,200 metres at the Willow River and Williams Creek confluence. The Wells Townsite area is centred on a gravel knoll overlooking Jack of Clubs Lake, surrounded by forested hills and a scenic wetland and meadow area.<sup>1</sup>

The District of Wells is a small community with a permanent population of approximately 218 people. The District of Wells is known as a historic gold mining town and is the gateway to two major tourist attractions: Barkerville Historic Town & Park, Troll Resort and the Bowron Lakes provincial park canoe circuit. The District of Wells is known for its strong arts community (14% of residents in the District of Wells are employed by arts, culture, or recreation, compared to 4% Province wide) as Wells' is home to Island Mountain Arts, a well-known gallery, which holds, workshops and festivals among other events.

Gold mining has continued to be a part of the District of Wells, with placer miners consistently living and working in the District of Wells. In 2015 exploration began for the proposed a new gold mine which has the potential to start a new chapter in the community's mining history. The project presents both opportunities and challenges for the local and regional community and is currently going through the Environmental Assessment Process. All approvals for the gold mine are the responsibility of the provincial government and outside of the jurisdiction of the District of Wells.



<sup>1</sup> District of Wells Official Community Plan. 1998.

## 2.3 INDIGENOUS TERRITORY

The District of Wells is located in the shared ancestral territories of the Dakelh (Carrier) and Secwepemctsin (Secwépemc or Shuswap) speaking Peoples. Several nations have history and territory in the area, including the Lhatko Dene Nation, Nazko First Nation, Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation, Ulkatcho Indian Band, ?Esdilagh First Nation, Xatšúll First Nation, Simpcw First Nation, and Lheidli T'enneh First Nation. Evidence of early indigenous settlement in the region dates back over 10,000 years.

The area around Wells up to the Barkerville Valley was an important place for gathering medicinal plants, blueberries and soap berries. For years, the history and stories of indigenous peoples was largely absent from the area including at the Barkerville Historic site. In recent years, new efforts have been made toward reconciliation with local First Nations, and these stories are slowly becoming more present. However, the District recognizes that there is still a lot of work to do to acknowledge injustices that occurred in the past and that are still occurring to this day.



Figure 3: Wild Blueberries

## 2.4 DEMOGRAPHICS

### 2.4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS & POPULATION:

The District of Wells population has been declining since 2011: The District of Wells population declined by 28 people (11.4%) from 2011 to 2016 and remained steady between 2016 to 2021; at the same time, the CRD population was constant, and the provincial population increased by 5.6% (Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021)<sup>2</sup>.

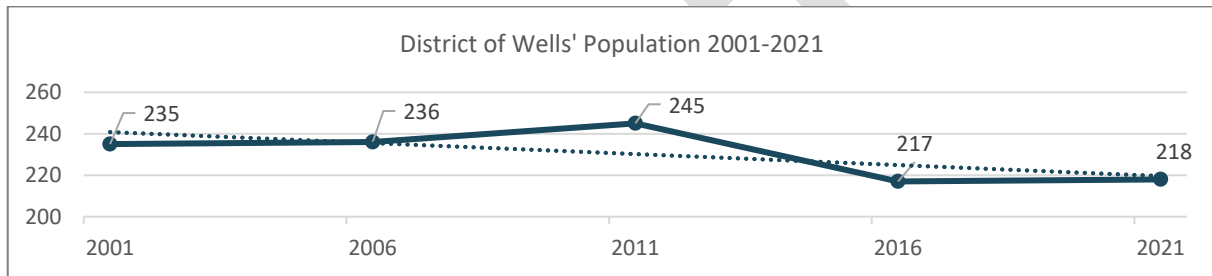


Figure 4: Population growth (2001-2021)

### 2.4.2 AGE

The District of Wells has an ageing population: Similar to provincial trends, the District hosts an ageing population. The District of Wells also has slightly fewer children under 14 in comparison to the regional and provincial trends. The District of Wells median age of 48.8 years is older than the regional (47.4) and provincial averages (43).

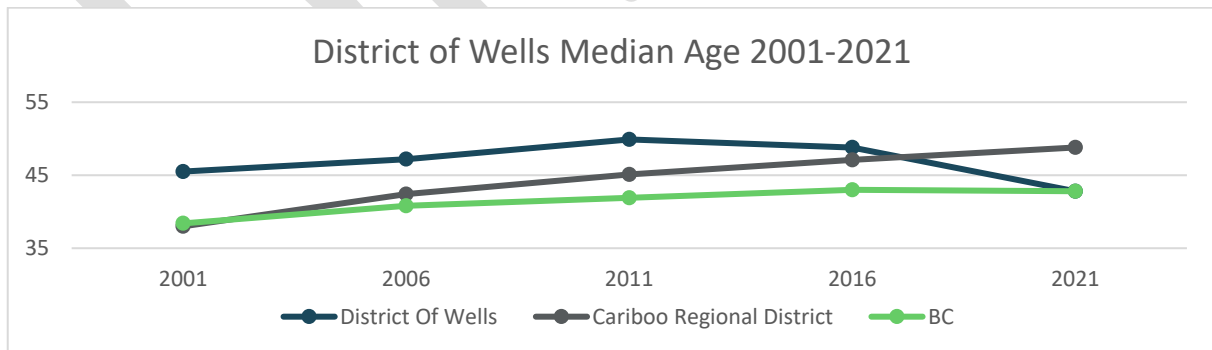


Figure 5: Changes in the District's age structure (2001-2021)

<sup>2</sup> Due to the different methods of Census data collection and rounding, total counts and percentages for data included in this document may not always be consistent.

**Table 1: The District's age distribution compared to the region and Province.**

AGE DISTRIBUTION	DISTRICT OF WELLS	CARIBOO RD	BC
0 to 14 years	15.9%	15.2%	14.3%
15 to 64 years	68.2%	60.3%	65.3%
65 years and over	18.2%	24.5%	20.3%
85 years and over	0%	2%	2.4%
Median Age	42.8	48.8	42.8

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2021

### 2.4.3 INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

The District of Wells has a small population who identify as Indigenous: Based on 2022 estimates projected from 2016 census data<sup>3</sup>, approximately 8% of Well's population identifies as Indigenous. This is slightly more than the 6% of the population of British Columbia that identifies as Indigenous.

**Table 2: Indigenous population.**

ABORIGINAL IDENTITY (2022 ESTIMATES)	DISTRICT OF WELLS		BRITISH COLUMBIA	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Population in Private Households by Aboriginal Identity</b>	<b>222</b>		<b>5,115,162</b>	
Indigenous identity	18	8%	328,397	6%
Non-Indigenous identity	204	92%	4,289,655	94%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2022 estimates via Sitewise

## Did you know?

Evidence of early Indigenous settlement in the region dates back over 10,000 years. Barkerville Historic Town and Park is located on the shared ancestral territories of the Dakelh (Carrier) and Secwepemctsin (Secwépemc or Shuswap) speaking Peoples. Several other nations have history and territory in the area, including the Lhatko Dene Nation, Nazko First Nation, Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation, Ulkatcho Indian Band, ?Esdilagh First Nation, Xat'sull First Nation, Simpcw First Nation, and Lheidli T'enneh First Nation.

<sup>3</sup> 2021 Census data for Aboriginal Identity was unavailable at the time of writing.

## 2.4.4 EDUCATION

**About half of Well's population has a post-secondary education:** Based on 2021 census data, 20% of the population of the District of Wells does not have a certificate, diploma, or degree; 23% have a secondary school diploma or equivalent certificate; and 57% have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree. Of the population with post-secondary education, 28% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Compared to British Columbia, there are more residents in the District of Wells with no education and slightly fewer residents with post-secondary education.

**Table 3: Level of education.**

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2021)	DISTRICT OF WELLS		BRITISH COLUMBIA	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Population 25 to 64 years of age by Educational Attainment</b>	128		2,825,296	
No certificate, diploma, or degree	25	20%	217,966	4 Pts
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	29	23%	239,970	8 <sub>2</sub> Pts
Postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree	74	57%	1,878,066	2 <sub>2</sub> Pts
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	10	8%	239,970	5 Pts
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	20	16%	612,791	88 Pts
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	8	6%	80,968	9 Pts
University certificate, diploma, or degree at bachelor level or above	36	28%	944,337	99 Pts
Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2016 via Sitewise				

## 2.5 ECONOMY

The economy in the District of Wells is deeply tied to arts and tourism. At present, mining is a secondary but prominent industry. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, norms around remote work have shifted, and more people now have greater choice in where they can live and work. The relative affordability of housing in Wells may make it an attractive location for remote workers and could be an additional mechanism for attracting new residents to the community. This section details Well's current economic status

### 2.5.1 PRIMARY SECTORS

The primary employment sectors in the District of Wells include Sales and Service, Education, Government and Religion, Management and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation. **Wells' proportion of jobs in the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector account for 14% of the labour force** in the District of Wells, significantly more than the surrounding Cariboo Region (2%) and across the Province (4%).

**Table 4: Labour force demographics.**

LABOUR FORCE	DISTRICT OF WELLS	CARIBOO REGIONAL DISTRICT	BRITISH COLUMBIA
Sales and Services	20%	23%	24%
Education, Government, and Religion	17%	6%	11%
Management	16%	6%	11%
<b>Arts, entertainment, and recreation</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Trades	11%	32%	14%
Sciences	8%	5%	7%
Health Occupations	8%	8%	7%
Sciences	8%	5%	7%
Primary Industry	6%	5%	2%
Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2021 via Sitewise			

## 2.5.2 EMPLOYMENT RATES

**The District of Wells' unemployment rates are high and fluctuate more than the Cariboo Region and Province:** In 2016, the District of Wells' unemployment rate was 15%, compared to 11% in the Cariboo Region and 7% in the Province, according to Census data collected by Statistics Canada. Unemployment rates in the Cariboo Region and the Province stayed relatively constant between 2016 to 2021, while in the District of Wells, unemployment rates fluctuated from 15% (2016) to 38% (2021), as shown below (Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2006, 2011, 2016).

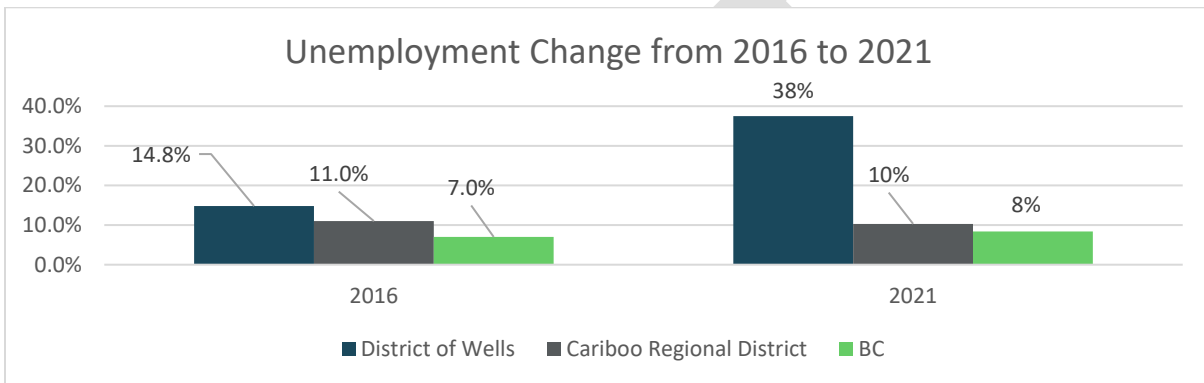


Figure 6: Unemployment rates 2016-2021

## 2.5.3 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**Households in The District of Wells have a lower median income than the Cariboo Region and Province:** In 2021, the District of Wells households earned a median income of \$36,667, compared to \$72,000 in the Cariboo Region and \$85,000 in the Province (Source: Statistics Canada Census Program, Census Profiles 2011, 2016, 2021, District of Wells 2021 Income data provided by Sitewise).

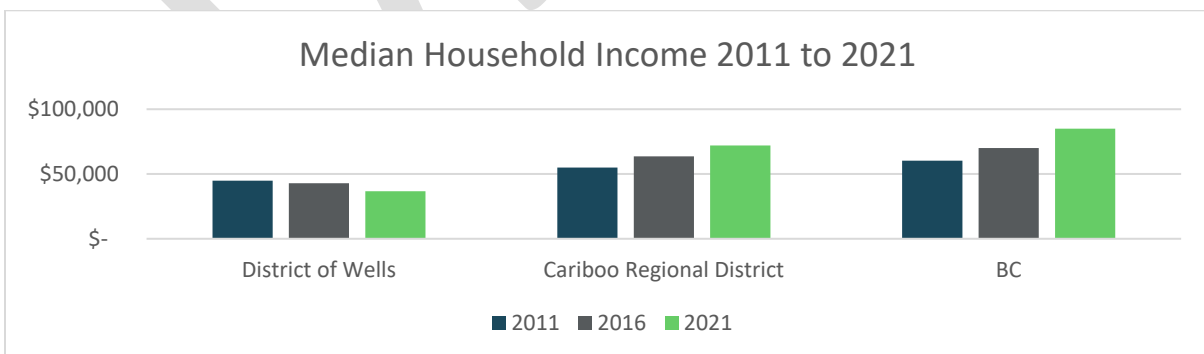


Figure 7: Changes in household income levels (2011-2021)



## 2.5.4 TOURISM

Many District of Wells residents are employed in arts and culture professions; many are either directly or indirectly tied to the local tourism industry. Barkerville, Bowron Lakes, trail systems, art events and festivals, and other attractions bring visitors to the area who contribute to the economy and support local business.

### i. Visitor Volumes

Much of Wells' economy is highly dependent on tourism. Local businesses are highly reliant on visitors coming to town to participate in the community's festivals, or to visit other local attractions. However, visitor volumes have been difficult to gauge in recent years for a variety of factors. Prior to 2015, the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) was a reliable source of visitor information, however, the VIC recently stopped selling tickets for the Barkerville Historic Town, which has had a noticeable effect on the number of people stopping at the centre. Attractions like the Barkerville Historic Town and Bowron Lakes Provincial Park do have visitor statistic programs, so it is possible to get a sense of visitor volumes are changing in the community. By analyzing this data in aggregate, a downward trend in visitor volumes can be observed in recent years.

Possible contributors to the decline in visitor volumes include a broader decline in tourism in 2015 resulting from a small recession and fires that closed Highway 97 and restricted visitor movements in 2017. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in another setback for the tourism industry globally including Wells. The timing of these larger scale events has created a difficult situation for the local tourism industry, and there is an opportunity for the community to communicate to travelers that Wells is open and ready to welcome them back.

## Did you know?

The District of Well's economy is deeply tied to arts and culture. As many as 14% of jobs in the District of Wells are in arts, entertainment, and recreation. That is much more than in the Province where only 4% of jobs are in this sector. The District of Wells' prominent arts community is represented by organizations such as the Sunset Theatre and Island Mountain Arts, the latter of which has been operating in the district of Wells since 1977.

## ii. Barkerville Historic Town and Park

The Barkerville Historic Town and Park is also a significant draw, seeing an average of 60,000 visitors per year. Barkerville does see significant visitor volumes each year. As with Bowron Lakes, Barkerville is a large draw for people coming to the area. Those on their way to Barkerville may not necessarily be stopping in at the visitor centre to be counted. The economic impact of Barkerville has long been an important contributor and attraction for the District of Wells.



Figure 8 Barkeville Historic Town and Park  
[[www.barkerville.ca](http://www.barkerville.ca)]

### iii. Bowron Lakes Provincial Park

Bowron Lakes Provincial Park is famous for its week-long canoe circuit. The park attracts visitors from all over the world, and has become an important part of the tourism landscape for the District of Wells. Historically, The park received a relatively stable number of visitors per year. Bowron Lakes also has a reservation system that limits the number of people who can travel the canoe circuit at any given time. However, visitor counts for the park show a decline in visitation after 2015 similar to other attractions in the area.



Figure 9: Bowron lakes canoe and kayak circuit

## 2.5.5 WELLS-BARKERVILLE COMMUNITY FOREST

The Wells-Barkerville Community Forest was approved and granted to the Wells-Barkerville Community Forest Corporation in 2014 by the Province of BC under the *Forests & Range Practices Act* (FRPA). The forest covers approximately 4,300 hectares to the north of the town of Wells.

The Wells-Barkerville Community Forest Ltd (WBCF) is governed by a Board comprised of seven Directors. It is a corporation that has a single shareholder, which is the District of Wells. The WBCF is committed to managing the forest in a sustainable way while also benefiting the local community.

Being right on the edge of town, the WBCF contains some of the area's recreation trails, forms part of the town's viewscape, is a popular non-timber forest product harvesting area, and contains one local home. The WBCFC is committed to being open, providing information to the community, and listening to public input.

As a community forest defined by the *Forest & Range Practices Act*, WBCF is required to develop a current forest stewardship plan that outlines its activities and plan for harvest. The primary driver for a community forest in this sense is to generate local economic benefit from forestry activity (harvesting) from the community forest area. Plans must be approved and reviewed regularly with the Ministry of Forests.

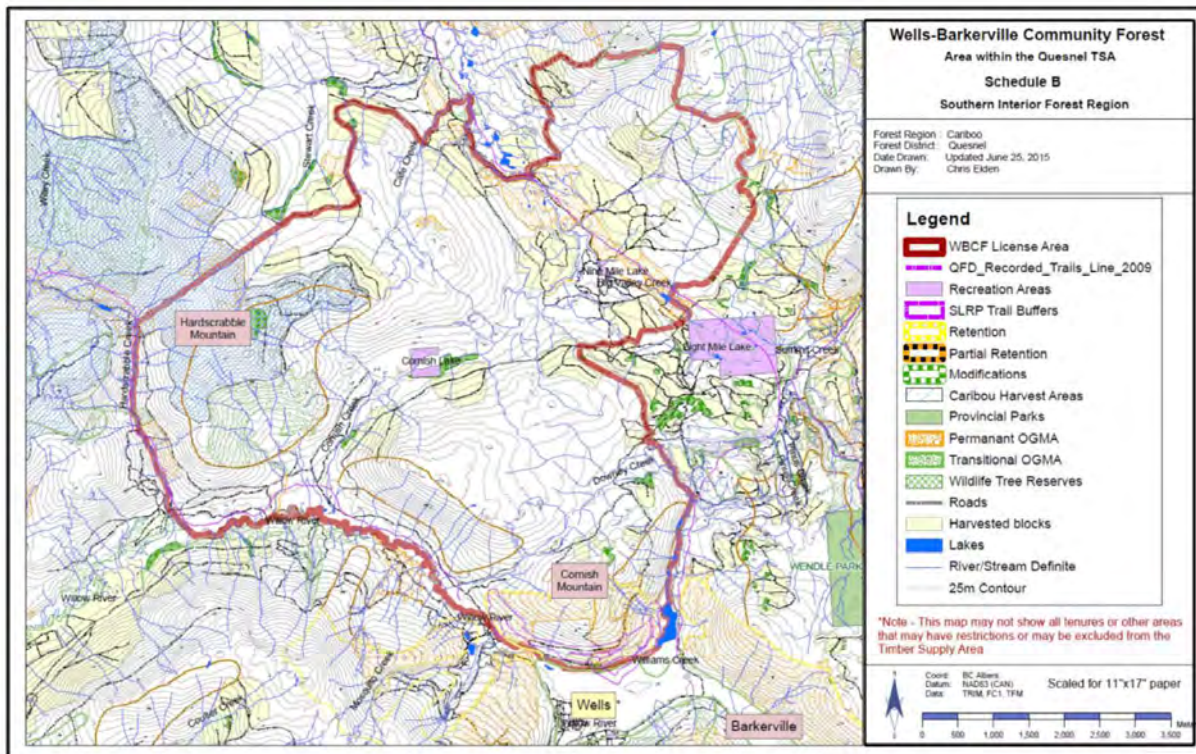


Figure 10 Wells-Barkerville Community Forest Area

## **2.6 INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES**

### **2.6.1 WATER & SEWER**

Water and sewer servicing within the District of Wells includes a water treatment and distribution system and a sanitary sewer collection and treatment system.

The water system services the community from Burnett Avenue and Dawson Street in the northwest to Lowhee Road in the southeast. A groundwater well and water treatment plant are located at Ski Hill road and Solibakke Drive. Treated water is distributed directly into the distribution system from the water treatment plant, where both community services and a storage reservoir are connected. The storage reservoir is located on the hill to the community's west, generally in line with Baker Street. The water system has only one pressure zone. The new water tower is planned to be built in the area of the existing water tower.

The sanitary sewer system is comprised of a gravity main collection system servicing the community generally from Burnett Avenue and Dawson Street in the northwest to Lowhee Road in the southeast, similar to the water system. The Gravity main drain towards a sanitary lift station located at Blair Avenue and Dawson Street, where sewage is pumped up Hard Scrabble Road to the wastewater treatment lagoon. The single-cell lagoon is aerated and continuously discharges by gravity to the Willow River. A weir structure is used to control the level of the lagoon, and flow is monitored across a v-notch weir. The District of Wells is currently experiencing issues with the flow monitoring system. The aeration system also experiences challenges, where the equipment frequently stops running and must be restarted by operations staff.

### **2.6.2 ROADS AND DRAINAGE**

The road network is comprised of both paved and gravel roads, with most roads being gravel.

Drainage is mainly conveyed overland, and there are a few catch basins that outlet to the ditch, but no other underground storm drainage system. Drainage is managed by ditches and culverts in some areas of the community, while other areas have no defined drainage system. Some catch basins exist that outlet to the ground.

### **2.6.3 ELECTRICITY**

Single-phase overhead power runs down Highway 26 from Quesnel to service the community. The power service is not looped such that power is supplied only from one direction. An interruption to this power service line means a power outage in the District of Wells. In the future, the District of Wells' electrical infrastructure could be expanded as the proposed mining project plans to expand the availability of three phase power to its own operations. This expansion could include the addition of three phase power to the town via a 25kv line and a dedicated three phase 69kv line for the mine. Without these expansions, there is limited electrical capacity remaining to service new development. Developments at nearby tourism draws like Barkerville Historic Town, Bowron Lakes and Troll Resort are also limited by the electrical capacity of the existing BC Hydro infrastructure.

### **2.6.4 COMMUNICATIONS / INTERNET**

High-speed internet was announced for the District of Wells in 2018 to be provided by Telus/ABC Communications. The broadband connections are designed to achieve download speeds of 50 Mbps when feasible. There is potential to expand a fibre optic line that runs to Barkerville Historic Town and Park to the District of Wells. A new cell tower was also brought into service in 2021 which provides coverage for cell phones in the community. This upgrade offers a new method of communication to residents and is also a welcome amenity for visitors to the community.

