



Village of Gold River

Official Community Plan

BYLAW NO. 760, 2025

**GOLD
RIVER**

BYLAW NO. 760, 2025

CORPORATE ADMINISTRATOR

Table of Contents

1	Introduction & Context	1
1.1	What is an Official Community Plan?.....	2
1.2	Legislative Requirements	2
2	Community background & context.....	4
2.1	Background.....	4
2.2	Planning Area & Regional Context.....	4
2.3	Community Profile	6
3	Vision & Guiding Principles	10
3.1	Community Vision.....	10
3.2	Core Values & Planning Principles.....	10
4	Land Use & Growth Management	14
4.1	Growth Management and Land Use	14
4.2	Residential	15
4.3	Commercial & Mixed Use	16
4.4	Industrial	17
4.5	Civic.....	18
4.6	Rural	19
4.7	Parks & Open Spaces	20
5	Housing & Community Wellbeing	22
5.1	Introduction.....	22
5.2	Current Housing	24
5.3	Housing Affordability and Availability	24
5.4	Future Housing and Housing Need.....	25
6	Economic Development & Resilience.....	27
6.1	Economic Overview	27
6.2	Local Business & Entrepreneurship.....	27
6.3	Tourism Development	28
6.4	Industrial & Resource Based Economy	30
6.5	Workforce Development	30
6.6	Downtown Revitalization	31
7	Infrastructure & Mobility.....	33

7.1	General	33
7.2	Transportation and Mobility	33
7.3	Sanitary Sewer.....	35
7.4	Water	36
7.5	Solid Waste	37
8	Parks and the Environment	38
8.1	Parks	38
8.2	The Natural Environment	39
8.3	Climate and Green House Gas Targets.....	40
9	Implementation & Governance.....	42
9.1	Master Plans and Studies.....	42
9.2	Development approval information	42
9.3	Temporary Use Permits	43
9.4	Development Permit Areas	43
10	Schedules	50
10.1	Schedule 1: OCP & Land Use Map	51
10.2	Schedule 2: Development Permit Areas Map	52

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that the Village of Gold River is located within the traditional territory of the **Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation**, whose deep cultural, spiritual, and historical ties to the land continue to this day. The Village also recognizes its place within the wider region connected to neighboring First Nations with whom the Mowachaht/Muchalaht share long-standing relationships.

Gold River values its connection with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation and reaffirms its commitment to strengthening this relationship through mutual respect, collaboration, and shared stewardship of the land and waters. The Village is committed to working together in ways that support the social, cultural, and economic well-being of both communities.





Part I: Context

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Community Background

3.0 Vision & Guiding Principles

1 INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

The Village of Gold River's Official Community Plan (OCP) provides the Village with a guide for future land use and community development decisions. The OCP reflects community values, and a statement of community goals and acts as the long-term guiding document to important community decisions.

The policy portion of the OCP provides the basis for regulatory documents such as the zoning bylaw. The policies of the OCP are intended to provide direction for residential, commercial and industrial growth, including special needs and rental housing. The Plan also provides for environmental protection, parks and open space, heritage preservation and the preservation of natural features. This OCP has four main parts:

Part I: Context

This section provides an overview of Gold River's context, history, and community profile, along with its shared vision, core values, and guiding principles. It also outlines how the Official Community Plan is used, the purpose behind it, and the legislative framework that guides its preparation.

Part II: Land Use and Community Objectives and Policies

This section defines each land use designation and its objectives and policies, and sets direction on key community topics including housing, climate action, environment, infrastructure, and economic development.

Part III: Implementation and Governance

This section describes how the OCP is applied and monitored through master plans, development permits, and other tools, and outlines the roles and responsibilities that guide its administration and ongoing review.

Part IV: Maps and Schedules

The following maps translate OCP policy into spatial form. The Land Use Map illustrates intended future growth patterns, and the DPA Map identifies areas requiring special design or environmental consideration. Together, they guide how and where Gold River will grow.

1.1 WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?

An Official Community Plan (OCP) sets out the long-term vision, goals, and policies that guide how land is used and developed in the Village of Gold River. It is a community plan, shaped through the ideas and input of residents, that reflects shared priorities for the Village's social, environmental, cultural, and economic future.

The OCP has several key functions:

- It establishes where different land uses may occur, helping to reduce conflict and ensure compatible development.
- It provides guidance for how new development and growth should occur so that it enhances the character and livability of the Village.
- It creates a policy framework on important topics such as housing, climate change, heritage, arts and culture, and parks.

The OCP is a **high-level visionary document**. It is not a detailed implementation plan, nor does it commit the Village to undertake any specific project. Achieving the policies of the OCP will depend on future decisions of Council regarding priorities, funding, and implementation.

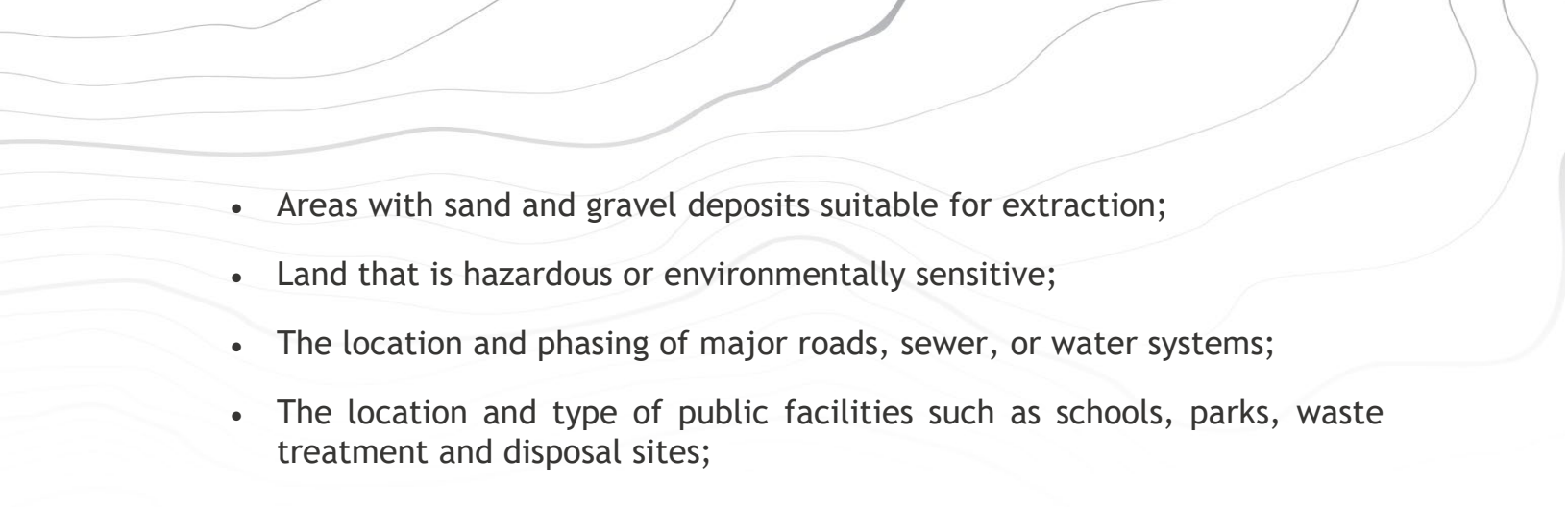
While amendments may be made occasionally, changes to the OCP should be considered the exception rather than the rule. As community needs and priorities evolve, the Plan will be periodically reviewed and comprehensively updated, typically every five to ten years, to ensure that it continues to reflect the community's long-term vision and values.

1.2 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

In British Columbia, the authority for a municipality to prepare or update an Official Community Plan (OCP) is set out in the Local Government Act (Part 14, Division 4, Sections 471-478).

Under the Act, every OCP must include policies and map designations that address:

- The approximate location, amount, type, and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over at least the next five years;
- The location and type of commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational, and public utility land uses;

- 
- Areas with sand and gravel deposits suitable for extraction;
 - Land that is hazardous or environmentally sensitive;
 - The location and phasing of major roads, sewer, or water systems;
 - The location and type of public facilities such as schools, parks, waste treatment and disposal sites;
 - Local government housing policies on affordable, rental, and special-needs housing; and
 - Targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, along with policies and actions to achieve them.

An OCP may also include policies on:

- Social needs, well-being, and development;
- Supporting farming and agricultural uses;
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment, ecosystems, and biodiversity.
- Alternative forms of transportation and transportation demand management.

An OCP is adopted by Council following a public hearing and majority vote. While the Plan does not commit the municipality to specific projects, it provides the framework for future decisions. All bylaws and works undertaken by Council must be consistent with the OCP.

2 COMMUNITY BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 BACKGROUND

Gold River was established in 1965 as a community to support the Tahsis Company Pulp Mill on Muchalaht Inlet. For over three decades, the mill provided stable employment, a strong industrial tax base, and a high quality of life for residents. Following its closure in 1999, the Village experienced significant economic and demographic change, prompting an ongoing process of adaptation and diversification.

