

# CITY OF PORT ALBERNI

## BYLAW NO. 4602

### A BYLAW TO ADOPT THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN FOR THE CITY OF PORT ALBERNI

The Municipal Council of the City of Port Alberni in Open Meeting Assembled Enacts as follows:

#### Title

1. This Bylaw may be known and cited for all purposes as **"Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 4602, 2005"**.
2. The Community Plan attached hereto as "Schedule One" and made part of this bylaw is hereby designated as the Official Community Plan for the City of Port Alberni.
3. This Bylaw is applicable to the entire City of Port Alberni.
4. The "City of Port Alberni Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 4124, 1993" and all amendments thereto are hereby repealed.

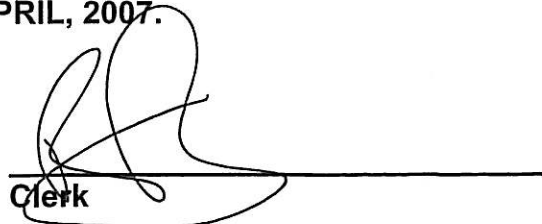
**READ A FIRST TIME THIS 12<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2007.**

**READ A SECOND TIME THIS 12<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2007.**

**A PUBLIC HEARING WAS HELD THIS 4<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2007.**

**READ A THIRD TIME THIS 10<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2007.**

**FINALLY ADOPTED THIS 10<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL, 2007.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

City of Port Alberni



# Official Community Plan



Schedule One of  
Official Community Plan  
Bylaw No. 4602

**UMA ENGINEERING LTD.**

**THIRD PARTY DISCLAIMER**

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## Section A: Introduction

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is one of the key policy documents adopted by City Council. It is developed through a collaborative process that includes the participation of people that live and work in the community. As a result, it is a document that expresses the community's vision for the future. As a long-range blue-print for growth, the OCP is used by Council when considering issues relating to: residential, commercial, and industrial development; the provision and maintenance of parks and recreation amenities; the natural environment; transportation infrastructure and the orderly provision of utilities. Specific content and process requirements associated with the development of a new OCP are defined in Provincial Legislation called the *Local Government Act*.

#### 1.1 Relationship to Other Regulations

Once the community plan is adopted by Council as a bylaw, it has “official” status. At this point, all future land use decisions made by Council must be consistent with the objectives and policies outlined in the Plan. However, an OCP is strictly a policy document. In order for an OCP to be effective, several tools are required to implement the policies and objectives. This includes the use of regulations or guidelines such as those contained in the zoning bylaw, development permit areas, capital expenditures planning, and subdivision control. These bylaws and regulations must be consistent with the Plan.

#### 1.2 The OCP is a Dynamic Document

An OCP is intended to be a “living” document that reflects new trends within society and responds to changing circumstances within the City. As such, following careful consideration by Council, policies and land use designations in an OCP may be revised through adoption of an amending bylaw in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act*. Community plans typically involve a 20 year planning horizon and are reviewed at least once every five years to assess whether the goals and objectives and subsequent policy direction remains valid for the community.



## 2.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS

The consulting firm of UMA was retained to undertake a review of the Official Community Plan. The review process began with an initial meeting with a number of key groups, the City's Advisory Planning Commission, and City Council. This entailed discussion concerning some of the key planning issues that currently affect the community. Based on input received through this process and a review of relevant City technical reports, a background report was prepared and provided to the City. The report covered a range of information such as Port Alberni in the regional context, the demographic, employment, housing, commercial, and industrial profiles, population projections, environmental characteristics, and identification of major planning issues. This phase was a precursor to the consultation phase which together forms the foundation for the new Official Community Plan.

### 2.1 Community Input

In order to ensure that the community plan is a document that accurately expresses the community's vision for the future of Port Alberni, it is essential that the people who live and work in the community have the opportunity to provide input. A number of opportunities to provide comments and observations were provided. The first was a newsletter and questionnaire that was mailed to each household in the community. The newsletter included general background information pertaining to the community, and identified the planning process and procedural information. The questionnaire was intended to provide residents with the opportunity to document their opinions on a number of issue areas. An on-line version of the newsletter and questionnaire were also provided.

The second major opportunity for input involved a public open house that was held at the Echo Center. This involved the presentation of key information pertaining to specific issue areas affecting the community including residential, commercial, industrial, waterfront, parks and open space, and the road network. Additional questionnaires were provided to capture people's input. The City's staff Planner and two members of the consulting team were in attendance to discuss issues and answer questions. Over 125 people were estimated to have attended and a total of 76 questionnaires were returned by the conclusion of this phase of the public participation process. A summary of the questionnaires was prepared and provided to the City in June 2004.

The third stage in the public input process involved a second public open house which was again hosted at the Echo Center. This event included a presentation of the goals and objectives of the draft Community Plan and the introduction of some representative key new policies from a range of policy areas. The event was well attended and approximately 30 submissions were made by the public. These were summarized and provided to the City. This same presentation process was





undertaken with a number of key stakeholder groups in order to solicit specific input on key new policies. Due to significant debate related to long term land use along the Johnston Road Corridor, additional public consultation occurred with respect to this. This included a public open house May 4, 2005 and a related mailed out survey.

### 2.1.1 External Agencies

The second component of the consultation phase involved input from key groups and external agencies. The groups identified for this process were those whose jurisdiction, plans, or actions could have implications for day-to-day business and/or long term planning within the City.

**Key groups included in the consultation process are:**

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| ● Ministry of Transportation                  | ● Hupacasath First Nation        |
| ● Ministry of Lands, Water and Air Protection | ● School District #70            |
| ● Fisheries and Oceans Canada                 | ● Port Alberni Fire Department   |
| ● Agricultural Land Commission                | ● Chamber of Commerce            |
| ● Port Alberni Port Authority                 | ● Real Estate Board              |
| ● RCMP  | ● Merchant's Association         |
| ● Central Vancouver Island Health Authority   | ● The Coulson Group of Companies |
| ● Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot      | ● Weyerhaeuser                   |
| ● Tseshaht First Nation                       | ● Norske Canada                  |
| ● Community Futures Development Corporation   |                                  |

The groups represent diverse interests and include governmental bodies/ agencies, First Nations, as well as major local businesses and business organizations as listed in the table above.

## 2.2 Key Planning Issues

A number of planning issues were identified through initial meetings with Council, City staff, key groups, and the Advisory Planning Commission. Although the issues tend to be fairly diverse in scope, they can be fitted into two broad themes. These include enhancing the liveability of Port Alberni and access to and within the City. The range of issues largely reflect the principles of building “complete communities” or “smart growth” and touch on ways to make Port Alberni a better place to live, work, and visit.

Key issue areas were identified as follows:



### **2.2.1 Demographic Changes**

- The community is mirroring a trend toward an aging population which could have implications for services and housing choice.

### **2.2.2 Commercial Development**

- Economic and social vitality in the Southport area needs to be enhanced.
- There is no one main street shopping district in the City. The quality of the shopping experience should be improved by increasing density in the key commercial areas and improving the aesthetic quality making it more pleasant to walk around and visit. The adoption of design guidelines, through implementation of Development Permit Areas, can improve the physical form of these areas as they redevelop.

### **2.2.3 Economic Development**

- There is a need to diversify the local economy so that it is more vibrant and sustainable in the long term.

### **2.2.4 Residential Development**

- The City offers a good housing mix. However two emerging trends could have implications for development of future housing stock: increasing demand for extended care housing due to an aging population and, demand for housing stock with amenity value such as waterfront multi-family housing.

### **2.2.5 Recreation**

- The City provides well developed recreation infrastructure. However, there is a need to improve trail connectivity throughout the community.

### **2.2.6 Tourism**

- There is great potential for development of the local tourism industry based on quality regional attractions. It is important that tourism infrastructure is properly developed so as to capitalize on the potential.

### **2.2.7 Transportation**

- There are some natural impediments to mobility within the City such as the Roger Creek ravine. Improved overall connectivity would benefit the community.



- Industrial traffic has posed challenges on Third Avenue, Anderson Avenue and Redford Street. A designated truck route might reduce conflict.
- Improved access to the Island Highway could increase economic activity.

### 2.2.8 Waterfront

- The community would benefit significantly from an improved connection to the waterfront such as a waterfront walkway or strategically located waterfront oriented public spaces.
- There is a need for increased moorage, day floats, and a fuelling dock to supplement the existing facility in the harbour.
- There are several key properties, such as the former plywood site, that could contribute to the vitality of Port Alberni if sensitively developed or utilized.

## 2.3 Relevant Studies

A number of studies have implications for long range planning and community development. The following provides a brief synopsis of some of the more relevant studies.

#### **Background studies for the OCP include:**

- 1981 – Alberni Valley Road Network Study
- 1995 – Sewage Lagoon Upgrading & Impact of Additional Loading from Leachate & Surimi Effluent
- 1995 – Alberni Valley Regional Water Supply
- 1998 – Alberni Valley East Side Bypass Study
- 2000 – The Port Alberni Shoreline Master Plan Review
- 2003 – Alberni Valley Aluminum Smelter Community Impact Assessment
- 2003 – Somass Estuary Management Plan
- 2003 – Liquid Waste Management Plan – Stage 2
- 2004 – Strategic Sign Plan
- 2004 – Harbour Road Pre-Design Study
- 2004 – City’s Strategic Plan
- Regional Solid Waste Management Plan



### **2.3.1 Alberni Valley Road Network Study**

In the 1981 Alberni Valley Road Network Study, a bypass route is identified. The proposed location is north of Port Alberni, roughly at the location of the tourism bureau at the Redford/Johnston intersection, bypassing the community and the Tseshaht Indian Reserve to the west, and connecting with Highway 4 at the approximate location of Great Central Lake Road. Although the bypass is shown on Ministry of Transportation mapping, the probability of construction is very low given other Provincial priorities for network improvements coupled with the relatively low volumes of traffic on Highway 4. Furthermore, there are necessary improvements on Highway 4 that would likely be higher priority such as the section of road between Sproat Lake and Kennedy Lake, and the section between Port Alberni and Parksville. Finally, construction of a bypass route would reduce traffic flow into the City and would likely have negative implications for the local economy. As such, the new OCP has eliminated it as a future possibility.

### **2.3.2 Alberni Valley Aluminum Smelter Community Impact Assessment**

The Impact Assessment was undertaken in order to assess the overall impacts of a smelter on the City of Port Alberni. Although the site identified for the potential development is situated in the Regional District, it is close enough that it would dramatically impact the City. The report accounted for an associated workforce of approximately 2,600 people (with a corresponding overall population increase of between 5,000-7,000 people based on an average household size of 2.5) at the operation stage, and a construction workforce of approximately 2,500. The impact of these numbers on the existing City infrastructure and capacity is assessed and deficiencies identified. This project is not proceeding, but the impact of a development of this magnitude clearly has significant implications.

### **2.3.3 Strategic Sign Plan**

The Plan is intended to inform visitors of amenity districts within the City such as Northport, Southport and Echo, and features of the City such as Harbour Quay, the historic steam train, and the First Nations Cultural Centre. The goal is to increase awareness of City amenities and thus promote tourism. The Plan will have implications for OCP implementation.

### **2.3.4 The Port Alberni Shoreline Master Plan Review**

This document is a review of the 1991 Master Plan and was a joint undertaking by the Port Authority and the City. It involves the foreshore area from Clutesi Marina at the north end of the City to the Polly's Point area to the south. The Plan provides a detailed vision for long term planning and development. As such, some of the goals and objectives are reflected in the new OCP.



## Section B: Community Characteristics

### 1.0 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The City of Port Alberni is located on the west coast of Vancouver Island and was incorporated in 1967 following the amalgamation of Alberni and Port Alberni (the commercial centres downtown of the two cities are referred to as Northport and Southport respectively). It is one of three incorporated areas in the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District and together with six “Electoral Areas” comprises a population of about 30,000 residents within a land area of over 6,600 square kilometres.



Source: City of Port Alberni

Port Alberni accounts for nearly 60% of the Regional District’s population and less than one percent of the overall land area.

Traditionally, Port Alberni has been reliant on the primary resource sector, particularly forestry and fishing. This is due in part to proximity to resource supply and the advantage of a deep sea port. However, it also functions as the service centre for a large region that includes the Alberni Valley, the Barkley Sound communities and the Pacific West Coast communities; as such its economy is quite diverse. It is the regional service centre for hospital care, recreation, and senior’s care services. Port Alberni is the educational centre providing the only high school within the Alberni Valley and is home to a campus of North Island College. Finally, it is the centre of a rich agricultural area which is developing its agri-tourism potential.

Port Alberni has experienced some uncertainty in its local economy over the past 25 years. This is largely attributable to an unstable resource sector. A number of external factors underlie this problem such as U.S. countervailing duties, anti-dumping levies, and high production costs in the forest industry, and declining commercial salmon stocks in the fishing industry (sport fishery salmon stocks remain healthy).

Leakage of the consumer dollar is also an obstacle to a vibrant local economy. Nanaimo with its “power centre”, “big-box” retail outlets and overall commercial mix appears to attract a considerable number of shopping and entertainment visits. This trend has been exacerbated by increasing commercial vacancies which further impacts the local commercial mix.

The Port Alberni area offers spectacular tourist opportunities and is an anchor for the renowned tourism/ eco-tourism destinations of Tofino, Ucluelet and Bamfield. The tourism infrastructure of these west coast communities is growing steadily and is facilitating an evolution into high-end tourist destinations.

Highway 4 is the primary access into the region. Access could be enhanced through highway improvements, and an upgrade of the airport facility located in the Alberni Valley to make it more of a regional facility offering scheduled flights. These improvements would likely benefit the tourism industry.

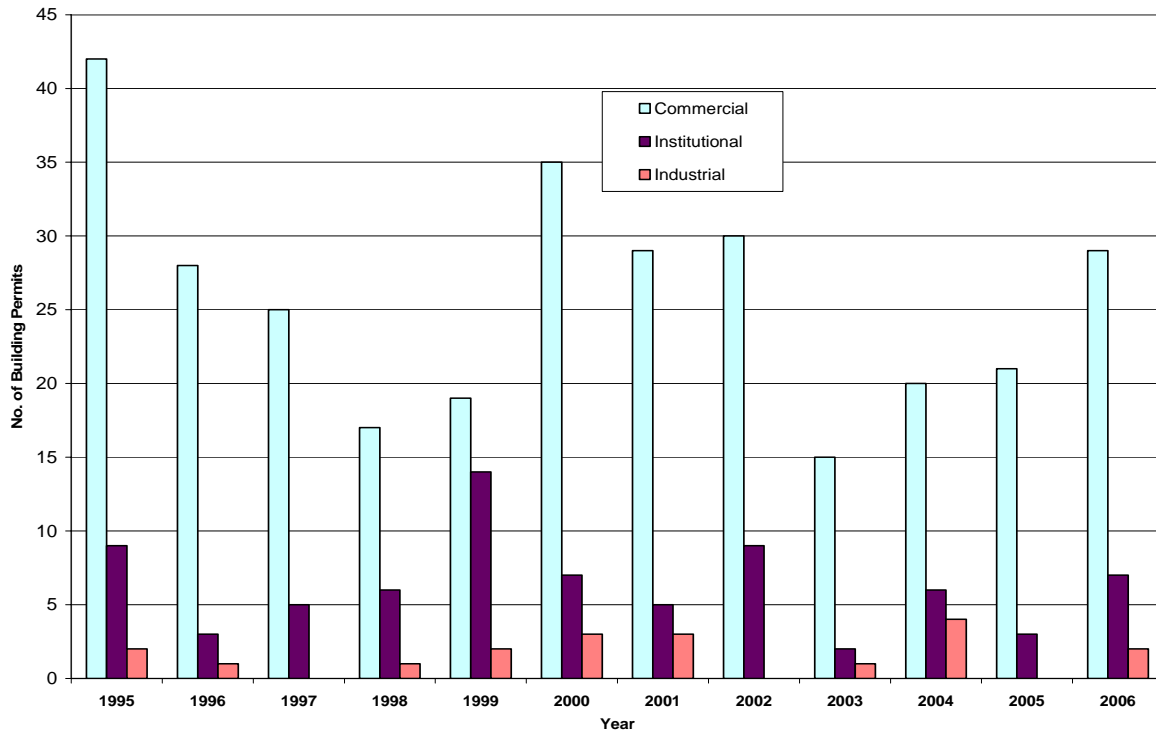


Source: City of Port Alberni

## 2.0 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The forest and fishing industries have been the traditional economic backbone of Port Alberni. However, these industries, over a number of years, have faced significant economic hardships. This has had a ripple effect throughout the community and was reflected in a population decline.

The primary resource sector and related industries continue to maintain economic primacy in Port Alberni. The number of industrial building permits issued between 1995 and 2006 has been reasonably consistent (see Figure 1). This might indicate more stability and a renewed degree of confidence.

**Figure 1 – Commercial / Institutional / Industrial Permits – 1995 – 2006***Source: City of Port Alberni*

This trend is not reflected in the commercial sector which has seen a substantial annual variation in the number of building permits issued. Much of the recent commercial development has been occurring in the Johnston Road corridor. The mall development in this area will account for the largest commercial development in Port Alberni in recent years. However, the commercial sector, and particularly retail, has been struggling in the City and has been most acute in the Southport area.

