

VILLAGE OF HAZELTON

Official Community Plan

Bylaw No. 473, 2015

SCHEDULE "A"

Adopted March 17, 2015



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Schedule B

Long Range Land Use Plan and Development Permit Areas



1 Introduction

The Official Community Plan is a very important document which often gets marginalized in smaller, rural communities. Every so often we spend time engaging community residents to plan for managing existing and new development, making sure we satisfy all legal requirements and to coin policies complete with land use plans. Then, especially in smaller rural communities, Official Community Plans (OCP) often sit on shelves, sometimes for decades collecting dust, until one day a project triggers the need to look at it, and perhaps needing to amend it.

This observation is not about being critical but about being realistic and searching for a method where this document, the Official Community Plan for Village of Hazelton, gains rather than loses importance after adoption.

1.1 Legislation

The authority to create land use regulations is given to the local governments in the *Local Government Act*, Sections 877 and 878. Both are quoted in full below:

877 (1) An official community plan must include statements and map designations for the area covered by the plan respecting the following:

- (a) the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 5 years;
- (b) the approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses;
- (c) the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction;
- (d) restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;
- (e) the approximate location and phasing of any major road, sewer and water systems;
- (f) the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites;
- (g) other matters that may, in respect of any plan, be required or authorized by the minister.

(2) An official community plan must include housing policies of the local government respecting affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing.

(3) An official community plan must include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.



878 (1) An official community plan may include the following:

- (a) policies of the local government relating to social needs, social well-being and social development;
- (b) a regional context statement, consistent with the rest of the community plan, of how matters referred to in section 850 (2) (a) to (c), and other matters dealt with in the community plan, apply in a regional context;
- (c) policies of the local government respecting the maintenance and enhancement of farming on land in a farming area or in an area designated for agricultural use in the community plan;
- (d) policies of the local government relating to the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

(2) If a local government proposes to include a matter in an official community plan, the regulation of which is not within the jurisdiction of the local government, the plan may only state the broad objective of the local government with respect to that matter unless the Minister has, under section 877 (1) (g), required or authorized the local government to state a policy with respect to that matter.

In general, the former, Section 877 of the current legislation (*Local Government Act*) is similar to the previous legislation (*Municipal Act*) which applied when the last OCP was adopted in 1997. Section 879 (of the *Local Government Act*) gives Local Governments additional authorities they may exercise.

Considering the importance of this document and the intent to provide a streamlined land use plan, it suffices to say that the Village of Hazelton Council elected to concentrate on the “must” policies. Considerations such as social well-being, natural environment and regional context are and will continue to be, acknowledged within the land use policies. In other words, matters of this nature are not only land use related but essential elements of the community socio-economic fabric affecting daily life as well as short and long term community goals.

1.2 Land Use Policies Now and in the Future

An OCP is a long term land use policy document. It is based on understanding the past, a reflection of the present and a vision of the future captured in policies. At the time of adoption the OCP becomes a legal instrument in the form of a bylaw and provides a framework for land use policies.



As future influences evolve (including but not limited to social and economic influences) this document also has a sense of flexibility and is often referred to as a “living document”. In other words, recognizing the unforeseen circumstances which may occur in the future, the *Local Government Act* provides a framework and a process to amend any part of this document including words and illustrations.

The last time the community engaged in developing the OCP was from 1995 to 1997. In the almost two decades that have passed much has happened but the overall intent of those policies have stood up quite well. Some goals were accomplished (NWCC satellite campus, sidewalk/trail to the Arena and beyond) and some goals remain (improvements/rebuilt of the Arena, Bulkley River Second Crossing). For nearly two decades the foresight of land use planning accommodated the development activity. Arguably, this may have been the result of the lack of commercial/private development but nevertheless, managing land use during a severe economic decline is perhaps as difficult as managing the same during an economic boom.

The intent of this OCP is to move forward with good, basic land use planning policies, to renew the interest in planning and to anticipate future influences. Section 2.0 and 3.0 provide policies adopted by the Village Council to guide the future physical development. That said, in contemplating physical shape and form, the resulting policies provide an underpinning to the Council to advocate on socio-economic matters.

The OCP is meant to serve as a guideline and endeavours to avoid being overly prescriptive or restrictive. Policies generally provide for a mix of land uses to the extent that land conflicts are avoided and health and safety are accommodated. Detailed and site specific land use regulations are identified in the Village Zoning Bylaw, with the OCP focusing on the general direction for land use and development.

1.3 Community Background

Two elements of the documents of this nature, which are often included in the main text, are some general information about the community (description/geographic context) and statistics (usually from the existing sources). For the purposes of this document it was elected to keep this information as reference information available on the Village of Hazelton Website or from the Village Administration office.

The Village of Hazelton has a rich history. Community Fact Sheets ([Village Website](#)) contain background information.