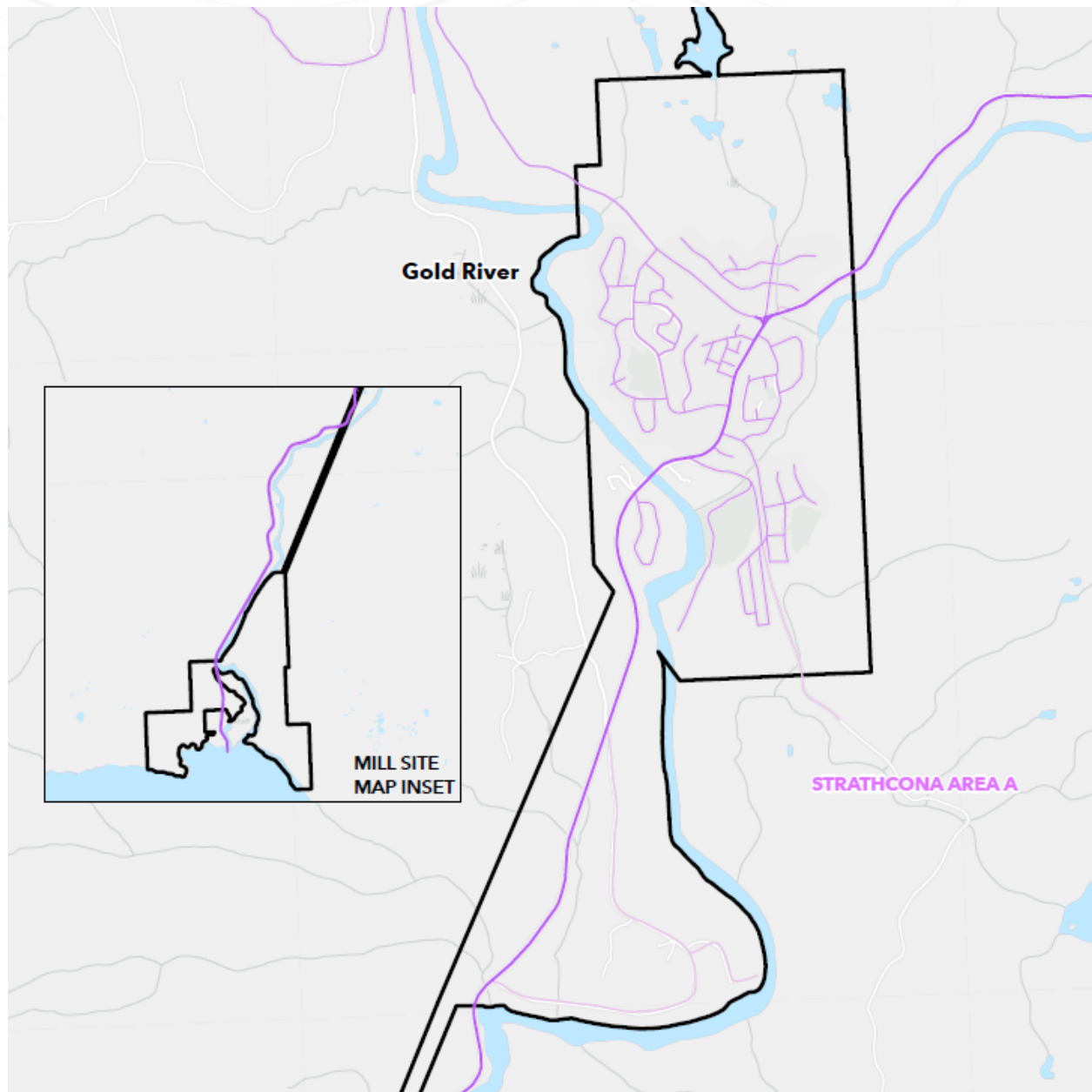
Located within the traditional territory of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation, Gold River is surrounded by exceptional natural and cultural assets, including forests, mineral resources, marine and aquatic ecosystems, and access to Nootka Sound. These resources, together with the community's infrastructure and strategic location, present opportunities for sustainable economic development in sectors such as tourism, mariculture, forestry, and other resource-based industries.

The Village continues to strengthen partnerships with Indigenous governments, neighboring communities, business groups, and other levels of government. This Official Community Plan provides a framework to guide Gold River's future, building on its history, acknowledging its context, and advancing its commitment to resilience, livability, and economic prosperity.

2.2 PLANNING AREA & REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Village of Gold River is located on the west coast of Vancouver Island within the traditional territory of the Mowachaht Muchalaht First Nation on Highway 28 approximately 90 kilometers southwest of Campbell River. The Village lies on a valley floor that extends some 14 kilometers south to the head of Muchalat Inlet in Nootka Sound. The community surrounds the confluence of the Gold and Heber Rivers and is characterized by mountainous topography with spectacular peaks and glaciers. Natural resources have traditionally formed the basis of employment for this area of the west coast. Gold River is uniquely positioned to

take advantage of tourism opportunities on the West Coast being adjacent to Strathcona Park to the East and historic Nootka Sound to the West.



2.3 COMMUNITY PROFILE

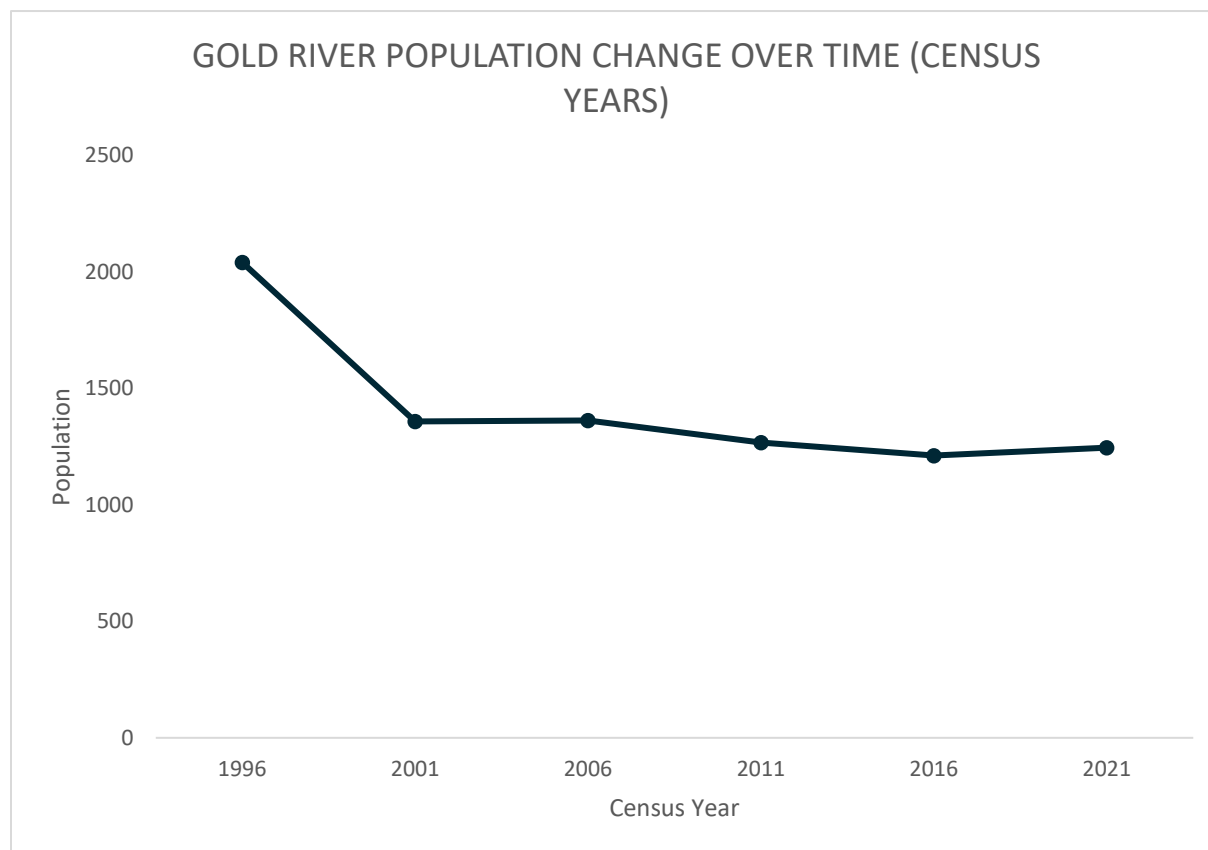
Population

Gold River is a planned community and is characterized by a compact layout and a variety of housing types to support the Village's population, which has been in decline since 1991. This is represented in *Figure 2* below. According to the 2016 Statistics Canada census, the population decreased slightly to 1212 people and increased slightly to 1246 people in 2021.

Table 1: Population, 2016-2021

Location	2016	2021	% Change
Gold River	1,212	1,246	2.8
SRD Electoral Area A	764	864	13.1
BC	4,648,055	5,000,879	7.6

Figure 1: Gold River Historical Population 1996-2021



Age Characteristics

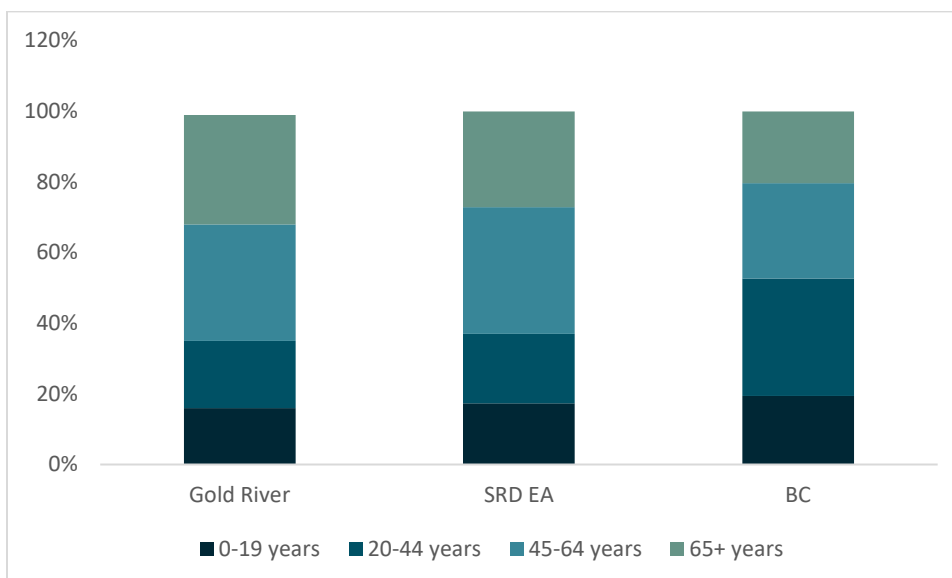
The average age of communities across Canada and BC is increasing, and so is Gold River. According to Statistics Canada Census data, the median age of Gold River residents has increased from 53.4 in 2016 to 56.4 in 2021 ([Table 2](#)). Approximately, 31% of the population of Gold River is over the age of 65 and 16% are 19 years or younger. The largest proportions of residents are between 20-64 years at 52% ([Figure 2](#)).