Much of the recent single family residential development has been occurring primarily in three areas of the City: Westport Place, Redford Heights, and Huff Drive. There are three emerging trends that should be considered in the context of residential supply and mix in Port Alberni. The first trend concerns an aging population that will likely translate into an increased demand for senior's oriented housing (e.g. independent living, assisted living, congregate care, etc.) These forms of housing are under-developed in the City. If this residential niche is not filled, it will ultimately force some seniors to move from the community and cause a loss of potential service employment for this sector.



Source: City of Port Alberni

The second trend involves Port Alberni becoming a magnet for retirees looking to relocate to the west coast. Notwithstanding the beautiful setting, lower housing costs in Port Alberni may be an important factor in attracting this segment of the population.

Lastly, is a trend involving a segment of the population working in or around the community that is electing to reside outside the City in locations such as Sproat Lake. Based on development trends and land value, it would

appear that amenity value is the underlying motivation. As such, there could be an opportunity to capture some of this “amenity residential” niche market within Port Alberni.

In recent years, the tourism industry has declined on Vancouver Island. However, in view of the spectacular natural setting, tourist amenities (such as McLean Mill and the No. 7 Steam Train) and the strategic location of Port Alberni, it is well positioned to capitalize on the tourism industry in the longer term.

Strengthening or developing water-based attraction down the Alberni Inlet and Barkley Sound would intensify the use of Port Alberni’s harbour. Additional attractions in eco-tourism, outdoor sports, winter sports and agri-tourism are opportunities that could be explored. Related to this is the sports fishing industry (salmon and steelhead) which attracts sports anglers and gives Port Alberni bragging rights as the sports fishing capital of Vancouver Island.



Source: City of Port Alberni

### 3.0 POPULATION

As of the 2001 Census period, Port Alberni’s reported population was 17,743. This number represents a population decline of approximately 13% (or a mean annual decline of 0.6% from 1981-2003) since the population peaked at 20,394 in 1981. The City has experienced two periods of substantial decline since the 1980’s. The first was a population decline of approximately 8% between the census years of 1981 and 1986. The second major decline was 5.5% occurring between the 1996 and 2001 census periods. In this same period, the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District experienced a similar population decline of over 4%. However, in the census years of 1986 and 1991, Port



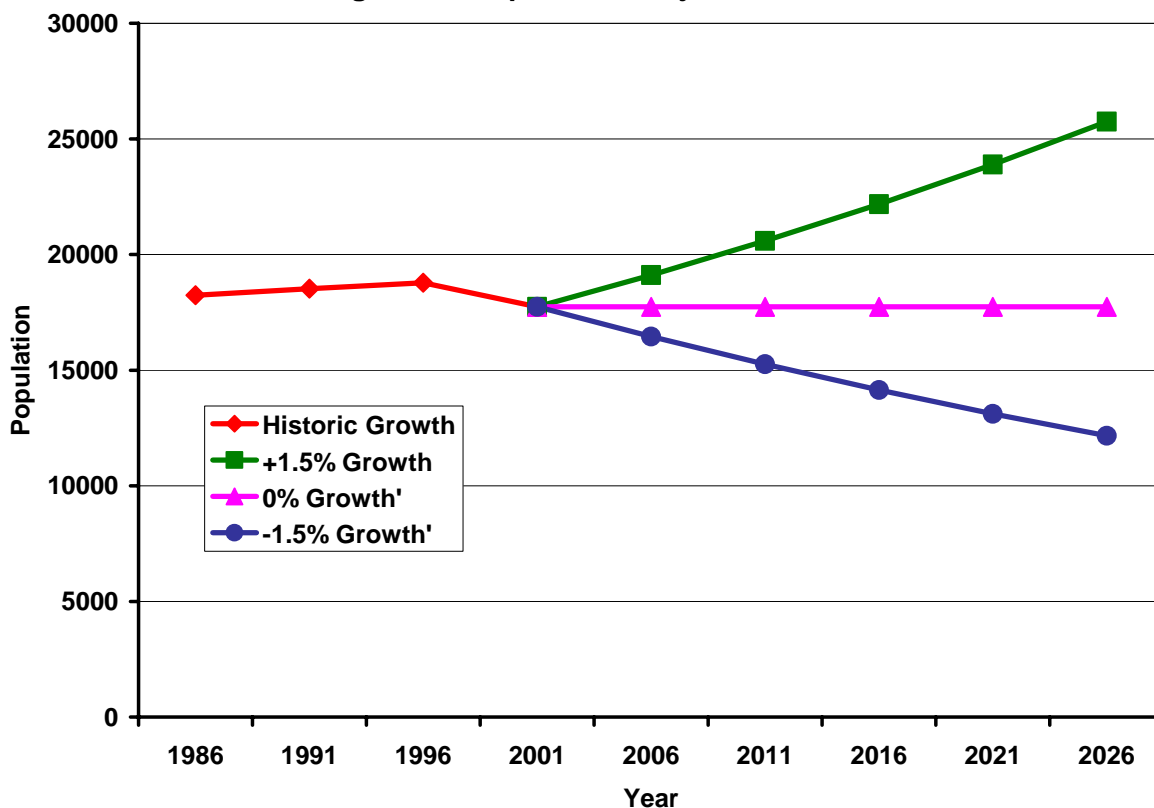


Alberni experienced positive growth of approximately +1.5% for each reporting period. Given the spectacular natural setting, associated outdoor recreational opportunities and overall quality of life, it is likely that Port Alberni's population growth will mirror the 1986 and 1991 census periods in the medium term.

Based on these trends, three population forecast scenarios have been developed as follows (see Figure 2):

- -1.5% annual growth rate which translates into a reduction of 5,582 residents for a total population of 12,161 by the year 2026;
- 0% annual growth which translates into a stable population growth rate;
- +1.5% annual growth which translates into a population increase of 8,002 residents for a total of 25,745 by the 2026.

**Figure 2 – Population Projections to 2026**



*Historic: Statistics Canada; Projections: UMA*



It is reasonable to assume that population growth will occur concurrently with economic growth within Port Alberni. However, a large industry would dramatically affect the population forecasts and have a trickle-down affect for all aspects of the community and the Official Community Plan.

A second source of growth that should be considered is the “empty-nester” category. There is a significant population of retirees moving to a number of communities along the central east coast of Vancouver Island. Given the low housing costs as compared to other island communities, and given the proximity to the Island Highway and Nanaimo, it is likely that Port Alberni will experience a similar growth trend particularly if new development coupled with City plans and policies reflect senior’s lifestyle preferences.

## 4.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

Age distribution is an important factor in predicting future demand for specific forms of housing and community services (medical services and schools), commercial/ retail trends, and infrastructure requirements. Figure 3 represents the 2001 Census age distribution for the City, Regional District and Province. A number of age categories exhibit similar trends for all three jurisdictions.

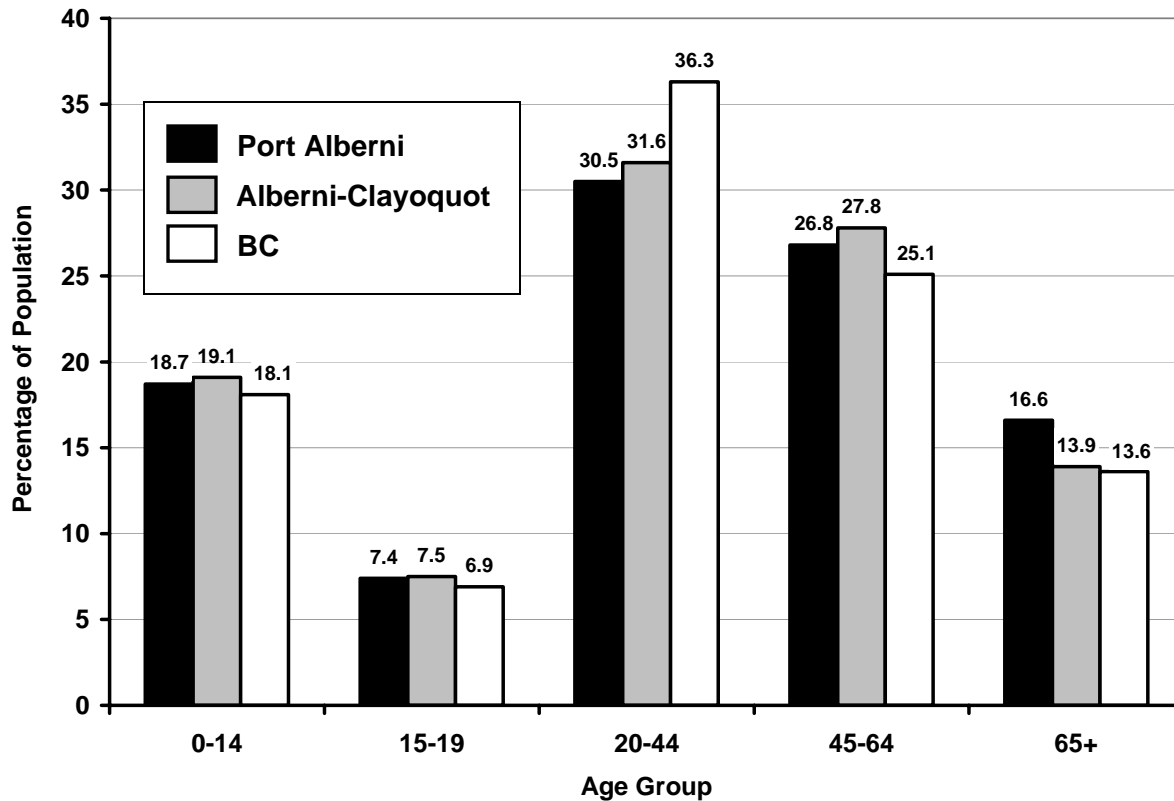
However, there are two age groups of note. First is the 20-44 age category which is lower for the City and Regional District than the Province. This group can be broadly characterized as having yet to attain the highest income earning years, are acquiring their first residence, and having family units comprised of pre and school aged children.

The 45-64 age group represents a segment of the population that is typically in the highest income earning years. Family units tend to have secondary or post secondary aged children and a higher disposable income. The percentage of Port Alberni’s population in this age group is 1.8% higher than the Provincial average.

A second category is the 65+ age group which can be broadly characterized as “empty nesters” that typically enjoy greater mobility and higher disposable income. The percentage of Port Alberni’s population in this category is approximately 3% higher than the Provincial and Regional District average. As a percentage of Port Alberni’s population, this age category has increased by approximately 6% between the 1986 Census period (accounting for 11% of total population) and the 2001 Census period (accounting for 17% of total population). It is likely that this trend will continue and perhaps will expand in relation to the aging “baby-boom” population. This has significance for medium to long range community planning and will translate into a number of land use/ development issues such as the composition and location of appropriate housing stock, the development of residential care facilities, and provision of other related services and amenities.



Figure 3 – Population Profile



Source: Statistics Canada - Census 2001

## 5.0 EMPLOYMENT PROFILE

In reviewing the employment profile for Port Alberni, three significant trends emerge in relation to Provincial averages (see table 1). In the sectors of “*management*” and “*business/finance/administration*”, the percentage of the Port Alberni workforce falls substantially below the provincial average. Jobs in these sectors tend to be high paying relative to some other sectors.

The second area of significance relates to the sectors of “*primary industry-related*” and “*manufacturing/processing/utility-related*”. In these sectors, Port Alberni maintains a significantly higher percentage of the workforce than Provincial averages. This is reflective of the continued reliance of the forest-based sector as a major local economic contributor. This sector has struggled in the Province over a number of years and has significantly affected the economy of resource oriented communities.

While other employment sectors closely mirror Provincial averages, the “sales and service” sector is nearly 3.5% higher than the Provincial average accounting for nearly 30% of Port Alberni’s workforce. This is likely a reflection of Port Alberni’s role as a regional service center. However, jobs in this sector tend to be low paying. This is reflected somewhat in the average annual income which is over \$3,000 less than the Provincial average. This alone does not account for the lower average annual income: the percentage of Port Alberni’s employed population is nearly 10% less than the provincial average, and a greater percentage of income is derived from government transfers. This has obvious implications for consumer spending habits and vibrancy of the local economy. It is the recognition of this situation that reinforces the need to continue efforts to promote diversification of the local economy and to increase the number and stability of higher paying jobs.



Source: City of Port Alberni

**Table 1 – Employment Profile**

Sector	No. of Employees PA	No. of Employees BC	% Workforce PA	% Workforce BC
management	530	218,445	6.7	10.8
business/finance/admin	980	353,710	12.5	17.5
natural and applied sciences	345	123,755	4.4	6.1
health	385	105,690	4.9	5.2
social sciences/educ/govt. services/religion	625	160,650	7.9	7.9
art/culture/recreation/sport	90	67,325	1.1	3.3
sales and service	2260	514,985	28.9	25.5
trades/transport/equipment operators	1090	288,940	13.9	14.3
primary industry	530	84,525	6.8	4.2
processing, manufacturing, utilities	985	96,585	12.6	4.8

Source: Statistics Canada – 2001 Census





## 6.0 HOUSING PROFILE

Assuming a +1.5% population growth projection, Port Alberni could grow by approximately 8,000 people by the year 2026. This translates into an increase of 3,334 dwelling units for the same period (as shown in table 2) or an increase of approximately 45%.

The City's Alberni Valley Aluminum Smelter Community Impact Assessment identifies a total potential infill population of 2,980 within four designated OCP sectors (based on a calculation of land currently vacant and zoned residential). This would translate into 1,242 detached single-family dwelling units based on a current average household size of 2.4 people. The Impact Assessment also noted that vacant lands currently zoned for future development could accommodate approximately 1,940 building lots or detached single-family dwelling units. The total for both categories is approximately 3,200 dwelling units. This figure does not reflect redevelopment opportunities, multi-family residential, row housing etc. which would yield a significantly greater number of dwelling units per hectare. However, it is evident that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate an average annual population growth rate of +1.5% over the next 20 years. These figures are useful for understanding general growth implications associated with any major new industrial development.

**Table 2 – Residential Dwelling Units Projections (1.5% Annual Growth)**

Total Population	Period (Year)	No. of New Dwelling Units Required	Total No. of Dwellings	Yearly Average
19,114	2002 – 2006	571	8,126	114
20,591	2007 – 2011	615	8,741	123
22,183	2012 – 2016	663	9,404	133
23,898	2017 – 2021	715	10,119	143
25,745	2022 – 2026	770	10,889	154

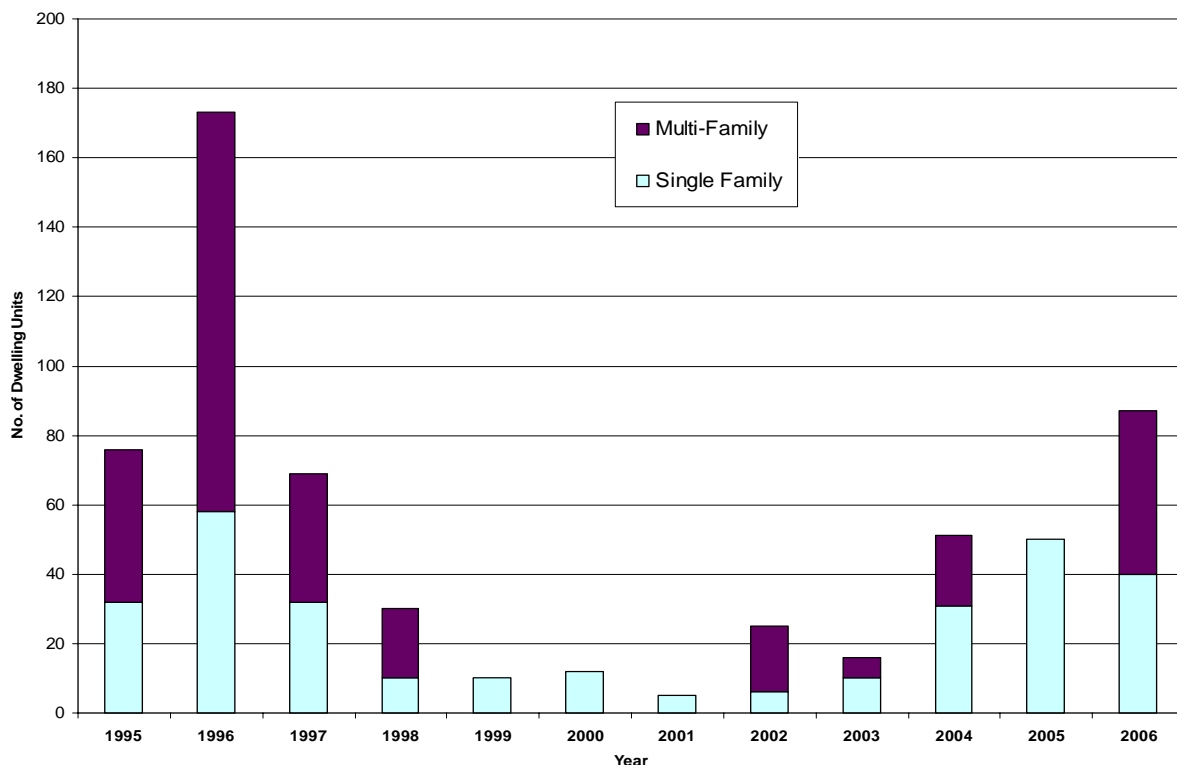
*Projections: UMA*



Over the period 1995- 2006 the combined average of single-family and multi-family housing starts has been 50 units/ year. If the high number of units from 1996, are not included the housing starts is a more typical 39 units / year. After the spike in 1996 the number of units decreased until 2002. The number of single-family and multi-family between 1997 – 2001 was 25 units / year, with no multi-family in 1999-2001. A small upswing of new housing began in 2002 and increased in 2004 through 2006, with 46 units / year for 2002 – 2006.

