

7 Social Development

Social sustainability is one of three dimensions of overall sustainability – the others being environmental and economic. Since the three are inextricably connected and supported by a healthy built environment, this section of the OCP articulates how the City of Prince George can influence social development through the thoughtful application of policies and objectives. By using a range of levers within the jurisdiction of local government and working in partnership with other organizations and levels of government, the City can act on matters of social welfare and demonstrate its commitment to improving quality of life for all citizens. The *Local Government Act* states that OCPs may address social needs, social well-being and social development. Accordingly, this Plan provides context and direction in seven inter-related social development goal areas including: affordable and accessible housing, community identity and pride, cultural richness, equity and inclusion, health and wellness, safety and civic engagement (through the development of a supportive community and strong neighbourhoods). See also Part D for Implementation.

7.1 Cultural Richness

Arts and culture is an important aspect of social, environmental and economic sustainability. The Arts refer to a wide variety of artistic endeavors including but not limited to: performing arts, visual arts, media arts, literary arts, and heritage arts. Culture embodies the values, ideas, and other symbolic meaningful systems that are transmitted and created by a group of people.

Our community's culture is apparent in a variety of ways such as literary, visual and performing arts, recreation throughout the seasons, ethnic cuisine and events, and language and traditions for a few examples. Prince George has a thriving Arts community where citizens can enjoy a rich cultural life through events, facilities, education and community involvement in the Arts. Emerging trends and issues include an aging and more educated population who desire increased Arts opportunities as well as higher quality experiences; increased demand on facilities to accommodate more events; declining volunteerism and funding sources. Inclusion and celebration of the community's range of diversity of interest and practice in Arts is paramount to developing a life-long learning, appreciation and participation in the Arts, in the community. Conserving heritage resources also creates exciting community spaces and acts as a catalyst for compatible development [See also Section 7.4 *Heritage, Identity and Pride*].



(Photograph courtesy Shawn Haines)

Objectives

- Objective 7.1.1 Encourage inclusive community participation in arts and culture that should ensure the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the community.
- Objective 7.1.2 Support and facilitate the development of events, programs and spaces that celebrate culture, place and season.

Policies

- Policy 7.1.1 Support and promote learning, appreciation and participation in the arts and various cultural aspects and events.
- Policy 7.1.2 Continue to partner and work with arts and cultural organizations.
- Policy 7.1.3 Provide leadership in public art planning, endeavor to make space available for public art and encourage private development to incorporate public art.
- Policy 7.1.4 Ensure arts facilities are available to meet the needs of the community.
- Policy 7.1.5 Support and encourage accessibility to arts and cultural services for all citizens and visitors.
- Policy 7.1.6 Support and encourage efforts by community organizations to partner in the maintenance or management of public owned spaces.
- Policy 7.1.7 Encourage partners and organizations to celebrate Prince George's Arts and Culture through festivals and events and encourage the delivery of these events in the downtown.

7.2 Equity and Inclusion

An inclusive community values all its members and helps them to meet their basic needs so they can live with dignity, engage actively, and contribute to their community. Policies and objectives focused on equity and inclusion help ensure the city is affordable, accessible, and welcoming of all cultures, identities and abilities. In an inclusive community, all members have equal opportunities for participation in decisions that affect their lives, allowing all to improve their living standards and overall well-being. Community inclusion is founded on principles of economic and social security as well as justice. It fosters full participation in work, education and society by those who face economic and social barriers.



In 2010, no benchmark data sets regarding measures of social inclusion were available. However, Inclusive Cities Canada (a collaborative venture of five social planning organizations and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities) identified five dimensions of social inclusion that are relevant for the City of Prince George. The dimensions, which provide potential direction for inclusion in the social development component of an OCP include: institutional recognition of diversity; opportunities for human development; quality of civic engagement; cohesiveness of living conditions (provisions for personal and family security that minimize disparities); and adequacy of community services.

Objectives

- Objective 7.2.1 Support measures to ensure all citizens experience equal access to the unique experiences of urban places.
- Objective 7.2.2 In collaboration with partners, support and facilitate a wide variety of social development opportunities for individuals and families with economic and social barriers to enable their active engagement in the community.
- Objective 7.2.3 Provide opportunities for relationship building between First Nations and local governments, such as through annual Community to Community Forums, which allow dialogue between community leaders on areas of common interest.