Table 1: Median Age, 2016-2021

Location	2016	2021
Gold River	53.4	56.4
Strathcona Regional District Electoral Area A	55.8	52.8
BC	43	42.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021.

Figure 1: Percent Population by Age Group - 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2021.

Household Size

Household sizes in Gold River averaged around 2 people per household in 2021. This is slightly less than the BC average of 2.4 people per household. Additional details on household size are provided by the Census regarding the number of

households relative to the number of persons living within. Within Gold River, the number of one (1) person households increased from 170 in 2016 to 200 in 2021, as with the number of two (2) and three (3) person households, while four (4) and five (5) person households decreased slightly (*Table 3*).

Table 3: Gold River Total Households by Household Size - 2016, 2021

Household size	Gold River 2016	% of households	Gold River 2021	% of households
1 person	170	29.8	200	32.8
2 persons	270	47.4	275	45.1
3 persons	55	9.7	80	13.1
4 persons	45	7.9	35	5.7
5 or more persons	25	4.4	20	3.3
Total private households	570	100%	610	100%
Total number of persons in private households	1,210	n/a	1,245	n/a

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016-2021.

Single detached homes account for the majority of housing types, followed by duplexes, row houses and apartments. There has been an integration of manufactured homes and a mobile home park in the community. This mixed-form residential development has worked well for the community and will continue in the future with emphasis upon infilling and increased densities. The aging of the existing housing stock should be considered. The majority (73%) of Gold River housing was built between 1961-1980 and has seen little development since then.

The Future

Age characteristic data indicates that the Gold River population, like BC and Canada, continues to age. The limited design of public facilities and provision of public services will need to consider this demographic shift, including other daily services and amenities to help residents “age in place” and to support ongoing, independent living.

It is important to recognize the rural nature of Gold River and to consider the access and size of the remote community when developing community strategies for aging in place. The housing needs report also indicates that the percentage

of residents ages 65-84 will rise from 28.9% in 2021 to 40.9% in 2031, further implying the need to consider resources and adequate support for an aging population.

Although there was a significant decrease in full-time population over time within Gold River from 1996-2001, the population stats represent a stable trend, trending towards a slight increase between 2016-2021. The Housing Needs Report also indicates that the population is projected to grow to 1,386 people by 2031.

Over the life of the previous OCP the economic and employment climate on northern Vancouver Island and within the Village did not require residential lands for development. Should settlement pressures increase, infilling within the Scout Lake subdivision as well as the development of Ucona Flats would provide future housing opportunities. In the long term, the potential may exist for Council to consider rural acreage developments. Where appropriate, lands adjacent to the community may be considered for future boundary extensions that may be in the interest or of benefit to the community.

Gold River has a total area of 1,275 ha of which 895 ha is undeveloped. There is a considerable amount of land available for development in and around Gold River. However, topography, the predominance of the forestry industry, and ownership patterns limit development and expansion of the community.



3 VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Vision serves as the anchor for this Official Community Plan. Each policy area, from housing and economic development to infrastructure and environmental management is designed to help achieve the Vision and uphold the Core Values. The vision also provides a framework for evaluating new initiatives, ensuring that future decisions align with the community's long-term aspirations.

In practice, this means:

- Objectives in each chapter describe the outcomes the Village seeks to achieve in support of the Vision.
- Policies provide direction on how to reach those objectives while respecting the Core Values and Planning Principles.
- Implementation tools ensure that actions are realistic, coordinated, and measurable over time.

By keeping the Vision at the forefront, the OCP ensures that day-to-day decisions contribute to a future that reflects Gold River's identity, priorities, and goals.

3.1 COMMUNITY VISION

Gold River is a safe, inclusive, and sustainable community that is rooted in its history, enriched by its natural surroundings, and strengthened through partnership. As a gateway to Nootka Sound and Strathcona Park, the Village is a place where residents enjoy a high quality of life, a healthy environment, and diverse economic opportunities. The community is committed to building a resilient future through economic diversification, environmental stewardship, and strong connections with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation and neighboring communities.

3.2 CORE VALUES & PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The following values and principles represent the foundation for planning and decision-making in Gold River. They express what residents consider important and enduring, and they guide the development of policies and actions in this OCP.

Core Values

- Safety and Livability - A community that is safe, welcoming, and inclusive for all ages and abilities.
- Resilience - The ability to adapt to changing economic, environmental, and social conditions.
- Environmental Care - Protection and enhancement of the community's natural surroundings.
- Partnership - Collaboration with Indigenous governments, neighboring municipalities, and other partners to achieve shared goals.
- Fiscal Responsibility - Efficient use of resources to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Planning Principles

- Make decisions that integrate social, environmental, cultural, and economic considerations.
- Support a diverse and resilient economy that reflects local strengths and opportunities.
- Plan for compact, efficient land use patterns to reduce servicing costs and preserve surrounding natural areas.
- Promote housing diversity and affordability to meet community needs.
- Provide and maintain infrastructure in a sustainable, cost-effective manner.
- Encourage development that enhances local character and sense of place.

Guiding Principles

The following principles reflect the values and aspirations of Gold River residents and provide direction for all policies within this Official Community Plan:

1. Sustainability - Make decisions that balance environmental, social, cultural, and economic well-being for present and future generations.
2. Economic Resilience - Support a diversified local economy that provides stable employment and investment opportunities, including forestry, mariculture, tourism, and other sustainable resource-based and service sectors.
3. Environmental Stewardship - Protect and enhance the Village's rivers, shorelines, forests, and air and water quality, while ensuring public access to natural amenities.
4. Community Livability - Maintain a safe, welcoming, and inclusive community with access to housing options, recreation, parks, cultural spaces, and services that meet the needs of all ages and abilities.

5. Partnership and Reconciliation - Strengthen relationships and pursue collaborative initiatives with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation, other Indigenous governments, neighboring municipalities, business groups, and other levels of government.
6. Efficient Infrastructure - Provide and maintain cost-effective infrastructure and services that support community growth and quality of life, including roads, active transportation, water, sewer, and waste management systems.
7. Respect for Local Character - Support development and activities that reflect the Village's unique character, heritage, and setting, while encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship.





Part II: Land Use, Objectives, & Policies

- 4.0** Land Use and Growth Management
- 5.0** Housing & Community Wellbeing
- 6.0** Economic Development & Resilience
- 7.0** Infrastructure & Mobility
- 8.0** Parks and the Environment

4 LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The Land Use Framework provides the foundation for how land within the Village of Gold River is organized and managed over the long term. Through the Land Use Designation Maps and associated policies, the Official Community Plan establishes broad objectives for where and how different types of development should occur. Each designation describes the general purpose and character of an area, such as residential neighbourhoods, commercial centers, industrial districts, civic spaces, rural lands, and parks and trails. These directions serve as the community's high-level guide for growth and change, informing future decisions about development in a way that supports Gold River's vision for livability and resilience.

4.1 GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE

The land use plan is shown in Schedule "1", OCP & Land Use Map. This map outlines the general land use designations within the plan area corresponding to the objectives and policies for each land use designation mentioned subsequently below.

Objectives:

- To promote the logical and sequential growth and development of the community.

Policies:

4.1.1 The future pattern of land use in the Village of Gold River be consistent with the Official Community Plan map.

4.1.2 Where rural residential subdivision occurs, houses shall be located on the lots in a manner which permits future subdivision.

4.1.3 Where rural residential development is permitted, on-site private wells and septic fields shall meet the requirements established by the provincial Ministry of Health.

4.1.4 The extension of services to rural residential subdivisions that rely on private wells and septic systems is not supported in this plan.

4.1.5 Sewage treatment and water supply outside the Village proper is a concern to Council. Where development is proposed for areas outside the developed portion of the Village the properties proposed for development shall be of sufficient area to accommodate on-site sewage treatment and water supply. Alternatively, private servicing systems approved by the appropriate authority may be considered.

4.2 RESIDENTIAL

The Residential designation encompasses lands intended primarily for housing in a variety of forms, ranging from single detached homes to multi-unit dwellings. The intent of these policies is to support the development of complete, livable neighbourhoods that can evolve over time while maintaining the small-town character of Gold River.

Objectives:

- To support and encourage a mix of housing typologies and densities.
- To optimize the use of available undeveloped or underdeveloped land to support more efficient residential use of land.

Policies:

4.2.1 Residential development is limited to the areas that are designated as Residential in Schedule “1” OCP & Land Use Map.

4.2.2 Residential neighbourhoods may include a range of compatible land uses, including parks, schools, civic and institutional uses, natural areas, small-scale tourist accommodations, home-based businesses (including daycare), and small-scale urban agriculture.