Source: City of Port Alberni

**Figure 4 – Single and Multi-Family Housing Starts - 1995-2006**



Source: City of Port Alberni



## 7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE

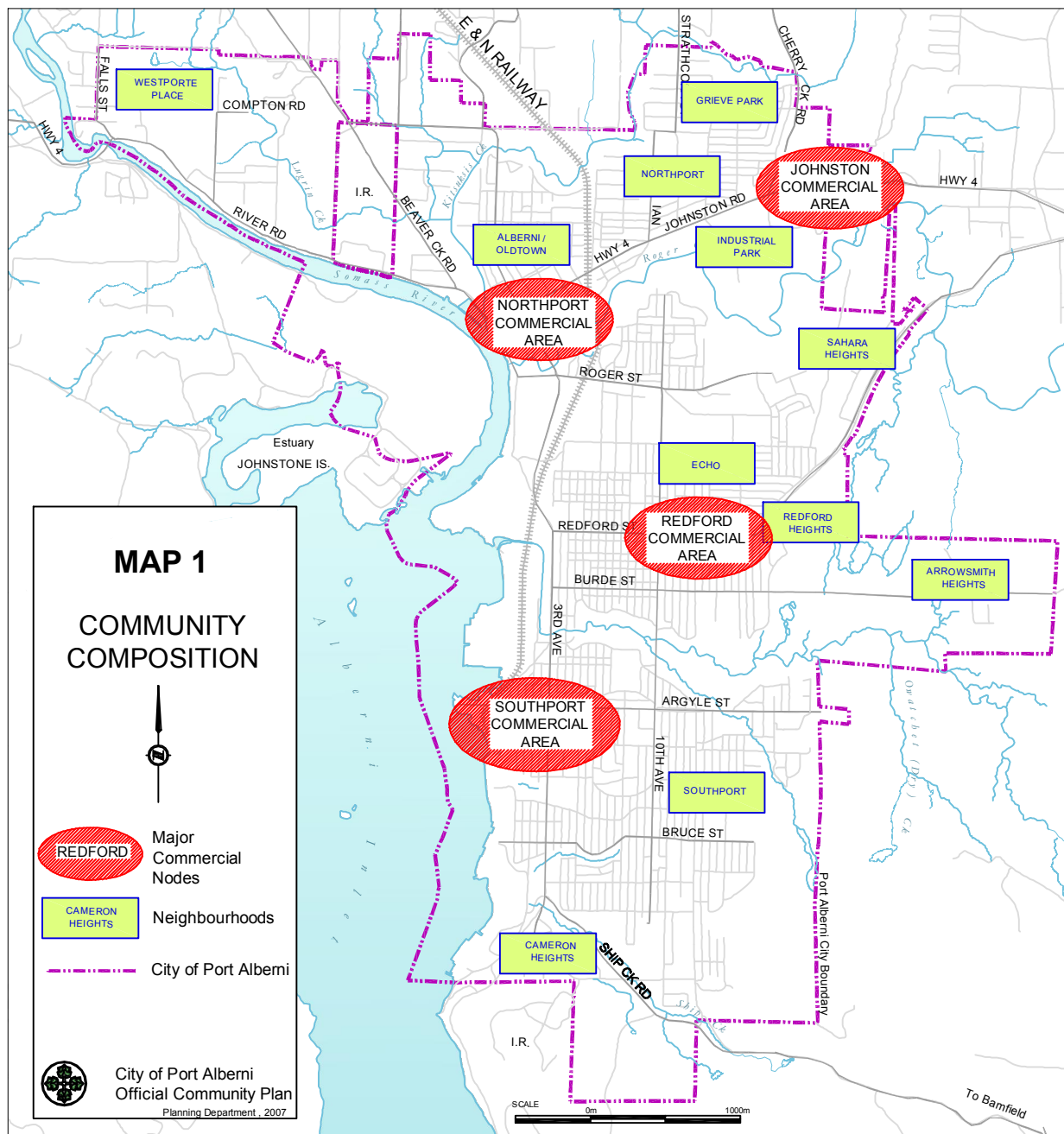
The City has a well developed infrastructure system. All parts of the City are serviced by water and most of it serviced by sanitary sewer. Given the recent growth trend, existing water capacity is sufficient for the foreseeable future. The existing sewage treatment facility is considered to be at or close to capacity and warrants expansion. The City is currently undertaking some significant upgrades to the sanitary sewer in the northern sector of Port Alberni. This initiative is intended to improve efficiencies in the system, and to separate the shared line into storm and sanitary lines. In regard to road infrastructure, the current network of roads is adequate to service the existing and projected populations. However, there are issues related to industrial traffic, right-of-way widths and improved linkages.

### 7.1 Growth

The City has a number of established commercial nodes and mature and developing residential neighbourhoods, as shown on Map 1, each with their own distinctive characteristics. From a servicing perspective the City should encourage development/growth within existing developed areas (through infill and redevelopment). This would be more economical and practical than opening up new development areas as it would require less infrastructure for the City to maintain. However, Port Alberni has an existing sewage treatment/ capacity issue which must be addressed before substantial new growth occurs. By replacing the combined sewers with separated sewers, upgrading the existing sewage treatment lagoon and construction of a new wastewater treatment plant, there will be sufficient capacity to accommodate the projected population growth.



Map 1: Community Composition





## 8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

A significant area of Port Alberni is situated on a side slope with a west aspect that terminates at the Alberni Inlet. It benefits from a spectacular natural setting with incredible views such as Mount Arrowsmith. The Port Alberni landscape is incised by numerous creeks/ravines such as Lugin Creek, Kitsuksis Creek, Roger Creek, Dry Creek (Owatchet Creek), and Ship Creek. The Somass River is an additional significant water feature in the area. With a watershed of over 1,200 square kilometres, it is Vancouver Island's second largest river. It feeds into the Inlet at the north end of the City and comprises part of the Somass Estuary. According to the Somass Estuary Plan, the river system supports one of the most productive fisheries on the Island **representing** all five species of Pacific salmon as well as steelhead.

The Somass Estuary is an ecologically sensitive area and is currently the subject of a major inter-agency study. The management plan characterizes the Estuary as having significant aquatic, wildlife, botanical, and habitat values.

The Estuary contributes to the overall distinctive natural quality that defines, in part, the special character of Port Alberni.

Port Alberni is vulnerable to tsunami inundation as illustrated by the 1964 tidal wave generated by a powerful earthquake in Alaska. Because of the length and narrowness of the Alberni Inlet, the ocean surge was funnelled and amplified. The ensuing high water damage was limited to the low lying areas of the City, particularly in the River Road area. The OCP has reflected this hazard in the land use designations by identifying a "tsunami inundation zone" below the 6.0m contour line. For emergency planning purposes a 20m contour line delineates a worst case tsunami hazard zone as adopted by the Provincial Emergency Program.



## Section C: Plan Goals & Land Use Designations

### 1.0 PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives of the Port Alberni Official Community Plan are outlined below.

#### 1.1 Growth

- To support and promote growth patterns that are economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable.
- To encourage the efficient use of land and infrastructure, and development of compact built form by encouraging sensitive in-fill and intensive forms of development in key locations of the City.
- To ensure that there is sufficient land available to accommodate residential growth over a 20 year time-frame.

#### 1.2 Economic Development

- To enhance the economic and social vitality of key commercial areas by limiting commercial growth to these locations.
- To encourage the development of built form in Northport and Southport that substantially enhances the pedestrian experience, stimulates social activity, and generates a distinctive shopping experience.
- To promote tourism by capitalizing on existing amenities in the Northport and Southport areas, and community recreational infrastructure.

#### 1.3 Industrial Development

- To encourage diversification and promote development of the industrial sector in order to achieve a more stable employment and economic base.
- To ensure the City provides a positive environment for industry and associated businesses.





## 1.4 Environmental Stewardship

- To protect significant natural ecosystems, habitat, green space linkages, and environmentally sensitive areas, and promote stewardship of these valuable resources.
- To maintain the environmental quality of the community by providing alternative transportation options, promoting a development form that provides for less reliance on automobile travel, and encouraging community choices that minimize impact on the environment, water resources, and air quality.

## 1.5 Community

### Residential

- To ensure that a range of housing choice is provided in order to meet the needs of current and future residents.
- To ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, walkable, and connected by pedestrian/ bicycle corridors to significant local destinations.

### Parks and Recreation

- To maintain and enhance where possible the existing inventory of parks, trails, open space, and recreational facilities within the community.
- To provide programs and services to enhance health and well-being of citizens.

### Public Administration and Institutional

- To ensure services are accessible and promote a vibrant, healthy, united, safe and liveable community.

### Heritage

- To preserve and protect buildings, features, and/or artefacts that have heritage significance for current and future generations.
- Showcase Alberni Valley's rich heritage in the forestry, fishing, agriculture, and First Nations areas for citizens and visitors.

## 2.0 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The Official Community Plan establishes a framework of specific land use categories or designations that are intended to guide community development in a planned and strategic manner. The

designations are shown in Table 3 and include a general description of the purpose and range of associated uses that would be suitable for the land. The location of the land use designations is shown on the Schedule “A” (Land Use Map). Policies pertaining to each designation are included in Section “D” of the Plan. The policies provide general direction on significant issues involving each land use designation. However, the OCP document is different from the Zoning Bylaw in that it provides broad guidance in relation to specific land uses. The Zoning Bylaw provides a more detailed regulatory framework that stipulates specific requirements concerning permitted uses, building heights and setbacks, landscaping standards, and parking requirements based on the nature of each zone.

**Table 3 – Land Use Designations**

Land Use Designation	Short Form	Designation Description
Residential	RES	Permits one and two family residential.
Multi-Family Residential	MFR	Permits housing forms such as townhouses (including stacked townhouses), row houses, duplexes and apartment buildings. This type of residential should be located in proximity to community services or major amenities.
Future Residential	FUR	Identifies areas that will accommodate future residential growth at a low density for up to 20 years. Lands with this designation will require as a condition of development, the preparation of a neighbourhood plan that identifies how development will occur in a planned and sustainable manner. This designation may include some non-residential land uses.
General Commercial	GCO	Identifies areas that permit a wide range of uses such as retail, office, entertainment, food and beverage, and mixed commercial/residential. The purpose is to maximize the economic and social vitality of these areas. It is expected that associated development will provide an enhanced pedestrian experience to promote non-vehicle shopping trips.
Highway Commercial	HCO	Identifies areas that permit large format, automobile oriented commercial land uses.
Neighbourhood Commercial	NCO	Identifies small-scale commercial locations that are intended to serve the daily shopping needs of the adjacent residential neighbourhood. It is expected that this form of development will be oriented to the pedestrian.
Institutional	INS	Identifies areas that accommodate community facilities such as schools, recreation facilities, government buildings, hospital, assembly facilities etc., and public care facilities.
Industrial	IND	Identifies areas that accommodate a wide range of industrial uses primarily comprised of wholesaling, warehousing, manufacturing and processing, storage facilities, service and repair operations, and salvage operations
Urban Agricultural	UAG	Identifies low-lying areas that have the potential to accommodate non-intensive urban agriculture at a relatively large scale such as market gardens.
Parks and Open Space	POS	Identifies areas intended for community recreational activities and/or preserved because of environmental significance.



## Section D: Plan Policies

### 1.0 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

#### 1.1 Environmental Protection

The City of Port Alberni is set against a majestic mountain backdrop which is punctuated by Mount Arrowsmith to the east. Verdant forest surrounds the City and extends natural fingers along creek corridors to the waters of Alberni Inlet. On its western boundary, the City is contained by the waters of the Alberni Inlet, Somass Estuary, and Somass River, which is home to a productive aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem.

Recognizing the tremendous value of this asset, the City endeavours to balance economic growth and community development with the protection of its natural attributes. This is reflected within the community by residents who have indicated that the natural setting and features is one of Port Alberni's major strengths. As such, protection and acquisition of additional green space/ natural areas is a priority.

##### **Council Policy**

1. Ravines, watercourses and riparian areas will be preserved in their natural state, and wherever possible, will be linked to other park spaces or natural areas to create a comprehensive network of green space. Trail opportunities within these areas may also be considered when not detrimental to the environment.
2. Where possible, the City will consider conserving or protecting areas having significant wildlife values, and/ or significant wildlife corridors in an effort to maintain habitat and access.
3. The City supports efforts by community groups and public agencies to promote public awareness concerning conservation of water and energy.
4. The use of alternative forms of energy which reduce or eliminate environmental pollution and/ or improve conservation and efficiency of consumption is encouraged.
5. The City will promote an environmental ethic concerning the value of reducing, reusing and recycling resources, and will encourage lifestyles and development that contribute to the enhancement of environmental quality. As part of this the City will endeavour to facilitate development of a more comprehensive recycling program.
6. The City recognizes the value of habitat restoration in the overall health of local ecosystems and supports efforts to undertake restoration projects.
7. The City will work with government agencies, environmental groups, and citizen groups in an effort to reduce harmful emissions and improve air quality.



8. The City will encourage the use of innovative development standards particularly in regard to storm water management.

## 1.2 Watercourses

### Council Policy

1. The City will attempt to protect Fisheries Sensitive Zones in conjunction with the Federal and Provincial agencies by protecting natural vegetation within riparian areas, requiring an appropriate development setback from the “top of bank”.
2. The City may require development in or around watercourses (including watercourse crossings) to complete an environmental report as a part of any development approval process.
3. The City will work to manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff in order to help protect and/or enhance aquatic habitats.
4. Riparian setback areas will be preserved in a natural state except for public trails, benches, and interpretive signage where not detrimental to the habitat.
5. Redford Ponds and tributaries and similar environmentally sensitive areas comprise significant wildlife habitat and shall be subject to habitat protection policies as determined through detailed environmental analysis.

## 1.3 Marine Environment

### Council Policy

1. Shoreline habitat and aquatic and terrestrial life is to be protected in the Somass Estuary by working toward to the guidelines contained in the Somass Estuary Plan.
2. Public access to the shoreline is to be provided wherever possible, and view corridors through to the Alberni Inlet are to be protected and preserved.