Policies

- Policy 7.2.1 Facilitate and support collaborative measures to reduce poverty in Prince George.
- Policy 7.2.2 Ensure a delivery system that supports public participation, respects partnerships and values relationships.
- Policy 7.2.3 Manage community expectations by focusing on the greatest needs while improving opportunities for children, youth, seniors and families.
- Policy 7.2.4 Support measures to ensure all children from birth to age five have access to comprehensive early childhood development and care.
- Policy 7.2.5 Support measures to increase high school graduation rates for Aboriginal students.
- Policy 7.2.6 Recognize that Prince George is a racially and culturally diverse community and that diversity is a source of enrichment and vitality.
- Policy 7.2.7 Affirm the equal rights of all persons to access municipal services and employment opportunities and to be treated with respect.

- Policy 7.2.8 Promote the participation of all citizens in the development of non-discriminatory Municipal bylaws, policies, programs, and services.
- Policy 7.2.9 Contribute to harmonious relations by promoting understanding of, and positive attitudes towards, people of all backgrounds and levels of ability.
- Policy 7.2.10 Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination and promote diversity and equal opportunity in all sectors.
- Policy 7.2.11 The City shall continue to work together with the Lheidli T'enneh Band to promote cooperative relationship building as identified within the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation and Communication.

7.3 Health and Wellness

Health can be defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being; it is not just the absence of disease or infirmity. Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a more successful existence. Important components of health and wellness include: active living and healthy eating; recreation and leisure; community food security; health promotion and support services; disease prevention; injury prevention; cultural health and safety; and spiritual health. Investing in health and wellness is important to the economic, environmental and social prosperity and livelihood of our families and community.

Active Living & Healthy Eating: Healthy communities create opportunities for its residents to stay active and eat healthy. Active living is the inclusion of physical activity in daily activities throughout a lifetime. Technology, urbanization, increasingly sedentary work environments and automobile-focused community design have engineered much physical activity out of daily life. Active living relies on the built environment to provide opportunity for active and safe routes to work places, schools, stores, parks and trails. Busy lifestyles, competing priorities, changing family structures and lack of social connectedness may also be contributing to unhealthy eating as well as inactivity. Schools, public buildings and recreation facilities are recognizing the importance of providing environments that promote opportunity for healthy eating as well as physical activity. Access to local and healthy food at the neighbourhood level supports residents in making the healthy choice the easy choice while supporting the local food systems.



(Photograph courtesy the Prince George Citizen).

Recreation & Leisure: Recreation engages people and builds social cohesion, generating healthy and inclusive communities. The public recreation and leisure delivery system plays a key role in the provision of services as well as connecting,

supporting and coordinating community organizations and individuals in the provision of quality life activities. Recreation and Leisure is essential to our well-being, encouraging physical activity, fostering social connections and providing enjoyment for all ages and abilities. Emerging trends and issues in recreation and leisure include aging infrastructure; changes in demographics; changes to sport standards and regulations; new standards for health, safety and the environment; increased need for accessibility; and changing trends in recreation choices. The 2015 Canada Winter Games is a large multi-sport event providing Prince George with a unique opportunity to create a number of lasting legacies to remain in the community long after the event. Our physical legacies will be about building opportunities for new and enhanced infrastructure that meet Canada Games Standards and have a positive impact for our community users and for our ability to attract and host future events.

Food Security: Food and agriculture play an important role in a sustainable community by improving the environment, the economy, the health of our population and our community’s well being. Access to quality, local food is increasing in demand throughout much of North America due to high cost of food, limited availability and a growing awareness in sustainable agriculture. The increasing costs associated with the production and shipping of food can result in limitations for community access to quality food. The production and supply of local food can help provide food security but requires support to establish systems for community food production at all levels.

OCP objectives and policies in this section articulate a municipal role in the retention and creation of health and wellness opportunities.

Objectives

- Objective 7.3.1 Encourage and support a healthy and active community.
- Objective 7.3.2 Support partnerships with groups and organizations to ensure residents have access to active living opportunities and healthy food in the community.
- Objective 7.3.3 Focus recreation and leisure resources on achieving the goal of fostering a sense of community as well as the growth of the individual.
- Objective 7.3.4 Encourage a culture of local, healthy food.



(Photograph courtesy the Prince George Citizen).

Policies

7.3 A. Active Living and Healthy Eating

- Policy 7.3.1 Support and promote active living and healthy eating.
- Policy 7.3.2 Support the implementation of the Healthy Food and Beverage Policy.
- Policy 7.3.3 Encourage the social and physical environments where children live, learn and play to be more supportive of physical activity and healthy eating.
- Policy 7.3.4 Support the development and implementation of an obesity prevention action plan.
- Policy 7.3.5 Support increased consumer access to local and healthy food through local food institutions and retail markets throughout the community.
- Policy 7.3.6 Encourage fast food outlets to locate a minimum distance from youth-oriented facilities such as schools and playgrounds.