4.2.3 A broad spectrum of housing forms will be supported to meet the needs of residents and changing demographics, including single-detached dwellings, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, rowhouses, secondary suites, accessory dwelling units, live/work units, and apartments where appropriate.

4.2.4 Housing types and non-residential uses should be designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood. Consideration should be given to building height and massing, integration of trees and landscaping, and buffering to reduce the visual impact of larger buildings.

4.2.5 Infill development and redevelopment within existing serviced areas will be strongly encouraged to promote efficient utilization of land and municipal infrastructure.

4.2.6 Encourage residential forms and densities that support affordability and diversity of choice, including multi-unit and attached housing forms. Housing developments that provide options for seniors, people with disabilities, and seasonal or tourism-based housing are also supported.

4.2.7 All new residential development and existing property owners are strongly encouraged to implement FireSmart standards to enhance community safety and resilience.

4.3 COMMERCIAL & MIXED USE

The Commercial & Mixed Use designation identifies lands intended for a range of retail, service, office, and tourism-related activities that support both residents and visitors. These areas are important community focal points, offering opportunities for business, social interaction, and cultural expression. Mixed use development, where housing is integrated with commercial uses, is encouraged to create lively, walkable neighbourhoods and make efficient use of land. Overall, this designation is intended to strengthen Gold River's economy, provide essential services, and enhance the community's small-town character.

Objectives:

- To provide land for the sustainable growth of commercial uses within the community.

Policies:

4.3.1 Commercial & mixed-use development is limited to the area designated Commercial and Mixed Use on Schedule "1" OCP & Land Use Map.

4.3.2 Encourage tourism-oriented commercial development, such as restaurants, accommodations, cultural attractions and visitor services within commercial and mixed use areas in partnership with First Nations and neighboring communities to reinforce Gold River's role as a service and visitor hub.

4.3.3 Commercial and mixed use areas may include a range of compatible uses such as retail, personal and professional services, restaurants, offices,

accommodations, community facilities, and residential uses ideally integrated into mixed use developments.

4.3.4 Support a variety of commercial developments, including neighbourhood-scale retail, visitor-serving businesses, tourism accommodations, and mixed use buildings that combine commercial and residential uses.

4.3.5 Encourage commercial areas to serve as focal points for community life, offering space for social interaction, cultural activities, and events, in addition to their economic role.

4.3.6 Support the integration of residential units in commercial areas, particularly through mixed use buildings where housing is located on upper floors or behind street-fronting commercial uses. Residential development in mixed use areas should respond to identified housing needs, including seniors, Indigenous residents, low-income households, and seasonal or shift-based workers. Where possible, age-friendly housing should be located within walking distance of services and amenities.

4.3.7 Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing commercial lands before expanding into new areas, in order to make efficient use of infrastructure and enhance established centres.

4.3.8 All new commercial or mixed use development must be supported by adequate water, sewer, drainage, and road infrastructure, with consideration for hazard management, stormwater control, and long-term financial sustainability.

4.4 INDUSTRIAL

The Industrial designation identifies lands intended to support a diverse range of industrial activities that capitalize on Gold River's resource-based economy. This includes forest and value-added wood industries, aquaculture and mariculture operations, light manufacturing, and other compatible industrial uses. These areas are intended to provide employment opportunities, support local and regional economic growth, and take advantage of strategic access to transportation and port facilities, while ensuring integration with surrounding land uses and community needs.

Objectives:

- Support the development of appropriate heavy and light industrial uses in suitable locations.
- Encourage value-added forestry, aquaculture, and other resource-based industries to broaden the economic base.
- Promote environmentally responsible and safe industrial development.
- Identify and maintain strategic industrial lands to provide employment opportunities for residents.
- Facilitate the sustainable use of mineral and aggregate resources within the Village.

Policies:

4.4.1 Industrial development is limited to the areas that are designated as Industrial in Schedule “1” OCP and Land Use Map.

4.4.2 Encourage a diversity of industrial uses, including forestry, aquaculture, light manufacturing, and compatible commercial activities, within designated industrial areas.

4.4.3 Ensure new industrial development is located and designed to minimize impacts on residential areas and the environment, including noise, dust, traffic, and visual impacts.

4.4.4 Support the reclamation and environmentally responsible management of mineral and aggregate extraction operations.

4.4.5 Consider industrial site expansions or rezoning only when existing industrial lands cannot accommodate proposed development.

4.4.6 Promote industrial activities that create local employment and strengthen Gold River’s role as a regional resource and service hub.

4.5 CIVIC USE

The Civic Use designation identifies lands used for public and institutional purposes that provide essential services, programs, and facilities for the community. These include schools, health and emergency services, government offices, cultural and recreational facilities, and other community-serving uses that support the social well-being and resilience of Gold River.

Objectives:

- Support the long-term viability and enhancement of community facilities and services.
- Ensure civic spaces are accessible, inclusive, and adaptable to meet evolving community needs.
- Encourage the integration of civic uses as central gathering places that strengthen community identity and well-being.

Policies:

4.5.1 Civic Use is limited to the areas that are designated as Civic Use in Schedule “1” OCP and Land Use Map.

4.5.2 Encourage partnerships with senior governments, First Nations, and community organizations to deliver services and facilities.

4.5.3 Protect existing civic lands (schools, health facilities, recreation, cultural, and government services) for community-serving uses and support upgrades, expansions, or redevelopment of civic facilities to meet changing community needs.

4.5.4 Support multi-use and adaptable buildings or spaces that can accommodate a variety of programs and services and ensure civic facilities are equitably distributed and accessible to residents of all ages and abilities.

4.5.5 Encourage the co-location of civic uses with parks, trails, or commercial areas to create vibrant community hubs.

4.5.6 Recognize the cultural and heritage value of civic facilities and encourage their incorporation into community identity.

4.6 RURAL

The rural designation is intended to delineate larger areas for future large-lot village expansion and to support opportunities for potential resource uses or parks and trail networks that is not already designated as such. Area designated rural is intended be maintained and the subdivision of land into parcels less than two hectares within areas designated Rural will not be supported without the provision of roads and sewerage, storm drain and water facilities. The cost of providing such services will dictate a more rural development density.

Objectives:

- Maintain the rural character of lands outside the Village core through low-density development and resource-based uses.
- Support the continued use of rural areas for agriculture, forestry, recreation, and other compatible activities.
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources while allowing appropriate rural development.
- Ensure rural lands are planned and serviced in a manner that does not create conflicts with residential, commercial, or industrial areas.

Policies:

4.6.1 Rural land uses are limited to the areas that are designated as Rural in Schedule “1” OCP and Land Use Map.

4.6.2 Support rural residential development only at low densities that reflect the rural character and limited servicing capacity.

4.6.3 Permit resource-based and recreational uses that are compatible with rural residential areas and the natural setting.

4.6.4 Encourage small-scale home-based businesses or tourism operations that fit with the rural character.

4.6.5 Require that rural development avoids or mitigates impacts on sensitive ecosystems, steep slopes, watercourses, and wildlife habitat.

4.6.6 Require that rural development be serviced with on-site systems (water, septic) unless otherwise approved.

4.7 PARKS & OPEN SPACES

The intent of the Parks and Trails designation is to provide a connected network of parks, natural open spaces, and trails that celebrate Gold River’s natural setting and offer recreation opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages, with accessibility provided where feasible.

Objectives:

- Maintain and enhance a network of parks, natural open spaces, and trails that celebrate Gold River's natural setting.
- Provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages, with accessibility supported where feasible.

Policies:

4.7.1 Parks and open space uses are limited to the areas that are designated as Park in Schedule "1" OCP and Land Use Map

4.7.2 Provide a mix of recreational opportunities, from playgrounds and sports fields to natural and wilderness trails.

4.7.3 Support biking, hiking, and adventure tourism initiatives that align with Gold River's natural terrain and character.



5 HOUSING & COMMUNITY WELLBEING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Housing is central to community well-being, shaping health, equity, and economic vitality while contributing to a resilient and sustainable future. The Village of Gold River is committed to supporting safe, inclusive, and affordable housing options that allow residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities to thrive.

The Housing Continuum represents the spectrum of housing options needed to meet diverse community needs. This continuum ranges from emergency shelters and transitional housing to supportive and affordable rental housing, through to market rental and homeownership opportunities. Recognizing the importance of providing a variety of housing types, the Village seeks to ensure that residents can access appropriate housing throughout different stages of life and changing financial circumstances.

While not every type of housing along the continuum will be necessary or feasible in Gold River, the concept underscores the importance of flexibility and choice. Local housing strategies must reflect the realities of the community, including access to land, construction resources, services, and partnerships.

Policies in this section are informed by the Village's Housing Needs Assessment and respond to pressing challenges such as affordability, aging housing stock, demographic shifts, and climate resilience. Gold River's approach emphasizes:

- gentle density and missing-middle housing,
- partnerships with non-market and Indigenous housing providers, and
- reducing barriers to housing delivery.

By integrating housing objectives with land use planning, servicing, and amenities, the Village can foster complete neighbourhoods, provide pathways for residents to remain in the community, and strengthen overall social and economic resilience.

At the time of the development of the OCP, the Village's Housing Needs Assessment was conducted. This assessment identified the housing needs projections for the Village for the next five and twenty years. The Housing Needs Report is a requirement of local governments in BC and must be updated every five years. Therefore, in this document, The Village of Gold River has identified the following housing needs below.