## 1.4 Hazardous Areas

### Council Policy

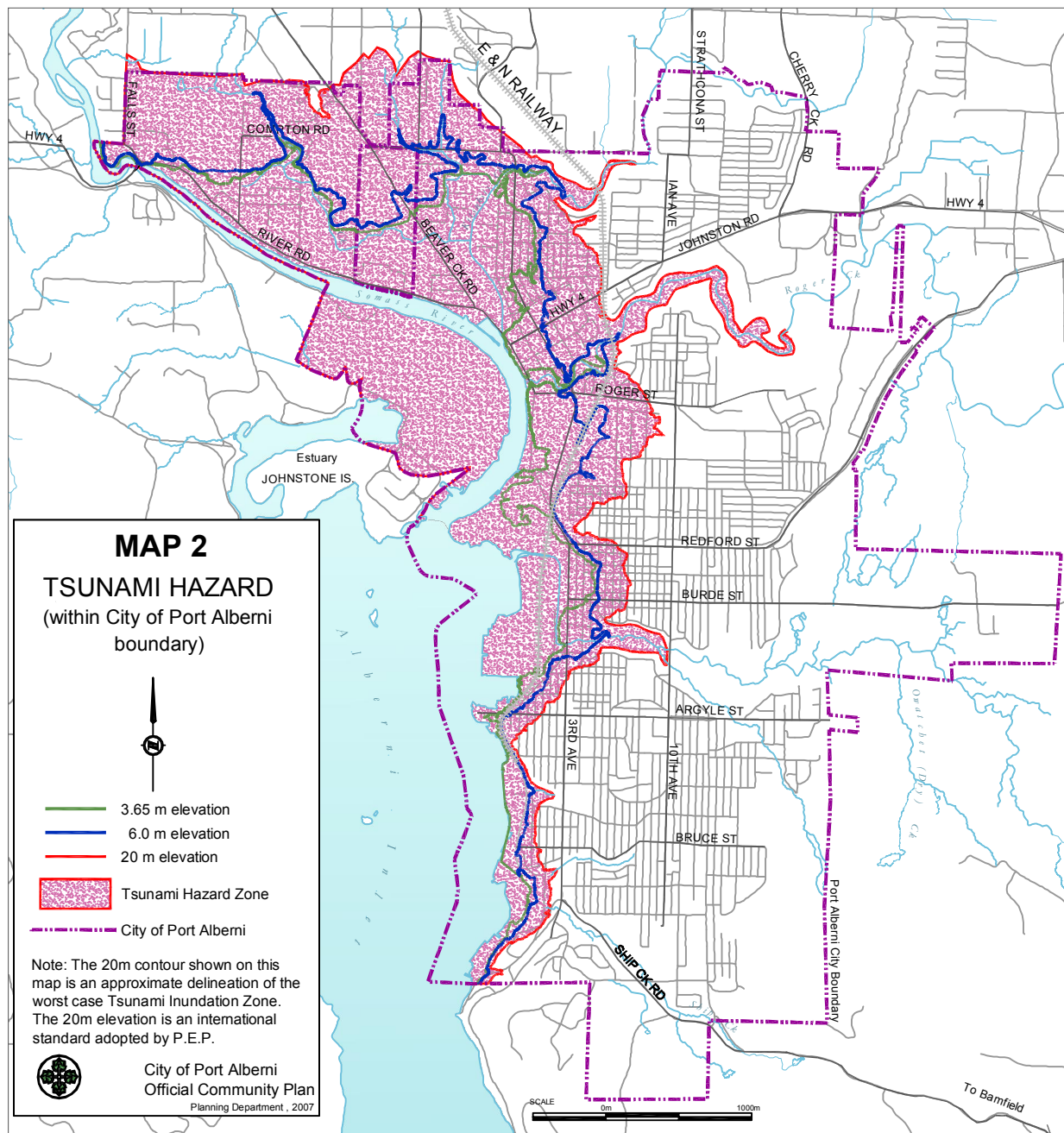
1. The City will maintain and update as necessary the Tsunami Floodplain Management Strategy which shall address such issues as:
  - the Emergency Measures Plan;
  - a tsunami warning system;
  - potential evacuation routes;
  - flood control infrastructure;
  - development and land use regulations for the 6m contour areas identified within the tsunami hazard area on Map 2; and



- regulating the storage and security of petroleum products, chemicals or hazardous goods in those areas identified within the tsunami hazard area on Map 2.
- 2. To protect against the loss and to minimize property damage associated with flooding events the Council encourages agricultural, park and open space recreational uses of flood susceptible lands. Where floodable lands are required for development, the construction and siting of buildings and manufactured homes to be used for habitation, business or the storage of goods damageable by floodwaters shall be flood proofed to those standards specified by the City of Port Alberni Floodplain Bylaw.



Map 2: Tsunami Inundation







## 2.0 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

### 2.1 Parks

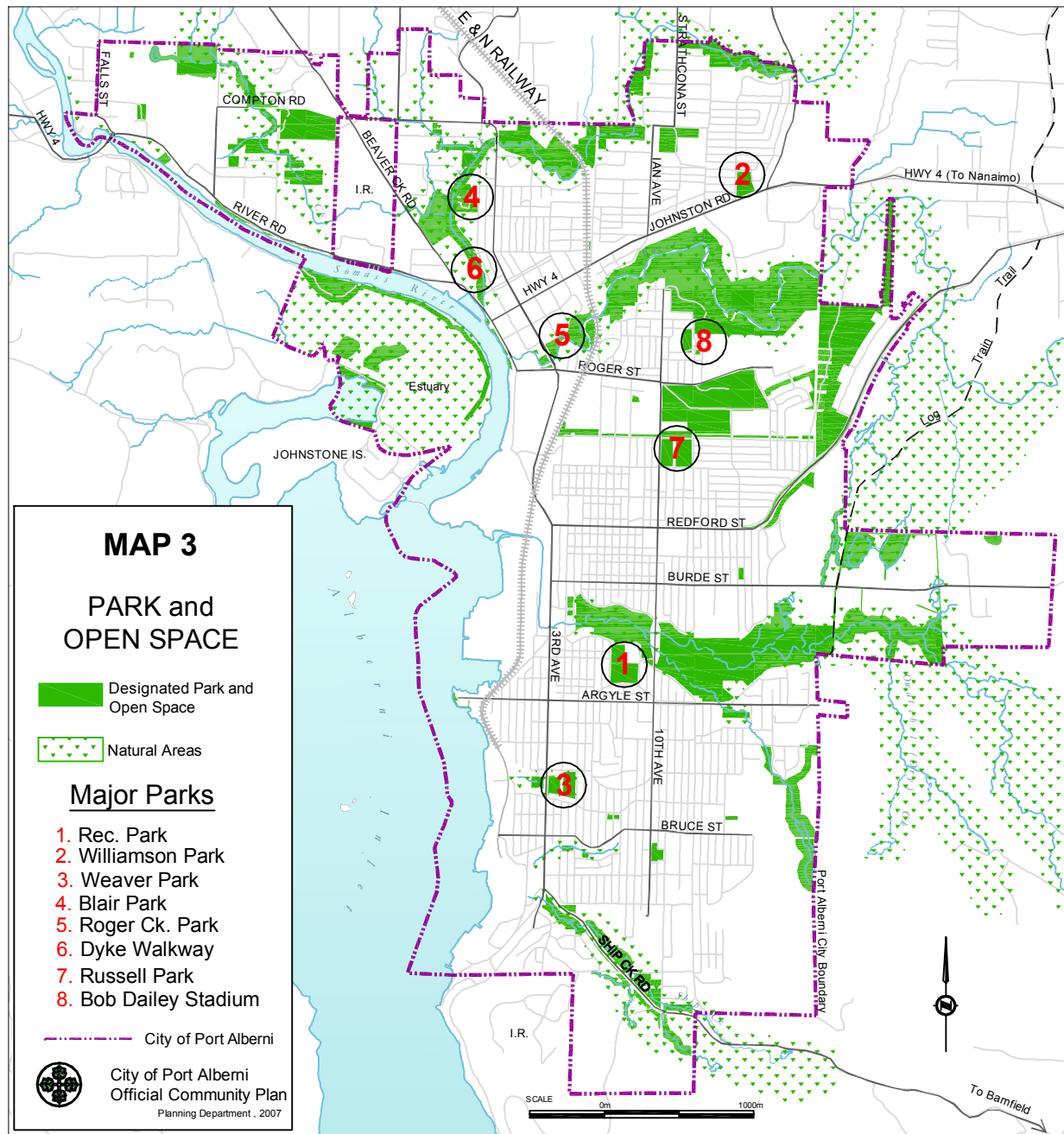
Port Alberni benefits from a well developed system of parks and open space. These amenities include both programmed and non-programmed park space and natural open space areas. Together, this system of green space provides exceptional recreational opportunities for residents and is deemed to be one of the major community assets.

#### Council Policy

1. Parks and Open Space (POS) areas are designated on Schedule “A” (Land Use Map).
2. The City shall attempt to evenly distribute the various scales of park space throughout the community in order to provide equivalent levels of service and access to each of the principal residential areas in the community. Parks will be located in prominent locations, designed to act as focal areas for the neighbourhoods they serve, and be connected through the pedestrian / bicycle network to other areas in the community.
3. Public land identified for future park or recreation facilities shall be reserved for such purposes and shall be protected from incompatible adjacent land uses that are visually intrusive, noisy, and/ or impede access.
4. New and upgraded parks shall be designed and planned in consultation with the community.
5. The City shall continue to use the 5% parkland dedication requirement or cash equivalent through the subdivision approval process in order to acquire land for parks and open space.
6. In order to improve overall community connectivity, the City will encourage undevelopable land to be dedicated to the City where possible. However, such dedication will not replace the parkland dedication requirement.
7. The City will maintain the following minimum parks standard:
  - 2.0 ha / 1000 residents for community parks
  - 1.0 ha / 1000 residents for neighbourhood parks.
8. Park and public space design shall provide a safe environment and include barrier-free opportunities for people with disabilities and/or mobility issues.
9. The City will continue to maintain City owned parks and associated facilities that are located outside of City boundaries.



Map 3: Parks and Open Space





## 3.0 COMMUNITY

### 3.1 Public Administration/Institutional

#### Council Policy

1. Public Administration and Institutional uses will be permitted in areas designated Institutional (INS) on Schedule "A" (Land Use Map). These uses will include: schools, recreation facilities, government buildings, hospital, assembly facilities, and public care facilities.
2. The City shall continue supporting police and fire protection services in order to ensure a safe and liveable community.
3. The City supports a partnership between the police and community to address issues that affect safety in the community.
4. The City shall monitor land use patterns to determine the need for fire halls in order to ensure that an adequate level of service is provided.
5. The City supports fire fighting agreements with other jurisdictions within the Alberni Valley.

### 3.2 Recreation & Community Facilities

The City of Port Alberni offers a well developed system of recreation and community facilities including Echo Center and the Multiplex. Echo Center has been operating since 1967 and houses a public swimming pool, library, museum, and Parks and Recreation offices.

#### Council Policy

1. The Echo Center area shall be maintained as the principal community recreational facility for the City.
2. Lands to the north of Echo Center shall be reserved to accommodate future expansion of the facility.
3. The City will assist the Vancouver Island Regional Library to ensure that an appropriate level of library services are provided in the community in relation to existing and projected community need.
4. The City will promote sport tourism events utilizing established recreation infrastructure in order to generate economic benefits for the community.

### 3.3 Schools

Port Alberni has a number of schools located throughout the community. These include six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one secondary school as listed below.



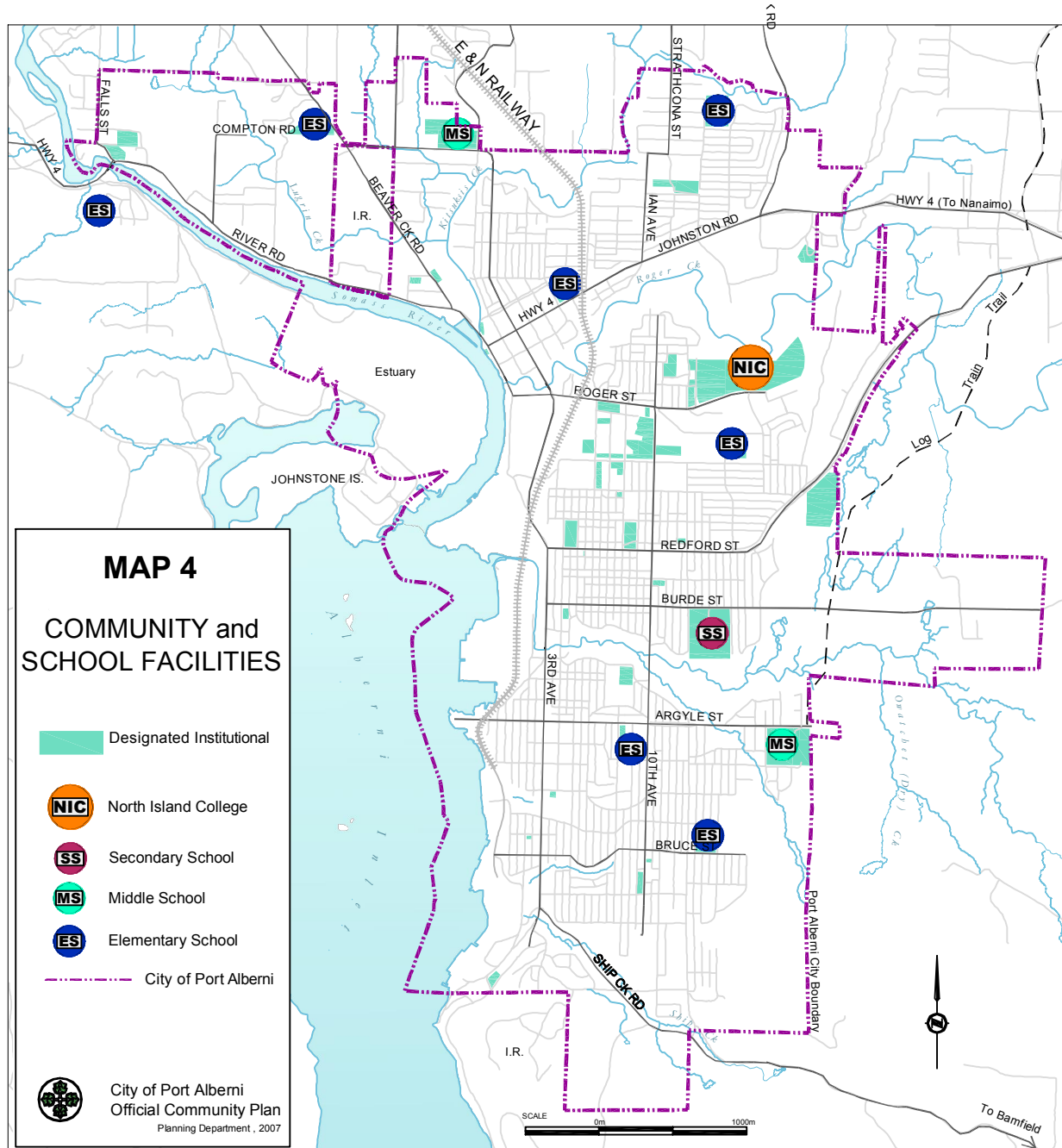
Table 4 – Community Schools

Elementary Schools Grades K-6	Middle Schools Grades 7-9	Secondary School Grades 10-12	Post Secondary
Gill Elementary School	Eric J. Dunn Middle School	Alberni District Secondary School (ADSS)	North Island College
Alberni Elementary School	A.W. Neill Middle School		
John Howitt Elementary School			
Wood Elementary School			
8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Elementary School			
Maquinna Elementary School			

**Council Policy**

1. A joint-use agreement for the shared use of recreational lands and School buildings is supported.
2. New residential development or redevelopment that substantially increases the net residential density shall be referred to the School District to ensure that there is an appropriate opportunity for school site planning.
3. North Island College is an integral educational/ training facility in Port Alberni and as such will continue to receive support from the City.
4. The City will support efforts that contribute to initiatives and development of job training and research in Port Alberni.

Map 4: Community, and School Facilities





## 3.4 Health Care

### Council Policy

1. The City will work closely with the appropriate health care providers for the purposes of improving the provision of health care services to meet the current and future needs of residents.
2. Support services, businesses and industries that cater to the needs of seniors and enhance quality of life will be encouraged and promoted.

## 3.5 Arts & Culture

### Council Policy

1. Festivals and events that celebrate or promote arts and culture in the community are supported.
2. Initiatives by organizations, such as the Community Arts Council of the Alberni Valley, to promote and advance the arts and culture within the City are supported.
3. The City will consider creating or promoting a seasonal cultural district in a strategic tourist oriented location that would bring together local artists/ artisans in a single location for the benefit of the community and the travelling public. The identification and designation of such a district is to be determined upon further study and consultation.

## 3.6 Heritage

The Alberni Heritage Network has played a significant role in the preservation and enhancement of historical resources as well as promotion of heritage tourism. Their involvement has included a number of projects including the McLean Mill National Historic Site, the Alberni Pacific Railway, the Maritime Discovery Centre, and the Alberni Valley Museum.

The City has a number of buildings that could have heritage significance but also has limited resources for undertaking significant heritage conservation projects. Therefore, the City will rely on legislative provisions to encourage owners of buildings with heritage or architectural significance to designate them for preservation.

### Council Policy

1. The adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of older buildings is encouraged as a method of retaining a legacy of buildings with heritage significance.
2. New developments shall identify impacts and mitigation strategies in order to protect views and view corridors, and natural open space or vegetation that has heritage significance.
3. Where buildings of heritage, historical or architectural significance are on land slated for redevelopment, the City will encourage preservation of the building façade or incorporation of a design program that reflects the historic vernacular and scale.





4. The development of a Heritage Management Plan is supported. The Plan can be developed through community consultation and is intended to establish a heritage vision, a resource inventory and associated management goals, assessment of possible financial tools and legal parameters concerning implementation.
5. The City supports the Alberni Valley Museum as a central repository for historically significant artefacts.
6. The City has adopted a Community Heritage Register to identify and consider local heritage resources in the land use planning process.

### 3.7 Agriculture

Urban agriculture is central in efforts toward achieving a more sustainable food source and assist in the creation of a secure food supply for residents of the City. A benefit of this form of small scale food production is that it can be undertaken at various scales from residential gardens to allotment gardens, and provides the benefit of being available to a wide range of ages and mobility levels.

The amount of land located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in Port Alberni is limited to a single property that forms part of a contiguous Highway Commercial (HOC) land use area on the east side of the City, and an area on the west side located within the Somass Estuary.

#### Council Policy

1. Market gardens are encouraged as a suitable land use in low-lying areas that are subject to tsunami inundation and designated “UAG” on Schedule “A” (Land Use Map).
2. Urban agriculture is encouraged as a method to assist in the provision of daily food items.
3. The City supports the production, processing, distribution and sale of locally grown products.
4. Public education efforts concerning the value of urban agriculture, composting and water conservation are supported.
5. The City will work with the Agricultural Land Commission in an effort to identify opportunities to enhance and/or promote agriculture in the community.
6. The City will continue to support the Port Alberni’s Farmer’s Market and will consider options to expand this economic opportunity.