## 2.7 GROWTH PROJECTIONS & FUTURE LAND NEEDS

Future population growth in the District of Wells will be influenced by several factors, including the continued ageing of the population, the availability of housing and essential services, including education and healthcare, and the success of proposed industrial initiatives such as the proposed mining project. The District also encompasses a large land area that could host any number of opportunities.

Potential projects and developments that could affect the future of the District of Wells include:

- Proposed and potential mining projects
- Large forestry projects
- Potential ski resort or lodge (current and future expansions of Troll Resort)
- Further development and increased popularity of the Purden Connector Road
- Destination trails and recreation projects

Any one of these opportunities or a combination of these outcomes could significantly influence the number of full-time or seasonal residents and potential stress on infrastructure such as water, sewer, or roads in the District of Wells.

### 2.7.1 GROWTH SCENARIOS

Wells has two main components of its local economy that have the potential to influence growth and land needs in the community. First, the Wells was founded to support local mining industry, which is still reflected in the towns architecture to this day. Since its main mining employers wound down operations several years ago, the local arts, culture and recreation industries have come to define the community. At present there is the potential that a new mining project may influence future development and growth in the District of Wells. The proposed mining project is projected to add 460 direct jobs, including approximately 60 professional and administrative jobs that are most likely to be based in the community. Of all the potential future developments, this one would likely have the biggest year-round impact on population. However, seasonal industries like Barkerville and Troll Resort also bring in employees at different times of year and are anticipated to have growing and varied housing requirements. The growth scenarios presented here are designed to illustrate the potential scale of influence of the proposed mining project for planning purposes.

Two growth scenarios have been developed to illustrate potential development in Wells. Each scenario provides detail on population growth, need for housing, and land needs. Scenario 1 illustrates a future where Wells continues on its current path with no major changes to its current context or economy. The second scenario focuses on the potential implications of new growth industries like mining and seasonal culture and recreation developments. Mining and seasonal operations will have different implications for growth,

but as both will happen concurrently, they have both been combined into one growth scenario. The majority of mine employees will live work in camps and will likely have little interactions with the community and impact on housing supply.

Similarly, summer operations at Barkerville and other high season activities draw seasonal employees to the community from May to October. During the winter months, operations at Troll resort also draw in employees. In the These details have far reaching impacts on population growth in Wells.

The potential addition of new community members will have critical impacts will require upgrades to the existing power lines. Whether the current mining project is built or a similar project moves ahead down the road, the scale of impacts is likely to affect how the District plans for services in the community. To summarize, the scenarios are described below:

Scenario 1: Business as Usual	Scenario 2: Enhanced Growth
The District of Wells continues its current path of modest population growth.	A new mine is built, resulting in new full-time residents working professional and administrative jobs. Seasonal tourism operations also increase and expand operations.

### 2.7.1.A Impacts of added Employment

To model the potential population, employment, and growth impacts of the Enhanced Growth Scenario, it is important to factor in three types of employment.

- **Direct Jobs** - Employment at major employers such as a seasonal tourism business or mine<sup>4</sup>.
- **Indirect Jobs** – Contractor jobs for those who work with major employers. Many contractor jobs are specialized and do not translate to long-term residency.
- **Induced Jobs** - Jobs not associated with major employers, but that support population and activity growth<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://securereservercdn.net/104.238.68.196/f5q.857.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Cariboo-Gold-DPD-October-2020.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://pages.uoregon.edu/rgp/PPPM613/CommEconAnalysis.htm>



Table 5: Employment projections under an enhanced growth scenario.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS	SCENARIO 2: ENHANCED GROWTH
<b>Direct employment</b>	
<b>Wells Based Professional and Administrative Jobs at proposed Mine</b>	<b>62</b>
Projected Proportion of Export Jobs <i>(employees do not live in the District)</i>	80 – 89%
Projected Proportion of In town Jobs <i>(employees live in the District)</i>	10 – 20%
Export Jobs	170 - 191
In town jobs	21 - 42
<b>Indirect Employment</b>	
Contractors	50
<b>Induced Employment</b>	
Employment Multiplier <i>(total direct jobs per export job)</i>	0.32 – 0.37
Induced Jobs <i>(in town jobs * multiplier)</i>	7 - 16
<b>Total Projected In Town Jobs (Induced and Direct)</b>	<b>28 - 58</b>

The table above illustrates the scenario of export/in-town employment. In this scenario, 10% to 20% of employees live in the District of Wells. This scenario also illustrates indirect and induced job numbers. Indirect job numbers have been kept constant as contractor jobs tend to be specialized and task-specific and do not tend to translate into long-term residency. Induced demand for jobs as described above is a measure of all other jobs that may be expected in a community due to the presence of a new large industrial operator.

For the remainder of the growth scenario discussion, only the direct employment numbers will be used. While induced jobs are interesting to illustrate potential employment, how that translates to real community impacts is less certain.

### 2.7.1.B Household Assumptions

New employees who choose to live in the District of Wells will have a range of housing needs. Some new residents will move to the District of Wells with their families, while some will seek housing for themselves only.

Maintaining a good variety in the local housing stock is key to attracting families and workers to make their home in the District of Wells. Having an array of housing options and

choices also aids affordability for new and current residents. This is an important factor that has been highlighted in other communities such as Sparwood, BC in their 2019 Sparwood Livability Study<sup>6</sup>. As the primary source of full-time employment is likely to be related to mining, other small mining communities were chosen for comparison.

**Table 6: Household size comparison.**

HOUSEHOLD SIZE (OCCUPANTS)	DISTRICT OF WELLS	DISTRICT OF SPARWOOD	DISTRICT OF ELKFORD	DISTRICT OF LOGAN LAKE	AVERAGE
<b>One</b>	39%	30%	27%	29%	29%
<b>Two</b>	43%	37%	37%	48%	41%
<b>Three</b>	9%	14%	15%	11%	13%
<b>Four</b>	4%	14%	14%	8%	12%
<b>Five More</b>	4%	5%	7%	4%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	

It is valuable to look at the household composition in other mining communities to model a potential need for variety in housing choice. The table above illustrates the proportion of households of different sizes in the District of Wells, Sparwood, Elkford and Logan Lake. New residents moving to the District of Wells may come by themselves, or they may bring their families with them. Single versus multiple-occupant households may have different preferences and needs, and this distinction will inform future potential residential land needs in the District. Other mining towns average about 29% single-occupant households and 71% multiple-occupant households (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Using the ratio of single versus multiple-occupant households, is it possible to model the potential population impacts for the two growth scenarios. The District could expect to accommodate 10 to 98 new residents by 2025, depending on the proportion of new mine employees that choose to live in town.

### 2.7.1.C Population Projections

The population projections illustrate how the assumptions from the different growth scenarios might affect population growth in the District of Wells should a new mine open and existing tourism operations expand their offerings in 2025. The population growth rate is designed to reflect current growth projections for the District of Wells from B.C. statistics. Although the District of Wells has exhibited a slight population decline over the last two census periods, long-term projections still forecast modest growth.

<sup>6</sup> <https://sparwood.civicweb.net/document/87409>

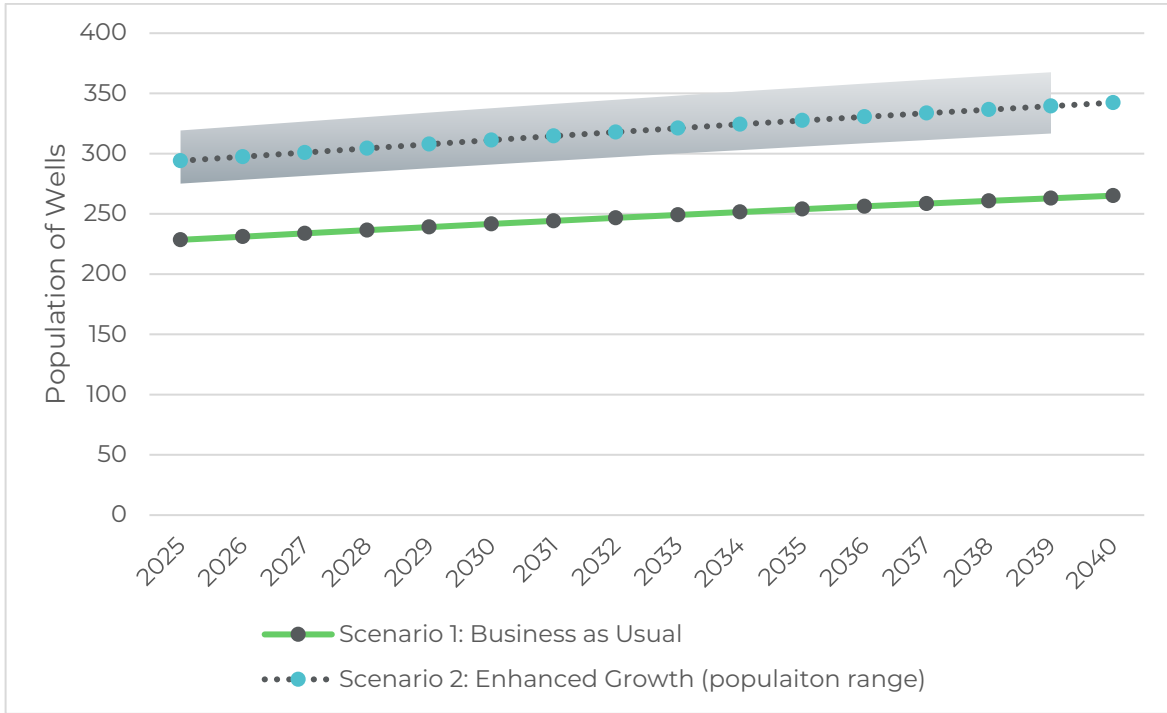


Figure 11: Scenario based population projections (2025-2040)

Table 7: Scenario based population projections (2015-2040)

YEAR	SCENARIO 1: BUSINESS AS USUAL	SCENARIO 2: ENHANCED GROWTH
-	-	<b>Proportion of new employees living in The District of Wells (10 – 20%)</b>
2015	228	228
2016	227	227
2017	228	228
2018	230	230
2019	231	231
2020	231	231
2021	218	218
2022	221	221
2023	223	223
2024	226	226
2025	228	272 - 316
2026	231	275 - 320
2027	234	279 - 323
2028	236	282 - 327
2029	239	285 - 331
2030	242	288 - 334
2031	244	291 - 338
2032	247	294 - 342
2033	249	297 - 345
2034	252	300 - 349
2035	254	303 - 352
2036	256	306 - 355
2037	259	309 - 358
2038	261	312 - 362
2039	263	314 - 365
2040	265	317 - 368

### 2.7.1.D Households and Household Size

The average household size in the District of Wells is just under two persons (1.87)<sup>7</sup>, and there are approximately 124 households in the community. By 2040, it is estimated that between 22 and 81 additional homes will be required in the District of Wells to accommodate future growth. It is assumed that new residents to the District of Wells will have a household composition that reflects the provincial average (2.49 people per household) rather than the average for the District of Wells. Under Scenario 1: Business as usual, where no mine is opened, only 18 homes will be required. However, many more homes may be necessary in the enhanced growth scenario. The proportion of workers who live in town versus neighbouring communities will significantly impact the number of homes needed and the subsequent servicing needs (roads, sanitary, water, sewer).

**Table 8: Scenario based housing needs (2020-2040)**

YEAR	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE WELLS (2021)	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE B.C. (2021)	HOUSEHOLDS - SCENARIO 1: BUSINESS AS USUAL	HOUSEHOLDS - SCENARIO 2: NEW MINE OPENS
<b>2020 (Existing Homes)</b>	1.9	2.49	118	118
<b>2025</b>	1.9	2.49	120	145 - 170
<b>2030</b>	1.9	2.49	127	154 - 180
<b>2035</b>	1.9	2.49	134	162 - 190
<b>2040</b>	1.9	2.49	140	169 - 198
<b>Estimated New Homes Required 2040</b>			<b>22</b>	<b>52 - 81</b>

Assuming an enhanced growth scenario beginning in 2025, there would be significant and immediate need for housing in the District of Wells. Depending on how many people workers choose to live in town, 10% – 20%, the need for new housing could range from 52 to 81 additional homes. This is a much greater amount than the number of homes that would be required should Wells continue to grow at its current pace.

<sup>7</sup> Environics 2023

New housing should be a mix of multi-family units and single-family units. To meet the housing needs in the District of Wells, in an enhanced growth scenario, it is estimated that between 15 and 23 multi-family units and 37 to 58 single-family units would be required.




**Table 9: Projected housing needs by type of dwelling (2040).**

PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS BY UNIT TYPE	PROPORTIONAL DEMAND FOR UNIT TYPES	HOUSEHOLDS - SCENARIO 1: BUSINESS AS USUAL	HOUSEHOLDS - SCENARIO 2: NEW MINE OPENS
<b>Estimated New Homes Required 2040</b>	-	22	52 - 81
<b>Multi-Family Units</b>	29%	6	15 - 23
<b>Single-Family Units</b>	71%	16	37 - 58

### 2.7.1.E Housing Density

Various housing forms have different space requirements. In the District of Wells, current lot sizes and housing types are spaced at approximately four units per acre. The table below illustrates neighbourhoods with existing and slightly higher densities. Conversations about neighbourhood density must be informed by the availability of land, the community's desires, and the municipality's ability to build and maintain infrastructure associated with new neighbourhoods (roads, water, sewer, etc.). Lower density development is expensive to service and maintain, which can result in increased property taxes for residents. The existing OCP envisions most new growth areas in the District of Wells as multi-family developments that are scaled to fit the context. For this exercise, multi-unit residential has been interpreted to mean duplex housing that can be scaled to fit within most existing residential areas.

**Table 10: Example housing types and densities.**

	THE DISTRICT OF WELLS (PRESENT)	TYPICAL SUBURB	MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL (DUPLEX)
Units per Acre	4.1	5	10
Units per Hectare	10.1	12.4	24.7
Context			
Description	Present day lot sizes and configuration.	Comparable lot sizes to present day District of Wells. All lots have a house on them.	Duplex housing <sup>8</sup> on slightly larger lots.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cityofeastlansing.com/DocumentCenter/View/1550/Visualizing-Density---Lincoln-Institute-of-Land-Policy-PDF>

### 2.7.1.F Projected Land Needs

To estimate the future land needs for the District of Wells based on the two growth scenarios, we can use the density examples shown above and apply them to the projected demand for new households. The land requirements are summarized below.

**Table 11: Projected residential land needs.**

RESIDENTIAL LAND REQUIREMENTS FOR FUTURE GROWTH 2040	REQUIRED HOUSING UNITS	UNITS PER ACRE	UNITS PER HECTARE	REQUIRED RESIDENTIAL LAND AREA (ACRES)	REQUIRED RESIDENTIAL LAND AREA (HECTARES)
<b>Scenario 1: Business as Usual</b>	22				
Continued District of Wells Development Pattern	22	4.1	10.1	5.4	2.2
<b>Total</b>				<b>5.4</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>Scenario 2: Enhanced Growth</b>	52 - 81				
Multi-Family Units	15 - 23	10.0	24.7	1.5 - 2.3	0.6 - 0.9
Single-Family Units	37 - 58	5.0	12.4	7.4 - 11.5	3.0 - 4.7
<b>Total</b>				<b>8.9 - 13.9</b>	<b>3.6 - 5.6</b>

Another way to illustrate potential land needs is to imagine housing demand in a uniform way. The table below illustrates housing demand for each scenario if it were to proceed as either all duplex or all multifamily townhouse development.

**Table 12: Projected land needs by housing type.**

	Population Growth to 2040	Household Size	Housing Need (units)	Land Needs		
				Duplex (10 UPA)		Townhouse (19 UPA) - Fourplex
<b>Scenario 1: Business as Usual</b>	42	1.9	22	2.2	OR	1.2
<b>Scenario 2: Enhanced Growth</b>	94	1.9	52 - 81	5.2 - 8.1	OR	2.7 - 4.3



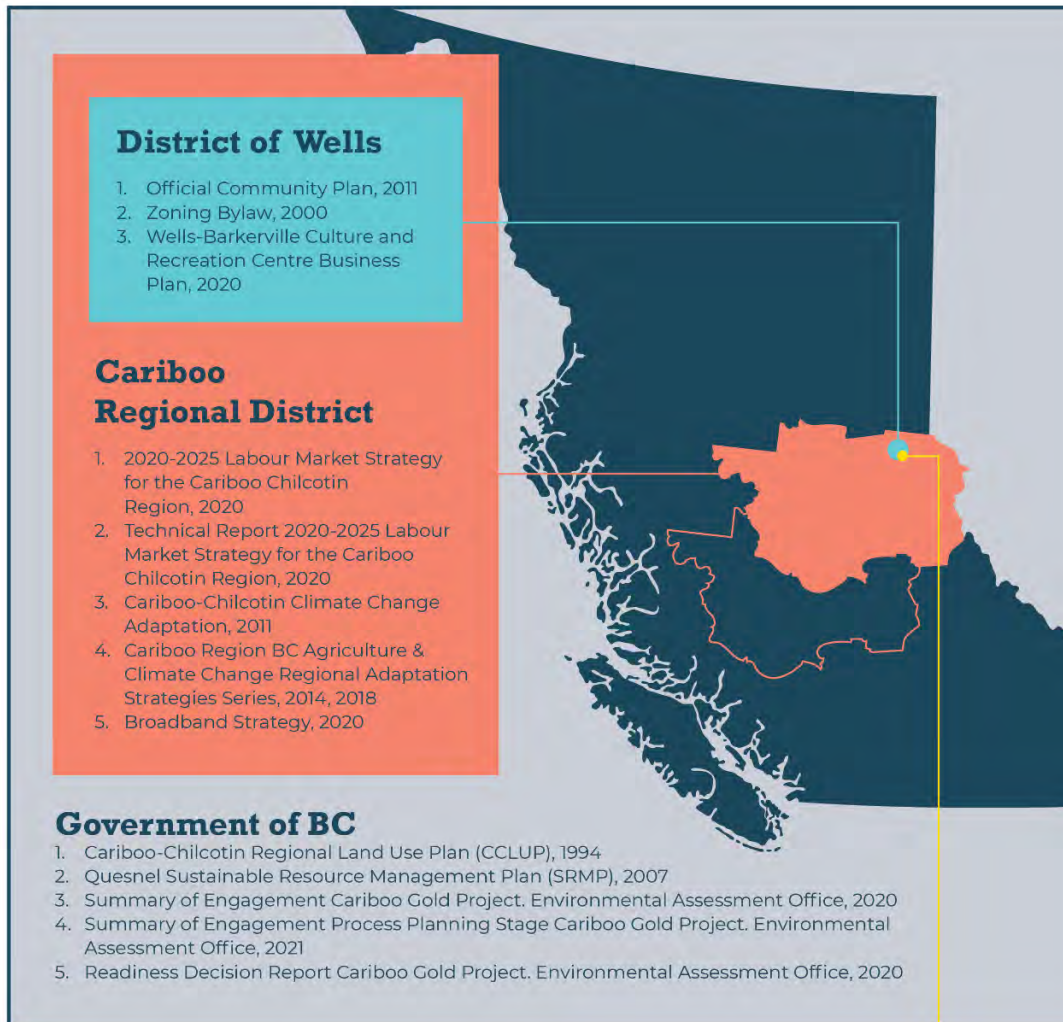
As the table illustrates, higher density housing forms require less land area overall. Housing demand is modest even at the high end of the projections, which would translate to a relatively minor demand for new residential land.

Depending on the density of new development, the proportion of potential new workers that move to the District of Wells, and performance of seasonal industries, there could be demand for between 3.6 and 5.6 hectares of new residential lands. The current OCP designates several undeveloped areas for both future multi-family residential and future rural residential development.

Under the current growth scenarios, there appears to be sufficient land to accommodate the new growth under current densities. However, there may be demand for a mixture of housing types in the District of Wells, including rural residential, multi-unit, and single-unit residential development. Higher demand for rural residential lots could pose issues for the District in the future in terms of servicing costs and maintenance and land supply.

## 2.8 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS & STUDIES

The development of this OCP has involved reviewing and considering recommendations and findings identified in the following relevant planning documents:



### Academic Publication and Studies

1. Wells Corridor Analysis. University of Northern British Columbia School of Environmental Planning, 2017
2. Wells-Barkerville Community Forest Mapping Project. University of Northern British Columbia. Christopher Morgan and Pamela Wright, 2020
3. Climate Summary Cariboo. Pacific Impacts Climate Consortium. University of Victoria, 2013

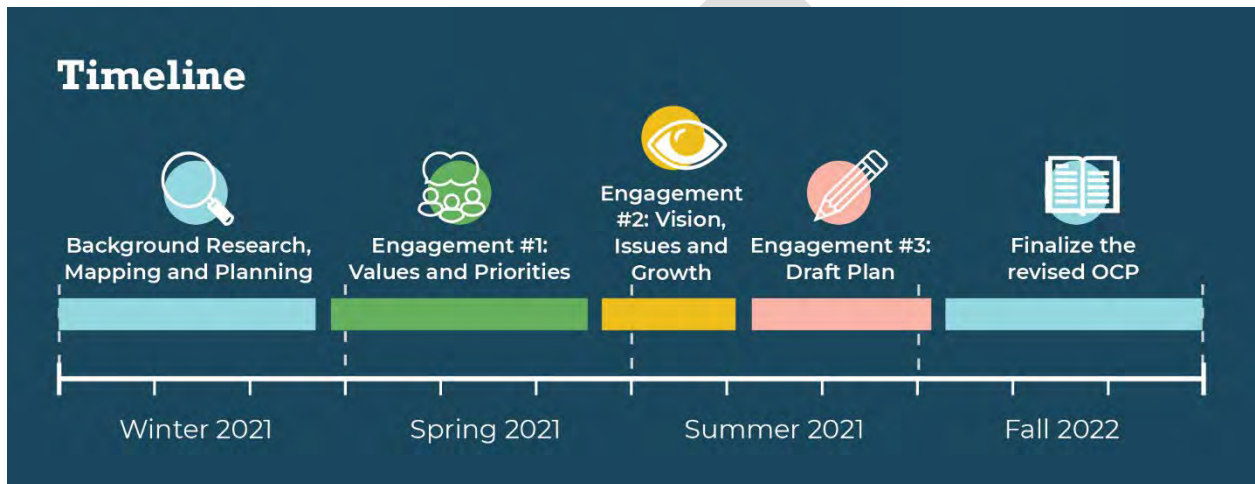
### Proposed Mining Project

1. NI 43-101 Technical Report – Feasibility Study for the Cariboo Gold Project, 2022
2. Supplemental Information for Cariboo Gold Project Description. Barkerville Gold Mines, 2020
3. Cariboo Gold Project Detailed Project Description. Barkerville Gold Mines Ltd., 2020
4. Cariboo Gold Project Application for Environmental Assessment Certificate. Barkerville Gold Mines Ltd., 2021

## 3.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS

In January 2021, the District of Wells began a process to revise their 2010 Official Community Plan (OCP). The Planning process took place in a series of five phases:

1. Background Research, Mapping & Planning
2. Engagement #1: Values and Priorities
3. Engagement #2: Vision, Issues and Growth
4. Engagement #3: Draft Plan
5. Finalize of revised OCP



**Figure 12: Official Community Plan development timeline**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of the public engagement activities were conducted online. Provincial Health Orders placed limits on gatherings sporadically throughout the process, and periodic outbreaks in the community led to decreased community comfort with in-person activities. However, the project team was able to leverage advancements in video conferencing technology and put a considerable level of effort into engaging the community through the project website and through social media throughout the process. In addition, efforts were made to have physically distanced engagement materials present in the community through a series of sounding boards, mailouts and a variety of digital activities and resources.