Table 4: Six Areas of Housing Need

Component	5 Year Need	20 Year Need
A. Extreme Core Housing Need	1.91	7.64
B. Persons Experiencing Homelessness	5.04	10.09
C. Suppressed Household Formation	12.46	49.83
D. Anticipated Growth	48.76	105.62
E. Rental Vacancy Rate Adjustment	0.40	1.59
F. Additional Local Demand	19.89	79.54
Total New Units - 5 Years	88	
Total New Units - 20 Years	254	

Source: HNR Report

Projected new housing units by 2029: 88

Projected new housing units by 2044: 254

In alignment with recent provincial housing legislation, the Village of Gold River has undertaken a high-level review of large, potentially developable parcels to better understand its capacity to meet future housing targets. This analysis estimates how many new housing units could be accommodated under current zoning within the municipality's existing boundaries.

The review focused on parcels most likely to redevelop, particularly those designated for duplex and single-detached residential use. For each site, the total parcel area was divided by the minimum lot size permitted in the zone, then adjusted by a net land use factor of 80 percent to account for internal roads, sidewalks, utilities, and other servicing needs. This method provides a realistic build-out estimate that reflects site planning constraints.

Civic Address	PID	Zone	Area (m ²)	Net Land Use	Potential Units
Scout Lake Rd, Gold River, BC V0P 1G0	017-872-413	RR	521,935.21	80%	41.75
Scout Lake Rd, Gold River, BC V0P 1G0	017-872-414	RL	281,042.04	80%	403.65
Matchlee Dr, Gold River, BC V0P 1G0	017-872-405	RL	75,595.34	80%	108.58
Muchalat Dr, Gold River, BC V0P 1G0	009-131-515	Various (see below)	*	*	*

		RR	133,000.00	80%	10.64
		RL	35,900.00	80%	51.56
		RL	165,000.00	80%	236.98
		RM	18,500.00	80%	21.14
		RM2	25,000.00	80%	57.14
		RL	165,000.00	80%	236.98
TOTAL					1,115.19

According to this analysis, the Village of Gold River has capacity for approximately **1,115 additional housing units** under current zoning and land use designations. This far exceeds the identified housing needs of 88 units by 2029 and 254 units by 2044, demonstrating that the Village already possesses sufficient land capacity to accommodate projected growth well into the future.

Considerations beyond land availability that could impact this number are amenity services and infrastructure.

5.2 CURRENT HOUSING

Objectives:

- To promote high quality diverse residential development.

Policies:

5.2.1 Supporting secondary suites and accessory dwellings as a way to expand rental options and improve affordability.

5.2.2 Explore ways to reduce barriers to infill housing, including access to small-scale design templates or builder directories.

5.2.3 Encourage housing development to prioritize quality landscaping, enhancing the aesthetic appeal and livability of residential areas.

5.3 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND AVAILABILITY

Objectives:

- To promote a diverse array of safe and cost-effective housing solutions that cater to the diverse needs of individuals and families across different income brackets, age demographics, and lifestyles.

Policies:

5.3.1 Consider tools such as fee waivers, tax deferrals, or reduced development charges to support the development and retention of affordable housing.

5.3.2 Partnering with government, non-profit, Indigenous, and private organizations to help deliver affordable and supportive housing.

5.3.3 Enabling infill housing that increases rental and affordable supply while respecting neighbourhood character and servicing capacity.

5.3.4 Lobby all levels of government to provide affordable and available housing.

5.3.5 Explore options and lobby the Provincial government for tools to control vacant homes used for seasonal vacation and recreational properties

5.4 FUTURE HOUSING AND HOUSING NEED

Objectives:

- To encourage housing for all incomes.
- To encourage adaptive housing for everyone including people with disabilities
- To guide the future development of land in Gold River in a fashion that would preserve the Villages community and historical characteristics and to promote the history of Gold River, promoting new development to adopt a similar architectural style.
- Identity land for future housing development to meet the 5 and 20–year housing needs of the community.

Policies:

5.4.1 Coordinating with service providers to ensure that supportive and seniors housing is well connected to essential services.

5.4.2 Reviewing zoning regulations to allow a range of housing types and multiple units on residential parcels where appropriate.

5.4.3 Zone land within the Village to enable the development of housing units to meet the needs within the community.

5.4.4 Provide adequate land to support the 20-year housing needs projections, by means of adequately zoned land for residential development.

5.4.5 Periodically conduct land use reviews during updates to housing needs reports to identify suitable areas for future housing development, ensuring ongoing opportunities to meet the housing needs requirements.



6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & RESILIENCE

6.1 ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

The Village of Gold River is transitioning from its historical dependence on forestry and single-resource employment toward a more diversified and sustainable economic base. The closure of the pulp and paper mill in 1999 marked a significant economic shift, requiring the Village to redefine its future through targeted economic development and investment in quality of life.

Gold River's strategic location, industrial infrastructure, and natural resource base position it for growth in marine industry, tourism, value-added forestry, aquaculture, and small business development. The Village will continue to support economic development that is environmentally sustainable, culturally respectful, and aligned with community values.

6.2 LOCAL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Gold River's commercial core is the heart of community life, where people shop, connect, and access essential services. Anchored by two key plazas, it plays a central role in supporting both local business and visitor activity. As tourism expands, strengthening this core will be vital to keeping the Village vibrant and economically resilient.

Beyond the core, new opportunities lie along the waterfront and highway corridor. The Village encourages flexible, low-barrier commercial development—from home-based businesses to mixed-use hubs and marine-oriented ventures.

Objective:

- To support the growth and diversification of the local economy.

Policies:

6.2.1 Encourage reinvestment in the Village Centre through public realm improvements, streetscaping, and local leadership in revitalization.

6.2.2 Support home-based businesses and micro-enterprises through enabling regulation and minimal barriers.

6.2.3 Facilitate the development of commercial services that meet both resident and visitor needs.

6.2.4 Enable flexible and low-barrier business models, including mobile, pop-up, temporary, and seasonal ventures.

6.2.5 Promote beautification, public art, and placemaking that reinforce Gold River's distinct identity and commercial character.

6.2.6 Support marine-oriented business development—commercial, tourism, and service-based—aligned with the Village's coastal location.

6.2.7 Advocate for reliable digital infrastructure and cellular service to enable modern business and attract investment.

6.2.8 Integrate economic development priorities into infrastructure and servicing decisions.

6.2.9 Strengthen partnerships with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation and regional agencies to support shared tourism and economic development.

6.2.10 Promote Gold River as a small business-friendly and innovation-oriented community to attract values-aligned investment.

6.3 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism represents a significant opportunity for economic diversification in Gold River. The community's proximity to Strathcona Park, Nootka Sound, and various trails and caves positions it as a hub for nature-based and adventure tourism. However, product development, shoulder-season offerings, and accommodation options are currently limited.

Objective:

- To provide tourism opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages, abilities, and income levels.

Policies:

6.3.1 Promote guided outdoor experiences, cultural interpretation, and seasonal events as core tourism offerings.

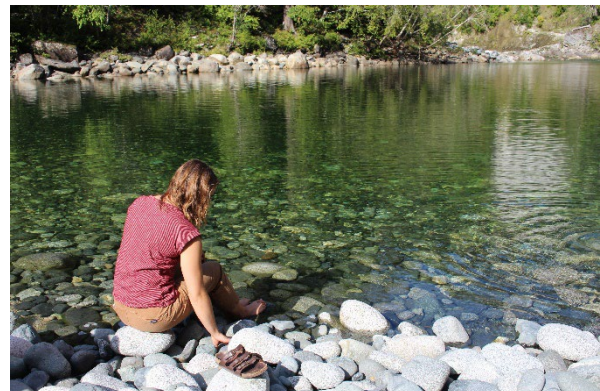
6.3.2 Develop a tourism marketing partnership with Indigenous and regional partners, aligned with Gold River's identity.

6.3.3 Enable a range of flexible accommodations such as short-term rentals, B&Bs, and glamping, through supportive regulation.

6.3.4 Improve the visitor experience through signage, trail connectivity, and waterfront access.

6.3.5 Enhance the sense of arrival into Gold River through coordinated signage, landscaping, and design improvements at community entry points, highlighting the Village's natural setting and community pride.

6.3.6 Support commercial uses that strengthen Gold River's role as a gateway to outdoor recreation and tourism, such as accommodations, dining, and guiding or outfitting services. Scenic views and connections to natural features should be protected and enhanced wherever possible.



6.4 INDUSTRIAL & RESOURCE BASED ECONOMY

Gold River's deep-water marine industrial lands, formerly the site of a pulp mill, remain a cornerstone of future economic potential. With approximately 180 acres of net industrial land and existing dock infrastructure, this area is one of only a few deep-water access industrial sites on Vancouver Island.

Objective:

- To support the redevelopment and modernization of marine industrial lands in a way that strengthens the local economy while protecting environmental and community values

Policies:

6.4.1 Protect marine industrial lands and promote them as regionally significant employment areas.

6.4.2 Support infrastructure upgrades (power, broadband, water) to enable industrial reinvestment.

6.4.3 Encourage clean industries such as aquaculture, value-added forestry, and low-carbon marine enterprises.

6.4.4 Partner with public and private sectors to improve site readiness and streamline industrial approvals.

6.4.5 Identify and support small-scale industrial areas to meet local servicing and trades needs.

6.5 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A resilient economy requires a skilled and adaptable workforce. Gold River's aging population and limited housing options pose challenges for labour attraction, particularly in tourism, construction, and services. Expanding housing diversity and collaborating with education and training providers are necessary to support workforce development.

Objective:

- To attract and retain a skilled, working-age population by improving housing diversity, supporting local training opportunities, and ensuring access to essential community services.