### 3.8 Regional Context

#### Council Policy

1. The City is committed to coordinate efforts with the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District to ensure that growth adjacent to City boundaries occurs in a planned and sustainable manner.
2. The City shall strengthen its position as the regional center in the Alberni Valley for commercial, governmental, institutional, recreational and other higher order services.



3. The City may consider requests for boundary extension on a case by case basis. Where boundary extension is considered by the City, the land owner will be required to assume all associated servicing costs, and the City will also review on-going maintenance implications.

## 4.0 RESIDENTIAL

Based on current statistics, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate detached single-family residential for 20 years based on a projected 1.5% annual growth rate. This translates into a population increase of over 7,000 residents (from 17,743 in 2001 to over 25,000 by 2024). Residential capacity could be substantially increased well beyond the 20 year horizon through the provision of a range of higher density housing forms. These can include multi-apartments, stacked townhouses, row housing, high-density detached single-family residential and secondary suites. A wider choice of housing options translates into greater access to housing and a more liveable community for a greater range of age groups. This is a fundamental objective in creating complete and inclusive communities.

### Single Family Housing

Approximately 75% of the City's housing stock is in the form of single-detached residences (15% higher than the provincial average). This figure has been essentially static for the past 20 years. Most of the single-detached housing stock exists in older, established single-family neighbourhoods such as the Southport area. In a number of locations, the housing stock is older with a distinctive architectural character. It corresponds to a vernacular that represents a past era in the City's history and now lends a distinctive look and feel to the community. There are two principal locations in the City that are experiencing new single-family residential development. These are Redford Heights and Westport Place. Within these areas, there is still some capacity for further residential growth (see Map 1).

### Multi-Family Housing

A wide range of housing choice should be provided in the community in order to respond to diverse housing requirements or choices. This is a major element in the creation of complete and liveable communities as it enables people that have special housing requirements to stay within the community rather than having to relocate. Multi-family housing can be provided in a number of forms including duplexes, ground oriented multi-storey residential buildings (with or without commercial space at grade), and apartment buildings. There are a number of multi-family developments in various locations throughout the City.



Typically, this form of housing is within or adjacent to established single-family residential neighbourhoods. They are also typically situated near strategic amenity or service locations such as commercial nodes, parks, schools, community facilities, or in relation to significant transportation corridors. The objective is to facilitate compact urban form which reduces vehicle trips, increases the likelihood of social interaction, increases the economic viability of commercial nodes, and leads to a more sustainable lifestyle.

### **Affordable Housing**

The provision of affordable housing is central to the liveability of a community. A number of measures can be used to quantify the threshold for affordability. One such measure used by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation is that the cost of adequate shelter should not exceed 30% of household income. A range of affordable housing options should be provided to accommodate a wide range of lifestyles and economic profiles such as young families, seniors, singles, those on a fixed income or are low-income households. Such housing can consist of a range of forms including multi-family, high density detached single-family residential, or secondary suites within or associated with single-family dwellings in single-family neighbourhoods. The Plan does not support concentration of specialty housing such as specialty senior's housing in a single location. Rather, it promotes integration of such housing throughout the community in order to provide greater housing diversity.

### **Future Residential**

The Future Residential (FUR) designation applies to undeveloped lands reserved to accommodate residential growth over the next 20 years based on a projected 1.5% growth rate. Of the land designated FUR, approximately 65 hectares is serviced and available for development. A further 176 hectares is available for residential development but is not currently fully serviced. On lands within this designation, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate approximately 3,200 detached single-family residences.



## 4.1 General Provisions

### Council Policy

1. With the projected increase in the senior's population, the provision of appropriate housing choice and range of care options shall be supported.
2. The provision of a wide-range of housing choice for the benefit of all demographic and socio-economic segments is encouraged.
3. The City supports efforts to provide integrated special needs, affordable, and rental housing within the community.
4. The City will encourage greater residential density in locations near commercial nodes and near transit routes.
5. The City will support increased residential density along Johnston Road on lands designated Residential (RES) on Schedule "A" (Land Use Map), in support of nearby commercial land use.

## 4.2 Residential (RES)

### Council Policy

1. Residential land uses will be permitted in areas designated Residential (RES) on Schedule "A" (Land Use Map).
2. The Residential (RES) designation permits the following:
  - detached single-family dwellings;
  - two family dwellings;
  - places of worship and associated uses;
  - home-based business;
  - bed & breakfasts;
  - daycare facilities.
3. Development of secondary suites is encouraged within those areas zoned to permit one family dwellings in order to provide for a wider range of housing choice. These can be contained within the primary residential building or in the form of "granny flat" in an ancillary outbuilding subject to zoning regulations.
4. The City supports the development of residential infill provided that the scale and character are suitably integrated into the adjacent neighbourhood.



## 4.3 Multi-Family Residential (MFR)

### Council Policy

1. Multi-Family Residential (MFR) land uses will be permitted in areas so designated on Schedule "A" (Land Use Map).
2. The Multi-Family Residential (MFR) designation permits the following:
  - detached single family dwellings (as a strata);
  - two family dwellings;
  - multi-family dwellings;
  - mobile home developments;
  - senior's care facilities (except congregate care which should be located within the Institutional designation);
  - places of worship;
  - daycare facilities.
3. Land designated Multi-Family Residential (MFR) on Schedule "A" (Land Use Map) shall be designated as a Development Permit Area to control the form and character of development in order to ensure an appropriate fit with the adjacent neighbourhood.
4. When considering redesignation of areas to Multi-Family Residential (MFR), the City shall consider the following criteria:
  - Should be within walking distance (approximately 800 metres) of commercial, recreational, public/institutional nodes, or community scale parks;
  - Should be located on or in proximity to major collectors or arterial roads in order reduce traffic impacts on local roads;
  - An adequate transition between lower density housing, and compatibility with adjacent land uses must be provided; and
5. All Multi-Family Residential (MFR) shall require full connection to City utility services.

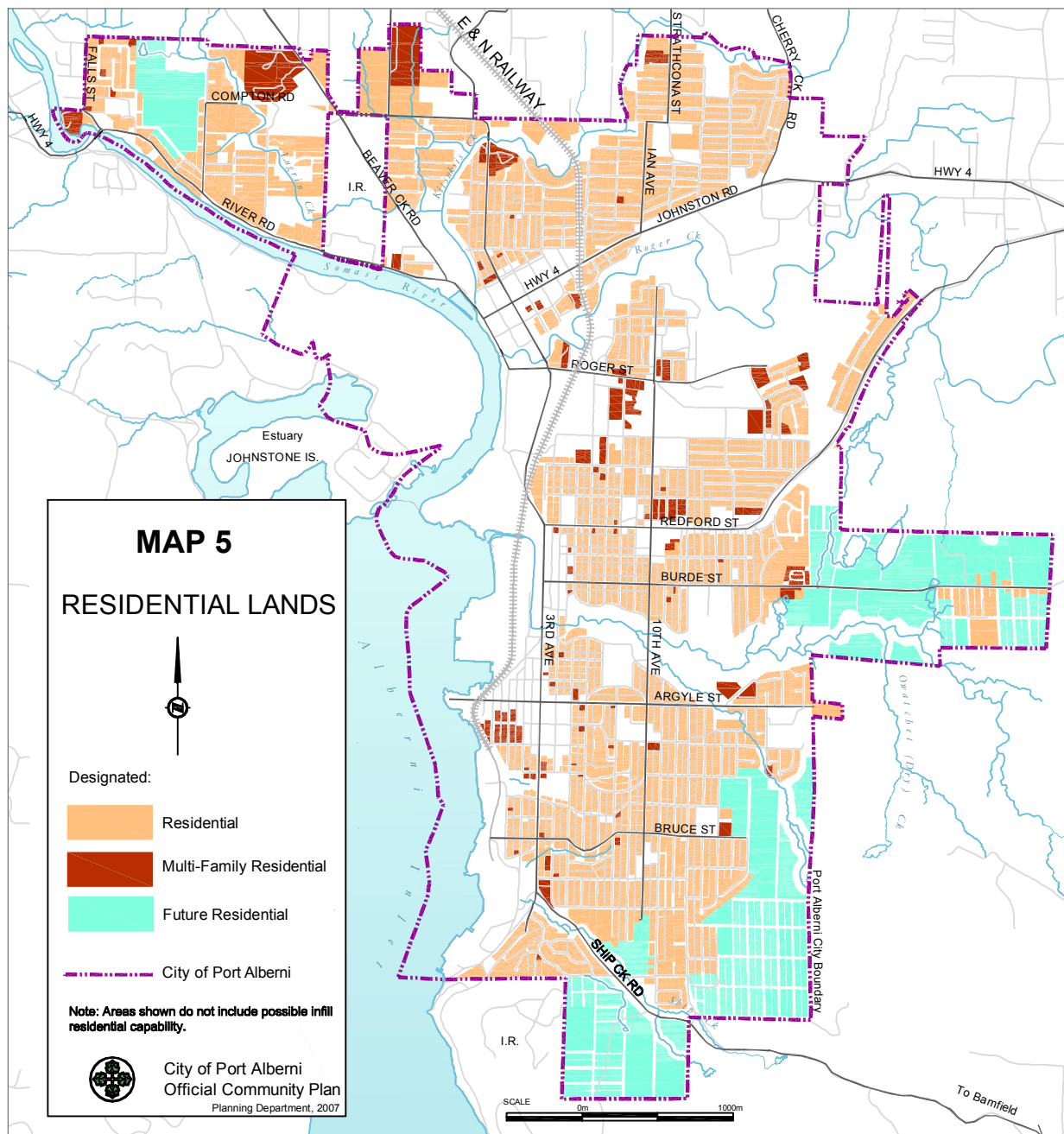
## 4.4 Future Residential (FUR)

### Council Policy

1. Future Residential (FUR) land uses will be limited to areas so designated on Schedule "A" (Land Use Map).
2. In those areas designated in the Official Community Plan as "Future Residential", a detailed neighbourhood plan is required in order to address the specifics of the proposed land use. The neighbourhood plan must be approved prior to an OCP designation change by Council.
3. Future Residential may accommodate a range of residential densities and can include provision for neighbourhood commercial uses, parks, schools, and other land uses that are intended to provide support services for the neighbourhood.



Map 5: Future Residential





## 5.0 COMMERCIAL

The City of Port Alberni has four major commercial areas each having a different function and character. This is a reflection of the town amalgamation in 1967. These areas include Northport, Southport, Redford Area, and Johnston Road East.

- Southport -** This is the original downtown of the former Port Alberni. It is characterized by hillside topography; spectacular views of the Alberni Inlet framed by mountains beyond, and is the focus of governmental and financial services, traditional street-oriented commercial retail units, and Harbour Quay. It functions both as a neighbourhood and community commercial node.
- Northport -** This is the location of the downtown of the former Alberni townsite. It is characterized by relatively flat topography, and predominantly small-scale commercial retail units split between street-oriented and automobile-oriented buildings, and is contained by Victoria Quay on the west side. It functions predominantly at the neighbourhood level and community levels. However, as Johnston Road (Highway 4) is the only transportation linkage to the west coast, it captures trade from the traveling public.
- Redford Area -** This area is characterized by relatively flat topography, and a mix of small and large scale commercial retail units that are predominantly oriented to the automobile. It is surrounded by residential land uses and as such functions primarily as a neighbourhood node.
- Johnston Road East -** This area consists of relatively flat topography and a concentration of large format, automobile-oriented commercial uses with expansive street-oriented parking lots. Based on the retail format, Johnston Road functions as both a community and regional service node. For the purposes of this document, comprehensive regional serving commercial development can be categorized as typically including one or more anchor tenants along with clusters of other larger size retail units. In the case of stand alone retail developments, those situated on individual parcels, the amount of floor space is typically not less than about 1860m<sup>2</sup>. The intent of this designation is to not facilitate inclusion of smaller, more specialized and pedestrian-oriented retail and service facilities that are preferred within other city commercial areas.

Residents have indicated an appreciation of the small-scale commercial character in Port Alberni and the positive shopping experience it provides. It has also been indicated that the community would benefit from increased retail variety and more consolidated shopping areas. As such, it will be



important to ensure that future commercial development is limited to the established commercial nodes. This will translate into more compact and vibrant shopping areas and improved urban fabric. It will serve to improve the local shopping experience, enhance the sense of place, quality of life for residents and attract visitors to the community.

There are three commercial land use classifications that reflect specific characteristics and/ or requirements. These include *General Commercial*, *Neighbourhood Commercial*, and *Highway Commercial* as shown in the following table.

**Table 5 – Commercial Land Use Classifications**

Designation	Description
General Commercial (GCO)	Permits a broad range of commercial use including retail, office, financial, institutional, service, entertainment, food & beverage, accommodation, and residential. Can function at a neighbourhood, community, and in a limited capacity, regional scale.
Neighbourhood Commercial (NCO)	Permits small scale, pedestrian oriented retail use to serve the daily needs of the adjacent residential neighbourhood.
Highway Commercial (HCO)	Permits a broad range of automobile oriented, large format retail and/ or service uses. Functions at a community and regional scale.

## 5.1 General Commercial

### Council Policy

1. Lands designated as General Commercial (GCO) on Schedule “A” (Land Use Map) are to be used for a broad range of pedestrian-scale uses including retail, office, financial, institutional, service, entertainment, food and beverage, and accommodation. Residential is permitted where it is located above ground floor commercial, unless stated otherwise.
2. Lands designated as General Commercial (GCO) on Schedule “A” (Land Use Map) are designated as Development Permit Areas (DPA) and all new development or substantial building renovation therein shall be subject to the guidelines contained in Section “E”: Implementation.
3. The City will encourage the concentration of commercial development in established commercial nodes. It should complement the character of adjacent land uses and achieve an appropriate human scale in order to create compact and vibrant shopping nodes. Where current residential parcels in GCO designated areas along Johnston Road are proposed for commercial zoning, Council will consider such zoning with attention to overall comprehensive development. Council will discourage the potential to leave one residential parcel ‘locked in’ between commercially zoned properties. As a rule, no commercial zoning will be considered where 2 or less contiguous parcels are left as residential, unless it is clearly demonstrated that such parcels can be readily converted to a suitable commercial development.



4. Large format retail is permitted within this designation however, it must respond to the principles of compact, vibrant and pedestrian-friendly urban form. This is to be achieved by respecting existing block patterns, preserving the rhythm of small-scale, pedestrian oriented commercial retail units along the street frontage, and containing the majority of off-street parking within the building envelope.
5. For all other forms of commercial where off-street parking is required it should be provided at the rear of the building in order to avoid disruption of the street wall by parking lots or driveways.
6. Infill and redevelopment of underutilized commercial lands will be a priority for the City in order to achieve compact urban form, and to mitigate against excessively dispersed development.
7. Buildings should be oriented to the street and located at the property line or be setback minimally in order to accommodate a specific programming requirement such as outdoor seating.
8. The City shall encourage the creation of strong linkages between the Northport and Southport commercial nodes and the waterfront to enhance the City's identity, sense of place, aesthetic beauty, and reinforce its function as a port city. This can be achieved through streetscape enhancement that visually connects both locations, and the provision of bicycle lanes and an enhanced sidewalk standard to increase the psychological connection.

## 5.2 Southport (Within the General Commercial (GCO) Designation)

### Council Policy

1. The City supports efforts to enhance the quality and sense of place associated with Southport. This should be done strategically, building on existing opportunities and logical connections. A priority would be linking Harbour Quay with other significant areas in Southport along strategic corridors such as Argyle Street. This can be achieved through the use of such enhancements as:
  - street furniture;
  - decorative landscape treatment;
  - sidewalk enhancements;
  - building façade enhancement;
  - public events such as street festivals; and
  - decorative signage such as utility box way finding maps, banners, etc.
2. The role of Southport as a primary shopping, tourist, cultural, residential and social node with a distinctive sense of place is supported and is to be achieved through a coordinated and sensitively developed program of streetscape enhancements and public space improvements (particularly in association with the waterfront). This may form an integral part of a comprehensive urban design plan.
3. Significant view corridors in this area contribute to the overall experience and distinctiveness of place and shall be preserved. These view corridors are typically located along east-west roads in the Southport area.



4. Together with the restored E & N railway station at the entrance of the Harbour Quay, this area of the community has evolved as a major focal point. Adjacent development that capitalizes on this location by building on the distinctive character of this enclave is encouraged. This can include mixed used developments or niche development such as destination hotels.
5. Maintain and enhance where possible through City acquisition or through redevelopment, public access to the waterfront. This includes public spaces and a waterfront walkway from Harbour Quay along Harbour Road.
6. Link the Harbour Quay area with other significant areas in Southport along strategic corridors such as Argyle Street.
7. Densification of Southport with residential above ground floor commercial is supported in an effort to provide different forms of housing, increase vibrancy in the area, and enhance the area as a people place. However, residential buildings which exclude a commercial component will be encouraged to locate on streets other than the main shopping streets of Argyle Street and Third Avenue. Other than in the Southport General Commercial (GCO) district, developments that are limited only to multi-family residential use are not permitted within the General Commercial (GCO) designation.
8. The City supports the continued use of the harbour as a “working harbour” but will seek to achieve a balance between commercial/ industrial and public uses.
9. The City supports the use of the waterfront area for day moorage and land-based marine fuelling facilities for residents and visitors.