7.3 B. Food Security

[See also Section 8.2 Urban Form & Structure]

- Policy 7.3.7 Support agricultural and food systems planning to improve the current state of food systems and to encourage local food self-reliance.
- Policy 7.3.8 Ensure that food and agricultural spaces are accessible to all people.
- Policy 7.3.9 Ensure existing policies and bylaws help eliminate barriers to sustainable food and agriculture systems.
- Policy 7.3.10 Support improvements to public transportation to make grocery stores and farmer's markets accessible to all residents.
- Policy 7.3.11 Support food and agricultural opportunities in education and community facilities, parks and open spaces.
- Policy 7.3.12 Support the development of community gardens and community kitchens.
- Policy 7.3.13 Promote attractive agricultural and community gardens in highly visible public or semi-private spaces, ensuring balance with wildlife considerations. *[See also Section 6.4 B Caring for our Natural Environment & Forests]*

- Policy 7.3.14 Encourage collaboration among industries, such as forestry and agriculture, to foster innovation in local food production.
- Policy 7.3.15 Encourage research and education on local food production and self-reliance.



7.3 C. Recreation and Leisure

- Policy 7.3.16 Manage community expectations by focusing on the greatest needs while supporting and facilitating a wide variety of recreation and leisure options that provide opportunities for all residents to participate regardless of demographics, economic or cultural background.
- Policy 7.3.17 The City should pursue opportunities to enhance and link recreational opportunities within naturalized spaces, where appropriate.
- Policy 7.3.18 The City should promote and support indoor and outdoor activities during winter months for children, adults and seniors.
- Policy 7.3.19 Recognize the value of using publicly sponsored recreation and leisure services to foster a sense of community and identity.
- Policy 7.3.20 Support recreation programming and infrastructure development that meet the emerging recreation trends.

7.4 Heritage, Identity and Pride

Citizens of Prince George want to share a clear identity that the community can be proud of with a strong downtown, a connection to its rivers and natural surroundings, and a tangible link to the City’s historical development. Civic pride initiatives fuel a sense of place characterized by events and initiatives that celebrate culture, place and season that connect and engage people and contribute to the vitality and livability of northern BC’s capital.

Our built heritage is in danger of slowly being eroded through redevelopment or lack of maintenance. Therefore, it is important we identify and protect properties with significant heritage value and heritage character. Heritage planning and resource management is necessary to ensure the unique traits and features that give our community a distinctive quality and appearance are not lost.

Heritage: The community of Prince George has a responsibility to integrate its diverse and interesting heritage into its community planning processes. Conserving

Prince George's historic places and educating people about the historic significance of buildings, events and sites helps to build a legacy for future generations. While heritage conservation has not been a priority in community planning and development in the past, it is seen as an opportunity for building a sense of community identity. It is important that the people who come after us understand what makes this community unique, and a significant part of British Columbia. It is an understanding of the past which guides community development in the future. (See "Built Environment" for additional information on Heritage).

Part of our heritage includes archaeological sites – the physical evidence of how and where people lived in the past. For the vast majority of the time people have lived in this area, no written records were made. Archaeological sites and oral tradition are the only vestiges of this rich history. The Plan area contains 16 recorded archaeological sites and has the potential to contain more. The Province of British Columbia is primarily responsible for protecting and managing archaeological sites, and aboriginal traditional use sites through the *Heritage Conservation Act*. This protection applies to both private and Crown land. However, the City has an interest in protecting these valuable cultural resources by being aware of sensitive, or potentially sensitive, archaeological and aboriginal traditional use sites within the Plan area.

Connection to Nature and Rivers: The proximity to nature and the fact that two major rivers flow through the city's core has provided a unique sense of identity and pride for many Prince George residents. This connection to nature is often the reason that keeps people in the region and is viewed as unique and provides a certain quality of life that is hard to find in other urban centres. Residents' pride in being a "winter city" is another reflection of this connection to nature.



Civic Pride: The ability, opportunity and desire to actively participate in the civic life of Prince George have built connections and relationships resulting in an engaged and proud community. Prince George identifies itself as a four season community with a strong "can do" attitude and high volunteerism rates.

Objectives

Objective 7.4.1 Protect and foster the preservation of representative samples of natural and built heritage as well as key landscapes and neighbourhoods, and work to preserve, conserve, restore and promote awareness of this resource. Ensure that these are incorporated into long-term planning in a way that should balance preservation with growth and renewal through the prudent application of incentives and regulation.