Policies:

6.5.1 Align housing strategy with labour market needs by enabling affordable and diverse housing types.

6.5.2 Manage short-term rental growth to support tourism without undermining long-term rental supply.

6.5.3 Collaborate with education and training providers to expand access to skills development in forestry, aquaculture, trades, and tourism.

6.5.4 Advocate for services—such as childcare, broadband, and healthcare—that attract and retain working-age residents.

6.6 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

There is a significant opportunity to reimagine the downtown area in Gold River. The Village Tide Mall and Nimpkish shopping center is a place where people come to shop, visit and get their daily living needs. Expanding and upgrading the existing services can lead to the creation of a vibrant community hub.

Objectives:

- Strengthen Gold River's role as a local service and visitor hub.
- Encourage mixed use development to support vibrant, walkable neighbourhoods.
- Foster attractive, accessible commercial areas that reflect small-town character and serve as community mixed-use and gathering places.

Policy:

6.6.1 Encourage commercial areas to serve as focal points for community life, offering space for social interaction, cultural activities, and events, in addition to their economic role.

6.6.2 Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing commercial lands before expanding into new areas, in order to make efficient use of infrastructure and enhance established centres.

6.6.3 Support commercial uses that strengthen Gold River's role as a gateway to outdoor recreation and tourism, such as accommodations, dining, and guiding or outfitting services. Scenic views and connections to natural features should be protected and enhanced wherever possible.

6.6.4 Consider opportunities to encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in existing commercial areas through incentive programs, façade improvement initiatives, or other tools that support long-term economic vitality.

6.6.5 Enhance the sense of arrival into Gold River through coordinated signage, landscaping, and design improvements at community entry points, highlighting the Village's natural setting and community pride.

6.6.6 Commercial and mixed use developments should contribute to a vibrant, attractive streetscape by incorporating:

- high-quality landscaping with an emphasis on trees and native species;
- pedestrian-friendly storefronts and safe, accessible connections;
- façade improvements and articulation to avoid large blank walls;
- screening of parking areas to reduce visual impact;
- public art and local materials (e.g., wood/timber) that reflect community identity.



7 INFRASTRUCTURE & MOBILITY

7.1 GENERAL

Objectives:

- Provide safe, reliable and cost-effective infrastructure and transportation systems that meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

Policy:

7.1.1 Council will implement an Asset Management Policy and develop an Asset Management Strategy to guide long-term maintenance, renewal and investment in Village infrastructure systems such as roads, water, wastewater and stormwater.

7.1.2 Sewer and water infrastructure extensions may be permitted where the full cost of design and installation is borne by the developer. The Village may implement latecomer agreements or equivalent mechanisms to recover servicing costs from future users connecting to the extended infrastructure.

7.2 TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Gold River has two significant thoroughfares, Highway 28 and Muchalat Drive. Highway 28 is a designated provincial highway linking the Village with the southern portion of the Island through Campbell River. Pedestrian access poses somewhat more of a challenge due primarily to the width of the road and the truck traffic. Muchalat Drive provides north-south access through town down to the mill site. Parts of Muchalat Drive are a provincially designated arterial road as well as designated joint-use industrial road.

Many municipalities in the province are assessing the potential for providing cycling routes within their boundaries. Although there has been no specific request for the inclusion of such routes within Gold River, the municipality is compact enough to have the shared-use of roads within its boundaries serve as a transportation network for all modes of transportation. Gold River has narrow streets which would limit the provision of cycle routes throughout the community. Muchalat Drive is wide enough to have a marked bicycle route, while local streets could accommodate bicycles in a similar fashion as it does other vehicles.

Whereas pedestrian safety is a concern for the Village, it would require considerable capital expenditure for sidewalks to be included in existing

subdivisions. The low volume of traffic mitigates this concerns in most existing areas of the community. In the future, the Village will consider the provision of sidewalks as a requirement of subdivision. The installation of sidewalks on at least one side of the street would improve pedestrian safety and provide for better vehicular movement on local streets

Objectives:

- To provide an efficient ground transportation network incorporating vehicular, cycling and pedestrian movements and safety within Gold River.
- To encourage the development of pedestrian linkages between future residential areas and the central core of the Village and to enhance existing linkages between developed portions of the Village and the Core.
- To improve the trail system within the Village, to extend Peppercorn Trail wherever feasible, enhance the trail system to Antler Lake, and in the long term promote a trail from the Village along the Gold River to Big Bend and to the head of Muchalat Inlet.
- To allow for the efficient use of air travel through the use of an airfield, heli-port or float plane marina.
- To maintain the Village Road System in a high level of repair on a cost effective basis.

Policies:

7.2.1 Village Council encourages the cooperation of landowners abutting the port, the provincial government and port users to improve parking in the area generally.

7.2.2 Council may consider the location of a bicycle lane on Muchalat Drive and other village streets. Council may investigate methods of providing improved vehicular circulation and improved parking on Village cul-de-sacs and local streets, and determine where additional parking could be provided on boulevards of arterial and collector roads.

7.2.3 Helicopters are recognized as a convenient mode of transportation to and from Gold River. In order to control the number of helicopter landing pads located in the Village and their potential impacts, Village Council designates the areas shown on Schedule “1” OCP & Land Use Map as Helicopter Landing Pad.

7.2.4 Council will lobby the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to ensure infrastructure improvements to the Highway and Bridges and a high standard of road maintenance.

7.2.5 The provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure shall be encouraged to replace the existing bridge over the Gold River.

7.3 SANITARY SEWER

The Village's wastewater system consists of preliminary treatment screening, an activated sludge secondary treatment process with sludge dewatering, ultraviolet effluent disinfection and effluent discharge to an infiltration basin from May to September and to the Gold River from October to April. The infiltration basin enhances phosphorous reduction in the effluent treatment process. The treatment process continues to evolve as upgrades are made to the system. The facility has been assessed as being in good mechanical operation but due to its age will require additional and ongoing maintenance. The system has been effective but with aging there are concerns with infiltration from storm drainage and ground water.

The Village has an inflow and infiltration plan in place and improvements continue to be made to the wastewater collection system through the measuring of flows in the different capture zones and utilization of point repairs to reline sewer pipe cracking prone to ground water inflows

The Village has initiated a new sludge dewatering project where it will replace the existing Drimad Sludge Dewatering System with a new centrifuge sludge dewatering system. Once the centrifuge system is installed, dewatering sludge will be more efficient and the volume of dewatered biosolids will be considerably reduced. Gold River is investigating ways to utilize the dewatered biosolids in a beneficial way such as landfill cover, forest fertilization, and exhausted quarry reclamation.

Objectives:

- To identify opportunities to utilize sludge from the Gold River Sewer Treatment Plant in a beneficial process.
- To upgrade the provision of sewer services as a long-term objective.
- To provide for efficient sewer services in the Village as resources allow and to improve delivery of services where these are deficient.

Policies:

7.3.1 Methods to reduce inflow and infiltration into the Village's sanitary sewers shall be investigated and implemented as funding is made available.

7.4 WATER

Gold River is served by three wells located on an aquifer adjacent to the confluence of the Gold and Heber Rivers. Although the Village has an excellent supply of water, in the area of Scout Lake, development has reached its maximum due to the height of the existing reservoir. Further development would require an in-line pump system and a reservoir at a greater height. The Heber Heights subdivision has an adequate water supply. Further development in Ucona Flats may require an additional reservoir. The village completed a review of its water supply and distribution system in 2002. The review provided recommendations for upgrades to the existing system; much of which has been completed but continues to be referenced in future planning. Maintenance on the water distribution system continues through implementation of the infrastructure study information.

In November 2017 VIHA provided notification to the Village of new proposed Terms and Conditions for the Village water system. These conditions include guidance for the protection of the Village well fields and water system. Staff are reviewing the revised conditions to update and implement in the time frame outlined. The Village has already commissioned several studies on water quality and source protection and is in discussion with engineering consultants to update those studies to embrace today's water quality standards. Council wishes to ensure we continue to maintain supplying the high quality water to our residents in compliance with VIHA requirements and Industry Best Practices.

Objectives:

- To ensure that the residents of Gold River have access to safe drinking water.
- To provide for efficient supply of water services in the Village as resources allow and to improve delivery of services where these are deficient.

- Develop a Strategic Plan for the ongoing maintenance and upgrade of the Village water infrastructure.

Policies:

7.4.1 In order to provide for sufficient water supply the Village may investigate alternatives to existing sources of supply.

7.4.2 Village Council continues to review pressure and water flows to the Scout Lake and Heber Heights subdivisions.

7.5 SOLID WASTE

Objectives:

- To improve the waste recycling program already in place in the Village and reduce the overall waste stream.
- To address changes to the management of solid waste resulting from the anticipated future closure of the Gold River Landfill, and the implementation of the Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM) Regional Solid Waste Management Plan (RSWMP) that was updated in 2012 and, which received approval from the Ministry of Environment in 2013.

Policies:

7.5.1 Methods to improve the existing recycling and waste reduction programs will continue to be supported by Council.

7.5.2 Council will review the local solid waste program to determine a cost-effective service to the residents and businesses of Gold River for the safe disposal of solid waste.

8 PARKS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Village of Gold River is surrounded by mountains, forests, and waterways that define its sense of place and quality of life. The community's setting offers unparalleled access to outdoor recreation and natural beauty, which are central to why people choose to live in Gold River. Protecting the integrity of this environment is vital for both current and future generations.

As required by the *Local Government Act* (Section 473(3)), the Village must include targets for the reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Gold River will work toward meeting the targets established by the Province of British Columbia, while also exploring opportunities at the local level to reduce emissions, encourage energy efficiency, and support climate resilience in a manner that reflects the community's rural context.