### 3.1.1 PHASE 1 - BACKGROUND RESEARCH

To set the stage for the development of the OCP, background research was conducted on the history of the District of Wells, the current context of the community, and ideas for the future. This information was summarized in the **District of Wells: Past, Present & Future Official Community Plan Background Report** that was shared with the community.

The report includes an analysis of data for the 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021 Census periods, which included a comparison of the District of Wells statistics to the Cariboo Regional District and B.C.

The report is organized into the following sections:

- **Wells Past:** A summary of the District of Wells Indigenous and modern history.
- **Wells Present:** A community profile including demographic information and maps identifying various existing conditions in the District of Wells.
- **Wells Future:** Population projections for growth scenarios and a summary of draft principles for the revised OCP.

### 3.1.2 PHASE 2 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT #1

Community engagement is an essential part of revising an OCP. For this work, the consulting team worked with the District of Wells Community Vision & Planning Select Committee to develop an engagement strategy that would reach as many residents and stakeholders as possible. The Committee was established in 2020 with the goal of supporting the District in making all feasible efforts to solicit community members for their future vision and input in the planning of the Wells Community.



The engagement process was designed to achieve the following specific outcomes:

- Share information with the public, elected officials, and stakeholders about the scope, purpose, and value of an OCP and how it differs from the mine review process.
- Provide a neutral forum for residents to express their desires and “dreams” for the future of the District of Wells from now to 2040.
- Gain an understanding of the variety of issues and opportunities in the District of Wells.
- Ensure that the OCP process is separate and distinguished from Environmental.
- Reach residents who are “harder to reach” or less likely to engage.

The engagement process began during COVID-19. Therefore Engagement #1 and #2 were limited to online and telephone-based engagement. **Engagement #1: Values & Priorities** consisted of the following activities:

- Project Website
- Project Team tour of public infrastructure in the District of Wells and Cariboo Gold Project site
- Community survey (110 responses)
- Information packages sent to every home in the District of Wells
- Sounding Boards in the Jack O' Clubs
- Photo Contest
- Mapping exercise with the District of Wells School Students
- 2 Wells Vision & Planning Select Committee Meetings

Findings from the first round of engagement are summarized in the **What We Heard Report: Official Community Plan Engagement Summary** that was shared with the community.

### 3.1.3 PHASE 3 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT #2:

**Phase 3 - Engagement #2: Vision, Issues and Growth** included a Kitchen Table Update where residents could join the consulting team on Zoom. The session was planned with input from the Wells Vision and Planning Select Committee. Forty-six residents joined the Zoom meeting. The consulting team shared key findings from Engagement #1 and the OCP Background Report, including information population projections and potential growth opportunities. Using Zoom's poll feature, residents provided feedback on the draft principles for the OCP.

### 3.1.4 PHASE 4: DRAFTING THE PLAN

**Engagement #3: Drafting the Plan** occurred in summer and fall 2021. Throughout the summer, the project team drafted the OCP and, in the Fall, began reaching out to specific stakeholders to fill gaps in information. Throughout this period, updates were shared via social media to remind residents that the process was ongoing and to share interesting facts uncovered through the planning process. The draft plan was shared with the public on October 12, 2021. Changes to mayor and council shortly after the draft OCP's release introduced a delay to the process. However, feedback gathered from the draft was incorporated and a new draft created for referrals in September 2022. The community feedback on the draft OCP was collected between October 12, 2021, and October 31<sup>st</sup>. A total twenty-two community members submitted feedback which informed the continued development of the draft OCP. Overall, the respondents were most concerned with potential mining and other heavy industrial operations, tourism and culture, housing, retaining Wells' historic character, and park and trail development.

### 3.1.5 PHASE 5: FINALIZING THE PLAN

The planning process concluded with the incorporation of feedback from the community, staff and Council. The plan was then referred to several other stakeholders, First Nations and government agencies as per provincial legislation. A final draft was compiled based on feedback received from the referral, and the Official Community Plan was adopted by Council.

## 4.0 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The OCP sets out the vision for how land will be used in the District of Wells in the years ahead. This is achieved through land use designations that are defined and identified in the OCP. Schedule A and Schedule B illustrate the types of land uses that the OCP supports for future development. The categories of land use include:

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Residential-Commercial (Mixed use)
- Institutional
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Urban Parks
- Rural & Outdoor Recreation
- Commercial Recreation

This section includes a description of each land use, as well as Objectives and Policies for each category of land use.

### 4.1.1 GENERAL LAND USE OBJECTIVES

General land use policies are designed to apply to all lands in the District regardless of its land use designation. These policies provide a framework for achieving community goals in all areas of the District. It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Retain and enhance the historical and eclectic character of the District of Wells.
- .2 Retain and enhance development around Pooley Street and the Barkerville Highway as core commercial areas that allow for a mix of commercial, residential, retail, service, and tourism-oriented uses.
- .3 Provide flexibility for unique development proposals while maintaining clarity on the core values and vision for future development.
- .4 Provide sufficient land to meet anticipated needs and demands for residential development.
- .5 Provide sufficient land for industrial use.
- .6 Support land development and public investments in transportation infrastructure that allows the District of Wells to continue to be walkable, accessible, and safe for pedestrians of all abilities in the context of a growing community.
- .7 Accommodate a mix of housing types and densities within all residential areas.

## 4.2 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Low Density Residential areas are those that primarily consist of single-family homes, duplexes, suites, or carriage homes in the District of Wells. The majority of housing in the District of Wells is currently low density in nature, and residents have communicated a desire to preserve this housing form. However, Low Density residential areas will permit a variety of other housing forms, such as duplexes, secondary suites, carriage houses, and tiny homes (as permitted by the BC Building Code). Many existing Low Density residential areas are adjacent to existing neighbourhoods and are within the Wells Townsite area. New Low Density residential development will be developed in a similar style and scale to existing residential development in the District of Wells.

### 4.2.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Support a range of housing types to accommodate the needs of current and future residents.
- .2 Preserve the District of Wells' compact form for increased community cohesion and efficient infrastructure investments and maintenance.

### 4.2.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of low-density residential neighbourhoods and subdivisions within areas designated Low Density Residential on Schedule A.
- .2 Permit the following housing forms in Low Density Residential areas:
  - a. Single detached homes
  - b. Secondary suites within single detached homes; and
  - c. Duplex homes.
- .3 Permit the development of detached suites, and carriage homes (suites above detached garages) where lot sizes are appropriate and sufficient parking is provided to meet the needs of the uses on the property.
- .4 Permit tri-plexes and fourplexes in Low Density Residential Areas where lot sizes are appropriate, the proposed building is similar in height and scale to the surrounding homes, and sufficient parking is provided to meet the needs of the uses on the property.
- .5 Permit the establishment of daycares, both within homes and as stand-alone uses;
- .6 Encourage new trees to be planted where trees must be removed to accommodate site development.
- .7 Size newly created lots within Low Density Residential areas to accommodate a variety of building typologies to encourage new housing development in a



variety of housing forms. New subdivisions in Low Density areas should achieve an overall density of between 5 to 8 units per acre. The District will support alternative subdivision designs that incorporate the principles of universal design with the purpose to increase active living and social interaction. Example considerations include but are not limited to:

- a. Networks of sidewalks and/or trails;
  - b. Parks and spaces for play; and
  - c. Clustered housing (i.e., courtyard housing, co-housing, cottage housing, etc.) with shared parking areas.
- .8 Ensure that development in Low Density Residential areas provide adequate space for parking to avoid the need for residents parking on the street.
  - .9 Allow home based businesses.
  - .10 Allow for a variety of tourism accommodation uses such as bed and breakfasts, short term rentals, or home conversions to small scale boutique hotels, provided that such developments are able to accommodate parking off street parking on site.

## 4.3 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Medium Density Residential areas include existing residential areas within the District of Wells (Schedule A Future Land Use – Townsite). Currently, Medium Density Residential areas include a mix of housing types, and the objective of this designation is to continue permitting a range of higher-density housing options within Medium Density Residential areas. Within the Medium Density Residential areas developments should prioritize enhancing walkability. The development of vacant and under-utilized lots in Medium Density Residential areas is a priority and will be supported, as these lots are close to or serviced by existing water, sewer, and road networks (thus reducing the District’s ongoing operating, maintenance, and replacement costs of infrastructure). The development of workforce housing will be strongly encouraged in Medium Density Residential areas.

### 4.3.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of increased residential densities in areas where adequate servicing is available, and development is compatible with surrounding land uses and building forms.

### 4.3.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of higher density residential development within areas designated Medium Density Residential on Schedule A Future Land Use – Townsite.
- .2 Allow the development of multi-family homes, including row-houses, townhomes, and apartments up to a maximum density of 65 units per hectare (26 units per acre).
- .3 Permit tri-plexes and fourplexes in Low Density Residential Areas where lot sizes are appropriate, the proposed building is similar in height and scale to the surrounding homes, and sufficient parking is provided to meet the needs of the uses on the property.
- .4 Allow the development of multi-family homes up to a maximum of two storeys.
- .5 Prioritize infill development in Medium Density Residential areas.
- .6 Encourage Medium Density developments to be designed to be compatible with surrounding land uses.
- .7 Allow home based businesses.
- .8 Allow for a variety of tourism accommodation uses such as bed and breakfasts, short term rentals, or home conversions to small scale boutique hotels, provided that such developments are able to accommodate parking off street parking on site.

- .9 Developments should prioritize walkability and accessibility through designing street frontages based on the guidance provided in the Provincial British Columbia Active Transportation Design Guide, 2019.

## 4.4 COMMERCIAL

Commercial Areas include the land on the north and south side of Pooley Street in North Wells and the land on the north and south side of Barkerville Highway in South Wells. These two corridors have served as the heart of the community and will continue to as the District of Wells grows. A variety of commercial, tourism and residential uses will be supported in lands designated Commercial. A key goal is to maintain and enhance pedestrian safety and comfort in the context of a growing community.

### 4.4.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Retain and enhance the Commercial areas as the heart of the community with a mix of commercial, civic, institutional, cultural, tourist-oriented, and residential uses.
- .2 Encourage the retention and ongoing maintenance of existing heritage buildings and support the construction of new buildings that incorporate “character-defining elements and values,” as defined in the Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Second Edition).

### 4.4.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support a wide range of commercial uses within areas designated Commercial on Schedule A.
- .2 Prioritize infill development on vacant or underutilized parcels in Commercial areas to reinforce its position as the heart of the community.
- .3 Create unique public spaces at key points for people to gather within the commercial district.
- .4 Allow residential uses as accessory uses above commercial uses to encourage an active streetscape.
- .5 Retain and expand civic, institutional uses, and community facilities in the Commercial areas.
- .6 Maintain and develop the Commercial areas as “pedestrian-oriented” environments that prioritize pedestrians and other forms of active transportation over individual automobile use. “Pedestrian-Oriented” principles could include, but are not limited to:

- a. Providing spaces for people of all ages and abilities to use the District without competing with other modes of transportation.
  - b. Provide spaces that encourage people to move at their own pace and provide facilities that invite people to stop, stay, and spend time.
- .7 Encourage the development of new commercial businesses.
  - .8 Encourage the development of tourism accommodations such as hotels, motels or short-term rentals in new and existing buildings.

## 4.5 RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL (MIXED USE)

Residential-Commercial (Mixed Use) areas are suitable for both low-intensity commercial and residential uses. Residential-Commercial (Mixed Use) areas will support the District's aim for a compact community core. In these areas, the District will encourage a variety of mixed residential-commercial buildings. The intention is to provide mixed-use buildings that integrate well within residential primary neighbourhoods. Compatible commercial uses may include artisan studios, coffee houses and professional offices.

### 4.5.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Allow for a variety of commercial and residential uses that are compatible with residential neighbourhoods.

### 4.5.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of mixed-use commercial buildings within areas designated Residential-Commercial on Schedule A.
- .2 Allow the following Commercial uses that are considered compatible with residential neighbourhoods:
  - a. Uses that do not create significant noise or light impacts.
  - b. Businesses that are pedestrian-oriented and do not create significant additional demand for parking.
  - c. Businesses and organizations that operate during daytime working hours.
  - d. Allow artisan studios, galleries, coffee houses, small scale retail and professional offices.
- .3 Encourage buildings in Residential-Commercial (Mixed Use) areas to be designed in a manner that considers the privacy of neighbouring lots and is protected from site illumination and noise.
- .4 Allow home based businesses.

- .5 Allow for a variety of tourism accommodation uses such as bed and breakfasts, short term rentals, or building conversions to small scale boutique hotels, provided that such developments are able to accommodate parking off street parking on site.

## **4.6 INSTITUTIONAL**

Institutional land uses are those that provide essential services to the community such as schools, community buildings, or more practical uses such as public works yards. While many civic uses can be comfortably located within commercial spaces, the intention of this land use designation is to provide space for those with more complex or unique land requirements.

### **4.6.1 OBJECTIVES**

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Provide sufficient lands within the District to support future institutional uses as required.
- .2 Support redevelopment and revitalization of the School Site (bound by Barker Street, Dawson Street, Mildred Avenue, and the laneway) that advances the community's social development goals (including learning opportunities), expands opportunities for arts and culture and generates economic opportunities.

### **4.6.2 POLICIES**

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of civic and institutional uses within areas designated Institutional on Schedule A.
- .2 Engage with the community, government agencies and community groups on any future proposals for the Wells-Barkerville Culture and Recreation Centre Site
- .3 Ensure that the vision outlined in the Wells-Barkerville Culture and Recreation Centre (WBCRC) Business Plan is considered in any potential future development of the WBCRC site (including the development of a covered recreation area).
- .4 Maintain the WBCRC site to provide space for the elementary school, access to secondary school education, childcare, community groups, and artists.
- .5 Allow for the occasional use of the WBCRC site as a venue during community events and festivals such as ArtsWells.
- .6 Ensure the WBCRC site is considered when planning for new institutional facilities.

- .7 Work with the Crown to develop community facilities uses on Crown land in the District of Wells. This could include but is not limited to maintaining an ongoing dialogue with Crown representatives about the District's vision and plans for Crown land and utilizing the Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development's Community Institutional Policy to develop community facility uses on Crown land.

## **4.7 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL**

The Light Industrial areas provide space for both commercial service and light industrial uses. Commercial service/light industrial areas host uses that are oriented towards motor vehicle needs, manufacturing, warehousing, and construction industries. The District of Wells will direct these uses to the areas shown on Schedule A and Schedule B.

### **4.7.1 OBJECTIVES**

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Provide space for service commercial and light industrial uses that support industrial development in the District of Wells.

### **4.7.2 POLICIES**

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of light industrial uses within areas designated Light Industrial on Schedule A and Schedule B.
- .2 Support a variety of Light Industrial uses.
- .3 Ensure that developments in Light Industrial areas are screened from neighbouring properties with landscaping and/or fencing.
- .4 Consider other areas for Light Industrial uses on a site-by-site basis.
- .5 Not allow residential uses in Light Industrial areas, except for caretakers, work camps, maintenance staff, or business owners.

## 4.8 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

The Heavy Industrial areas provide space for heavy industrial uses related to mining, forestry, and other heavy industries in the District of Wells. Heavy Industrial uses are those that operate at large scales and involve large undertakings both in terms of the types of equipment used and the volume of product produced. The District of Wells will direct these uses to the areas shown on Schedule A and Schedule B.

### 4.8.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Provide space for mining activity, forestry, and other heavy industrial activity that can support the future growth of the District of Wells.

### 4.8.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of Heavy Industrial uses within areas designated Heavy Industrial on Schedule A and Schedule B.
- .2 Ensure that developments in Heavy Industrial areas are screened from neighbouring properties with tree preservation, landscaping and/or fencing.
- .3 Require that Heavy Industrial users follow relevant environmental regulations.
- .4 Consider other areas for Heavy Industrial uses on a site-by-site basis.
- .5 Consider the impact of air, noise, and light pollution on local residents when evaluating any industrial development application.
- .6 Require project proponents to follow the development approval process whenever a change in OCP land use designation is contemplated (as per Pat 14, Division 6 of the Local Government Act).
- .7 Not allow residential uses in Heavy Industrial areas, except for caretakers, work camps, maintenance staff, or business owners.

## 4.9 URBAN PARKS

The Urban Parks are parks located within the Wells Townsite area that include urban amenities. Parks provide spaces to gather, play, relax and connect with neighbours and visitors. Urban Parks are also valuable amenities for tourists and visitors. Figure 18: Parks and Active Transportation includes a map of existing and proposed Urban Parks.

### 4.9.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- 1 To provide parks and facilities to satisfy the recreation needs of the community and visitors.
- 2 Invest in a network of urban parks that create focal points and gathering spaces through the Wells Townsite area.
- 3 Link Urban Parks through greenway corridors, paths, and trail development, and provide public access to major creek systems, watercourses, recreation areas, and areas of interest for tourists.
- 4 To promote the maintenance of the forested slopes within the visual field of the municipality in a manner that is not detrimental to the visual environment of the District of Wells.

### 4.9.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- 1 Support the development of a variety of park and trail types within areas designated Urban Parks on Schedule A.
- 2 Develop infrastructure in Urban Parks that support active living and are inclusive for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.
- 3 Continue to acquire parkland, or collect money in lieu, as required by provincial legislation, for parkland acquisition as lands are subdivided.
- 4 Support community organizations using Urban Parks for events, educational programming, and other initiatives.
- 5 Support place-making initiatives and creative art installations within Urban Parks to contribute to the sense of place in the District of Wells.
- 6 Build on existing trail networks to adapt them for use as active transportation infrastructure to support greater transportation choice.
- 7 Support development of a new shoreline park at Jack of Clubs Lake in collaboration with government agencies and other local project partners.
- 8 Preserve and enhance the visual quality of Jack of Clubs Lake to preserve the viewscape as one approaches the community,
- 9 Provide public washrooms and garbage collection bins in Urban Parks.



## 4.10 RURAL & OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Rural and Outdoor Recreation designation includes areas used for economic and resource extraction activities, as well as outdoor recreation opportunities. In these areas, the District will work with the provincial government to maintain high standards of environmental management and to support opportunities for outdoor recreation that promote active living and community-wide health.

### 4.10.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Provide a variety of economic and outdoor recreation uses that will enhance community well-being and provide opportunities for residents and visitors.
- .2 Participate in engagement opportunities for natural resource development to ensure that proponents and government regulators understand and consider the values and concerns of the community.
- .3 Promote the maintenance of the forested slopes within the visual field of the District in a manner that is not detrimental to the visual environment.

### 4.10.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the development of a variety of activities within areas designated Rural and Outdoor Recreation on Schedule A.
- .2 Support clubs and non-profit organizations who work to maintain and develop outdoor recreation infrastructure and trails on lands designated Rural & Outdoor Recreation.
- .3 Promote and enhance outdoor recreation and trail development as a strategy to attract tourists and residents.
- .4 The District will ensure that forested slopes within the visual field of the municipality are managed in a manner that is not detrimental to the visual environment of the District of Wells.
- .5 On privately held land that may have an impact on visual quality objectives, the District will adopt provisions under the Local Government Act to protect the removal of trees. Such policies and provisions shall not be inconsistent with the Forest Land Reserve Act.
- .6 Work with senior government to require that resource-based industries exercise good environmental stewardship as part of their resource management practices.
- .7 Work with government agencies and industry to minimize the impacts of natural resource extraction activities on existing and potential outdoor recreation areas and trails, particularly those identified in Figure 18: Parks and Active Transportation.

## 4.11 COMMERCIAL RECREATION

The Commercial Recreation designation is intended to provide areas for future uses that support the growing tourism economy in the District of Wells. In these areas, a mix of accommodation such as hotels, motels, and vacation rentals are supported and integrated with commercial recreation opportunities such as snowmobile lodges, RV parks, mountain bike parks, or other commercial recreation opportunities. Development of commercial recreation businesses is encouraged to further develop the local tourism economy and provide additional opportunities for visitors to the District.

Commercial Recreation areas shall include an anchor attraction such as a lodge, mountain bike park, adventure park, guest ranch, golf course or other relevant supporting uses which may include, but are not limited to retail, tourist accommodation, and residential uses.

### 4.11.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Expand the District's offerings for commercial recreation opportunities to build the District's reputation as a four-season destination.
- .2 Ensure that there is an adequate supply and variety of tourist accommodation to support commercial recreation operations in the District of Wells.
- .3 Ensure there is adequate housing for seasonal and permanent workers.
- .4 Support a variety of complementary commercial uses that help build local tourist attractions.

### 4.11.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 The District will support the development of commercial recreation and accommodation uses within areas designated Commercial Recreation on Schedule A and Schedule B.
- .2 Work with the Province to ensure that there is an adequate supply of Crown land available for commercial recreation and accommodation use.
- .3 Encourage the development of commercial outdoor recreation businesses that draw visitors year-round, including but not limited to ski hills, mountain bike parks, adventure parks, golf courses, guest ranches, or lodges.
- .4 Support a variety of residential uses such as one, two and multifamily dwellings and tiny homes that are accessory to commercial recreation areas.
- .5 The development of tourist facilities, such as recreational vehicle parks, will be encouraged on sufficiently large parcels of suitably located vacant land. Locations suitable for potential recreational vehicle parks are indicated on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map.