- Objective 7.4.2 Protect heritage property that is under threat of damage or loss due to demolition, redevelopment, or lack of maintenance and upkeep.
- Objective 7.4.3 Protect heritage property that is unique because of its heritage character or heritage value.
- Objective 7.4.4 Avoid and mitigate impacts to archaeological sites.
- Objective 7.4.5 Improve general understanding of the extent, importance, and sensitivity of archaeological sites and aboriginal traditional use sites through consultation with the aboriginal community, a review of ethnographic reports, and possible inspections and investigations.
- Objective 7.4.6 Demonstrate leadership in heritage conservation, protection and interpretation by managing City owned protected heritage property and archaeological sites appropriately.
- Objective 7.4.7 Enhance quality of life by providing opportunities for cost-effective programs and facilities for culture and heritage throughout the community.
- Objective 7.4.8 Build on the pride within the community to encourage strong relationships, encourage volunteerism and to motivate participation.

Designation of Areas

Heritage Conservation Area

Heritage designation is intended to give long-term protection to heritage property. It is used to identify the features or characteristics that contribute to heritage value or heritage character. The lands shown on the attached *Schedule C-1: Heritage Conservation Areas* are designated as heritage conservation areas pursuant to s. 970.1(1) of the *Local Government Act*.



Archaeological Resource Potential Areas

Archaeological resource potential designation is intended to identify areas of high probability where archaeological sites are likely to occur based on Archaeological Overview Assessments. The areas shown on the attached *Schedule C-2: Archaeological Overview Assessment: High Potential Areas* is designated as archaeological resource potential areas.

Schedule of Protected Heritage Property

This following is a list of buildings, structures, land or features within the heritage conservation area that are protected heritage property pursuant to Section 970.1(3)(b) of the *Local Government Act*, including features and characteristics that

contribute to the heritage value or character pursuant to Section 970.1(3)(c) of the *Local Government Act*:

- a) Federal Government building (post office) at 1294-3rd Avenue (legally described as lots 19 and 20, Block 44, District Lot 343, Cariboo District, Plan 1268, and Parcel A (11170M) of Lot 18, Block 44, District Lot 343, Cariboo District, Plan 1268). This building has significant heritage value as the first Federal Government building constructed in Prince George (1939). As the interior of the building has been modified over time the remaining value is in the preservation and possible restoration of the building's original façade and exterior elements including: 4-inch red brick facing, two 8-foot iron lamp posts flanking the entrance steps, front entrance of cut stone, plate glass doors, electric clock over the entrance, coat of arms, concrete sidewalk and grassed area surrounded by an iron picket fence on three sides (Trelle Morrow and Kent Sedgwick, Heritage Advisory Committee, 1989).
 
- b) Two facades (13 linear metres along 6th Avenue and 10 linear metres along Dominion Street) of the building (old Government Liquor Store) at 1188-6th Avenue (legally described as Parcel B (PS14290), Block 165, District Lot 343, Cariboo District, Plan 1268). This building was designed by Lord Wilfrid Hargreaves in the art deco style. It is one of the few remaining examples of this standardized plan for government liquor stores in British Columbia. The building was constructed in 1949 and a sympathetic conversion and addition was initiated in 2001. The heritage façade walls now form an open-roofed courtyard for the residents. The original façade was conserved and the following heritage characteristics were maintained: curvilinear glass block walls, black tile facing, and steel trim, on a symmetrical and geometric facade.
- c) The building (old Ewart/King home) at 1627-7th Avenue (legally described as Parcel A (W13946), Block 175, District Lot 343, Cariboo District, Plan 1268). The building was originally constructed in 1921, and a sympathetic conversion of the home to a restaurant occurred in 1985, with an addition in 1991. The conversion and expansion complemented the heritage characteristics of the original California bungalow-style home and maintain the unique upturned tips on the roof edges. Other interesting features include the stone fireplace with locally sources river cobbles, the narrow clapboard siding, and half-timber features on the roof line.
- d) Prince George's (South Fort George) first school house in Fort George Park at 755-20th Avenue (legally described as Parcel Z, District Lot 417, Cariboo District, Plan 1409). This building is one of the best examples of a school having simple, efficient, and economical building construction common to the period (1910). The structure was originally located on the corner of 4th Avenue and Thapage, which is today between
 

Jasper and LaSalle Streets. It has been moved from its original location in 1976, but always kept in the vicinity of the South Fort George Neighbourhood. It was substantially restored in the 1970's and 1980's. Its present location next to the museum allows for its continued use as a place of education for teaching children about schools from the past.