8.1 PARKS

Objectives:

- Strengthen trail and park connections within the Village and to surrounding natural areas and regional networks.
- Support the role of parks and trails as community gathering places, cultural spaces, and tourism amenities.

Policies:

8.1.1 Expand and connect local trails to regional trail systems, including linkages to Nootka Sound and adjacent communities.

8.1.2 Support trail development and signage that improves navigation, safety, and enjoyment for users.

8.1.3 Encourage the integration of heritage, cultural, and artistic elements into parks and trails, in partnership with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation and community groups.

8.1.4 Recognize the tourism value of Gold River's trail systems and promote them as part of eco-tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities.

8.1.5 Support the improvement and maintenance of existing park and trail assets to meet community needs.

8.1.6 Encourage universal design and accessibility improvements in community parks and trailheads, where terrain allows.

8.1.7 Protect natural open spaces, riparian areas, and environmentally sensitive lands through park and trail planning.

8.1.8 Support improvements to Nimpkish Park that enhance accessibility, safety, and recreation opportunities while preserving its natural and social value as a key community gathering space.

8.2 THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Objectives:

- To recognize and protect the ecological integrity of the Gold and Heber Rivers, their tributaries, and associated riparian and wetland areas.
- To conserve fish and wildlife habitat, including important salmon-bearing streams, by applying best practices in land use and development.
- To direct new growth away from environmentally sensitive areas and encourage stewardship of natural resources.
- To support public enjoyment of the natural environment through low-impact recreation that does not compromise ecological values.

Policies:

8.2.1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), including riparian corridors, wetlands, and steep slopes, shall be designated in Schedule “2” Development Permit Areas Map and afforded special protection.

8.2.2 Protect natural open spaces, riparian areas, and environmentally sensitive lands through park and trail planning.

8.2.3 Land development within or adjacent to ESAs must follow provincial and federal guidelines for habitat protection, including the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* and the *Fisheries Act*.

8.2.4 Development shall be directed away from floodplains, high hazard areas, and critical fish habitat to minimize environmental and public safety risks.

8.2.5 Land uses within ESA-designated areas are restricted to low-impact recreational activities such as hiking, walking, nature appreciation, and non-motorized water access.

8.2.6 The Village will encourage stewardship partnerships with community groups, Indigenous governments, and environmental organizations to support habitat restoration, stream health, and long-term conservation initiatives.

8.3 CLIMATE AND GREEN HOUSE GAS TARGETS

Objectives:

- To reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in alignment with the Province of BC's legislated reduction targets.
- To encourage energy efficiency and low-carbon choices in buildings, transportation, and community services.
- To build local climate resilience in a manner that reflects Gold River's rural setting and access to natural resources.

Policies:

8.3.1 Strive to meet the Province of BC's GHG reduction targets. The goal is to reduce community-wide GHG emissions to:

- 16% below 2007 levels by 2025
- 40% below 2007 levels by 2030
- 60% below 2007 levels by 2040
- 80% below 2007 levels by 2050

8.3.2 Encourage building energy efficiency by supporting participation in provincial and federal retrofit programs and promoting the use of renewable energy systems where feasible.

8.3.3 Support transportation-related GHG reductions by encouraging active transportation (walking, cycling), exploring opportunities for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and promoting ride-sharing initiatives where viable.

8.3.4 Partner with community organizations, Indigenous governments, and residents to pursue climate adaptation and mitigation projects that enhance local resilience, such as wildfire preparedness, flood management, and habitat restoration.

8.3.5 Develop the processes to measure and report on the community's GHG emissions profile. This will start with modeling the GHG emissions from Village operations.



Part III: Implementation & Governance

9.0 Implementation & Governance

9 IMPLEMENTATION & GOVERNANCE

There are many ways that the Village can implement tools to support the success of the vision outlined in this document. The following section provides a summary of those tools that can be used to support the implementation of this bylaw.

Policies: Village Council will consider the implementation of development cost charges to pay for the installation of new services or for improvements to existing services required as a result of new development.

9.1 MASTER PLANS AND STUDIES

The following plans and studies were identified during the OCP review process. These projects will help achieve the key objectives of the plan.

Plan/Study	Supporting Policies
Village Centre Strategic Design & Development Plan	6.6.1-6.6.6, 6.6.7
Deep-Water Industrial Lands - Investment Readiness & Servicing Study	6.4.1-6.4.5
Water & Sewer Asset Renewal Roadmap	4.3.8, 6.4.2, 7.3.1, 7.4.1,
Nimpkish Park Implementation Plan	8.1.8
Review downtown revitalization tax exemption program	5.3.1, 6.6.4

9.2 DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL INFORMATION

Pursuant to the establishment of a Development Approval Information Area bylaw, the area covered by this OCP is designated as a development approval information area under the authority of Section 485 of the Local Government Act, as amended from time to time. Development approval information may be required for:

1. Zoning bylaw amendments;
2. Temporary use permits, and;
3. Development permits.

9.3 TEMPORARY USE PERMITS

All lands shall be designated as being eligible for consideration for the issuance of Temporary Use Permits. The consideration of applications for a Temporary Use Permit shall be conditional upon the applicant providing:

1. A detailed description of the proposed use and the duration of the proposed activity;
2. Plans for mitigating potentially harmful impacts on the environment, adjacent lands, and the local community;
3. Applicable provincial and federal government approvals or permits;
4. A plan for rehabilitation of the site following the discontinuance of the proposed temporary use;
5. Other information required to fully evaluate the application.

9.4 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

Section 488 of the Local Government Act permits Council, in an Official Community Plan, to designate Development Permit Areas (DPAs). Council may issue a development permit that may vary or supplement a regulation of the Subdivision or Zoning Bylaw. A development permit cannot vary use, density, or flood plain specifications. Where land is subject to more than one DPA designation, a single development permit is required, however, the application is subject to the requirements of all applicable DPAs.

Pursuant to Section 488 of the Local Government Act, the Village of Gold River has designated Development Permit Areas for:

1. Form and Character for lands designated on Schedule 2
2. Environmental areas for lands shown on Schedule 2
3. Hazardous areas for lands shown on Schedule 2

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA EXEMPTIONS

Development permits are not required if the proposed development is consistent with the form and character of the original development and:

- a) Is an interior renovation; or
- b) Is minor and cosmetic in nature such as the replacement of a door or window, replacement of roofing, repairs to exterior finishes and does not involve altering the structure of the building; or

- c) Is an addition or alteration to an existing building which does not exceed 40 square metres; or
- d) Includes changes to the text on an existing sign that was permitted under an existing development permit; or
- e) There are hazardous conditions requiring development precautions which a geo- technical study indicates can otherwise be regulated by any zoning, servicing and floodplain management bylaws.

2. Development permits are not required when a development involves emergency repairs to buildings and structures where there is a demonstrable and immediate risk to public safety or property.

3. Development permits are not required for areas where tree cutting or soil removal and deposit permit bylaws exist at the time the application is made.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA 1 - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Category: The areas shown on *OCP Schedule "2" Development Permit Areas* as DPA 1 are designated as Development Permit Area 1 in accordance with Part 14: Division 7 - Development Permits, Section 488 (f) of the Local Government Act, to provide guidelines for the form and character of commercial, industrial, and multi-family development within the Village.

Justification: Gold River's Central Commercial, Recreational Commercial areas and Service Commercial areas are adjacent to residential, institutional, public and parks and open space uses. The density of development is scaled in proportion to the community. The objectives of the designation are: to ensure that commercial, industrial and high-density multi-family developments that occurs in Commercial Designations are compatible with the form, scale and character of existing development, to strengthen Central Commercial Area as the primary commercial focus of the Village, and to realize the economic, cultural, historical and architectural potential of the Village.

Guidelines:

1. Effort shall be made to incorporate innovative themes, roof structures and canopies designed to afford protection to pedestrians in cases of inclement weather.
2. Effort shall be made to incorporate varied rooflines, eg. pitch, height, facade, etc.

3. Signage shall be in accordance with the Village Sign Bylaw.
4. A landscape plan may be required. If required, the plan will include landscape specifications, vegetation, siting of decorative street furniture (i.e. lighting, benches, refuse containers) and appropriate landscaping.
5. Exterior storage, service and refuse areas shall be landscaped, fenced and buffered to minimize intrusions on adjacent uses. Exterior storage, service, refuse and parking areas include: paved, brick, or stone finished pedestrian areas, and paved parking.
6. Parking and other works and service requirements may be reduced or altered in special circumstances through the Development Permit process where strict compliance with the bylaws would unduly restrict appropriate development or would undermine the character of the area.
7. Barrier free design principles shall be used, for buildings, structures and uses in the Downtown.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA 2 - ENVIRONMENTAL AND HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS

Category: The areas shown on *OCP Schedule "2" Development Permit Areas* as DPA 2 are designated as Development Permit Area 2 in accordance with Part 14: Division 7 - Development Permits, Section 488 (a) and (b) of the Local Government Act, to provide guidelines for the purpose of protecting the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity, and protection of development from hazardous conditions.

Justification: Both the Gold and Heber Rivers flow through the Village and exhibit a range of characteristics, from fast-flowing flats to deep ravines. The confluence of the two rivers is located adjacent to Heber Field along Matchlee Drive. Areas that contain a slope of greater than 12% in the development permit area are also subject to slope review to ensure that the terrain is safe and suitable for the proposed development. The designation of DPA 2 seeks to:

- protect and enhance the environmental quality, ecosystems, and biological diversity of these watercourses and their adjacent uplands;
- retain the amenity values of the rivers and adjacent uplands for the community;
- protect development from hazardous conditions; and
- permit improved public access where practicable.
- Protect the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity;

- Protect human life and property.