# 5.0 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

## 5.1 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The District of Wells will maintain and enhance community infrastructure to ensure that residents and businesses have access to reliable services including, water, power, communication, and transportation systems. Figure 13 Utilities and Road Network. includes an overview of existing water and sewer infrastructure and proposed water and sewer service areas that are required to achieve the development plan in Figure 20: Growth Management Areas, Schedule A and Schedule B. The District of Wells current water system includes:

- **Water Services:** A groundwater well and treatment plant (located at Ski Hill Road and Solibakke Drive) distributes treated water to homes and to a reservoir located on the western side of North Wells.
- **Sanitary Sewer System:** A gravity main collection system services the community. Gravity mains drain towards a sanitary lift station located at Blair Avenue and Dawson Street, where sewage is pumped up Hard Scrabble Road to the wastewater treatment lagoon.
- **Stormwater System:** The District of Wells does not have an underground stormwater management system. Drainage is mainly conveyed overland, and there are a few catch basins that outlet to the ditch. Drainage is managed by ditches and culverts in some areas of the community, while other areas have no defined drainage system.

### 5.1.1 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- 1 Support the development and maintenance of community infrastructure in existing community areas.
- 2 Manage infrastructure investments in a manner that is fiscally sound.
- 3 Ensure development occurs in an organized manner in appropriate areas.
- 4 New development located in the District of Wells Townsite Area of Figure 20: Growth Management Areas will be serviced with District water and sewer services. Development outside of the Wells Townsite Area will be serviced with on-site water and septic systems.
- 5 The District should develop and maintain safe and efficient water and sanitary utilities that accommodate the growth management objectives and policies within this Plan.

## 5.1.2 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Water and sanitary sewer utilities and drainage servicing required for all development, whether or not consistent with the growth management objectives and policies within this Plan, must be determined from:
  - a. Water and sewer infrastructure servicing studies prepared by a qualified professional engineer; and
  - b. Storm water management plan(s) prepared by a qualified team consisting of a professional engineer, environmental professional, and other professionals as required.
  - c. Based on District design guidelines, standards, and other requirements adopted by bylaw, provide capacity sufficient for the proposed development and for future lands to be served beyond the proposed development; and,
  - d. Meet all applicable servicing requirements regulated by the provincial and federal governments.
- .2 Consider and, where opportunities exist, implement low impact development and other storm runoff volume-based discharge reduction strategies for new development and redevelopment to reduce the requirement to increase existing storm sewer and drainage facilities.
- .3 Utilize available techniques, such as sensitivity analyses, to consider climate change impact on storm drainage facilities.
- .4 Look for opportunities to integrate climate adaptation.
- .5 Develop new infrastructure in a safe and sustainable way.
- .6 Determine the location and inventory existing community infrastructure, including the District of Wells, pipes, and other services.

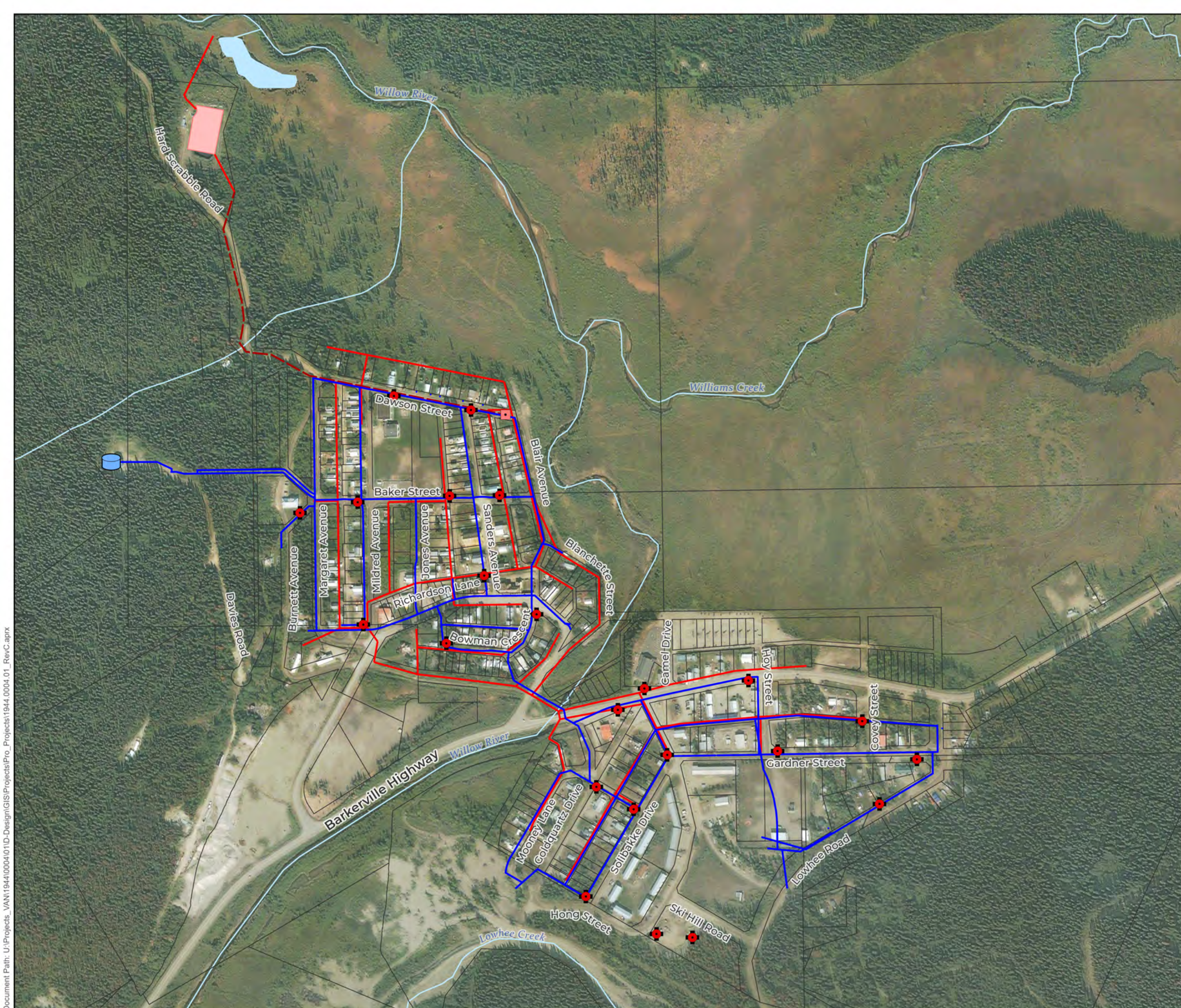


District of Wells  
Official Community Plan  
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Utilities and Road Network

- Municipal Boundary
- Reservoir
- Hydrant
- Water Main
- Lift Station
- Sanitary Pressure Main
- Sanitary Gravity Main
- Lagoon



Scale: 1:5,500



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## 5.2 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

This chapter covers a wide variety of social development topics, including arts, culture, safety, accessibility, diversity, inclusion, education, and food security. The map in Figure 14: Community Facilities illustrates the location of existing institutional uses, community amenities, and services, including:

- Wells Community Hall, which includes:
  - Gathering Space (rental)
  - Library
  - Offices
  - Fitness Centre
  - Primary Health Care Clinic (one day/month)
  - Library
  - Gymnasium
  - Stage
  - Dance Studio
- Wells Fire Hall
- Wells RCMP Detachment
- Wells-Barkerville Culture and Recreation Centre (WBCRC)
- Community Garden

The Wells-Barkerville Culture and Recreation Centre (WBCRC) and the Wells Community Hall currently serve as key gathering places for residents. These facilities also provide residents with access to a variety of services and supports. In September 2020, the District of Wells developed the Wells-Barkerville Culture and Recreation Centre (WBCRC) Business Plan. The Business Plan proposes a renewed vision for the WBCRC that includes various community, education, fitness, and revenue-generating uses.

Through the OCP survey, respondents expressed the importance of keeping the District of Wells safe, and respondents felt it was important that the district is regarded as a welcoming and diverse community. Survey responses indicated that the priorities for social development include improving access to healthcare services, healthy and fresh food, more amenities for youth, and the creation of an inclusive and diverse community. During interviews with the District of Wells school students, many students expressed that they felt safe in the district and told stories that reiterated the District of Well's strong sense of community.

## 5.2.1 ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

### 5.2.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Recognize the contribution of arts, culture, and heritage to social and economic activity and sustainability. The District will continue to provide leadership in the development of arts, culture, and heritage within the community and develop policies that encourage the growth of the cultural industries.
- .2 Encourage the preservation, conservation, and restoration of historical buildings and natural features that are representative of the District's unique Heritage.

### 5.2.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support community-based arts, culture, and heritage events, activities and initiatives being led by local non-profit organizations.
- .2 Promote and support the use of parks, civic buildings and public spaces for art, performances, festivals, and exhibitions.
- .3 Seek and support external funding resources for cultural programs, events, and facilities.
- .4 Support arts and heritage activities in the community through grants-in-aid.
- .5 Work with the CRD and other municipalities, school districts, Chamber of Commerce, Barkerville Historic Town and Park, major employers, and other agencies to plan and coordinate arts initiatives.
- .6 Ensure that housing in Low Density Residential areas is varied in design, footprint, form, and materials.
- .7 Support the preservation of significant archival material and artifacts.
- .8 Develop and promote a Heritage Register and the BC register of Historic Places to officially list and describe the unique features of heritage properties and buildings in the District of Wells.
  - a. Build upon the existing *Heritage Plan, 1991*, the Heritage Inventory established in 1983, and Bylaw No. 16, 1999 Heritage Properties.
- .9 Encourage and facilitate volunteerism to help manage, protect, and enhance heritage buildings in the District of Wells and promote education and awareness about historical buildings in the District.
- .10 Require property owners to follow the design guideline in the Commercial Core Development Permit Area
- .11 Support the re-development and revitalization of the District of Wells School Site, as outlined in the *WBCRC Business Plan*.
- .12 Collaborate with the Wells Historical Society to preserve the District of Well's historical form and character.

## 5.2.2 FOOD SECURITY

### 5.2.2.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Support partnerships and initiatives that ensure residents have access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food in the community.

### 5.2.2.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support initiatives and organizations that seek to connect consumers to local and healthy food through local food production (i.e., farmers markets, community-supported agriculture programs, etc.)
- .2 Ensure existing policies and bylaws help eliminate barriers to sustainable food and agriculture systems.
- .3 Support the development of community gardens, community kitchens, and community greenhouses.

## 5.2.3 INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE AND SAFE COMMUNITY

### 5.2.3.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Support measures to ensure all citizens experience equal access to the unique experiences of the community.
- .2 Support opportunities for relationship-building between new residents, seasonal residents, and long-term residents.
- .3 Encourage all new developments to meet modern accessibility standards.

### 5.2.3.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Invest in improvements to the accessibility of civic buildings and infrastructure. This can include applying for grants and allocating funding for renovations and high standards of accessibility in new civic buildings and developments.
- .2 Encourage new developments to incorporate a high standard of accessibility.
- .3 Promote the participation of all citizens in decision-making through the development of non-discriminatory municipal bylaws, policies, programs, and services.
- .4 Support measures to challenge discrimination and promote diversity and equal opportunities throughout the community of Wells.



## 5.2.4 EDUCATION & CHILDHOOD

### 5.2.4.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

1. Develop a culture of life-long learning through the provision of both public and private education opportunities to serve a broad range of interests and age groups.
2. Support the revitalization of the Wells-Barkerville Culture and Recreation Centre (WBCRC) as is outlined in the WBCRC Business Plan.

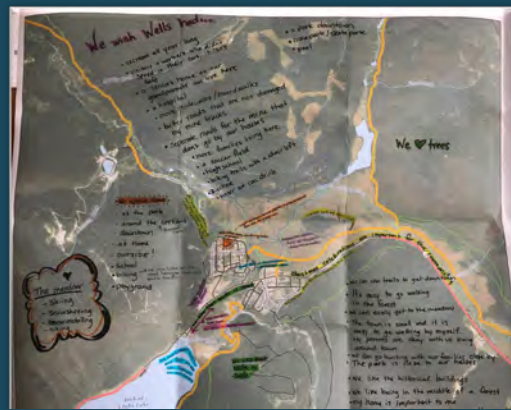
### 5.2.4.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

1. Support measures that ensure all children from birth to age five have access to comprehensive early childhood development and care.
2. Retain and maintain the Wells, Barkerville, Community School as a vital element in the community's current and future development.
3. Promote the ongoing liaison and cooperation with School District #28 on matters of mutual interest, including the efficient use of resources in site development and existing facilities, in searching for innovative solutions to the provision of educational facilities, and the potential siting of a potential new school.
4. Support the development of education facilities including existing elementary and community schools (including the new high school function to be contained within the existing school) and other educational institutions in conjunction with business and economic development.
5. Only explore the creation of new buildings as necessary. Compare costs and opportunities between the renovation of old buildings and the construction of new ones on other sites to make a business case for new developments.

### Did you know?

As part of the the District of Wells OCP update, students at Wells School were asked what they like to do for fun in the District of Wells and what changes they would like to see in the community. The students said they enjoy spending time outside riding their bike, going on walks, and playing in the park and playground. They would like to have more things to do and have more opportunities for outdoor recreation and learning. Many students also mentioned they like that everyone in the community knows each other and would like to see more children.





District of Wells  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. XX  
Community Facilities



Scale: 1:4,000

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## 5.3 ENVIRONMENT

This section of the OCP includes objectives and policies for environmental values, including groundwater/drinking water, riparian areas, air quality, wildlife and habitat protection, and contaminated sites. Figure 15: Environment includes a map illustrating environmentally sensitive areas in the District of Wells. Some of the notable environmentally sensitive areas within the District include:

- Riparian areas (watercourses containing fish), specifically those that are located near the Wells Townsite area, including Lowhee Creek, Willow River, and Williams Creek
- Jack of Clubs Lake
- Wetlands north of the Wells Townsite area (“meadows” trail network)
- Southern Mountain Caribou (Species at Risk) habitat in the northwestern portion of the District (Barkerville Caribou herd)
- Whitebark pine (Species at Risk) habitat in the northeastern portion of the District.
- The entire District of Wells is within Grizzly Bear Habitat.
- The Wells-Barkerville Community Forest and remaining forested lands which are home to other species at risk, including wolverine and fisher.

The District of Wells relies on a groundwater well and water treatment plant located at Ski Hill road and Solibakke Drive to provide clean and potable water to homes in Wells Townsite area. Treated water is distributed directly into the distribution system from the water treatment plant, where both community services and a storage reservoir are connected. The storage reservoir is located on the hill to the community's west, generally in line with Baker Street. Outlying areas are serviced by private wells. Given the community's reliance on groundwater, ensuring the protection of groundwater is an important consideration in future planning.

Due to the age of buildings in the District of Wells, there is a higher risk of lead contamination resulting from old plumbing in buildings. The District of Wells worked with Northern Health in the summer of 2021 to minimize the risk of lead contamination. The Northern Health findings indicate that risk of lead contamination is a result of private plumbing in individual buildings and that flushing plumbing will reduce the risk of contamination.

Given the history of the District of Wells, brownfield and contaminated sites are an important environmental consideration when planning development. Brownfields and contaminated sites include properties that have a historical use that may have resulted in site contamination or the perception of contamination from previous use. Examples of uses that have a higher likelihood of contamination include abandoned mine sites, gas stations, dry cleaners, former dumps/waste facilities, scrap yards, and former industrial sites. The provincial government regulates the use and management of contaminated sites through the *Environmental Management Act* and *Contaminated Sites Regulation*. Local

governments work with the provincial government to ensure that contaminated sites are identified and cleaned up before any re-development.

## **5.3.1 GROUNDWATER AND DRINKING WATER OBJECTIVES & POLICIES**

### **5.3.1.A Objectives**

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Protect, enhance, and monitor the quality of groundwater sources that provide safe drinking water to the residents of the District of Wells.
- .2 Explore opportunities for additional water sources.

### **5.3.1.B Policies**

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Limit incompatible uses that may pose a risk to groundwater contamination near wellheads that provide drinking water sources for the District of Wells.
- .2 Continue to monitor groundwater to ensure a safe drinking water supply for residents.
- .3 Explore opportunities to increase system redundancy or improve existing water sources.
- .4 Support opportunities for the community to learn, measure, monitor, enhance, conserve, and educate about water quality, air quality, biodiversity, and environmental protection.

## **5.3.2 RIPARIAN OBJECTIVES & POLICIES**

### **5.3.2.A Objectives**

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Preserve, protect, and restore riparian and wetland areas to maintain and enhance water quality and quantity and the ecological functions of watercourses so they continue to support healthy fish and wildlife populations.

### **5.3.2.B Policies**

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support the provincial government in ensuring that effluents and waste material do not flow into riparian areas and are not placed within riparian setbacks.

- .2 Encourage the maintenance of natural vegetation in riparian areas for the protection of fish and wildlife and the maintenance of efficient drainage systems. The District may require a restrictive covenant over land to be rezoned adjacent to watercourses for the purpose of maintaining an area of land adjacent to the watercourse in its natural state.
- .3 Build roads, culverts, and bridges according to provincial specifications to avoid damage to watercourses and fisheries.

### **5.3.3 AIR QUALITY**

#### **5.3.3.A Objectives**

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Improve air quality by reducing fine particulate matter levels, odour and other harmful pollutants.

#### **5.3.3.B Policies**

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support voluntary airshed research, education, and planning initiatives.
- .2 Encourage active transportation to reduce the amount of air pollution generated by personal vehicles.
- .3 Encourage residents and businesses to switch to high efficiency wood stoves, or alternatives.

## 5.3.4 WILDLIFE AND HABITAT PROTECTION

### 5.3.4.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Continue to grow and develop within a compact footprint and maintain separation between urban areas and natural wilderness areas.

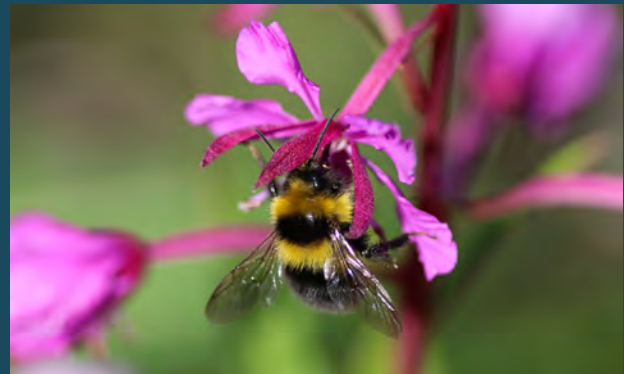
### 5.3.4.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Promote initiatives that raise awareness about local biodiversity and terrestrial environmental issues, including but not limited to caribou, grizzly bears, and white bark pine trees.
- .2 Develop and enforce regulations permitted under the Local Government Act that limit deforestation on large, private properties.
- .3 Participate in engagement opportunities with industry and senior levels of government and advocate for natural resource extraction that minimizes impacts on biodiversity and terrestrial ecosystems within the District of Wells.
- .4 Maintain the Community Forest Agreement with the Wells-Barkerville Community Forest and support Community Forest initiatives and programs.

## Did you know?

The District of Wells is home to the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee which is a species at risk in BC. The Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee (*Bombus bohemicus*) is one of six different cuckoo bumble bee species in North America and has been found in every part of Canada except Nunavut. Unlike most bumble bees, gypsy cuckoo bumble bees do not collect pollen to bring back to their colony, so they do not have any pollen baskets on their hind legs. They often nest near wooded areas but can be found in both rural and urban habitats.

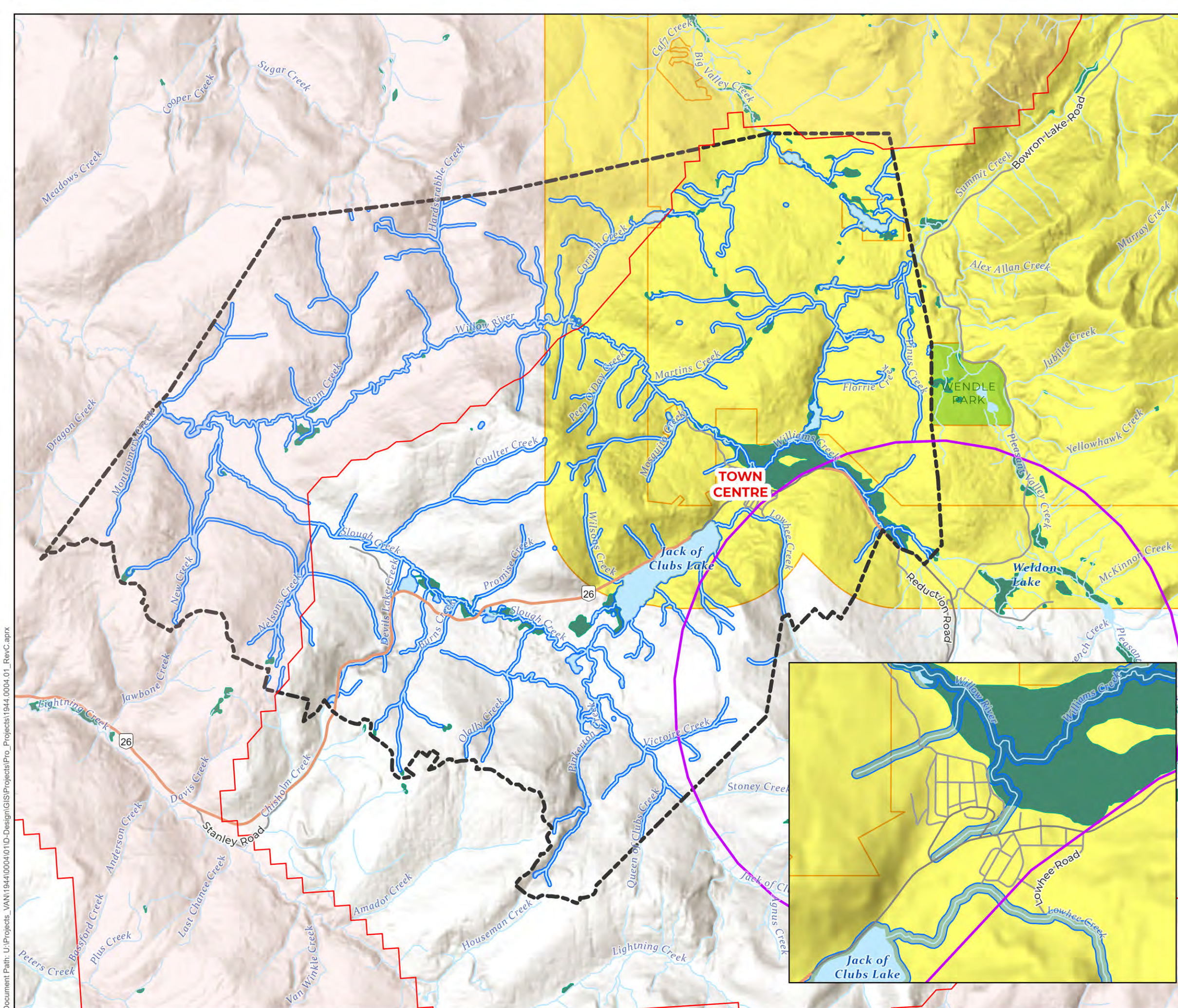




District of Wells  
 Official Community Plan  
 Bylaw No. XX  
 Environmentally Sensitive Areas

- Municipal Boundary
- Provincial Parks, Eco Reserves and Protected Areas
- Riparian Areas
- Wetlands
- Whitebark Pine - Critical Habitat
- Species and Ecosystems at Risk**
- Caribou (Southern Mountain Population)
- Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee

Note: The whole map extent is Grizzly Bear habitat, as well as critical habitat for Caribou - Southern Mountain population



Scale: 1:120,000

## 5.4 ECONOMY

The current economy in the District of Wells is deeply tied to arts, heritage, recreation, and tourism. Mining is currently a growing industry in the District which is present in many forms, including placer and lode mining. **The arts, culture, and recreation sectors are the primary employers in the District of Wells:** Arts, culture, and recreation jobs account for 14% of the labour force in the District of Wells, compared to only 2% in the Cariboo Region and 4% across the Province. Currently, mining accounts for 6% of the labour force. By 2040, this statistic could change significantly, as the proposed mining project could add 460 direct jobs to the community.