Exemption Conditions

If a building, structure, land or feature within the heritage conservation area is not listed within the Schedule of Protected Heritage Property as described above then Section 971(1) of the *Local Government Act* does not apply. Furthermore, The following specific types of alterations to protected heritage property are allowed without a heritage alteration permit:

- a) tenant improvements that do not change the heritage character defining elements of the building;
- b) Basic repairs and maintenance to a building or other structure that do not change the heritage character defining elements;
- c) Repair or maintenance to a building or structure required by an order from the City of Prince George, Province of British Columbia or its agencies, and,
- d) Replacing "like with like" building materials.

Policies

7.4 A. Civic Pride

- Policy 7.4.1 Participate in local and regional initiatives that positively promote the city and region as a year-round travel destination.
- Policy 7.4.2 Support and participate in winter city celebrations.
- Policy 7.4.3 Continue to recognize the achievements of Prince George residents in a range of endeavours including sport, arts and culture, education, and voluntary services as they represent our city and region as unofficial ambassadors.
- Policy 7.4.4 Encourage, support and celebrate community successes made possible through volunteer efforts.

7.4 B. Connection to Nature and the Rivers

- Policy 7.4.5 Improving public access to the Fraser River, Nechako River, and smaller watercourses lakes and wetlands is a high priority, and any new developments should be required to incorporate nature and water features into design and provide suitable public access and viewpoints.

- Policy 7.4.6 Support improvements to trails and green space to enhance and increase connectivity to nature and our rivers throughout the city for all seasons.
- Policy 7.4.7 Encourage various public uses close to the rivers to draw people to the riverfronts.

7.4 C. Heritage

- Policy 7.4.8 The City should utilize the Prince George Heritage Context Study to work towards implementing the Prince George Heritage Strategic Plan (2006) including the promotion of community heritage partnerships, achieving better conservation, and improving heritage awareness and communication.
- Policy 7.4.9 The City should work with the community to establish a heritage conservation program that should strive to protect, through a balance of incentives and regulations, significant examples of our heritage. This program should recognize the public benefits of preserving tangible links to our historical development and raise awareness of the value of heritage to our community.
- Policy 7.4.10 The protected heritage property listed in the Schedule of Protected Heritage Property that contribute to heritage value or heritage character should be conserved and maintained.
- Policy 7.4.11 Development on lands within the high archaeological resource potential area shown on *Schedule C-2: Archaeological Overview Assessment: High Potential Areas* may likely encounter protected archaeological sites. A development approval applicant should be notified if the subject property overlaps with one of these areas. Notification should include direction to engage a professional consulting archaeologist. The archaeologist should assist the City to determine if an archaeological impact assessment is necessary to manage development related impacts to an archaeological site. Altering a protected archaeological site will require a Provincial Heritage Alteration Permit prior to land altering activities.
- Policy 7.4.12 If an overlap is found between an identified archaeological site and a proposed development site the proponent should be notified using the standard Provincial notification letter. Notification should include direction to engage a professional consulting archaeologist. The archaeologist should determine if an archaeological impact assessment is necessary to manage development related impacts to an archaeological site. Altering a protected archaeological site will

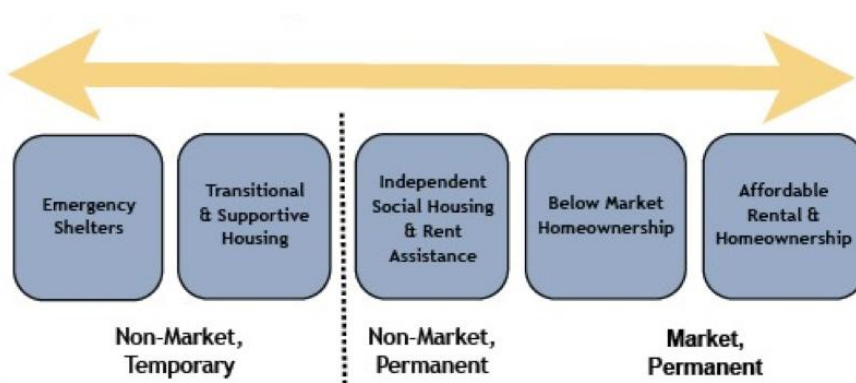
require a Provincial Heritage Alteration Permit prior to land altering activities.