## 5.3 Neighbourhood Commercial

### Council Policy

1. Lands designated as Neighbourhood Commercial (NCO) on Schedule “A” (Land Use Map) are to be used for neighbourhood scale, pedestrian-oriented retail uses. Residential use on a second storey is encouraged.
2. Lands identified as Neighbourhood Commercial (NCO) are designated as Development Permit Areas (DPA) and all new development or substantial building renovation therein shall be subject to the guidelines contained in Section “E”: Implementation.
3. New residential subdivisions may accommodate neighbourhood scale commercial development to serve daily convenience needs of the immediate neighbourhood. This will require redesignation in order that the commercial use is reflected in the Official Community Plan.
4. Neighbourhood Commercial (NCO) use is to be limited to prominent locations such as major neighbourhood intersections in order to maximize visibility, accommodate vehicle traffic, and provide a neighbourhood focal point.
5. Buildings should be located at or in proximity to the property line in order to accentuate their location.

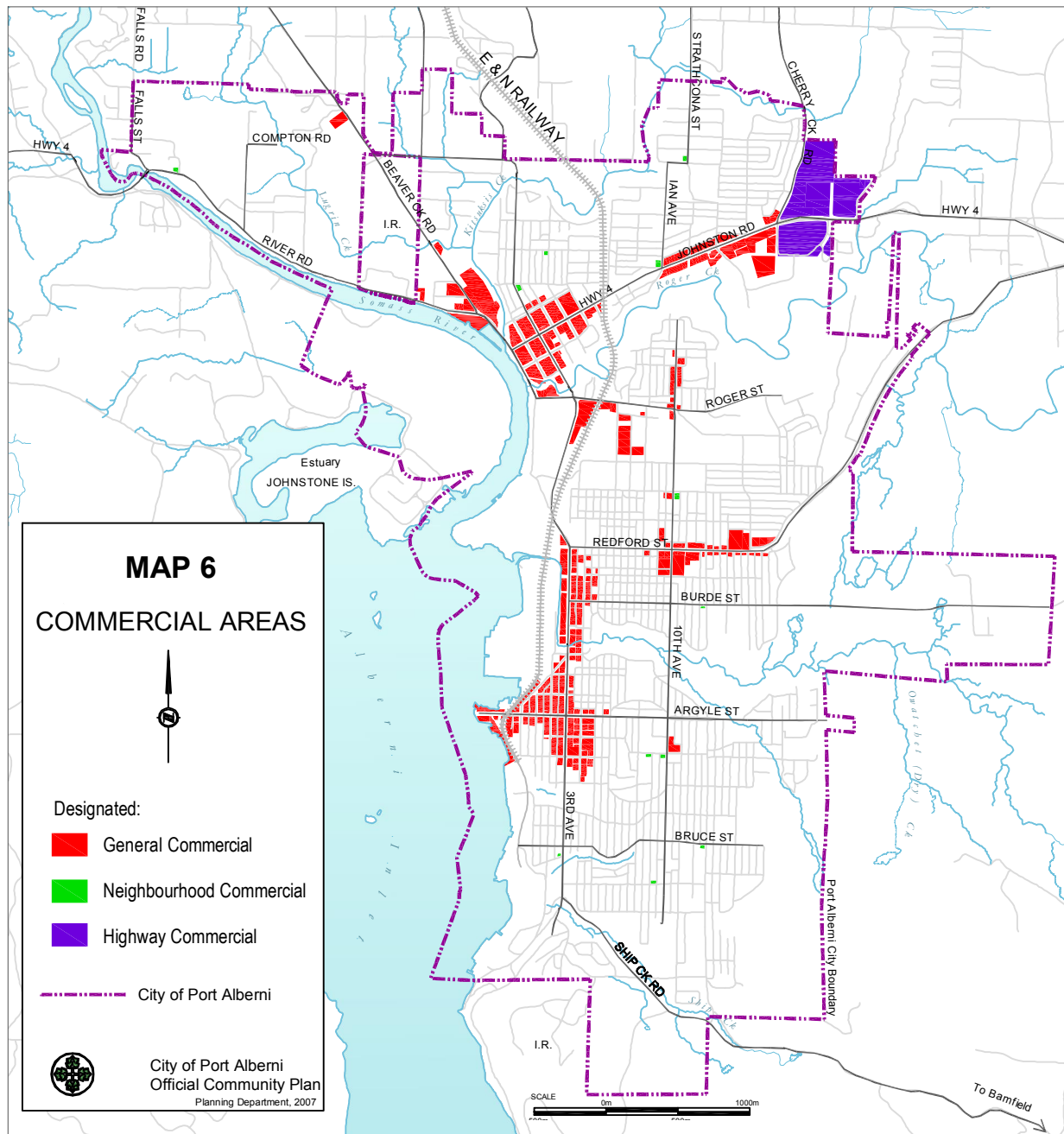


## 5.4 Highway Commercial - Johnston Road East

### Council Policy

1. Lands designated as Highway Commercial (HCO) on Schedule “A” (Land Use Map) are to be used for a range of large format retail and service uses. This designation is intended to accommodate a form of comprehensive development that is characterized by auto-oriented retail uses that typically include anchor tenants along with a mix of complementary retail and service units.
2. Stand alone retail or service developments on an individual legal parcel (with the exception of food and beverage outlets) having a gross floor area of less than 1860m<sup>2</sup> (20,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) are not permitted in this designation.
3. Lands designated as Highway Commercial (HCO) are designated as Development Permit Areas (DPA) and all new development or substantial building renovation therein shall be subject to the guidelines contained in Section “E”: Implementation.
4. The City will consider pursuing exclusion of the remaining ALR property in this location of the City for Highway Commercial (HCO) purposes.

Map 6: Commercial Areas





## 6.0 INDUSTRIAL

### 6.1 General Provisions

Industry is the major economic generator in the City. Most of the industry is located in the waterfront area and involves primary resource industries. There are a number of factors that will influence growth of the industrial sector in the City. Opportunities that serve to promote growth include: lower land costs; housing affordability; and lifestyle. Constraints to growth of the industrial sector include: relative location; access and transportation issues; availability of developable industrial land in adjacent communities; and availability of industrial land within the City. It is important to note that lands owned by the Port Authority are subject to Federal jurisdiction and as such, the City has no authority over land use.

#### Council Policy

1. Lands designated as Industrial (IND) on Schedule "A" (Land Use Map) shall accommodate industrial uses primarily comprised of wholesaling, warehousing, manufacturing and processing, storage facilities, service and repair operations, and salvage operations.
2. The City shall place a strong emphasis on the balance between development and expansion of the harbour and port facilities and increased access to the waterfront for the general public. Future waterfront projects are to be reviewed in relation to this objective, with every effort made to provide public access that does not compromise reasonable port/ business operations.
3. The Port Alberni Shoreline Master Plan may be referenced for the purposes of guiding enhancement and development of waterfront lands.
4. New light and medium industry shall be encouraged to locate in the Port Alberni Industrial Park.
5. The location of new heavy industry shall be considered on a site specific basis and will be subject to a mitigation study to ensure that no negative land use issues result.
6. The City shall monitor the supply of industrial land to ensure that sufficient lands are available for future development.
7. Future industrial areas should be located with consideration of the existing and intended uses adjacent and the associated impacts so as to ensure they are context sensitive and harmonize with adjacent land uses. Screening and buffering regulations will be established to mitigate land use impacts.
8. Retail and office uses as a primary activity are not permitted in areas designated for industrial use in order to preserve the industrial land base.
9. In order to accommodate substantial demand for heavy industrial land, the City may consider incorporating suitable adjacent lands into the City. All new industry shall connect to full City services.





10. Due to an identified competitive disadvantage for local forest manufacturing industries, Council's objective for designating the heavy and medium industry revitalization area is to foster the revitalization of the City's industrial waterfront by promoting reinvestment in existing industrial operations and promoting development of new industry on currently vacant lands.

A revitalization tax exemption is hereby designated pursuant to section 226 (2) of the Community Charter. This area is as shown on a map as "heavy and medium industry revitalization area" which is attached as Map 7 and forms part of this bylaw.

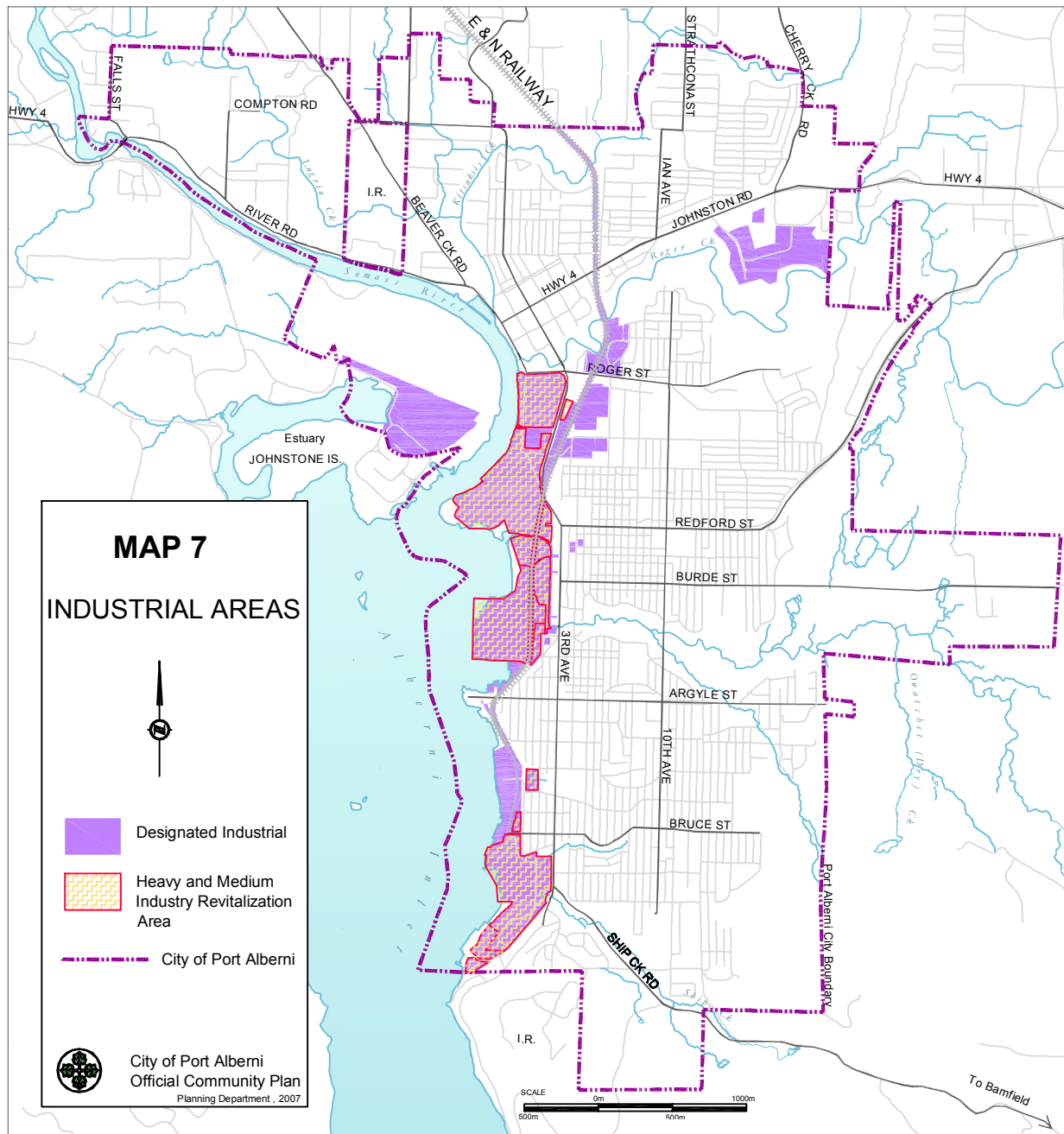
## 6.1 Sand & Gravel Deposits

### Council Policy

1. No sand or gravel extraction occurs within the City and is not foreseen to occur in the future. Should such activity take place, the City shall attempt to ensure that it occurs in manner that is compatible with adjacent land uses.



Map 7: Industrial Areas





## 7.0 GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 7.1 General Provisions

Economic development is a major focus for the City as it attempts to promote the diversification of the local economy and increase the availability of local employment. This has become more of a priority in response to a changing resource sector upon which the community has been traditionally reliant. The significance of this issue is also reflected in comments by residents who indicate the need to increase the vitality of the local economy in order to provide more local jobs but also to increase the range of goods and services available locally. This is a central principle underlying the creation of complete communities.

#### Council Policy

1. The City shall encourage the development and enhancement of locally based tourism opportunities particularly in such areas as sport-tourism, eco-tourism and heritage tourism.
2. The City shall continue to encourage the development of tourism opportunities as a major focus for economic development in the community, and will support enhancement of tourism infrastructure.
3. The City supports the natural resource industries and associated businesses and will review bylaws, policies, and procedures in order to ensure a supportive land use and regulatory system.
4. Efforts by the Chamber of Commerce and Community Futures Development Corporation to promote and assist in local economic development will continue to be supported by the City.
5. The downtown cores of Southport and Northport are intended as the primary commercial cores of the City. As such they should benefit from the widest range of permitted uses within the City including high density residential so as to bring vitality, aesthetic quality and liveability to these nodal locations.
6. The City shall strengthen its status as the regional center for the Alberni Valley particularly in the provision of services pertaining to institutional, commercial, and recreational requirements.
7. The City will explore opportunities to collaborate with the Tseshaht First Nation and Hupacasath First Nation in economic development initiatives.
8. The City attracts a significant number of recreational vehicles. As such, the City will endeavour to improve recreational vehicle facilities including access to the tourist information centre.



## 7.2 Home-Based Business

The percentage of the local workforce that works out of the home has doubled since the 1991 Census period. As of the 2001 Census, home-based business accounts for approximately 7% of the workforce and represents an important economic sector within the community.

### Council Policy

1. Home-based businesses and Bed & Breakfasts are supported where they do not detract from the residential character of the neighbourhood. Home-base businesses will be regulated through the City's zoning bylaw.

## 8.0 TRANSPORTATION

### 8.1 Roads

The road classification system is illustrated on Map 8. The current road network consists of approximately 128km of roadways and five vehicular traffic bridges (in addition to three pedestrian traffic bridges). It is designed to meet all levels of service conveying traffic within Port Alberni and interregionally. The existing road network has adequate capacity to manage existing traffic demand as well as projected population growth. However, there are key issues that should be addressed in order to improve access and manage industrial truck traffic. This specifically relates to construction of a designated truck route and improved north-south connectivity.

### Council Policy

1. The following road classifications are recognized:

#### Provincial Highway

Provincial Highways are designed to provide efficient inter-regional transportation. This road classification is characterized by restricted access, limited on-street parking, and use of controlled intersections.

#### Arterial Roads

Arterial streets are designed to accommodate high traffic volumes connecting major community nodes within Port Alberni, and feed into the inter-regional road network. As efficient traffic mobility is a priority, access is limited and on-street parking is discouraged. Lane widths are typically wide enough to accommodate a shared or dedicated cycling lane. Road right-of-way will be reserved in order to provide the appropriate standard or to meet projected demand.



### Collector Roads

Collector streets are designed to feed local traffic to higher order roads. They are characterized by moderate travel speeds, reduced access to individual properties and where road rights-of-way are sufficient; on-street parking is permitted. Lane widths are typically wide enough to accommodate a shared or dedicated cycling lane. Road right-of-way will be reserved in order to provide the appropriate standard or to meet projected demand.

### Local Roads

Local roads are designed to provide access to individual properties and carry traffic to the higher order streets. They are characterized by slower traffic speeds, narrower road rights-of-way, regularly spaced signed intersections, and on-street parking. Road right-of-way will be reserved in order to provide the appropriate standard or to meet projected demand.

2. The City will encourage development of an integrated and multi-modal transportation system for the benefit of the community, economy, and environment.
3. The City will encourage decisions concerning road infrastructure improvements to reflect the accommodation of alternative modes of transportation such as cycling, walking, and transit at a high standard of comfort and safety.
4. North-south linkages are not well developed in the City due to topographic influences. Improved vehicular and pedestrian linkages are supported on the basis of more detailed transportation and environmental studies. Based on previous technical analysis, preference shall be given to the development of an east-side bypass as a major north-south road. Appropriate right-of-way will be acquired accordingly. Community need, based on such issues as traffic volumes, emergency access and/or development pressure will influence the construction timeframe.
5. The City will encourage the enhancement and use of a multi-modal transportation system that includes cycling, walking, car-pooling, and transit in an effort to conserve energy and minimize air and noise pollution.
6. The City will consider the designation of a dedicated truck route in order to reduce the impacts of truck traffic over the wider community.
7. The City will seek the cooperation of the Ministry of Transportation in reviewing potential highway improvement options, particularly the impacts on land use and abutting parcels of any potential median strips/barriers as a means of improving road safety.
8. The City will consider undertaking a long term Corridor Management Plan for Provincial Highway #4 (Johnston Road) with the Ministry of Transportation.