**The District of Wells' unemployment rates are high and fluctuate more than the region and Province:** In 2016, the District of Wells' unemployment rate was 14.8%, compared to 11% in the Cariboo Region and 7% in the Province. Unemployment rates in the Cariboo Region and the Province stayed fairly constant between 2006 to 2016, while in the District of Wells, unemployment rates fluctuated from 6.3% (2006) to 25% (2011) to 14.8% (2016) In 2021 the unemployment rates in the District increased to 38%, compared to 10% in the Cariboo Region, and 8% across the Province. The relatively large variations can be partially attributed to the low population of the District of Wells, but any actions to improve the stability of the local economy will have a positive impact on overall employment rates.

This section provides policy direction for economic development in the District of Wells. For more information on the existing economy in the District of Wells, see Section 2.5.

### 5.4.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Encourage sustainable economic development and diversification while continuing to prioritize the unique arts, culture, heritage, and tourism economy that exists in the District of Wells.
- .2 Establish the infrastructure and amenities required to attract and retain a variety of businesses, professionals, creative professionals, and industry workers to the District of Wells.
- .3 Support the development of various retail and service-based businesses that allow residents to become less reliant on larger towns and cities.
- .4 Build on the District of Wells' existing reputation as a tourist destination by encouraging the development of additional tourism experiences, accommodations, businesses, and infrastructure to bolster the tourism economy.
- .5 Provide adequate and appropriately located land to accommodate the anticipated growth in industrial sectors while minimizing impacts for residents and/or negative impacts for residents' health and the environment.



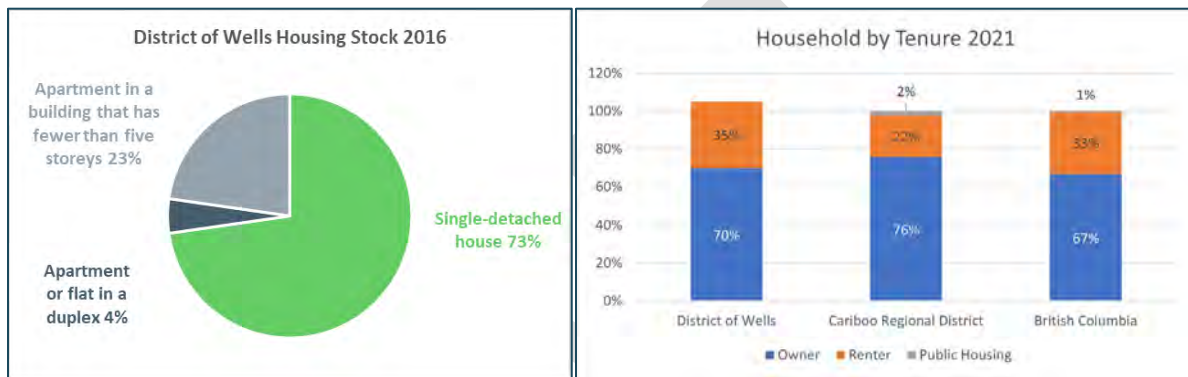
### 5.4.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Continue to invest in improved internet access, such as fibre optic to individual buildings, and reliable electrical power that will make it more practical for a variety of businesses to operate in the District of Wells.
- .2 Work with proponents of new projects to ensure that projects can proceed in a manner that is collaborative and mutually beneficial to the community.
- .3 Support work from home scenarios for employment types that do not conflict with existing land uses.
- .4 Encourage a range of tourist opportunities that promote arts, culture, and heritage, including tourist accommodation facilities such as hotels/motels, campgrounds, short term rentals, and bed & breakfasts.
- .5 Support the development of outdoor recreation infrastructure and amenities that attract visitors and residents throughout the year.
- .6 Work collaboratively with the Government of Canada, Province of BC, Indigenous Governments, Cariboo Regional District, City of Quesnel, and other partner agencies to advance collective economic priorities.

## 5.5 HOUSING

This chapter includes an overview of issues and policy direction for ensuring everyone in the District of Wells has access to safe, affordable housing that meets their needs. Based on 2016 and 2021 census data, the District of Wells housing stock is predominantly single-family dwellings: 70% of homes in the District of Wells are single-family dwellings, and the remaining homes are apartment units or "other" units. The District of Wells has less variety of housing types in comparison to the Province. The District of Wells has more renter households (35%) compared to the region (22%), but the number of renter households in the District of Wells is consistent with the provincial average (33%).



**Figure 16: Existing housing stock by type of dwelling and tenure**

The OCP survey included questions about housing issues. Many respondents expressed support for renovating and restoring old homes and building housing that is similar to the scale of existing housing in the District of Wells. Respondents also expressed the need for a wider variety of housing types (i.e., duplexes, townhomes, apartments, etc.). Some of the key issues that were raised include:

- Lack of rental housing.
- Lack of supply of housing for seasonal workers.
- Lack of supply of housing stock for sale.
- Many homes are vacant for large portions of the year.
- Lack of housing for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Housing is not maintained.
- Some respondents also noted concerns about the impact of work camps on the community.

### 5.5.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

### Did you know?

Most homes in the District of Wells were built before the 1960s: 70% of the District's housing was built prior to the 1960s; this is vastly different to the Cariboo Region (10%) and the Province (14%). As a result of the older housing stock, **29%** of homes in the District are considered in need of "major repair" (compared to 10% across the Province).

- .1 Provide an adequate supply and range of housing choices for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.
- .2 Develop new housing that reinforces the District of Wells as a compact and walkable community.
- .3 Develop housing for seasonal workers that generate long-term benefits to the community and fosters the development of a cohesive and inclusive community.
- .4 Develop and enhance partnerships with all forms of government and forge new relationships across sectors to further affordable housing objectives.

### 5.5.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Support secondary suites in appropriate areas provided that they meet the requirements of the BC Building Code.
- .2 Support the development of a greater variety of housing options and increased residential density in the Wells Townsite area, as is identified in Schedule A Future Land Use – Townsite and further described in Section 5.5 of this Plan.
- .3 Support the development of non-market, affordable and/or rental housing in all residential and mixed-use areas. To reduce barriers to affordable housing development, the requirements for height, setbacks, and parking in the Zoning Bylaw. Buildings and structures may be varied in accordance with the recommendations of a Qualified Professional to support the provision of affordable housing.
- .4 The District should play a leadership role in developing innovative housing options that support temporary and seasonal workers and better integrate workers into the community.
- .5 Support renovation and restoration of the existing housing stock and development of vacant residential infill lots.
- .6 Encourage the development of housing in a similar scale and heritage aesthetic as the existing housing in the District of Wells.
- .7 Develop housing to support year-round residents as well as housing that accommodates seasonal and temporary workers.
- .8 Ensure camp housing is located within industrial land use designations.
- .9 Work with BC Housing to explore potential future projects on Crown lands.
- .10 Ensure new housing developments are adequately supplies with carports, garages, and storage space.

## 5.6 HAZARDS

Figure 17: Hazards illustrates the location of significant slopes (20% to 30% grade) within the District of Wells and wildfire risk as per the Government of BC Wildland Urban Interface Risk Class Maps<sup>9</sup>. Neither the District of Wells nor the Government of BC has floodplain mapping readily available for the District of Wells.

As a historic community, many of the buildings in the District of Wells are wood structures that are over seventy years old. Climate change, the surrounding expanse of forests and the age of buildings in the District of Wells creates an environment of high wildfire risk. In addition, the community has only one highway providing vehicle access into and out of the community, creating a further challenge for emergency response. The Government of BC Wildland Urban Interface Risk Class Maps identify the District of Wells as a Risk Class 1 on a scale of 1 to 5, “1” being a higher relative risk and “5” being the lowest relative risk.

The District of Wells also has several “brownfield” or contaminated sites within its boundary as a historic mining community. Past mining activity in the District left behind contaminated soils, which persist to this day and pose a hazard to groundwater resources and community drinking water.

This section outlines objectives and policies for hazards, including wildfires, significant slopes, and flooding.

### 5.6.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Promote settlement patterns and take preventive measures that minimize the risk associated with hazardous conditions to protect life and property.

### 5.6.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Encourage the use of FireSmart building materials and systems (including sprinklers) in renovations and construction of new private and public buildings and creating a FireSmart landscape that reduces fuels on properties.
- .2 Participate in local and regional hazard mitigation and emergency preparedness efforts.
- .3 Improve public awareness of hazardous conditions through events, education campaigns, and partnerships.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/prevention/vegetation-and-fuel-management/fire-fuel-management/wui-risk-class-maps>

- .4 Require geotechnical reports from a certified professional geotechnical engineer for proposed developments on lands identified as Significant Slopes on Figure 17: Hazards or where the District has been advised that land is in an area subject to flooding, erosion, landslip, subsidence, or other natural hazards (or has the possibility of exacerbating a risk to adjacent property).
- .5 Require landowners to complete Site Profiles as required by the Ministry of Environment before development proceeds in areas subject to arsenic and other contamination.
- .6 Discourage the following activities on Significant Slope areas identified Figure 17: Hazards:
  - a. Excavation of slope or its toe.
  - b. Use of unstable earth fills for construction.
  - c. Loading of slope or its crest, such as placing earth fill at the top of a slope; deforestation – cutting down trees/logging and clearing land for crops.
  - d. Irrigation and lawn watering.
  - e. Mining/mine waste containment.
  - f. Artificial vibration such as pile driving, explosions, or other strong ground vibrations.
  - g. Water leakage from utilities, such as water or sewer lines; and,
  - h. Alteration of the natural drainage.
- .7 Locate new development outside of flood-prone areas.
- .8 Only allow uses that are unlikely to result in the loss of life or property damage, such as open storage, agriculture, and recreation in the flood-prone areas.
- .9 Prohibit new development within 7.5 metres of the natural boundary of a lake, within 30 metres of the natural boundary of any other watercourse or less than 0.6 metre above the two-hundred-year flood level, where it has been determined, or 1.5 metres above the natural boundary of a lake or any other watercourse where the two hundred year flood level has not been determined as per the Province of BC, Flood Hazard Area Land Use Management Guidelines<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/water/integrated-flood-hazard-mgmt/flood\\_hazard\\_area\\_land\\_use\\_guidelines\\_2017.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/water/integrated-flood-hazard-mgmt/flood_hazard_area_land_use_guidelines_2017.pdf)

## 5.6.2 BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AND CONTAMINATED SITES

Brownfield sites are sites which have been previously used for industrial purposes, or certain commercial uses, and may be contaminated by low concentrations of hazardous waste or pollution but still retain the potential to be reused once remediation occurs. It is important for remediation to occur, according to Provincial guidelines, before any development takes place on such sites.

This section outlines objectives and policies for the development of Brownfield and contaminated sites.

### 5.6.2.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Promote and, where possible, facilitate the remediation and re-development of contaminated sites.

### 5.6.2.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Partner with other governments and the private sector to undertake brownfield remediation and increase awareness of brownfield redevelopment potential where feasible.
- .2 Comply with provincial legislation for identifying potentially contaminated sites prior to development.
- .3 Educate the community and raise awareness about the benefits of redeveloping brownfield and contaminated sites.



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Hazards

▬ Municipal Boundary

Slope

▨ 20-30%

▩ >30%

Fire Threat

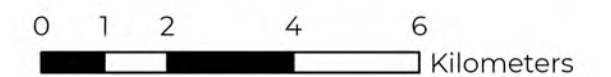
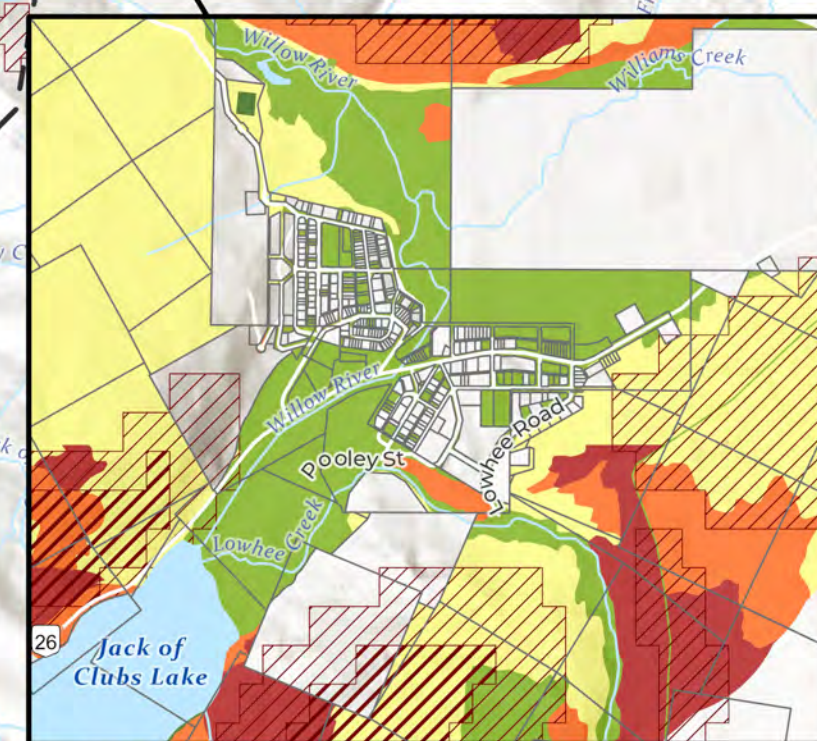
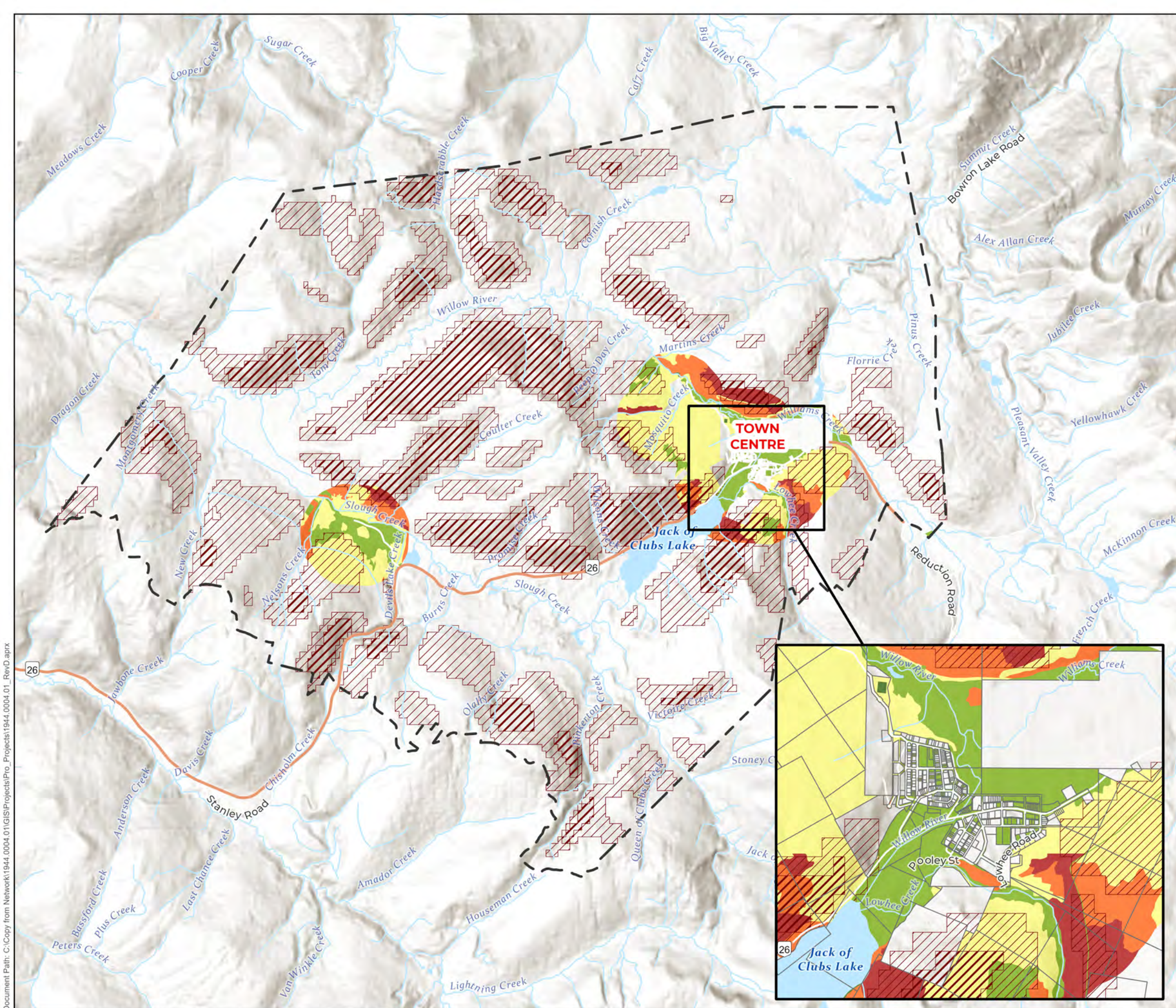
■ Very Low

■ Low

■ Moderate

■ High

■ Extreme



Scale: 1:120,000

## 5.7 TRANSPORTATION

Figure 13 Utilities and Road Network includes an overview of the road network in the District of Wells and illustrates the active transportation network in the District of Wells. The Barkerville Highway and Pooley Street serve as main arterials through Commercial Core areas and are the only paved roads in the District of Wells. The local road network in the District of Wells is not paved and there are no formal asphalt or concrete sidewalks in the District of Wells. Despite not having sidewalks, the District of Wells feels like a safe place for pedestrians due to the limited traffic and the compact land use patterns support walking to destinations within town. As the District of Wells grows, there will likely be a need to upgrade and formalize pedestrian infrastructure to ensure pedestrian safety and comfort.

### 5.7.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Develop infrastructure that maintains and enhances the comfort and safety of pedestrians and other active transportation users, while also accommodating anticipated vehicle traffic that is associated with tourism and industry.

### 5.7.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Develop a centralized parking area or areas to serve the Commercial Core along Pooley Street and Barkerville Highway. The intent of these parking areas will be to provide accessible parking that provides convenient access to tourism destinations and reduces vehicle traffic and parking demand along Pooley Street and Barkerville Highway.
- .2 Develop an active transportation plan to support future investments in pedestrian-oriented and active transportation infrastructure.
- .3 Invest in pedestrian-oriented and active transportation infrastructure, including but not limited to separated paths and sidewalks, traffic calming, pedestrian-scale lighting, and vegetated buffers between active transportation corridors and vehicle routes.
- .4 Collaborate with other transportation agencies to develop and manage the transportation system to meet the needs of residents, institutions, businesses, and industry to accommodate all modes.
- .5 Support a road network that avoids industrial traffic travelling through residential and tourist-oriented areas to reduce conflicts with non-industrial road users.
- .6 Prohibit 24-hour heavy truck traffic through the community (with the exception of Highway 26, and purpose-built industrial roads) to limit noise impacts and to reduce conflicts with non-industrial road users.
- .7 Support the construction of the Purden Connector Road to Highway 16.





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**Urban Parks, Trails and  
Active Transportation**

- Urban Trail
- Cornish Mountain Trails
- Urban Parks



0 250 100 150  
 Meters  
Scale: 1:5,500

## 5.8 CLIMATE CHANGE

The impacts of climate change are no longer just projections and have become re-occurring emergencies that communities respond to each year. In 2011, the Cariboo Regional District partnered with the federal government and the Fraser Basin Council to develop a *Climate Adaptation Strategy for the Region*. The Strategy reinforces the idea that municipalities have a critical role to play in addressing and minimizing climate change impacts. The Strategy speaks to the importance of various local government services, such as (but not limited to): regulating land use patterns and development, transportation planning, protecting sensitive environments, managing waste, economic development, protecting source drinking water, and planning for energy supplies.

In 2014 and 2018, the Cariboo Regional District partnered with the federal and provincial governments to deliver BC Agriculture & Climate Change Regional Adaptation Strategies. The climate science and impacts outlined in the report are reiterated by the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium<sup>11</sup> based out of the University of Victoria, that predicts climate change impacts in the Cariboo Region will include:

- Decreased snowpack resulting in a shorter winter logging season and may require the assisted migration of tree species to colder climates. If the dry season and fire season increase in length, this could increase forest fire severity.
- Increases to high-intensity precipitation and seasonal moisture variability could have effects on a variety of habitats.
- Seasonal increase in hot and dry conditions would increase the possibility of water shortages in summer and early fall.
- River flooding events may increase in frequency and magnitude; stream bank erosion and strain on flood protection infrastructure may increase. Stormwater design standards may no longer be adequate, and seasonal water quality may be reduced.

Objectives and policies for climate change are provided below. However, it is important to note that the goal of achieving sustainable development and reduced climate impacts is woven throughout this OCP in the form of policies and directions related to land use, transportation, utilities and infrastructure, and environmental protection measures.