- Policy 7.4.13 If, during the course of construction, an archaeological resource is discovered, the development should cease and the City should direct the developer to contact the Archaeological Branch of the Province of British Columbia for further guidance.
- Policy 7.4.14 The City should consider the potential impact of any development to heritage values, heritage character, archaeological sites and aboriginal traditional use sites.
- Policy 7.4.15 Negative impacts to heritage values, heritage character, archaeological sites and aboriginal traditional use sites should be avoided and mitigated, while conservation, preservation, and sensitive adaptation are encouraged.
- Policy 7.4.16 Development on lands within the heritage conservation areas should likely encounter protected heritage property. A development approval applicant should be notified if the subject property overlaps with one of these areas. Notification should include a determination whether a heritage impact assessment is necessary to manage development related impacts to the protected heritage property. Altering protected heritage property may require a heritage alteration permit.
- Policy 7.4.17 Proposed development in heritage conservation areas should occur in accordance with the provisions of this Plan, and any applicable heritage alteration permit, heritage conservation covenant, heritage revitalization agreement, and heritage site maintenance standards. Where heritage site maintenance standards do not exist for the subject property the Federal Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada should be consulted.
- Policy 7.4.18 A relaxation to any heritage conservation provision of this Plan, or any other applicable City bylaw, should only occur where a proven serious hardship exists and no other reasonable alternative is available to the landowner. Before consideration is given other options such as alternative sites, construction techniques and designs should be prepared by the landowner or their agent and provided to the City.
- Policy 7.4.19 If an overlap is found between a property identified on the community heritage register and a proposed development site the proponent should be notified. At that time the approval authority should determine whether it should withhold an approval, (s. 960

LGA), withhold a demolition permit, or require a heritage impact assessment. (s. 961 LGA).

7.5 Housing

Housing is an integral part of a socially sustainable community. The World Health Organization calls it a key social determinant of health. A range of housing types that can accommodate people of different ages, life stages, incomes and abilities is one of the fundamental elements of a healthy and inclusive community. The housing continuum (below) depicts this graphically, showing different housing forms, varying tenures and affordability levels. As Prince George grows and its residents age, the city's role should be to ensure that housing supply matches those needs.



In 2010, most households were meeting their housing requirements in the private market, which consists of predominantly single-family homes on large lots. However, there are few options suitable for seniors, and households with lower incomes struggle to find affordable, adequate and suitable housing. Additionally, consideration is to be given to the issues of homelessness, the age and condition of affordable rental housing, housing diversity and accessibility. It is recognized that other levels of government have the primary role in creating affordable and accessible housing and that the City should continue to play a facilitative role, using the measures at its disposal.

Objectives

OCP objectives and policies in this section articulate a municipal role in the retention and creation of a diverse housing stock in considering affordable, rental and special needs housing.

- Objective 7.5.1 Develop and enhance partnerships with all levels of government and forge new relationships across sectors to further affordable housing objectives.
- Objective 7.5.2 Support development of a full range of housing types and tenures so that people of all ages, income levels and abilities have housing choices throughout the community.

- Objective 7.5.3 Support development of new affordable housing along the housing continuum.
- Objective 7.5.4 Support preservation of existing affordable housing in good condition.
- Objective 7.5.5 Support a Housing First approach to the elimination of homelessness.
- Objective 7.5.6 Incorporate visitable or adaptable features to ensure accessibility in new and existing housing to accommodate people with mobility challenges and to enable seniors to age in place.



(Photograph courtesy Tony Einfeldt).

Policies

7.5 A. Accessibility

Foster mobility, focusing on the existing housing stock, new single and two-unit housing, and other housing options as permitted.

- Policy 7.5.1 Visitable housing has at least one no-step ground floor entrance, wider passage doors and a ground floor bathroom. Incorporate voluntary or mandatory policy and guidelines for visitable housing in new single family and two-unit housing.
- Policy 7.5.2 Through incentives and other means, encourage visitable and adaptable housing in locations downtown, in neighbourhood centres and corridors, particularly near public transportation.
- Policy 7.5.3 Support a pilot project to promote rehabilitation of existing housing to improve accessibility or visitability.

7.5 B. Affordable, rental and special needs housing

The City can foster creation of new affordable, rental and special needs housing using a variety of measures. The following describes City policies for affordable, rental and special needs housing both generally and related to the city’s objectives above. The city provides direction, information, coordination, education and advocacy around affordable, rental and special needs housing.

- Policy 7.5.4 Continue to work in partnership with others to plan and coordinate affordable housing activities in the community.