Environmental Areas have been identified to:

- Protect fish and fish habitat
- Protect riparian habitats that support wildlife and support healthy streams

Hazardous areas have been identified to:

- Allow for development near steep slopes when the areas is confirmed safe for the intended use

This designation also enables the Village to meet its obligations under the provincial *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR)*, which requires local governments to ensure that riparian areas are protected from development impacts through Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) assessments and recommendations.

Submission Requirements:

Every submission shall include:

1. Complete Development Permit Application and applicable fee.
2. Professional Site Plan showing all buildings (existing and proposed), structures and site features, topography characteristics including toe and top of banks and any watercourses and setbacks on the site.
3. A professional prepared plan showing existing and proposed grades, (including details on retaining walls), toe of slope, top of bank, or any floodplain area.
4. A plan showing the areas to be cleared and areas of cut and fill, and the proposed sequence and timing of the clearing and recontouring.
5. Other information, as necessary, to assess the development proposal.

Guidelines:

1. All development within 30 metres of the natural boundary of the Gold or Heber Rivers must comply with the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR)*. Where required, applicants must provide a riparian assessment report prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP).
2. The Village may incorporate the recommendations of a riparian assessment report as conditions of a Development Permit.
3. Where river banks are proposed for development abutting either the Gold or Heber Rivers, they shall be retained in their natural state preserving

indigenous vegetation and trees wherever possible in order to maintain their stability.

4. Buildings, structures and related uses shall be set back 30 metres from the natural boundary of streams or as approved by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
5. Where steep slopes may be affected by development a report signed and sealed by a qualified professional engineer licensed to practice in British Columbia establishing criteria for development shall be required.
6. Because both rivers are spawning waters for protected species identified by federal and/or provincial authorities, their regulations and guidelines shall apply to the creeks on an as required basis.
7. In order to prohibit erosion of siltation, or recreate instability of the banks, drainage from development on lands within these areas shall be accommodated on-site and directed away from the slopes of the riverbanks toward municipal storm sewers or servicing.
8. When development occurs adjacent to the rivers, the Village shall endeavor to obtain the dedication of public access to the watercourses if appropriate.

Natural Hazards DPA

1. Subject to the slope of the natural grade of the site proposed for development being in excess of 12%, Council may require the preparation of a geotechnical/soil stability report, at no expense to the Village, outlining:
 2. The suitability and stability of the soil for the proposed use;
 3. The potential impact of the project on groundwater flows on and adjacent to the site;
 4. A map illustrating topographical features of the site;
 5. Location of slopes in excess of 25%, and
 6. A report with an opinion from a qualified, registered professional engineer licensed to practice in British Columbia, outlining the geotechnical suitability of the site for the proposed development.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA 3 - MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Category: The areas shown on OCP *Schedule “2” Development Permit Areas* as DPA 3 are designated as Development Permit Area 3 in accordance with Part 14: Division 7 - Development Permits, Section 488 (f) of the *Local Government Act*, to provide guidelines for the form and character of low-density and high-density multi-family development within the Village.

Justification: Gold River has identified within its community goals and values the benefit to allow for multi-family residential development to provide for infilling of serviced lands, increasing population and small-scale development to help preserve the community’s character. Low-density multi-family housing is consistent with the Village’s residential objectives and policies identified in Section 3 of this document. It is the desire to introduce this type of development into appropriate residential areas in a manner that is scaled in proportion to the community. The objectives of the designation are: to ensure that these multi-family developments are compatible with the form, scale and character of existing development and promotes the concept of healthy and livable communities.

Guidelines:

1. Developments adjacent to single detached uses should be designed to maximize privacy and minimize views onto adjoining sites, particularly for portions of the development abutting the side yards of adjacent single detached residential uses.
2. Units should be designed in a manner that promotes a sense of community.
3. Roof forms should include design elements that impart a form, rhythm and scale sympathetic to surrounding single detached residential neighbourhoods.
4. Exposed undersides of balconies and porches that are visible from a street or public walkway should be covered with exterior finishes to provide a finished appearance to public view.
5. Individual unit designs are encouraged be varied to avoid significant repetition.
6. Where garage doors are front facing, the impact of garage doors on the public realm should be mitigated by; recessing of doors, limiting widths, including attractive entrances and windows between garages, providing interior spaces that overlook the street, include design details such as transom windows or glazing

in garage doors, landscaping to mitigate the visual impact of garage doors.

7. Buildings should be staggered, spaced and located on a site to:
 - Allow primary views past adjacent units;
 - Preserve and incorporate natural features or views;
 - Ensure proper orientation and relationship to adjoining residential uses;
 - Minimize impacts on natural features; and
 - Accommodate natural grades to ensure minimal grading is required.
8. Developments adjacent to treed slopes, ravines and watercourses must respect natural vegetation, use natural landscaping to retain soils on the site and may require additional setbacks as established by agencies having jurisdiction.
9. Buildings adjacent to existing residential buildings should be designed to respond to the scale and massing on adjacent properties, architectural character, protection of privacy and livability.
10. Landscape buffers from adjoining property lines must be provided.
11. Sufficient access for emergency response vehicles must be provided to all buildings on a site.
12. Lanes and driveways should conform to the existing grades as closely as possible to ensure minimal disruption of slopes and vegetation.
13. Well defined and safe pedestrian access must be provided from parking areas and the public sidewalk.
14. All areas not covered by buildings, structures or driveways shall be fully landscaped and integrated with existing landscape in the area.



Part IV: Maps and Schedules

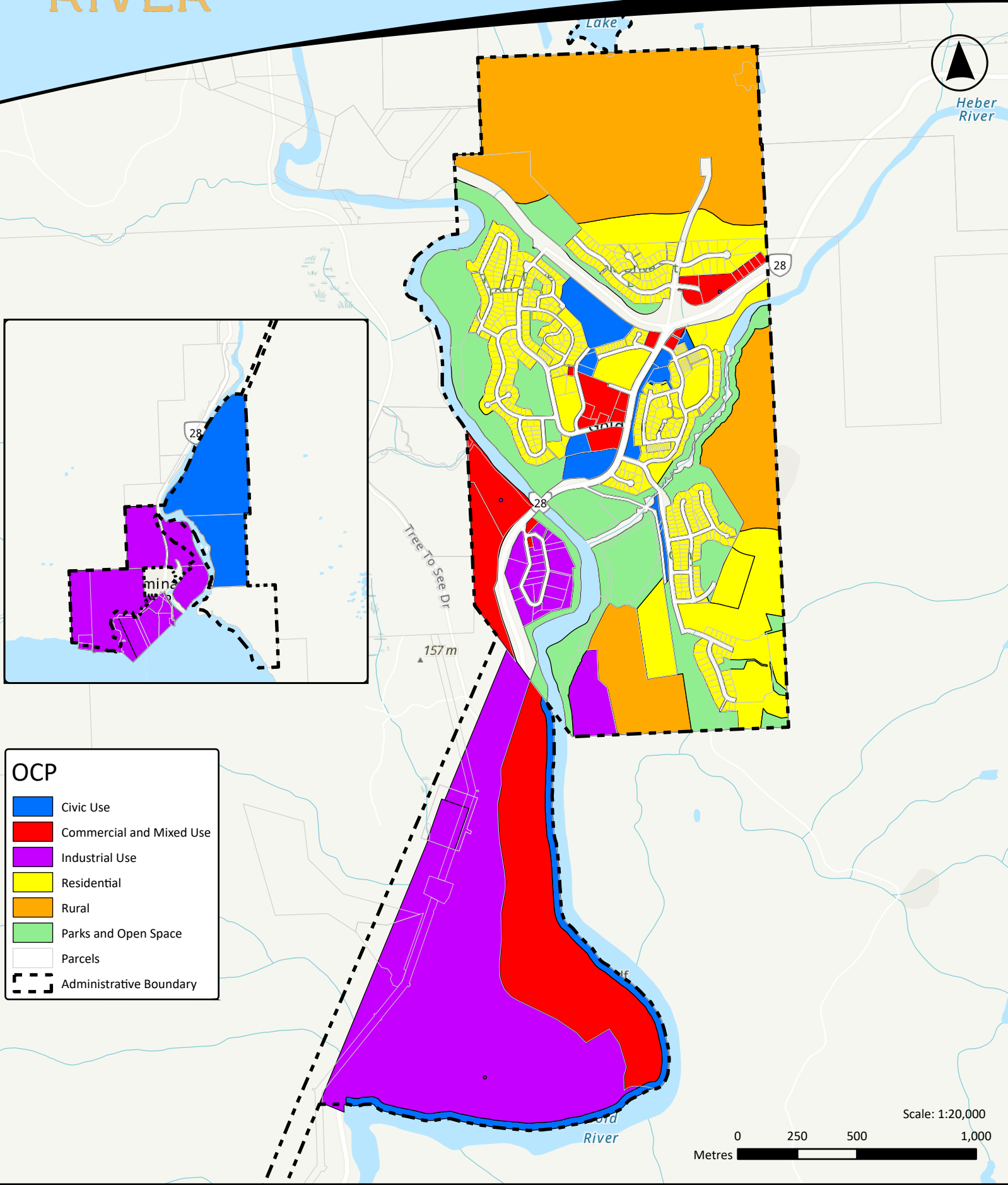
10.0 Maps & Schedules

Schedule 1 OCP & Land Use Map

Schedule 2 Development Permit Areas Map

Village of Gold River

OCP and Land Use Map



Village of Gold River

Development Permit Areas Map