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<sup>11</sup> Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium:  
<https://www.pacificclimate.org/analysis/publications/climate-summary-cariboo>

### 5.8.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Reduce Green House Gas emissions in the District of Wells by 80% by 2050 from 2007 levels. In 2007 the provincial government calculated the District of Wells' greenhouse gas emissions and completed the Community Energy Emissions Inventory (CEEI). Using this data, plus District of Wells data for fuel heating usage for public buildings, the District of Wells concludes that the 2007 emissions level was 1282 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- .2 Improve energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions for District of Wells-owned buildings and facilities.
- .3 Support land use decisions that create resilient infrastructure that is adaptive to a changing climate.
- .4 Reduce energy use and GHG emissions generated by new and existing buildings developed in the District of Wells.

### 5.8.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Pursue and support grant opportunities that will support more energy-efficient buildings and more resilient public infrastructure.
- .2 Support and promote educational opportunities to increase community awareness about energy efficiency, renewable energy alternatives and green building techniques.
- .3 Develop municipal infrastructure that is climate change resilient.
- .4 Encourage active transportation to reduce dependency on fossil fuels.
- .5 Encourage the use of High Efficiency Wood Stoves, Pellet Stoves, and alternatives for residential heating.

## 5.9 RECONCILIATION WITH FIRST NATIONS

Reconciliation with First Nations peoples is a priority for the District of Wells. Although there are no First Nations reserves within the community, the District recognizes that it falls within the traditional territories of several surrounding Nations, including the Dakelh (Carrier) and Secwepemctsin (Secwépemc or Shuswap), Lhatko Dene, Nazko, Lhoosk'uz, Ulkatcho, ?Esdilagh, Xatśūll, Simpcw, and Lheidli T'enneh. The District recognizes its responsibility to work towards reconciliation with First Nations people and has developed the following Objectives and Policies.

### 5.9.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Strengthen relationships with surrounding First Nation communities and communicate a desire for future collaboration and commitment towards reconciliation.

### 5.9.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Engage with First Nations on land use planning initiatives and future amendments to this plan.
- .2 Work towards the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action.
- .3 Adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples.
- .4 Collaborate with local First Nations on regional economic development initiatives.

## 5.10 PARKS, OUTDOOR RECREATION AND ACTIVE LIVING

The District of Wells is known as a destination for outdoor enthusiasts, whether it be travellers from across the world visiting for a bucket-list Bowron Lakes trip, snowmobilers from across BC looking for backcountry powder, or bikers, hikers, horseback riders, ATV enthusiasts, and skiers wanting to explore the surrounding mountains. The District of Wells is also home to an extensive Nordic ski trail on Cornish Mountain. Many of the District of Wells' trails and recreation assets have historical value, providing a unique opportunity to blend heritage tourism and recreation. In addition, through the Wells-Barkerville Culture and Recreation Centre vision, there are plans for an outdoor education program with nature and place-based learning opportunities. The District of Wells also has urban park spaces, including a playground, baseball diamonds, an outdoor skating rink, and pocket parks. Figure 19: Outdoor Recreation and Trails includes a map of existing outdoor recreation assets in the District of Wells.

The Wells-Barkerville Community Forest is an important part of the recreation landscape in the District of Wells. The Community Forest includes 4,527 hectares surrounding the District of Wells, providing critical views for the community, outdoor recreation opportunities, timber harvesting opportunities, and ecological value. Trails in the community forest, particularly on the south slope of Cornish Mountain, immediately north of the Wells Townsite area, provide hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing and snowshoeing opportunities for residents and visitors. One quarter of the community forest is defined as caribou habitat, old growth forest, riparian areas, wildlife tree reserve areas and recreation areas in the forest, and these areas are off-limits to timber harvesting.

Based on feedback received during the engagement process, one of the favourite past times for the District of Wells residents is simply going for a walk. Many respondents to the survey referenced how they value going for walks and having spots of interest to visit. This was reiterated in the interviews with Wells school students, whose comments were primarily focused on the importance of getting outside to spend time with family and friends in nature.

This section of the OCP includes policy direction to support the development and maintenance of outdoor recreation assets and increased

### Did you know?

The District of Wells has an extensive trail network that offers year-round outdoor recreation opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized trail users. In the summer, hikers and mountain bikers can explore the mountains enjoying beautiful views and blossoming alpine meadows. In the winter, the trails are popular for skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and even dogsledding! Trails are an important recreational feature in the District of Wells and the Wells and Area Trails Society (WATS) actively supports their ongoing improvement and maintenance. community.

opportunities for active living. Figure 19: Outdoor Recreation and Trails includes an overview of existing and future recreation amenities and infrastructure.

### 5.10.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Provide parks, facilities, and outdoor recreation facilities that attract and retain residents and visitors alike.
- .2 Establish parks and outdoor recreation infrastructure and promotional programs that establish the District of Wells as an outdoor recreation destination for people of all ages, abilities, and experience levels.
- .3 Support the vision to develop the District of Wells as a centre for outdoor education in the north.

### 5.10.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Develop new park and outdoor recreation infrastructure that is accessible and inclusive for people of all ages and abilities, particularly in urban areas and recreation areas close to town.
- .2 Provide and maintain accessible washrooms where appropriate/feasible.
- .3 Improve and expand trail networks that facilitate safe pedestrian routes and make it easy for tourists to explore and navigate the community.
- .4 Support the initiatives of volunteers and organizations that maintain and develop trail networks and recreation opportunities.
- .5 Promote and support the development of art installations, signage, and other place-making efforts that add interest along walking routes, trails, parks, and outdoor areas.
- .6 Support the development of recreation programming for people of all ages and abilities.
- .7 Advocate and promote the maintenance of forested slopes within the visual field of the municipality in a manner that is not detrimental to the visual environment of the District of Wells.
- .8 Upgrade and improve infrastructure in parks as they reach their end of life (i.e., playgrounds, benches, including memorial benches, picnic tables, etc.).
- .9 Support recreational use of Crown lands where compatible with existing uses. Work with the Crown to establish recreation assets on Crown land and maintain existing assets.
- .10 Support the development of programs and infrastructure that facilitate outdoor education learning opportunities in the District of Wells.
- .11 Build a new playground in the District of Wells.
- .12 Explore the feasibility of new recreation amenities at Jack of Clubs Lake.



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**Outdoor Recreation and Trails**

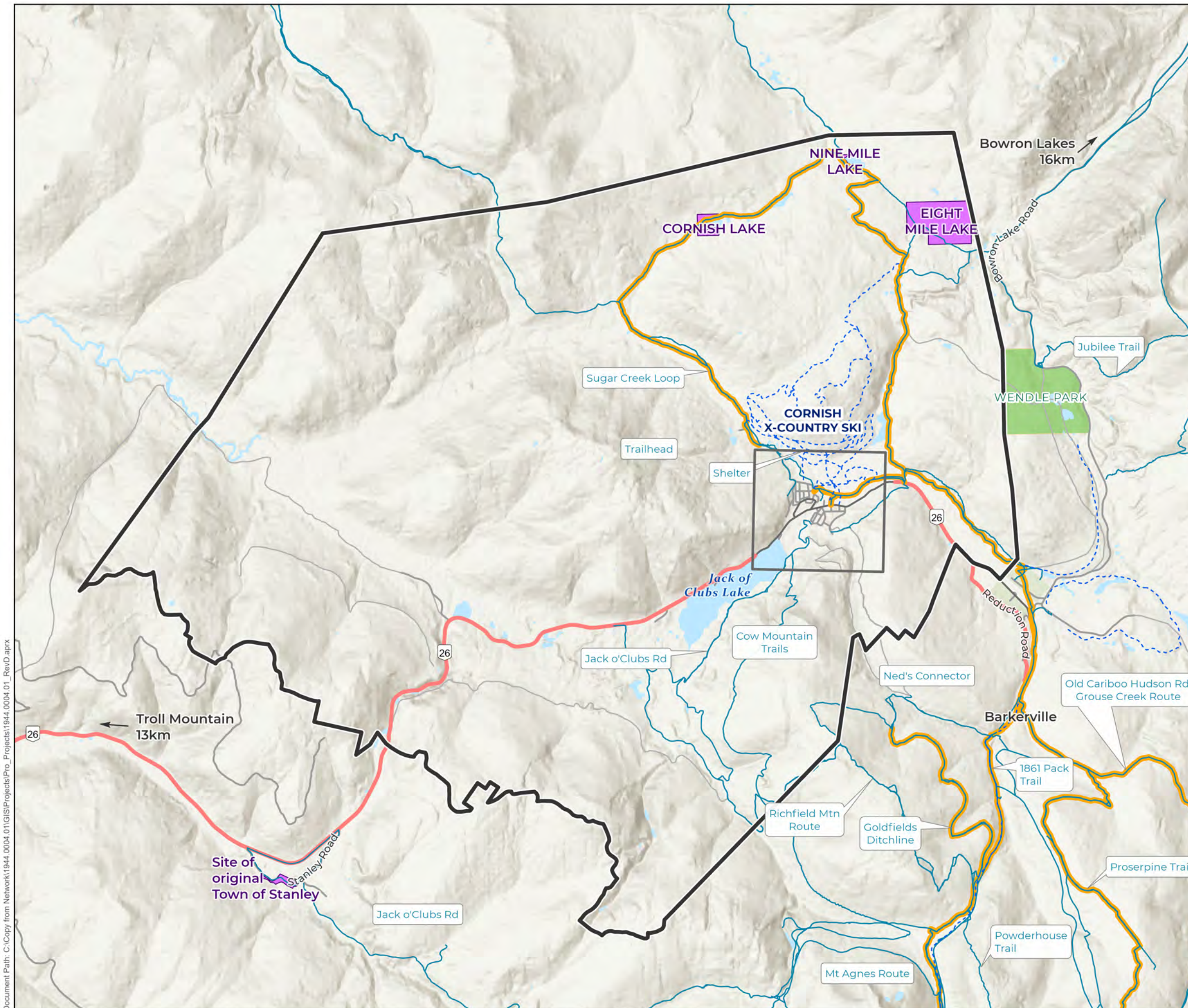
- Municipal Boundary
- Wells Townsite Area
- Provincial Parks
- Recreation Site
- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
- Local Road/FSR

**Trails**

- Recreation
- Cross country skiing
- Snowmobile



Scale: 1:70,000



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## 5.11 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

This Chapter includes an overview of Growth Management strategies, and Figure 20: Growth Management Areas identifies where growth will be prioritized. Growth management policy provides direction for how a community will grow and develop, where growth will and will not occur, and where growth will be prioritized. Growth management is a fundamental tool for achieving sustainability goals because the way land is developed influences how people travel around their community, how frequently residents socially interact with each other, and the amount of environmental disturbance that will occur to facilitate growth.

As Section 2.7 outlines, the District of Wells could experience significant change over the next twenty years. If 10% to 20% of new employees (resulting from mining or seasonal tourism enterprises) choose to relocate to the District of Wells, the population is estimated to increase by approximately 40-80 people by 2025. In an enhanced growth scenario, where a new mine opens and local tourism operations see expansion of their operations, there would be a significant and immediate need for housing in the District. Depending on how many workers choose to live in town, the need for new housing could range from 25 – 50 additional homes. In comparison, if the District were to continue “business as usual”, demand for new homes could remain static.

As is outlined in Section 5.5, currently, 70% of the District of Wells housing stock is single-family dwellings, and the remaining 30% is multi-family housing (apartments, duplexes, or townhomes). In an enhanced growth scenario, the District of Wells could meet its residential land needs with 3.6 – 5.6 hectares (9 - 14 acres) of land developed with a mix of 29% multi-family and 71% single-family. Within the Wells Townsite area there is sufficient vacant land to meet this development need.

### 5.11.1 GROWTH MANAGEMENT AREAS

Figure 20: Growth Management Areas illustrates priority areas for growth in the District of Wells and references the following Growth Management Areas:

- 1) **Wells Townsite Area:** The Wells Townsite Area provides a boundary for containing urban development to maintain a compact settlement pattern and minimize development in natural resource lands, environmentally sensitive areas, or hazard areas.
- 2) **Rural and Outdoor Recreation Area:** The Rural and Outdoor Recreation area is intended for natural resource extraction, outdoor recreation, and rural residential living on lots greater than 4 acres serviced by on-site wells and septic.



### 5.11.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Support growth that allows the District of Wells to continue to be compact and supports sustainable modes of transportation, such as walking and biking.
- .2 Support development that replaces and upgrades existing water, sewer and road infrastructure and minimizes the District's ongoing operating, maintenance, and replacement costs of infrastructure.
- .3 Reduce residential development pressure on natural resource lands and protect environmentally sensitive and hazardous areas.
- .4 Support a strong urban/rural edge that aligns with natural features.

### 5.11.1.B Policies

It is the policy of Council to:

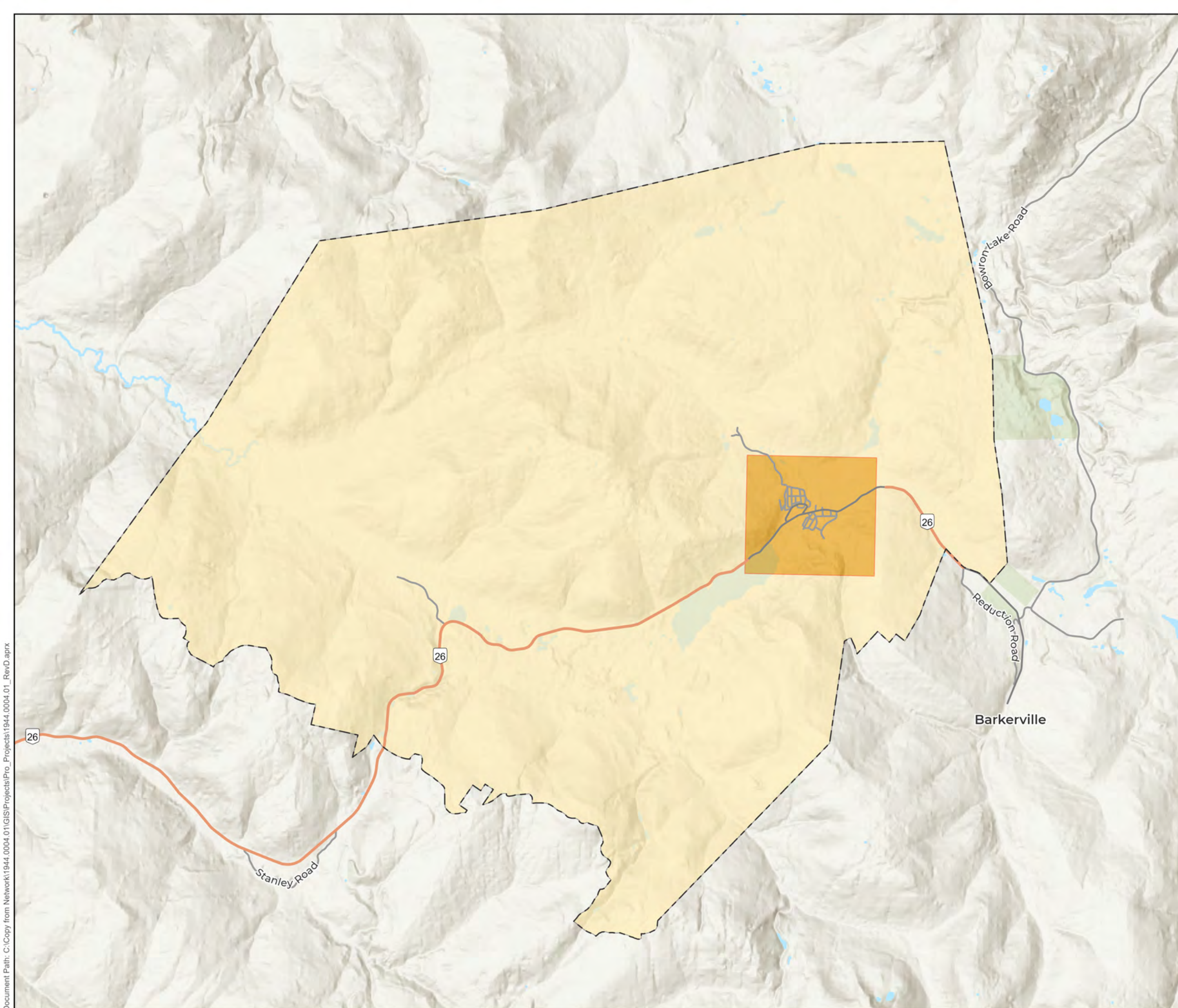
- .1 Encourage and support growth within the Wells Townsite Area with incentives, District investment, partnerships, and regulations.
- .2 Support growth patterns that are similar in size and scale to existing development patterns in the District of Wells.
- .3 Prioritize public investments in the Wells Townsite Area, including capital investments in biking/walking infrastructure, streetscape improvements, parks and other public open spaces, utility upgrades, communications, and energy infrastructure. Repairs and maintenance should also be prioritized in these areas.
- .4 Ensure all new subdivisions in the District adhere to Northern Health guidelines.



District of Wells  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. XX

**Growth Management Areas**

- [---] Municipal Boundary
- Growth Management Area
  - Wells Townsite Area
  - Rural Resource Area



Scale: 1:70,000

## 5.12 SAND AND GRAVEL DEPOSITS

Figure 21: Sand and Gravel Deposits identifies locations of sand and gravel tenures within the District of Wells. Sand and gravel are important resources that are necessary for communities to build new infrastructure, maintain roads, and support industrial activity. If a community does not have a nearby supply of sand and gravel, the transportation costs required to transport sand and gravel can become limiting. Sand and gravel extraction is associated with negative impacts (such as noise, dust, air quality, visual aesthetics, etc.) and the policies in the OCP seek to minimize the negative impacts of sand and gravel extraction while ensuring there is a sufficient supply of these important resources.

### 5.12.1.A Objectives

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Work collaboratively with the Province, residents, and the aggregate industry to manage aggregate resources in the long term.
- .2 Encourage responsible aggregate removal and deposit that minimizes the negative impacts on residents.
- .3 Direct sand and gravel extraction activities toward sites that have minimal environmental impact or where impacts can be mitigated.

### 5.12.1.B Policies

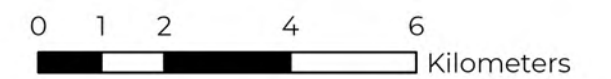
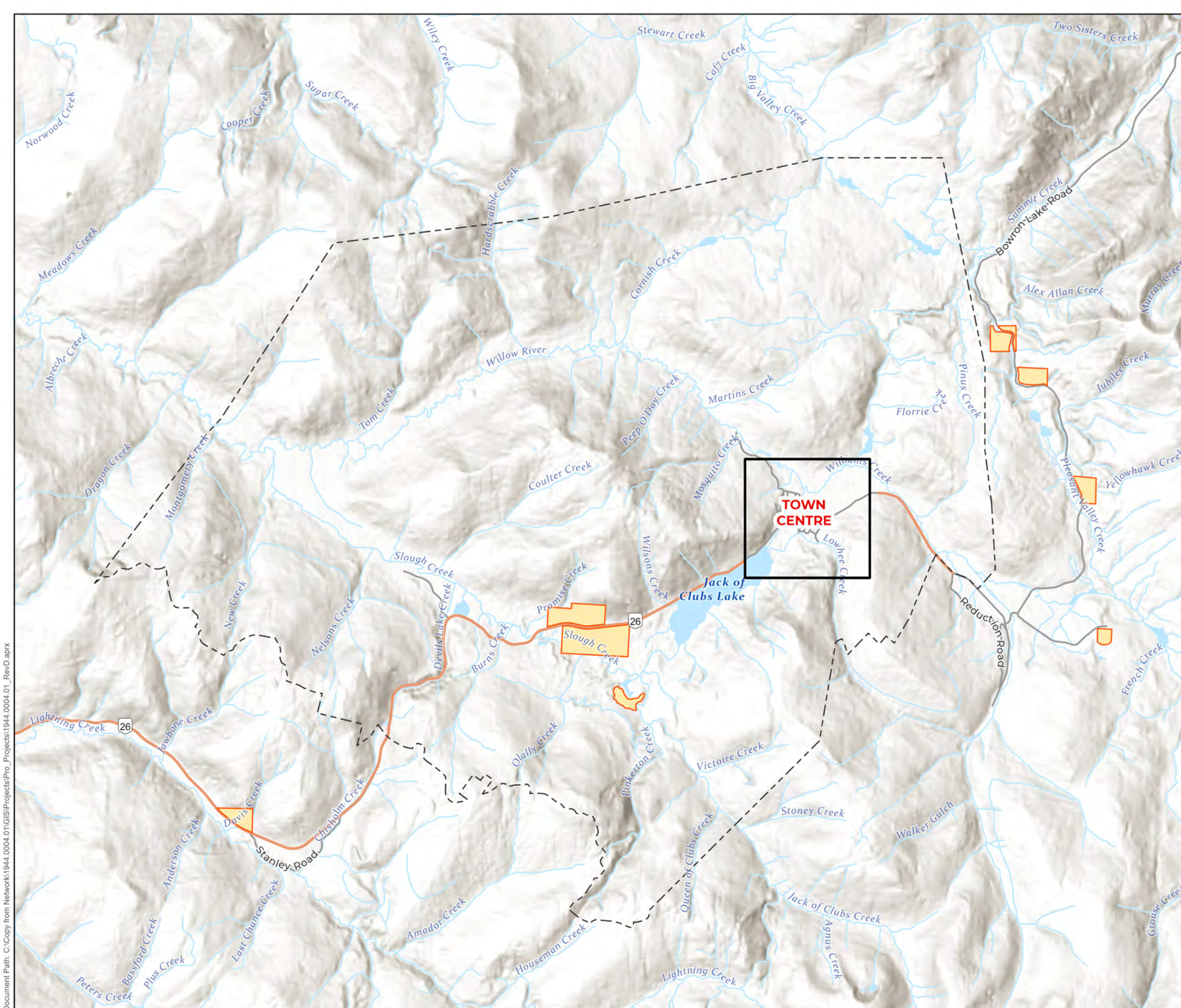
It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Encourage the Province to continue referrals of mineral exploration proposals to the District for comment and due consideration of the impact of resource extraction on surrounding communities and land uses.
- .2 Support the use of designated Rural and Outdoor Recreation areas for sand and gravel extraction where the uses will not cause a significant visual, auditory, community or environmental impact.
- .3 Collaborate with the Province to ensure new surface leases and permits within 1,000 metres of the townsite area or designated residential areas do not have detrimental impacts to the community's quality of life.
- .4 Consider rezoning applications for the processing of aggregate resources based on any or all the following criteria:
  - a. extent of visual screening and other mitigation works proposed,
  - b. type of processing proposed,
  - c. prevailing wind direction, and the potential for noise and dust,
  - d. compatibility with adjacent land uses,
  - e. environmental sensitivity of the site, and lands adjacent to potential aggregate resource processing site,
  - f. accessibility, and
  - g. characteristics of aggregate deposits and impacts on groundwater resources.