- Policy 7.5.5 Educate the public about the need for a range of housing types and tenures to accommodate households with differing needs and resources.
- Policy 7.5.6 Advocate for improvements to provincial and federal government funding of affordable housing.
- Policy 7.5.7 Promote green building for all affordable housing projects and promote benefits of resulting reductions in operating costs.
- Policy 7.5.8 Consider utilizing Housing Agreements to secure long-term commitments for affordable housing in projects receiving municipal incentives or relaxations.
- Policy 7.5.9 Permit affordable housing, including non-market rental, supportive housing and transitional housing, to be located in all residential areas subject to siting criteria.
- Policy 7.5.10 Support a range of seniors housing options in all residential areas, and encourage seniors housing in growth priority areas where medical facilities, cultural activities, social services, shopping and transit are available nearby.
- Policy 7.5.11 Secondary suites are supported as a means of creating affordable housing for both homeowners and renters within all single-family areas. The City should encourage all new single-family construction to be secondary suite-ready to ensure code conformity.
- Policy 7.5.12 Encourage provision of affordable food sources such as on site growing spaces in new affordable housing developments.



7.5 C. Diverse housing stock

A diverse housing stock that includes more multiple residential dwelling units provides a range of affordable options for households of different income and at different life stages.

- Policy 7.5.13 Encourage ground oriented medium density housing options such as townhouses, secondary suites, cluster housing, and carriage or laneway houses that contribute to the City's target for 80% new multifamily units over 30 years in ways that integrate existing neighbourhoods.
- Policy 7.5.14 Support initiatives that showcase new housing forms or tenures.

Policy 7.5.15 Encourage projects incorporating affordable family housing and/or a mix of market and non-market housing with a focus downtown, in neighbourhood centres and along major corridors that are close to transit and services, and that align with growth management directions.

7.5 D. Existing rental housing

The existing rental housing stock is typically the most affordable housing, but it should be preserved and in good condition.

Policy 7.5.16 Consider pursuing a Standards of Maintenance bylaw which allows the City to enforce basic levels of maintenance for rental accommodation.

Policy 7.5.17 Encourage energy efficiency and improved safe and healthy building upgrades of the existing rental housing stock.

7.5 E. Homelessness

Homelessness deserves a continued special focus alongside efforts to increase the supply of affordable, rental and special needs housing.

Policy 7.5.18 The City should support regular homeless counts and other efforts to understand the size and nature of the homeless population. These provide important baseline information for planning for homelessness.

Policy 7.5.19 Continue to work with community stakeholders to end homelessness.

7.6 Safe Community

There are essential emergency responder services such as Ambulance, Fire, Police, and emergency response programs that contribute to the community's goal of a safe environment. The Emergency Response and Recovery Plan outlines the City of Prince George's authority to act in emergencies. Its purpose is to help the City of Prince George and community representatives save lives, reduce suffering, protect property, mitigate damage to the environment, and control the economic consequences of emergencies and disasters. The City should continue to work closely with emergency services providers to ensure capital investments and infrastructure are planned in accordance with project population growth and appropriate land use siting criteria, and to ensure those with limited mobility and



older people are included within these processes. This section of the OCP focuses on two additional elements of public safety: crime prevention through environmental design and crime prevention through social development.

The City of Prince George is committed to creating a high-quality urban environment. The inclusion of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in the design and maintenance of the urban environment is an important step towards achieving this goal. The implementation of CPTED principles can reduce crime, the fear of crime and nuisance behavior through a proactive approach.

Crime Prevention through Social Development focuses on objectives and policies founded on a Crime Prevention through Social Development approach which was adopted by City Council in 2008. Crime Prevention through Social Development (CPSD) is an approach to preventing crime and victimization that recognizes the complex social, economic, and cultural processes that contribute to crime and victimization. CPSD seeks to strengthen the “bridge” between criminal justice policies and programs and the safe, secure, and pro-social development of individuals, families, and communities. It is important to note that CPSD does not function in isolation from traditional crime prevention and crime control measures. A comprehensive crime prevention approach for a safer community usually includes measures to address the immediate objective of protecting the public through the efforts of the police, courts, and corrections. At the same time, it may also direct resources to reduce the availability and attractiveness of opportunities for criminal activity through initiatives such as Block Watch and Rural Crime Watch, Speed Watch, and Citizens on Patrol (COPS).

Crime is primarily the result of multiple adverse economic, social, cultural and family conditions. The complex and inter-related root cause of crime in Prince George can be summarized in three main categories: poverty and economic factors, family environment and social inequities.