## 8.2 Bicycle & Pedestrian Corridors

The provision of alternate forms of transportation is central to the creation of liveable and complete communities. It offers mobility options and greater community access for those residents that cannot or choose not to travel by automobile. Furthermore, according to 2001 Census Canada information, nearly 11% of the workforce utilizes an alternative form of transportation to the automobile to get to work. Consequently, the integration of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian



network into the overall transportation grid is essential. Residents indicate that the trail system is one of the major strengths of Port Alberni, but better overall connectivity through the development of more trails and walkways is necessary.

### 8.2.1 General

#### Council Policy

1. The City supports the development of a comprehensive system of pedestrian and bicycle corridors that serve to link neighbourhoods, community services and amenities.
2. Bicycle corridors shall be developed as follows:
  - on-road routes through dedicated bicycle lanes or shared automobile/ bicycle lanes as appropriate; and
  - off-road routes utilizing the primary trail network.
3. Pedestrian corridors shall include:
  - sidewalks;
  - Pathways; and
  - Trails.
4. The provision of end of trip facilities such as appropriately designed, located, and situated bicycle racks for cyclists is encouraged.
5. New developments shall provide connectivity to the existing network of bicycle and pedestrian corridors when physically possible.

### 8.2.2 Trails

#### Council Policy

1. The development of a Trail Network Master Plan is supported. The Plan should provide for a comprehensive system of urban and natural trail opportunities, identify links to all areas of the community, identify the range of accessibility levels, consider varying categories of surfacing material and maintenance levels, and should address potential trail maintenance partnerships.
2. The City shall continue to develop its comprehensive network of integrated trails which provide varying levels of access to people of all ages and mobility levels. This will include:
  - sidewalks;
  - footpaths;
  - hiking trails; and
  - hard-surface multiple-use trails.



3. The City trail network shall connect to regional trails adjacent to City boundaries where possible in order to expand existing trail infrastructure and improve area access.
4. As a method of improving waterfront access, the City will explore the feasibility of constructing a waterfront walkway in the Clutesi Haven Marina/ Victoria Quay area, and Harbour Quay area along Harbour Road.

Walkway development is supported along River Road and Lugin Creek extending between Kitsuksis Creek along Lugin Creek to Paperdam Mill.

5. The City will explore opportunities to develop a portion of the E & N Railway corridor as a major greenway linkage between Northport and Southport in an effort to improve connectivity and mobility options.

## 8.3 Sidewalks

### Council Policy

1. The City will promote the establishment of pedestrian routes that link local destinations, and will promote a continuous separated pedestrian system in higher density areas.
2. The quality of pedestrian areas directly affects the overall image of a place, the quality of experience and the propensity for people to walk rather than drive. Recognizing this, efforts will be directed to such measures as:
  - reducing travel lane widths;
  - reducing street crossing distances;
  - enhanced separated sidewalks;
  - provision of pedestrian scale lighting;
  - soft and hard landscaping accents; and
  - street furniture.
  - This can be achieved where possible through capital improvement projects, capital works projects or new development or substantial renovation to existing buildings.

## 8.4 Transit

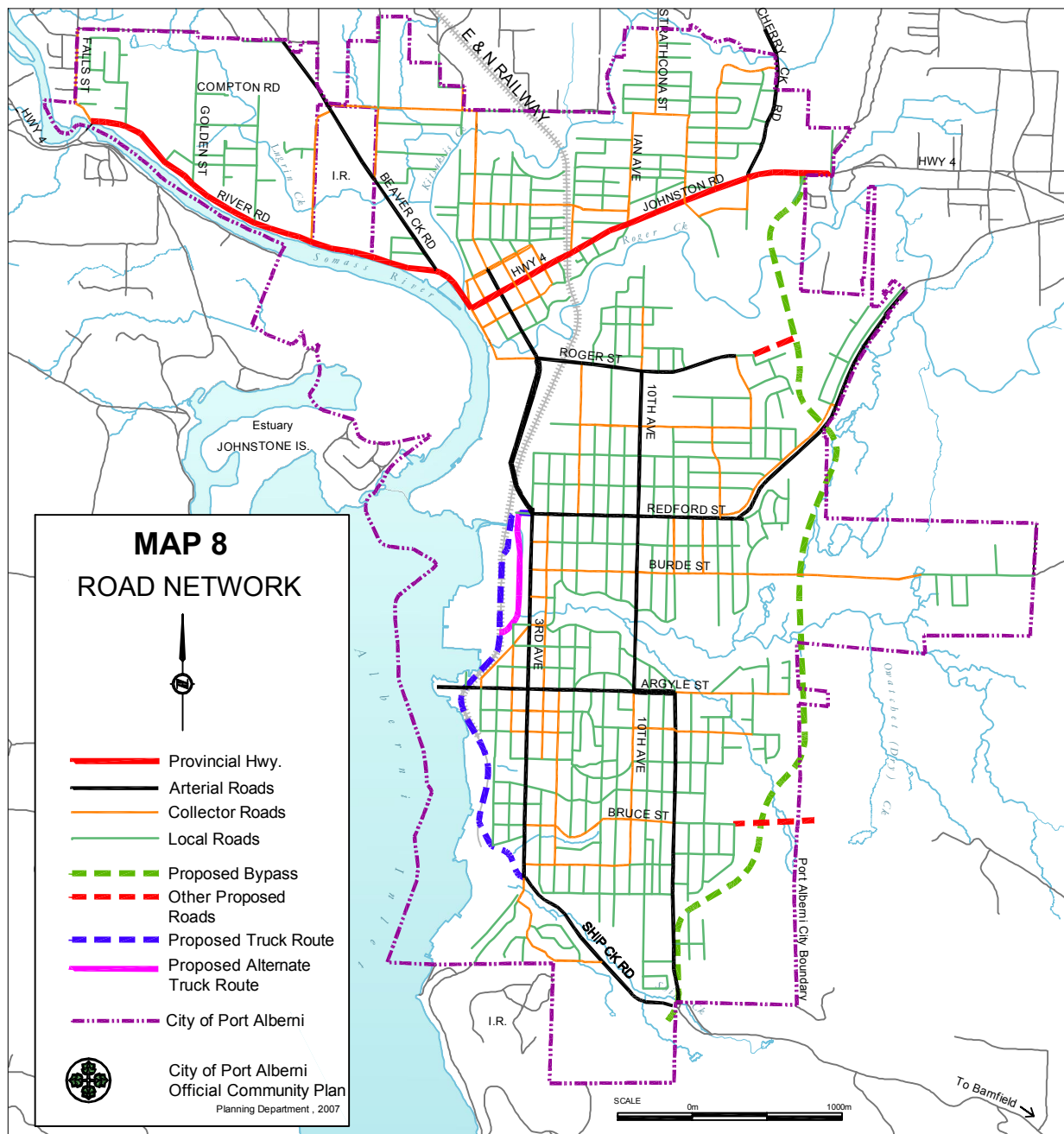
### Council Policy

1. The City in conjunction with BC Transit will ensure the provision of efficient transit service in order to connect all areas of the community.
2. The location of bus stops should be coordinated with sidewalk design for reasons of pedestrian safety and universal accessibility.
3. The City will promote and encourage efforts to provide regional transit connections to Sproat Lake and Cherry Creek.





Map 8: Major Road Network Plan





## 9.0 SERVICING

### 9.1 Water Distribution

#### 9.1.1 Capacity

All parts of the City are currently serviced with water which is delivered by a 150km network of watermains. The main water supply is China Creek/Bainbridge Lake with a capacity of 33,000 cubic metres per day. This source provides very high quality water and as such a minimal amount of water treatment is required (currently limited to chlorination and screening). Current peak day demand is approx. 26,000 cubic metres per day, which means the current supply has about a 25% residual capacity. Based on an annual growth rate of +1.5%, full capacity will be reached at a population of approximately 22,500 or by the year 2016. At this point, a new source will be required to accommodate future growth. However, this timeline could be affected should the current 20% reduction in water consumption, attributed to water metering, be sustained over the long term.

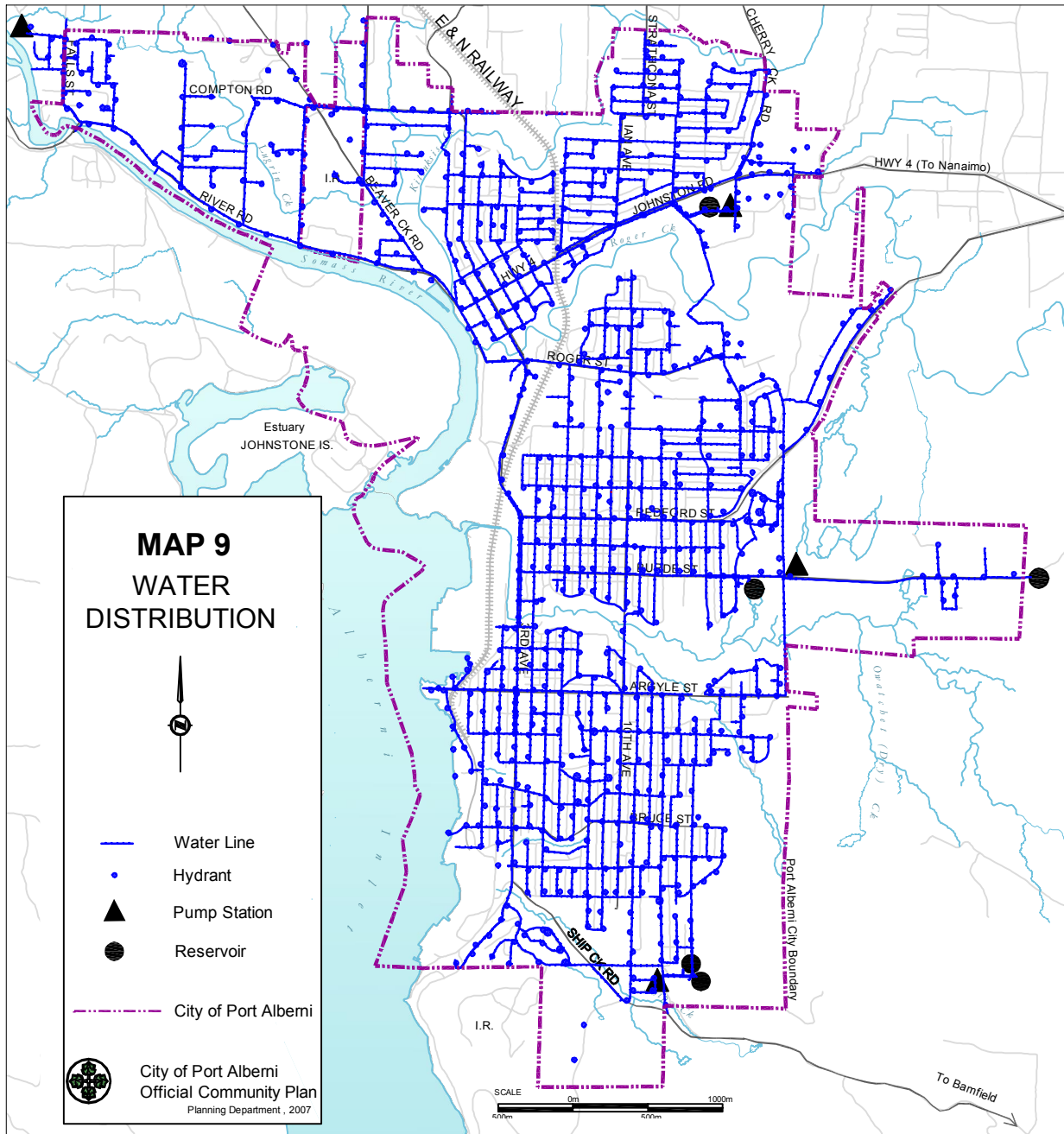
#### 9.1.2 Supply

A new regional water supply from Great Central Lake is a preferred long term solution to servicing additional water needs for the Alberni Valley area. This project is not expected to occur within the next 15 years or more. The Somass River is an existing source which is only used as a back-up system due to water quality issues. The Ministry of Health may encourage the City to install filtration as a result of new Provincial regulations concerning drinking water.

#### Council Policy

1. Water extension to areas outside of City boundaries shall not be permitted except for extraordinary circumstances. Expansion of City boundaries will be considered in cases where such expansion is required.
2. The City may assess the feasibility of installing a filtration system for drinking water supply.
3. Great Central Lake is identified as the preferred long term source for servicing water requirements.
4. Utilities will be permitted within all land use designations.

### Map 9: Water Distribution





## 9.2 Sanitary Sewer

Approximately 95% of the City is serviced by the sanitary sewer system. Currently, this includes approximately 155km of sanitary and combined sewers. Waste water management is provided by combined sanitary and storm sewers and separated sanitary sewers, four pump stations, and three forcemains all discharging into an aerated sewage treatment lagoon.

The *Stage 2 Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP)* identifies the need to replace combined sewers. The combined sewers allow stormwater and sewage to mix together in the same pipe, which during heavy rain events causes surcharge or overflows directly to the Alberni Inlet. Approximately 50% of the sewers are combined sewers and full separation of this system is expected to take approximately 40 years. The City has received a Canada/British Columbia infrastructure grant to abate sewage overflows into the Alberni Inlet. These funds are targeted towards fixing an existing situation, rather than building capacity for growth. The City has had a long term program of slowly replacing the combined sewers during road construction projects or sewer replacement projects.

The existing trunk sewer network is limited in its capacity to accept significant inflows from service area expansions. New growth particularly outside of infill growth opportunities may require localized lift stations which is a normal development requirement. Arrowsmith Heights is currently on septic systems and there are no short term plans to install a municipal system. Development of this area at an urban density would require sewer trunk construction as there are no sewers in the area.

### Council Policy

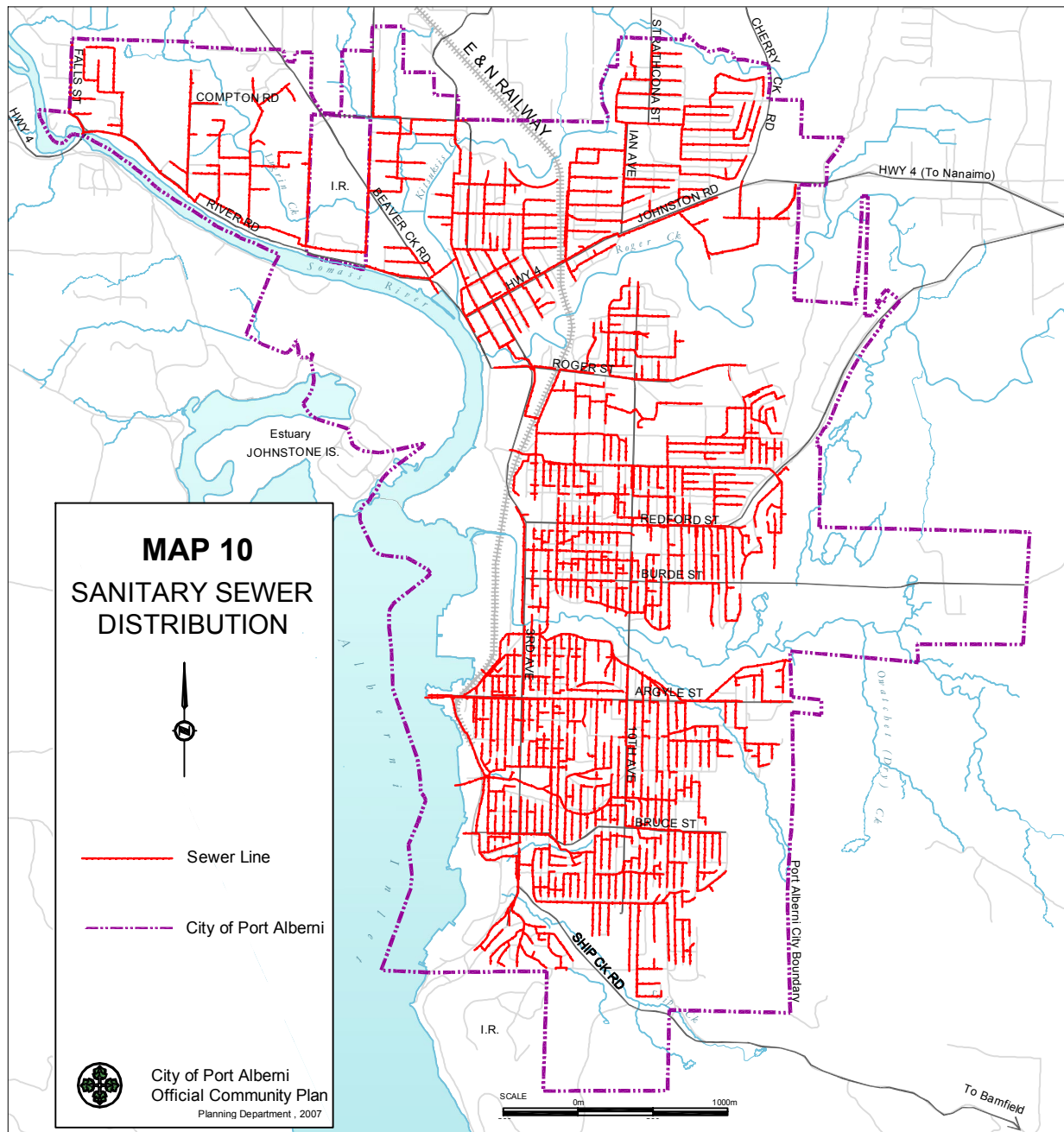
1. Sanitary extension to areas outside of City boundaries shall not be permitted except for extraordinary circumstances. Expansion of City boundaries will be considered in cases where such expansion is required.
2. The City shall continue efforts to replace the combined sewers with a separated system to reduce the impact of overflow into the Alberni Inlet.
3. Development of the Arrowsmith Heights area at an urban density will require construction of a sewer trunk as a precondition of development.
4. Utilities will be permitted within all land use designations.
5. The City shall complete the LWMP and work towards implementation of the upgrades recommended therein.