District of Wells  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. XX  
Sand and Gravel Tenures

- Municipal Boundary
- Sand and Gravel Tenures



Scale: 1:120,000

## 6.0 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS & TEMPORARY USE PERMITS

The *Local Government Act* provides the authority for local governments to require and issue Development Permits prior to the issuance of a building permit or approval of a subdivision in certain specific areas where it is believed that the achievement of certain public objectives requires them. The Development Permit system provides the local government with the process and guidelines to influence and enhance development beyond the provisions of the Zoning and Subdivision Bylaws.

### 6.1 COMMERCIAL CORE

#### 6.1.1 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT DESIGNATED AREA

All lands designated Commercial Core on Schedule A Future Land Use – Townsite require a Development Permit. The purpose of this Development Permit Area (DPA) is to preserve and enhance Well's unique mining inspired character and design. The Commercial Core Development Permit Area is designated under the following sections of the Local Government Act: The requirement for a Development Permit applies to all commercial, multifamily, and intensive mixed-use developments, but not to single family dwellings.

Section 488 (1) (d) - for revitalization of an area in which commercial use is permitted, and  
Section 488 (1) (f) - form and character of commercial or multi-family residential development

#### 6.1.2 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT TRIGGERS

The *Local Government Act* imposes development permit requirements in development permit areas. Unless exempted by 7.1.5, a development permit must be obtained when any of the following types of development activity occur in the Commercial Core Development Permit Area, in accordance with Section 489 of the *Local Government Act*:

1. Subdivision of land;
2. Construction, addition, or alteration of a building or other structure; or .
3. Alteration of land.

### 6.1.3 COMMERCIAL CORE OVERVIEW

The Commercial Core area was originally developed during the gold rush years of 1930 to 1935 and still contains many original buildings dating from this period. Revitalization and preservation of Well's unique mining inspired character and design have long been recognized as key to the community's economic future.

A "1930's Mining Town" design theme has been established to guide the reconstruction and renovation of existing buildings and the design and construction of new buildings. The development permit designation is required to ensure that this design theme is carried out consistently and it is a vehicle to protect the investments made in the heritage resources. The intent of the DPA is to preserve the heritage character of the community and to provide attractive visual landscape to encourage and attract visitors and residents.

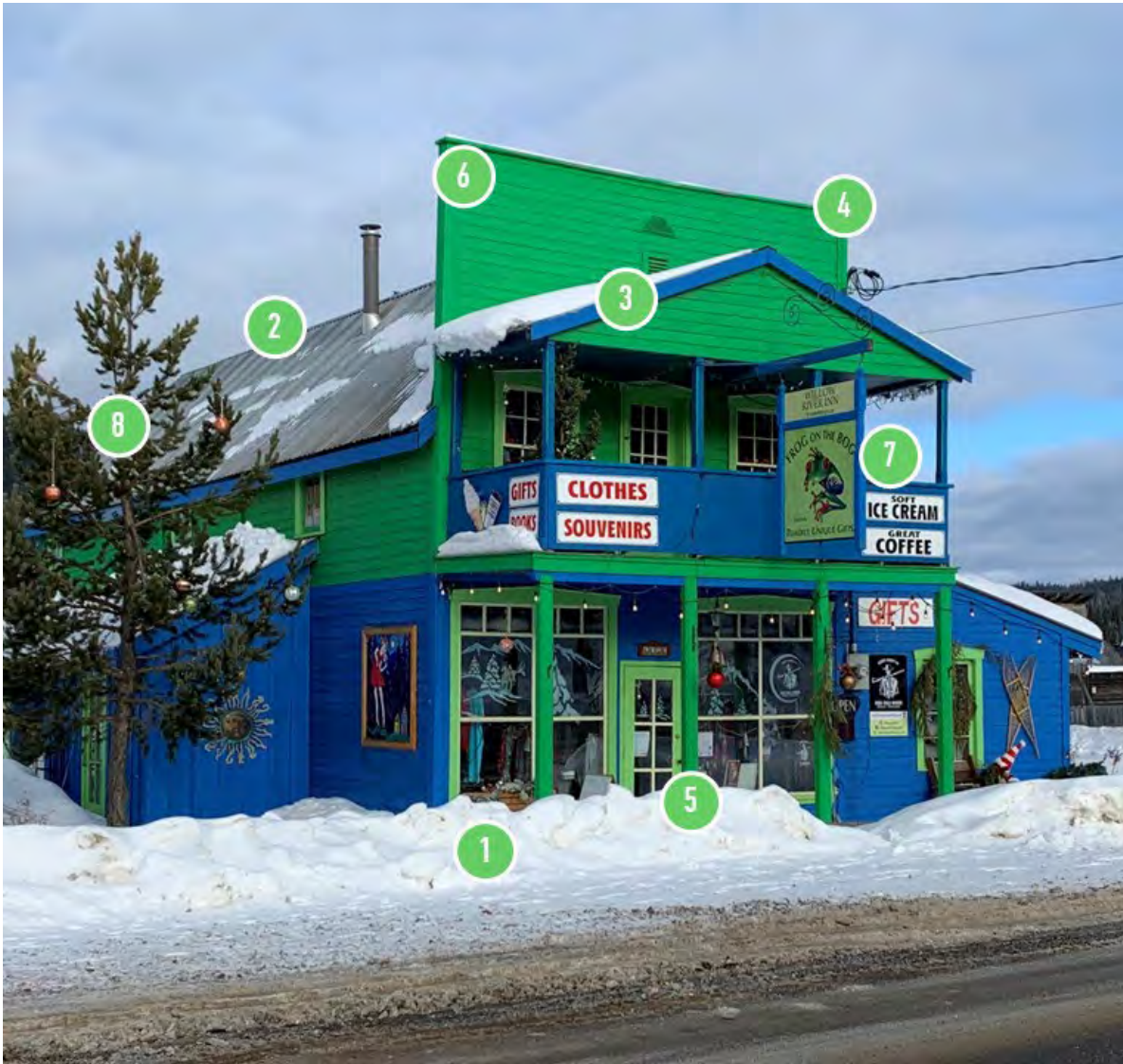
Of critical importance of this Development Permit Area is the preservation and restoration of Pooley Street, Sanders Avenue and Highway 26.

### 6.1.4 COMMERCIAL CORE THEME

The purpose of the Commercial Core Development Permit Area is to preserve and enhance Well's unique mining inspired character and design. The overall design theme is characterized by brightly coloured wooden buildings adorned with contrasting window and door frames and false facades. The core itself is pedestrian scaled and designed to function in a time before most people used personal vehicles to get around. The Figures on the following pages are photos of existing buildings in the Commercial Core DPA and are annotated to illustrate specific design and character features new developments should strive to incorporate. The numbered features are described in more detail in the guidelines provided in the following section.

### Did you know?

The community survey revealed that the District of Wells residents are very passionate about the District retaining its charm and small-town character which makes it a unique place to live. They would like future growth and development to complement this character and build upon what the District of Wells is recognized for. Residents want to see older homes renovated to reflect Well's unique mining inspired character and design and for new housing to be similar to existing infrastructure. Residents would also like to see the District of Wells maintained as a walkable and compact community.



**Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1**

1. Principal Buildings should be oriented towards the street
2. Gabled roofs
3. Secondary roof forms for building add-ons to enhance character
4. Bright colours encouraged
5. Door designs that complement windows
6. False facades in keeping with historical character
7. Arcade signs encouraged
8. Introduce trees where ever possible



**Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 2**

1. Varied rooflines and massing for visual interest
2. Sufficient roof overhangs
3. Siding detail, narrow horizontal profile with vertical boards at edges
4. Well defined window casings and mullions
5. False facades in keeping with historical character
6. Building signs that reflect the character of the tenant or use



## 6.1.5 COMMERCIAL CORE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

Development permits issued in these areas shall be in accordance with the guidelines set out below, provided that as is referred to below, the intention is that there will be a greater need for requirements respecting the character of the development in accordance with these guidelines in the Commercial Core and that not all the guidelines referred to below may be applicable to development outside the Commercial Core area:

### BUILDING SITING AND ORIENTATION

1. The shape, siting, and form of new buildings in the Development Permit Area should correspond with that of existing buildings.
2. In the Heritage Core, buildings should be located close to the street. On-street parking (i.e., parallel or angular) and landscaped open space (e.g., treed boulevard) is permitted between the building and the street. Space for pedestrians, commercial activity, and snow clearing and storage is encouraged between the building and the street.
3. For sites with two or more buildings, the principal building should be located closest to the street, with secondary buildings located to the side or back of the principal building.
4. Natural features (e.g., creeks, specimen trees) and unique site or neighbourhood conditions (e.g., heritage building, sculpture) should be respected.
5. For stand-alone buildings on a site, the front of the building and the main entrance should face the principal street. (**Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 1**)
6. Where there are two or more buildings on a site, the front of the building and the main entrance may face the principal street or the public open space between the buildings.

### BUILDING MASSING AND FORM

1. Site design should consider the preservation and enhancement of view corridors to open areas and viewscales.
2. Buildings shall be sited to ensure that any adjacent residential properties have visual privacy, as well as protection from site illumination and noise.
3. Building massing should respond to a human scale with materials and details that are proportionate to human height and provide visual interest at the street and sidewalk level. Low eave lines or one-storey add-on elements (e.g., overhang, porch, arcade) can be used to achieve this.
4. Buildings should create visual interest by providing variations in height, rooflines, and massing. (**Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 2 – Detail 1**)
5. Buildings should avoid building plans that are repetitive or monolithic.
6. Buildings that have a significant mass or large facade area should be broken down into smaller masses. This may be done through the addition of building forms that

reflect examples of 1930s rural architecture. The need for reducing the apparent bulk of the building decreases as the distance between the building and the nearest public sidewalk or open space increases. Similarly, those areas of the building with a pedestrian focus (e.g., entrances, patios, walkways) should also have a reduced bulk and an emphasis on a pedestrian scale.

7. Garages should not be visually prominent, mitigated through the use of staggered setbacks and varied orientation, materials, scale, and finishes.
8. Building massing should allow for adequate space for snow clearing and storage.

## BUILDING ROOFS

1. Roofs for principal buildings are usually gabled, having a peak that runs the length of the building and roof that slopes away on either side of the peak at an equal pitch. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 2)**
2. Roof overhangs should be 300mm to 600mm. (Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 2 – Detail 2)
3. Secondary roof forms (e.g., gables, and shed roofs for building add-ons, covered porches, dormers, cupolas) are encouraged where they enhance the form and character of the building. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 3)**
4. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be hidden behind screens or parapets designed as an integral part of a building to conceal such equipment.
5. The use of metal roofing materials should be prioritized where appropriate.
6. Snow should be positively shed or positively retained. Snow diverters or snow retainers should be designed as an integral part of the roofscape.
7. Fully protect building entrances and pedestrian routes from snow shed and ice accumulation utilizing, angled roofs, dormers, canopies or other means
8. Runoff from roofs should be collected and directed to planting areas or drains. Internal storm drainage or stormwater retention may be required.
9. All stairs and ramps providing access to buildings should be roofed.

## BUILDING FACADES

1. A commercial building may be constructed of any material acceptable under the building code with the front and visible sides covered by appropriate siding such as horizontal, narrow profile (3"-6" wide) wood siding with vertical corner boards, asphalt shingles, composite material or logs. Aluminum or vinyl siding, imitation brick or stone, concrete block, plywood, cardboard sheet, and rough wood siding will be discouraged. Windows should be wood-framed and many paned. Doors should be made of wood and should be framed. The overall design should be cohesive and representative of a commercial building in the 1930s. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 2 – Detail 3)**
2. Large blank walls should not dominate the buildings, and where windows/dormers/bays are not possible, landscaping should be used to mitigate the blank walls.

3. In general, the use of material should remain consistent for the entire building or the individual masses/components of the building. Secondary building components (e.g., add-ons) may have different materials or use the same material in a different manner than the primary mass of the building.
4. Incorporate FireSmart principles and materials.

## COLOUR

1. There is no requirement to follow a heritage colour scheme. However, the innovative use of colour, such as has been used by other resort communities such as Silver Star, is encouraged. Multi-colour paint schemes are encouraged.
2. Bright and eclectic colour schemes are encouraged. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 4)**

## WINDOWS

1. The ground floor level of the front facade should be relatively transparent and can have a high proportion of windows. Ground level side and back facades that do not front on a street or pedestrian open space should be transparent and should have more wall area than window opening area.
2. Large panes of glass are not characteristic. A window opening divided by mullions or partitions into two or more smaller openings is preferred. This applies to large display windows, transom windows, single windows, and windows in doors.
3. Windows should be deeply recessed. Facades where the window and wall planes appear nearly flush, producing a flat appearance, are inappropriate.
4. Windows should have clearly defined casing and mullions. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 2 – Detail 4)**
5. Reflective glass and reflective window coverings or films are not appropriate.
6. Large windows should not face directly onto adjacent properties.

## DOORS

1. The front entrance doorway may be flush with the facade or recessed. Recessed doorways provide an opportunity to increase the area of display window. Doorways and entrances that project out from the facade are not appropriate.
2. Doorways should be built and designed to shelter people from rain and snow.
3. Door design should complement the design of the window openings and the overall facade. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 5)**

## FEATURES AND APPURTENANCES

1. Exterior design guidelines shall apply to the parts of a building visible from the street(s). Council may exempt from the guidelines, parts of the building which do not have a significant visual impact on the streetscape.

2. False facades, decorative cornices, heritage fascias and other appropriate embellishments will be encouraged and should have a cornice, or cap feature, on their top edge. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 6 & Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 2 – Detail 5)**
3. Structural appurtenances (e.g., dormers, arcades, porches, balconies, add-ons or attached room/shed structures) should be used to provide a more pedestrian scale and reflect the character of traditional agrarian architecture in the area.
4. False facades and parapets may be used on the fronts of commercial buildings to screen the building mass behind and provide an identity unique to that building or use.

## SIGNAGE

1. Signs shall be in keeping with the District of Wells heritage theme and should be considered part of the overall building design. Lettering, size, support structure and material will contribute to the theme.
2. Signs should provide information and direction at a pedestrian scale.
3. Building signage should reflect the character of the tenant or use in the building. The location and nature of the sign should be considered as an integral part of the facade, and not as an afterthought. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 2 – Detail 6)**
4. Facade-mounted, doorway, hanging, and arcade signs are encouraged, as are sign bands and window-painted signs. Direct painting of signage onto the facade is also acceptable. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 7)**
5. In the Wells Townsite area or a main street area, pole-mounted, free-standing, awning, trailer, and bill-board signs are not appropriate.
6. The use of backlighting and neon lighting is discouraged in favour of mounted spot lighting of the sign.

## LIGHTING

1. Outdoor site lighting should be provided for walkways, sidewalks, arcades, driveways, parking lots and loading areas to enhance personal safety and site security.
2. Lighting should be directed and/or shielded to provide light to the facility or area intended to be lit. “Spillage” or “overthrow” of light to adjacent buildings and uses is discouraged.
3. Facade lighting of buildings is discouraged, as is lighting of the site from building-mounted lights. High mast area lighting is inappropriate.
4. Colour temperature of light should be warm and soft. Cool tones should be avoided.
5. Where possible, the use of energy-efficient LED lights is encouraged.

## LANDSCAPING

1. Buildings and vehicle areas should be sited and articulated to provide positive outdoor space for pedestrian activities (e.g., walking, social gatherings, shopping, outdoor eating, and entertainment).
2. Building edges and corners should be softened with landscaping and planting.
3. Outdoor storage areas and waste containers should be screened with walls, fencing, hedging, planting, other screening materials, or a combination of these materials.
4. The development should introduce trees wherever possible. **(Commercial Core DPA Detail Figure 1 – Detail 8)**

## OTHER

1. Buildings and structures should be permanent in nature and should not appear to be temporary structures or trailers.
2. The hours of operation of restaurants, club houses, licensed premises and other ancillary uses that are associated with recreation commercial development should be regulated in order to minimize the impacts that such activities may have on adjacent properties.

## 6.1.6 EXEMPTIONS

A Commercial Core Development Permit is not required for:

- Subdivisions.
- Minor text or tenant content changes to existing signage when overall design and colours remain unchanged.
- Any residential building other than a residential building that contains a non-residential use on the ground floor.
- The following minor alterations:
  - Interior renovations
  - Exterior maintenance requiring only the repair or replacement of existing surface materials and colours.
  - Changes to plant material in established landscaped areas.
  - An alteration which is limited to the addition, replacement or alteration of doors, windows, building trim or roofs.

## 6.2 TEMPORARY USE PERMITS

A Temporary Use Permit (TUP) is a tool to allow a short-term use that does not comply with the Zoning Bylaw and may be utilized where a condition prevails that warrants such a use for a short period of time but does not warrant a change of land use designation or zoning of the land.

### 6.2.1 DESIGNATION OF TEMPORARY USE PERMIT AREAS

The issuance of TUP can be considered in all Official Community Plan designations within the District of Wells.

### 6.2.2 OBJECTIVES

It is the objective of Council to:

- .1 Avoid conflicts between different types of uses (i.e., residential, commercial, and industrial).
- .2 Provide for temporary approval of transitional uses or uses where uncertainty exists respecting appropriateness or viability of the use and where it is premature to decide upon rezoning and long-term land use rights.
- .3 Ensure that TUPs are not considered a substitute for a rezoning application. In addition to development procedures requirements, TUPs will be considered against the following criteria:

## 6.2.3 POLICIES

It is the policy of Council to:

- .1 Consideration should be given to environmental protection, post-development site restoration, noise and nuisance abatement measures, operational hours, duration of permitted use, traffic management, parking, performance security, and the establishment of buffers or screening.
- .2 The District's evaluation of a TUP proposal should consider the following criteria:
  - a. The use must be clearly temporary, short-term or seasonal in nature
  - b. Compatibility of the proposal with adjacent uses;
  - c. Impact of the proposed use on the natural environment, including groundwater, wildlife, and all environmentally sensitive areas, and the proposed remedial measures to mitigate any damage to the natural environment as a result of the temporary use;
  - d. Intensity of the proposed use;
  - e. Inability to conduct the proposed use on land elsewhere in the community;
  - f. Must be reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure with respect to access to and effect on Provincial Highways.
- .3 The District may require the applicant for a TUP provides financial security to the municipality (in accordance with the Local Government Act) to ensure that conditions of the permit are met.
- .4 The District may require the applicant for a TUP do the following by a date specified in the permit:
  - a. Demolish or remove a building or structure, and/or
  - b. Restore land described in the permit to a condition specified in the permit.
- .5 Temporary use permits will be granted for a period of six (6) months.

## 7.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The District of Wells OCP sets out statements on the broad objectives, policies, and directions for the Plan area. This section includes detailed options for implementing the plan through Actions, Partnerships, procedures, updates to existing documents and other legislative tools. The purpose of this section is to set out specific steps the District should take to implement the goals and objectives of the District of Wells OCP. Some of the specific steps are set out in the subsections below.

### 7.1 ACTIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, POLICIES AND BYLAW UPDATES

In addition to implementing the objectives and policies outlined in the plan, the OCP supports pursuing the following specific actions, partnerships, policies, and bylaw updates outlined in the table below. The items in the table below have been developed to activate the objectives and policies in the OCP.