Objectives

- Objective 7.6.1 Foster the development of a community where safety and security are actively promoted and supported.
- Objective 7.6.2 Implement CPTED principles in the development and maintenance of both the private and public realm.
- Objective 7.6.3 Enhance public safety and well being by supporting emergency service providers with existing services, planning for expanded services and through crime prevention.
- Objective 7.6.4 Reduce crime and nuisance behavior.
- Objective 7.6.5 Expand crime prevention measures throughout the community.

- Objective 7.6.6 Address crime prevention on an equal level with other issues in the planning and development of the built environment.
- Objective 7.6.7 Support and facilitate the efforts of community partners to address the root causes of crime to ensure Prince George is a community where all citizens feel safe.

7.6 A. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

CPTED is based upon five (5) interconnected principles that relate to territoriality and defensible space, the hierarchy of space, natural surveillance, access control, as well as image and maintenance. The implementation of CPTED at the design and development stage has long-term financial benefits for the developer or owner and the community, as it can reduce emergency service calls and maintenance costs.

Policies

- Policy 7.6.1 Support the implementation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles of territoriality and defensible space; hierarchy of space; natural surveillance; access control; and image and maintenance throughout the public realm.
- Policy 7.6.2 Proactively apply the CPTED principles at the design and development approval process stage.
- Policy 7.6.3 Encourage all existing developments to apply CPTED principles and the use of CPTED safety audits.

7.6 B. Crime Prevention through Social Development

Crime Prevention through Social Development strategies can be characterized as: proactive; long-term; guided by social and economic factors that give rise to crime; targeted at those who are at high risk for future offending; coordinated with other crime prevention initiatives and programs that are already available in the community (particularly in the areas of education, health, housing, etc.,) and accessible to individuals and families.

Policies

- Policy 7.6.4 Support the creation of safe spaces in the community to encourage social connections where community members have easy access and are able to experience a sense of place, space, and belonging.

- Policy 7.6.5 Improve access to improved social networks by supporting efforts to enhance participation in arts, culture, sports and recreation for all residents.
- Policy 7.6.6 Promote, support, and facilitate positive youth development opportunities that promote social inclusion.
- Policy 7.6.7 Support and facilitate school and community efforts to provide anti-bullying and harassment programs.
- Policy 7.6.8 Support and facilitate community efforts to implement alternative and restorative justice models.
- Policy 7.6.9 Support and facilitate a collaborative approach to violence prevention.
- Policy 7.6.10 Support measures to ensure all children from birth to age five have access to comprehensive early childhood development and care.

7.7 Supportive Community with Strong Neighbourhoods

Supportive, engaged communities result from the bonds and connections that start at an individual level, extend to neighborhoods, and eventually to the community as a whole. These bonds refer to the linkages that residents have with each other and the wider community. Engaged neighbourhoods and communities provide a voice on issues, deliver responsive and accessible services, create a sense of belonging, and provide for basic engagement opportunities. Research points to strong correlations between vibrant social networks and childhood development, safety, education, income, economy and public health. Social capital is an integral part of strong, healthy communities and public policies which support the creation of social capital contribute to overall community sustainability. Open space also provides opportunities for the development of strong neighbourhoods and communities. While open space directives with respect to the built environment are included in Section 8 of the OCP, open space as it relates to social development is included in this section.

Prince George has a strong level of social capital and community connectedness. This extends beyond the city itself to the entire northern region, because Prince George is the central hub for northern BC. The creation of the University of Northern BC is an example of local and regional community connectedness in action. The rate of volunteerism is often an indicator of supportive and engaged communities and Prince George has one of the highest rates of volunteerism in B.C. In 2004, the BC average rate of community volunteerism for those aged 15 and older was 45%, while 62% of Prince George residents aged 15 and older volunteered. Volunteer Prince George reports an increasing percentage of young people (including college and university students) are choosing to volunteer.

Objectives

- Objective 7.7.1 Support the building of Community Association capacity to champion initiatives that provide opportunities for the engagement of all neighbourhood members.
- Objective 7.7.2 Facilitate and support neighbourhood efforts to identify and implement projects aligned with sustainability goals.

Policies

- Policy 7.7.1 Encourage the streamlining of permit and approval processes to enable the fast-tracking of initiatives undertaken by community associations or neighbourhood groups.
- Policy 7.7.2 Work in partnership with School District No. 57 to expand community use of existing space in schools.
- Policy 7.7.3 Consider creating smaller neighbourhood based centres as service and meeting hubs.
- Policy 7.7.4 Encourage neighbourhood building activities and other events through grants and other supportive measures.
- Policy 7.7.5 Help to attract people to neighbourhood gathering places with art, music and events.
- Policy 7.7.6 Support and promote activities that foster neighbourhood dialogue and engagement.