## 9.3 Storm Water Drainage

There are approximately 92km of storm sewers that convey storm water within the City. Furthermore, there are numerous major ravines and creeks which have been protected within the City and these serve as a way to discharge storm water to the Alberni Inlet. These ravines are capable of handling storm flows and there are few issues with respect to erosion.

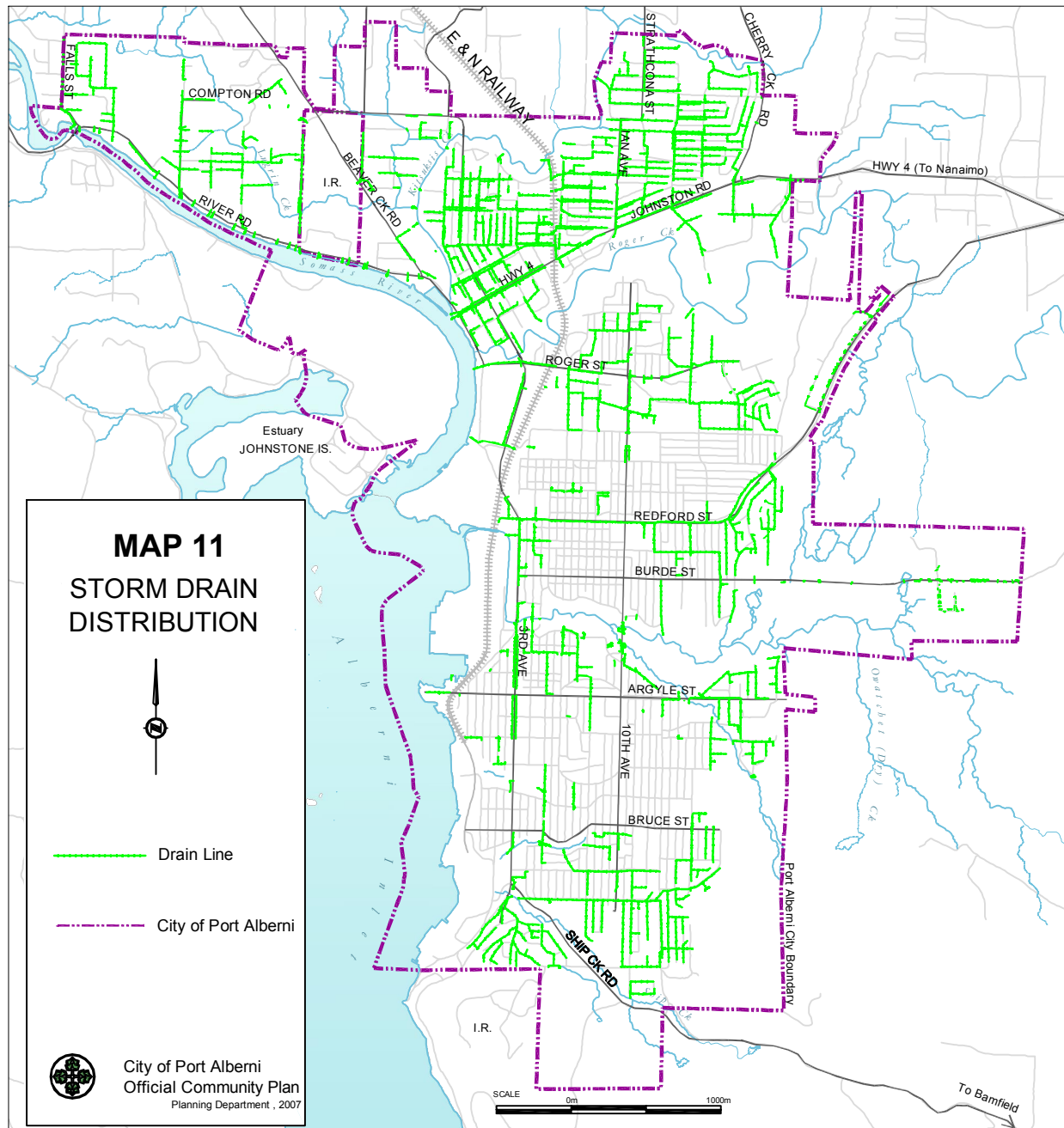


Map 10: Sanitary Sewer Distribution





Map 11: Storm Drainage Distribution







## 9.4 Solid Waste Management

Currently, City crews collect an annual total of approximately 6700 tonnes of residential and commercial garbage. Solid waste is currently accommodated in the Alberni Valley landfill. The capacity has been identified as being in the range of 90 years.

### Council Policy

1. In order to reduce the amount of solid waste dumped at the landfill, efforts to compost, recycle and reuse solid waste shall be encouraged.
2. The City may support or participate in efforts that directly benefit municipal waste management objectives or reduce environmental hazards.
3. Overall environmental management and recycling efforts shall be coordinated with the Regional District and generally be in compliance with the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan.





## Section E: Implementation

### 1.0 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

#### 1.1 Development Permit Area No. 1 Multiple Family Residential

##### Area

That area marked “Development Permit Area No. 1” as shown on Schedule “B” to this Bylaw is hereby designated as a development permit area.

##### Justification

The justification for the designation of this Development Permit Area is to coordinate the siting, massing, and form of buildings, together with parking areas, landscaping, and common areas in order to maximize the liveability of higher density residential developments and to control the interface with adjacent land uses.

##### Guidelines

Site plans, landscape plans, sections and elevations shall be submitted in support of a development permit application.

##### i) Architectural and Design Features

- The exterior design of buildings shall provide an attractive and aesthetic appearance compatible with surrounding developments.
- The building form encompassing the height, scale and massing should be complementary to the built environment in the surrounding area.
- A “box-like” appearance or horizontal emphasis in building design should be avoided.
- Where sloped roofs are characteristic of the area, they are encouraged as a design element in order to maintain a consistent architectural vernacular.
- Where flat roofs are characteristic of the area, they shall integrate a false façade ornamentation through parapet, cornices or other architectural features.
- Doorway entrances and window frames should be highlighted through vertical facade articulation including roof line accents, the use of awnings or other architectural features.
- Buildings shall be designed with materials that are durable and of high quality.



- Loading areas, garbage and recycling bins shall be completely screened in a manner that is consistent with the character of the architectural program and quality of the building.
- To ensure that rooflines remain attractive, all mechanical equipment located on the roof shall be screened.
- Exterior illumination shall be provided as a means to provide both an aesthetic accent to the development and to enhance personal safety through natural surveillance in low-light conditions. Illumination shall be designed to avoid light spill on adjacent properties.

**ii) Landscaping**

- Landscaping shall provide for an attractive visual appearance, aesthetic parking, service and storage areas and it shall enhance the overall development.
- All areas not covered by buildings, structures, parking and circulation shall be landscaped with a balanced mix of grass, shrub beds and trees to create a pleasant liveable environment.
- All landscaped areas shall be serviced by an underground irrigation system, utilize drought tolerant plant material, or a combination of both.
- Landscape screening shall be provided between development on adjacent sites and the site zoned for multiple-family development. Landscaping may include appropriate fencing, trees, hedges or a suitable combination.
- Landscaping shall be completed not later than six (6) months after the issuance of final occupancy for the development.
- Landscape beds located next to parking stalls shall be designed to avoid impacts on the plant material from door swing or foot traffic associated with entering or exiting vehicles by providing a hard-surface “staging area” within the landscape bed and adjacent to the parking stall.

**iii) Open Space**

- Where possible, private open space of a sufficient size should be developed adjacent to each dwelling unit to provide for private outdoor use by the occupants of the individual dwelling units. These may include patios at grade or balconies.
- Public open space is desirable in specific areas on the site to meet the common needs of residents for safe accessible outdoor recreation as well as opportunities for active and passive interaction with their physical environment.



**iv) Parking**

- Surface parking shall:
  - be sited to the side or rear of the principal building where possible; and
  - where lane access is available, parking and site entrances should be limited to lane access.
- Where covered parking is provided, the character shall be consistent with the comprehensive building design and in particular, sloped roofs shall be encouraged.
- Parking shall be paved and separated from other areas by landscaping in accordance with CPTED principles.

**v) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

Because safety and crime prevention are of paramount importance, CPTED principles should be applied reducing concealment opportunities.

**Development Permit Not Required**

Development Permits shall not be required in the following instances:

- for construction that is undertaken within the exterior walls of a principal building or structure
- construction of a value less than \$25,000.

## **1.2 Development Permit Area No: 2 Commercial Development**

**Area**

That area marked Development Permit Area No. 2 as shown on Schedule “B” to this Bylaw is hereby designated as a development permit area.

**Justification**

The justification for the designation of this Development Permit Area is the highly visible location of the areas within the City with its implications for community image. The intent of this Development Permit Area is to ensure high quality development.



## Guidelines

### i) Scale, Form and Character

1. A “box-like” appearance or a horizontal emphasis in building design shall be avoided. Building massing, walls, facades and roof lines shall be varied, articulated, stepped or indented. Except for Highway Commercial (HCO), building massing should be close to the street to unify the street elevation as a whole, and architectural detailing shall reflect appropriate scale, proportion and arrangement to enhance the pedestrian quality of the streetscape.
2. Buildings at road intersections should reinforce the corner definition and highlight entrance ways. Buildings should front both roads.
3. Building materials shall be of a high standard to convey quality and permanence.
4. Variations in the use of facade finishes shall be used to create a varied and attractive appearance. The use of wood as an architectural feature is encouraged.
5. Entrances and windows should be highlighted through vertical facade articulation including roof line or cornice accents or other architectural features.
6. Continuous weather protection shall be provided over pedestrian focal points on exterior building walls.
7. All roof top mechanical equipment shall be screened from view and should blend in with the roof line.
8. Loading areas, garbage and recycling bins shall be completely screened.
9. The design of buildings, parking lots, lighting and open space shall take into consideration the principles of CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design).

### ii) Signage, Landscaping, and Parking

1. The size, location and design of signage shall be architecturally integrated with the overall design of the buildings and landscaping and should be at a pedestrian scale. Signs shall comply with the City of Port Alberni Sign Bylaw.
2. On-site lighting shall be designed to minimize light spillage onto adjacent properties.
3. Parking areas that are visible from the street shall be screened through the use of landscaping.
4. Landscaping shall be used to define public space and to create an enhanced streetscape image, and to soften a land use transition.



**iii) Highway Commercial (HCO) – Additional guidelines**

1. A perimeter landscaping buffer area of an average width of 4 metres shall be provided along the inside of the property frontage where it borders a public street (excluding lanes) or adjacent lands containing a residential use. Boulevards of adjacent streets shall be landscaped and maintained by the adjacent developments. The perimeter landscaping buffer and boulevards may contain a combination of trees, shrubs, flower beds, grass, pavers and solid decorative fencing. All landscaped areas shall be serviced by an underground irrigation system.
2. A sidewalk 1.9 metres in width shall be provided along road frontages. A trail system can be used as an alternative to traditional sidewalks. However, a surface treatment shall be required that provides clean and stable footing at all times. Internal pedestrian walkways shall be provided from the public sidewalks to the principal customer entrance of all principal buildings on the site.
3. Parking areas shall avoid large expanses of uninterrupted paved surfaces. Parking lots should be broken down into smaller parking areas evenly dispersed throughout the development. Parking areas shall include landscaped areas designed to avoid conflict with automobiles and automobile occupants.

**Development Permit Not Required**

Development Permits shall not be required in the following instances:

1. for construction that is undertaken within the exterior walls of a principal building or structure,
2. construction of a value less than \$25,000; and
3. alteration of the message and/or graphic on signs, awnings or canopies where the size, area, shape, lighting and physical structure of the signs, awnings or canopies are not changed.

**1.3 Development Permit Area No: 3  
Industrial Development**

**Area**

That area marked Development Permit Area No. 3 as shown on Schedule “B” to this Bylaw is hereby designated as a development permit area.



### Justification

The justification for the designation of this Development Permit Area is the highly visible nature of the areas. The intent of this Development Permit Area is to ensure high quality development and buffer adjacent land uses.

### Guidelines

1. The design of parking and manoeuvring isles shall permit the efficient circulation of vehicles, and will include special provision for large truck movements.
2. On-site lighting shall be designed to minimizing light spillage onto adjacent properties.
3. Landscaping shall be used to adequately soften the transition to non-industrial land uses, and to soften the street frontage of the building.
4. All open storage areas shall be restricted to the rear of the property or the side if fully and appropriately screened.
5. Loading areas shall be restricted to the rear or side of the building where not abutting a road.

### Development Permit Not Required

Development Permits shall not be required in the following instances:

1. Construction of a value less than \$10,000.
2. Alteration of the message and/or graphic on free standing signage where the size, area, shape, lighting and physical structure of the signs, are not changed.

## 2.0 SUPPLEMENTAL PLANS

An Official Community Plan is intended to provide general direction on a wide-range of issues related to community growth and well-being. In certain cases, greater detail and direction is necessary in order to properly manage a specific issue. Accordingly, a number of supplemental plans have been developed for Port Alberni. The OCP framework supports these plans which include the following:

- The Port Alberni Shoreline Master Plan;
- The Somass Estuary Plan;
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan;



- Liquid Waste Management Plan;
- Strategic Sign Plan.

The above Plans, where not inconsistent with this document, shall be used as more detailed policies for the areas or subjects that are dealt with. A similar philosophy will apply to Neighbourhood Plans, when such plans are formally adopted by Council.

### 3.0 EXTERNAL AGENCIES

In order to implement the policies contained in the Official Community Plan, on-going consultation and cooperation with a number of agencies will be required. These include:

- Ministry of Transportation;
- Ministry of Environment;
- Agricultural Land Commission;
- Port Alberni Port Authority;
- School District 70;
- Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot.





## 4.0 CHANGES TO MUNICIPAL BYLAWS AND POLICIES

### 4.1 Zoning

The zoning bylaw is a document that divides the City into a number of land use categories or zones. Each zone designation includes regulations that detail a range of issues such as the type of uses that are permitted to occur on the associated property, minimum lot density, building setbacks and height restrictions, and parking and landscaping requirements. As such, the zoning bylaw must be updated on an on-going basis as necessary to ensure consistency with the Official Community Plan.

### 4.2 Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw

This document details specific requirements in relation to the subdivision of land within the City. This includes such items as identification of minimum standards for the provision of sidewalks/curb and gutter, connection to or underground services to individual building lots, in addition to other requirements. This bylaw must be amended as necessary to ensure compliance with Official Community Plan policies.

## 5.0 MONITORING

The issues affecting a community can change quickly in relation to the life of an Official Community Plan. A Community Plan is not a static document and in order to maintain validity, it must respond to key changes effectively and in a timely manner. Therefore, it is essential that the Plan be reviewed regularly and updated as required. To this end, the City will, on an on-going basis, monitor the following:

- Demographic and population changes;
- Housing supply and diversity
- Land supply for residential, commercial and industrial;
- Local economic conditions;
- Environmental issues.

A comprehensive review of this Official Community Plan will occur than not more than five years after adoption of this bylaw.



## 6.0 FURTHER STUDY

In the process of reviewing the Official Community Plan a number of subjects were identified that were considered to warrant greater study and subsequent direction. They relate to social and physical well-being and commercial vitality as outlined in the chart below:

**Table 6 – Action Chart**

Policy No.	Responsibility	Required Action(s)	Timing
3.6(4)	Heritage Commission/Council	Develop and adopt a heritage inventory and a heritage management plan	Short Term
	Staff/Council	Develop and adopt a Comprehensive Cycling and Pedestrian Network Plan	Short Term
8.2.2(1)	Staff/Council	Develop and adopt a Trail Network Master Plan	Short-Medium Term
4.4(2)	Staff/Council	Neighbourhood Plans to be prepared and adopted prior to redesignation of Future Residential (FUR) Lands	As Necessary
	Council	Comprehensive Commercial Market Evaluation, including impacts to established commercial areas to be undertaken as a precursor to any commercial development within the area referred to as the Johnston Road Corridor	Immediate





### Schedule "B" -Development Permit Areas