**Table 13: Official Community Plan actions and partnerships.**

OCP Section	Actions and Partnerships
<b>5.1 Climate Change &amp; 5.2 Hazards</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remove Floodplain regulations from the District of Wells Zoning Bylaw and develop a Floodplain Bylaw to identify floodplain risk and regulate development that is at risk of flooding.</li> <li>2. Promote the use of FireSmart building materials and consider enrolling the District of Wells in the FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition Program (FCNRP). FCNRP is a program that provides resources for community-wide action to mitigate wildfire risks.</li> <li>3. Support and encourage fuel management and treatment initiatives that reduce wildfire risk in the District of Wells.</li> <li>4. Promote the District of Wells Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan once it is complete and make it publicly accessible.</li> <li>5. Develop an Emergency Management Plan, as is required by provincial legislation.</li> <li>6. Apply for senior-level government grants to support initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support making the District of Wells more sustainable and resilient.</li> <li>7. Support the compact, pedestrian-first development pattern as outlined in this Plan.</li> <li>8. Invest in infrastructure and initiatives that make active transportation (walking, biking, etc.) the preferred and most convenient mode of transportation in the District of Wells.</li> <li>9. Participate in senior-level government programs to track and monitor greenhouse gas emissions.</li> </ol>



<b>5.3 Water, Air and Environment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The District will acquire land within sensitive environments for the purpose of conservation, and outdoor recreation uses.</li> <li>2. The District will monitor groundwater to ensure a safe drinking water supply for residents.</li> <li>3. The District will support community-led initiatives and partnerships focused on environmental education and monitoring sensitive ecosystems.</li> <li>4. Explore opportunities for partnering with local Indigenous communities on environmental conservation and monitoring initiatives.</li> <li>5. Regulate tree removal on large, private parcels through the use of a Tree Removal Bylaw.</li> </ol>
<b>5.4 Economy</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with local business owners and tourism operators on a strategy for welcoming visitors to the District of Wells.</li> <li>2. Explore the demand for all forms of tourist accommodation.</li> <li>3. Work with existing industrial partners to ensure jobs for residents and to encourage procurement from local businesses.</li> <li>4. Encourage the development of additional local businesses.</li> <li>5. Promote the District of Wells as an attractive location for remote workers.</li> <li>6. Work with utility providers to ensure that there is sufficient capacity for community infrastructure to support future businesses.</li> <li>7. Support Phase 3 electricity in the community.</li> <li>8. Support the Purden Connector Road to Highway 16.</li> </ol>
<b>5.5 Social Development</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply for senior-government grants to fund renovations that provide enhanced accessibility in new civic buildings and developments.</li> <li>2. Play a leadership role in activating the vision set out in the WBCRC Business Plan, including actions such as (but not limited to): facilitating dialogue, leading, or supporting grant applications, and facilitating partnerships with industry and major employers.</li> </ol>
<b>5.6 Housing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply for funding through the Union of BC Municipality's Housing Needs Report Program to develop a Housing Needs Assessment, as is required by provincial legislation.</li> <li>2. If vacation rentals are limiting housing availability for residents and workers, establish a zone limiting vacation rentals to specific locations.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In partnership with industry, heritage and tourism organizations, and other government agencies, lead the development of housing that provides an alternative option to work camps, generates long-term community benefits, and enhances community cohesion.</li> </ol>
<b>5.7 Parks, Outdoor Recreation and Active Living</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop funding programs to provide sustainable funding streams for trail maintenance to reduce the burden on volunteers in the District of Wells while still allowing volunteer organizations to continue managing and developing trail networks.</li> <li>Consider developing a Parkland Acquisition Policy or Bylaw to require that developers provide parkland or 5% cash-in-lieu of parkland when developing new subdivisions, as is permitted under the <i>Local Government Act</i>.</li> <li>Create an active transportation plan that incorporates the existing trail network.</li> <li>Work with the mining proponent and the Province to establish a new park on Jack of Clubs Lake.</li> </ol>
<b>6.1 Growth Management</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an Asset Management Strategy to determine infrastructure upgrades that are required to support growth identified in Figure 20: Growth Management Areas and Schedule A Future Land Use – Townsite.</li> </ol>
<b>6.2 Future Land Use Designations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Development Procedures Bylaw to provide a consistent and clear process for managing development proposals.</li> <li>Develop a Subdivision and Servicing Bylaw.</li> <li>Require proponents of new residential areas to develop a Neighbourhood Plan to inform new subdivision development. This Neighbourhood Plan could include detailed strategies for street layout and streetscape, lot configuration, trails and parks, environmental protection, and the design of buildings.</li> <li>Explore feasibility of developing a Development Cost Charges Bylaw to collect fees from developers to support the ongoing costs of infrastructure maintenance.</li> </ol>
<b>6.3 Transportation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As and if anticipated growth occurs, develop a Streetscape Plan for the Historic Mixed-Use Core to ensure that the District of Wells continues to be safe, comfortable, and interesting for pedestrians.</li> <li>Apply for senior government grants and foster partnerships to make investments in active transportation infrastructure.</li> <li>Support the Purden Connector Road to Highway 16.</li> </ol>
<b>6.4 Utilities and Community Infrastructure</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct storm water study - Currently, the District of Wells has no storm infrastructure and with increased development/paved areas, there may be a need for it, particularly given the high-water table in South Wells.</li> </ol>

## **7.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **7.2.1 REFINEMENTS**

The District will make refinements to the District of Wells OCP as is necessary and may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Coordination with changes to Provincial legislation (e.g., Local Government Act, Community Charter, etc.)
2. Coordination with new or revised Provincial plans and policies that relate to land use and community issues within the District.
3. Changes to the known geographic extent of Environmentally Sensitive Areas, as determined through the review of plans, reports and applications submitted by project proponents to the District.
4. Minor text changes, revisions and figure updates that do not affect the overall policies and goals of the plan.

### **7.2.2 OCP AMENDMENTS**

An OCP is considered a living policy document. It is intended to adapt to new trends within society and respond to changing circumstances within the community. As such, following careful consideration by the District of Wells Council, policies and land use designations in this OCP may be revised by an amending bylaw under provisions outlined within the Local Government Act.

When an application for amendments is received, the application is circulated amongst District Staff and external agencies for review. Subsequent to this, there is also a legislated requirement to hold a public hearing for the proposed amendments, which is open to all stakeholders and the public.

A comprehensive review of the OCP should occur every five to ten years, with public open houses being held to review all major development proposals before the formal public hearing process.

### **7.2.3 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES**

Under Section Part 14, Division 6 of the Local Government Act, the District may require applicants for OCP amendments, development permits, or temporary use permits to provide development approval information.

The District will require development information to approve a Development Permit application in areas covered by this plan (development approval information areas).

The objective in designating the Plan Area as a development approval information area is to enable the District to gain a sound understanding of the anticipated impact of the

proposed activity or development on the community and to make a well-informed decision regarding such applications.

Conditions in this section will be used to evaluate all proposed amendments to the OCP for permitting development.

Potential OCP amendments for any proposed development will be evaluated on the following basis:

1. The impact of the proposed development causes unacceptable impacts to the community or environment;
2. The impact of the proposed development negatively affects the quality of life of the District of Wells residents;
3. The level of integration with the overall patterns of development in the District of Wells;
4. Any implications for District finance or assets;
5. Whether or not the development meets the applicable criteria established in the OCP Policies and/or Land Use Regulations;
6. Whether or not the uses proposed are compatible with the permitted uses of adjacent parcels;
7. The impact of the proposed development on public facilities such as parks, trails, public spaces, and/or other community amenities;
8. The impact of the proposed development on groundwater quantity and quality, surface water generated by the proposed development, and the options for collection, storage, and dispersal of such drainage;
9. The impact of the proposed development on community watersheds;
10. The impact of the proposed development on the natural environment such as adjacent aquatic areas, vegetation, soils and erosion, geotechnical characteristics, topographical features, ecosystems and biological diversity, fish and wildlife, fish and wildlife habitat, environmentally sensitive features, and rare or endangered plant or animal species;
11. The ability of the proposed development to provide on-site water and septic disposal or to connect to community services, if available;
12. The impact of the proposed development on public infrastructure and community services such as water supply, fire protection systems, and recycling;
13. The aesthetic values of the proposed development, such as integration with the natural environment, lighting, noise, and odour; and,
14. The archaeological impact of a proposed development in areas identified to have high archaeological potential.

In addition to other evaluation requirements, proposals for industrial development; other major projects, such as new mines will be evaluated in terms of:

- the project not negatively affecting surrounding areas by generating excessive noise or odours;

- the project avoiding uses or development patterns that detract from the overall quality of the District of Wells as a community.

All evaluations required by this section are deemed to be advisory for the purpose of providing staff and Council with the information needed to evaluate proposed OCP amendments. While a project may satisfy all of the evaluation criteria as described above, these are guidelines, and the District is not bound to make a decision (favourable or unfavourable) on the basis of those guidelines.

## **7.2.4 JUSTIFICATION**

The development of lands may have implications with respect to the achievement of the objectives of the District of Wells OCP. It is important that the District Council, staff, and members of the local community have sufficient information to form a well-considered opinion about the appropriateness of any proposed future development, its degree of compliance with the OCP and whether any conditions should be placed on the development. The requirement to provide Development Approval Information is intended to provide such information.

## **7.2.5 LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act, this OCP includes statements and map designations for the area covered by the Plan respecting the following:

1. the approximate location, amount, type, and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least five years;
2. the approximate location, amount, and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational, resource extraction, and public utility land uses;
3. the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction;
4. restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that are environmentally sensitive to development;
5. the approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer, and water systems;
6. the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites;
7. housing policies respecting affordable housing, rental housing, and special needs housing; and
8. targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan and policies and actions of the local government proposed on achieving those targets.

## 7.3 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW & PROCEDURES

Conditions in this section are consistent with development approval practices as detailed in the Local Government Act and will be used to evaluate all proposed amendments to the OCP for permitting development. For the purpose of sections 484 and 485 of the Local Government Act, development approval information may be required under any of the following circumstances:

- .6 The development results in any of the following:
  - a. A change in Official Community Plan land use designation,
  - b. A change in zoning,
  - c. A requirement for a development permit, or
  - d. A requirement for a temporary commercial or industrial use permit.
- .7 The development may result in impacts on:
  - a. Transportation patterns and traffic flow,
  - b. Infrastructure including sewer, water, roads, drainage, street lighting, and other infrastructure,
  - c. Public facilities such as schools and parks,
  - d. Community services, or
  - e. The natural environment.
- .8 The development could result in other impacts that may be of concern to the residents of the District of Wells, District Staff or Council.

Proposed OCP amendments will be evaluated in light of whether the development:

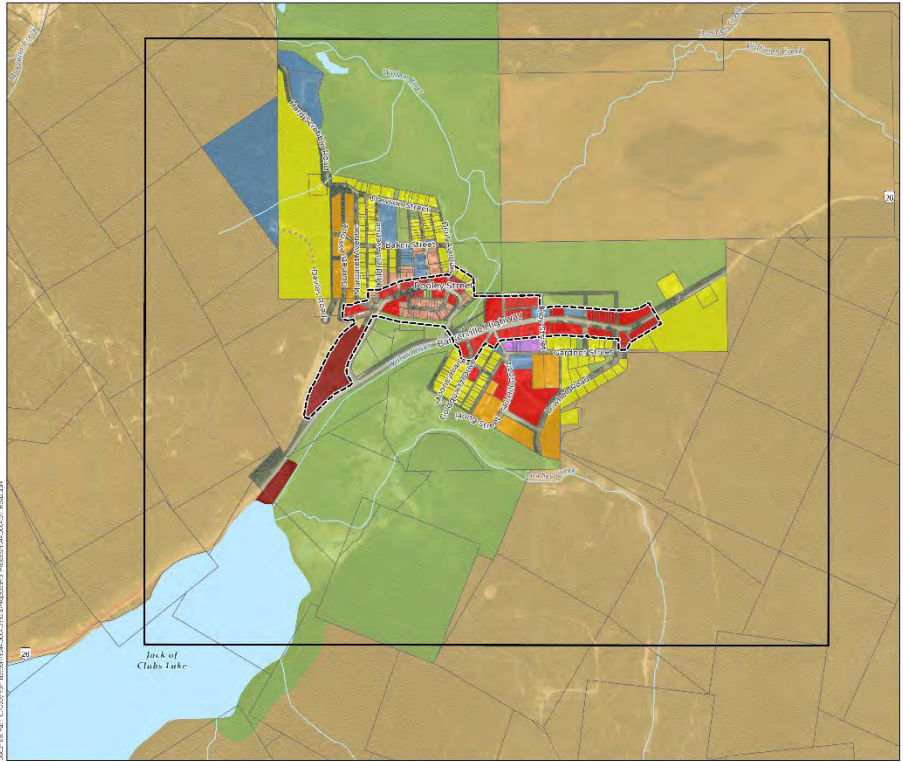
- a. causes unacceptable impacts to the community or environment,
- b. impacts on quality of life of District of Wells residents,
- c. supports the overall patterns of development of the community,
- d. impacts District finances and/or assets,
- e. impacts existing community facilities and pathways,
- f. causes environmental impacts, including wildlife and hazardous conditions,
- g. impacts to First Nations interests and rights
- h. supports community infrastructure,
- i. meets the applicable criteria established in the OCP Policies and,
- j. proposes uses that are compatible with the permitted uses of adjacent parcels.

In addition to other evaluation requirements, proposals for commercial, light industrial or heavy industrial development will be evaluated in terms of whether:

- a. the project negatively affects surrounding areas by generating excessive noise or odours,
- b. the project will maintain a high quality and appearance and,
- c. the project avoids uses or development patterns that detract from the overall quality of life in the District of Wells.

All evaluations required by this section are deemed to be advisory for the purpose of providing staff and Council with the information needed to evaluate proposed amendments to the District of Wells Official Community Plan. While a project may satisfy all of the evaluation criteria as described above, these are guidelines, and the District is not bound to make a decision (favourable or unfavourable) on the basis of those guidelines.

# SCHEDULE A FUTURE LAND USE - TOWNSITE



District of Wells  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. XX

## Future Land Use - Town Site

- Commercial Core DPA
- Town Centre Map Extent
- Land Use**
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Commercial Recreation
- Residential Commercial
- Institutional
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Urban Parks
- Rural and Outdoor Recreation

0 100 200 400 600 Meters  
Scale: 1:10,000

## SCHEDULE A

Schedule A Future Land Use – Townsite

DRAFT





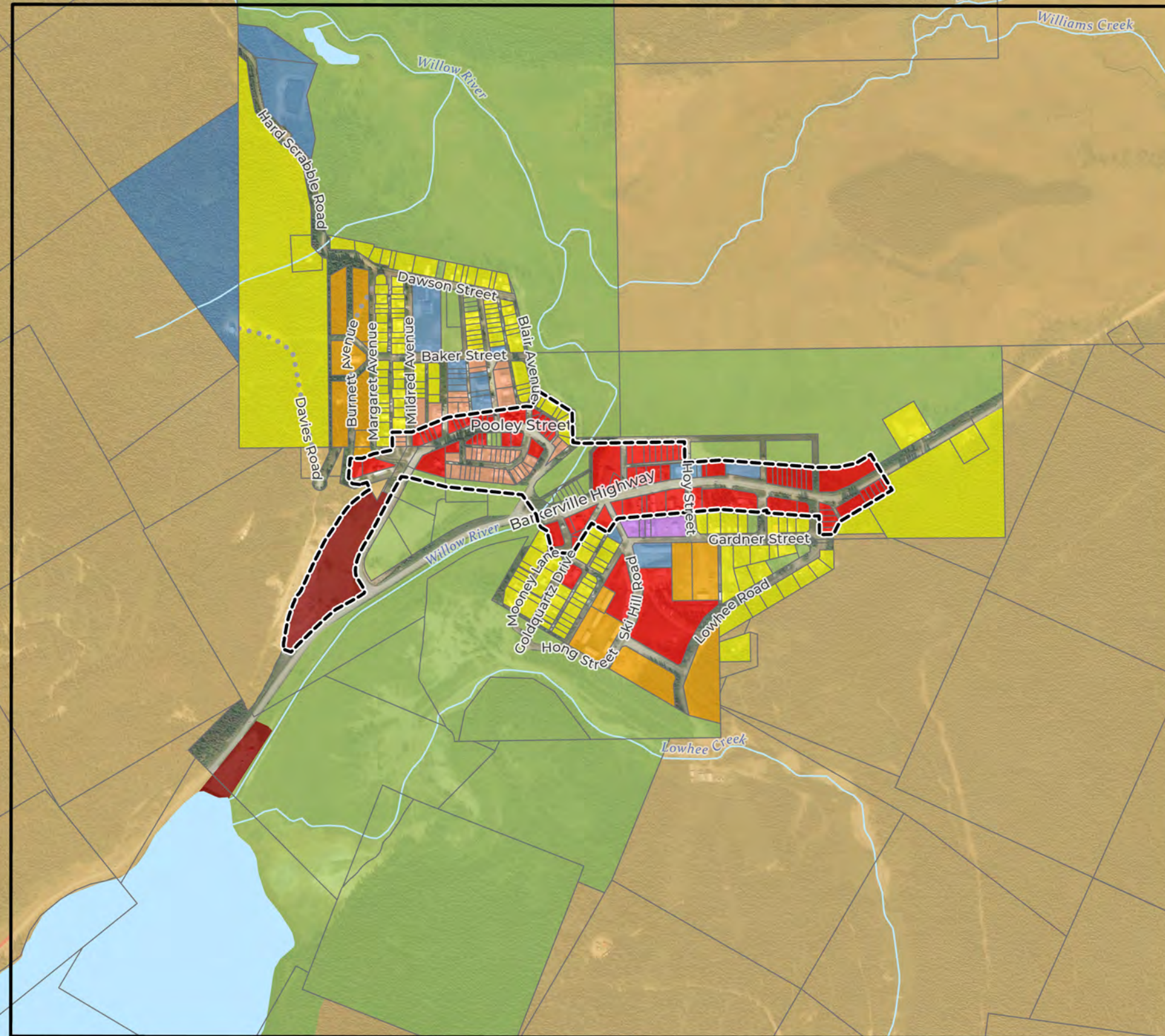
District of Wells  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. XX

**Future Land Use - Town Site**

- Commercial Core DPA
- Town Centre Map Extent

**Land Use**

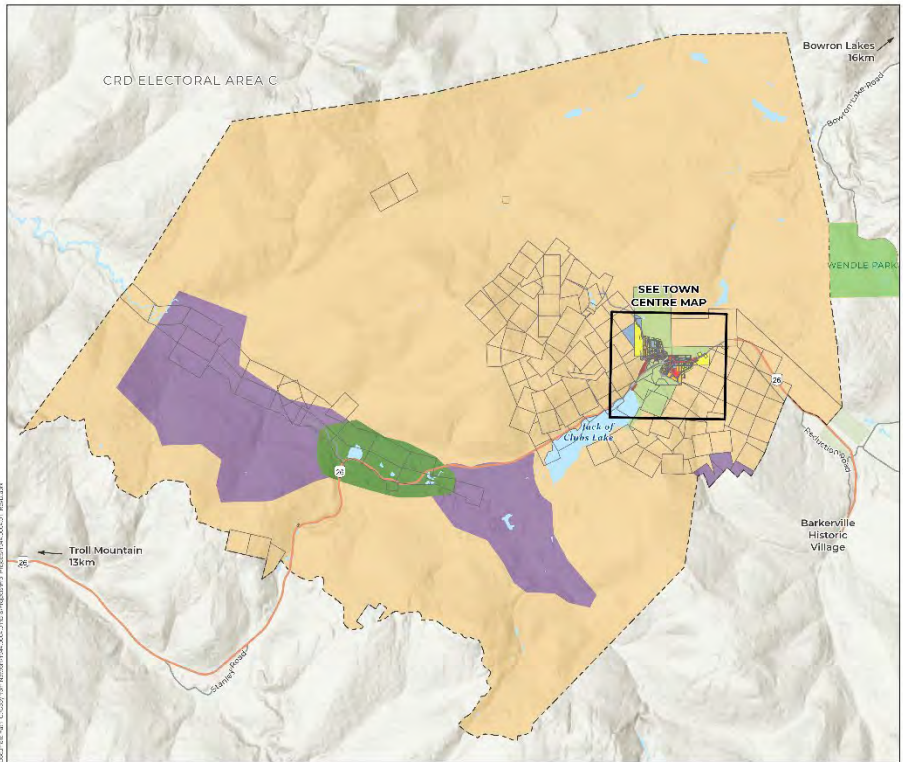
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Commercial Recreation
- Residential-Commercial
- Institutional
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Urban Parks
- Rural and Outdoor Recreation



Scale: 1:10,000

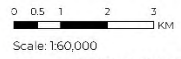
**SCHEDULE A**

# SCHEDULE B FUTURE LAND USE - DISTRICT



District of Wells  
 Official Community Plan  
 Bylaw No. XX  
**Future Land Use**

- Municipal Boundary
- Provincial Parks
- Land Use**
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Commercial Recreation
- Residential-Commercial
- Institutional
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Urban Parks
- Rural and Outdoor Recreation



**SCHEDULE B**

Schedule B Future Land Use - District

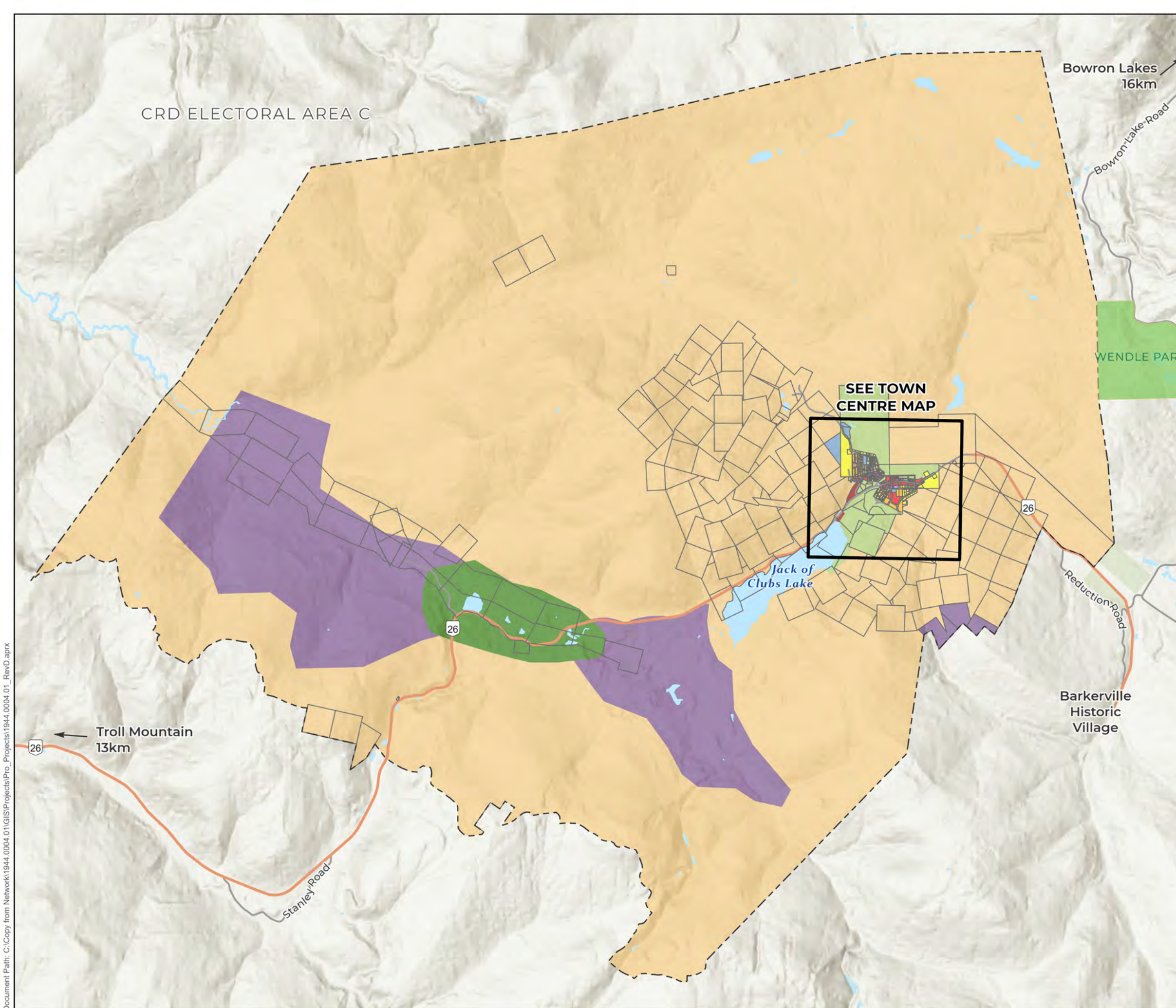
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District of Wells  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. XX

**Future Land Use**

- Municipal Boundary
- Provincial Parks
- Land Use**
  - Low Density Residential
  - Medium Density Residential
  - Commercial
  - Commercial Recreation
  - Residential-Commercial
  - Institutional
  - Light Industrial
  - Heavy Industrial
  - Urban Parks
  - Rural and Outdoor Recreation



Scale: 1:60,000

**SCHEDULE B**

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