This represents the commencement of work by the Village of Hazelton on promotion, branding and economic development. Consequently as time passes following adoption of this document, readers should seek current information from the Village.

The Local Survey and Inventory (**Village Website**) is the result of a door-to-door survey that was conducted during the late spring and early summer of 2014 to seek demographic statistics as well as some statistics on economy and employment. This information has provided a very important underpinning for community engagement and the basis for the policies which follow.

1.4 Housekeeping

This document is prepared in accordance with the applicable legislation of the *Local Government Act*, and:

- It recognizes the enabling legislation.
- It engaged the community.
- It recognizes the strict application to the lands within the Village boundaries.
- The words and illustrations are intent driven. In case of a dispute of interpretation has occurred, and resolution is at an impasse, it must be resolved in accordance of the provisions of the governing legislation: Local Government Act and *Interpretation Act of British Columbia*.
- If any part of this Bylaw for any reason is held invalid by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalid part must be severed and the decision that it is invalid must not alter validity of the remainder.



Source: <http://www.hazelton.ca/>



2 Community - Tenets - Goals

The 1995 Village of Hazelton Official Community Plan used the term “tenets” to describe the following guiding principles:

1. *The Village Council have expressed their commitment to developing a Plan which is a viable working document for the future of the Village. The Plan strives to provide clear land use and servicing policies that can be formally adopted and passed on to future councils.*
2. *Hazelton will continue to evolve and co-exist as a village with adjacent communities. The community has a proud heritage of resourcefulness and resiliency despite adverse circumstances.*
3. *The Healthy Community movement is supported by the Village of Hazelton and very much in evidence in a number of community initiatives, from downtown revitalization to youth conferences.*
4. *The Village of Hazelton promotes the premise of sustainable development, balancing the long-term interests of environment and social development with the more immediate economic concerns of commerce and industry.*
5. *The Hazeltons area represents a weaving of Native and non-Native cultures consisting of stable populations with strong ties to the land. The social and cultural environment of the Village of Hazelton grows from the bi-cultural nature of the region.*
6. *Expanded opportunities for recreation, especially for youth are critical to the social well-being of the community.*
7. *The natural features within the Village should be preserved and access to these enhanced as the Village develops. Environmentally sensitive design with a focus on retaining natural landscape features and increased access to the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers should guide development.*

These were the fundamental goals and underpinning of the community objectives. The language and the intent were forward thinking and carry the intent forward to the present day.

The community and indeed the region, the area commonly referred to as ‘the Hazeltons’, is arguably still going through the effects of the declining forest industry. The result is a sense of “survival resourcefulness” and resiliency.



In the chaos of economic downturn and unemployment, the social fabric of the community appears to have remained stable. On the flip side, the entire commercial tax base has dwindled to 11 service/commercial (stores and restaurants) establishments. Today, the short and long term sustainability of the Village depends on health and education services to provide both essential services and employment to sustain the local economy.

The sense of “survival resourcefulness” and resiliency is a defense mechanism against the “boom and bust” resource based economy, and while “just one more blanket will keep me warm for the day” attitude is the objective of the day, the long term goal is to be prepared for the future.

2.1 Community Goals

The goal of the entire process of developing land use policies is to provide a solid and balanced tool for considering land use and land development matters.

To be truly committed, Council must consider the following goals when contemplating any decisions which have land use implications both procedurally (often noted as bureaucratic and details/time consuming), as well as functionally (often referred to as transparency and accountability). To aid the staff to provide the best information possible so that Council can make informed decisions, the following goals guide the OCP:

Goal #1 Official Community Plan will be principally a land use policy document.

Goal #2 Council will consider land use policies when advocating for:

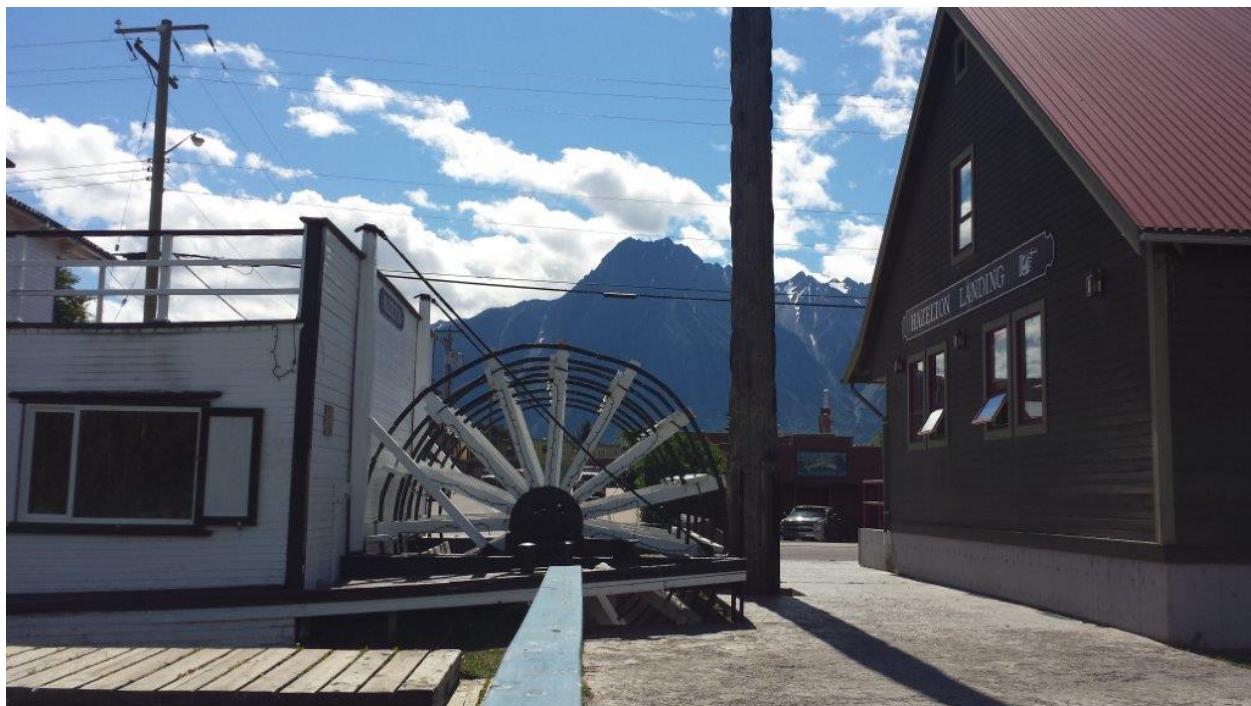
- Social well-being and social matters relating to the community and the region.
- Regional development benefits and development with surrounding incorporated and unincorporated local governments, and First Nations communities.
- Respect and enjoyment of the natural environment in its natural state and environmentally sensitive design when faced with development.
- Sustainable development.

Goal #3 To maintain the existing facilities and strive for enhanced, health and education services and facilities and relating opportunities.

Goal #4 Think regionally act locally - ‘the Hazeltons’ comprises an intricate fabric of traditional, cultural and legal entities and communities. Land and resources are the very heart of each community, and each community should consider all the others.



- Goal #5** Recognize local needs and changes to socio-economic attitudes.
- Goal #6** Advocate and continue to provide leadership in the efforts to build the new Upper Skeena Recreation Centre.
- Goal #7** Advocate and continue to provide leadership in the efforts to realize a second crossing of the Bulkley River.
- Goal #8** Advocate in the efforts to realize a foot bridge across the Bulkley River from K'san to Mission Flats.



3 Land Use Designations and Policies

The following policy statements are supported by land use designations as illustrated on Schedule ‘B’ – Long Range Land Use Plan and Development Permit Areas Map. The intent of words and illustrations are mindful of the earlier stated goals.

3.1 Residential Land Use

Residential designation is intentionally flexible. The intent is to accommodate various forms and densities of residential development as well as other uses which are found to be regular practice in residential neighbourhoods.

“The objective when considering residential land use decisions is to plan for diversified residential development which is suitable and provides choices for varying residential life styles.”

Policies

1. Residential designation applies to all forms and densities of residential development and includes uses such as schools, institutional and utility facilities, park and recreation facilities, and local commercial (conveyance/home based businesses), transportation and utility corridors.
2. The Village land use rules and regulations encourage social housing, special needs housing, assisted living housing and similar programs.
3. Village has a supply of developable land and new development is generally managed by availability of services and access. That said, any new development will be strongly encouraged to maximize, by proximity, existing infrastructure including water, sewer and roads.

3.2 Commercial Mix Land Use

The Village of Hazelton was once the largest community west of Prince George. For over 150 years it has existed, adapted and changed with the times in exactly the same place. The community has benefited from rich historical branding and invested in a very successful Downtown Revitalization program in late 1980’s and early 1990’s. The historic theme is both authentic and very attractive, and continues to be a focal point in community commerce and promotions. The Historic Downtown is designated as one of the Development Permit Areas in Section 4.0.



The remaining commercial land use options are limited to the serviced and immediately accessible parcels along Highway 62. In fact, the same lands are in competition with other (residential and institutional) land uses. Throughout the consultation and engagement process for the OCP it was made clear that this type of land demand competition is in fact an opportunity to provide for mixed land use planning.

“While the intent of the commercial land use designation is clear, the objective when considering any development is a balance between the intent of commercial and the benefits of the mix with institutional and/or residential development.”

Policies:

1. The downtown historic Village portion of the community has naturally evolved as mixed use of residential, commercial and institutional use. This will continue to be encouraged.
2. Develop, adopt and abide by Historical Downtown Design Guidelines.
3. Encourage home businesses subject to the consideration of the overall neighbourhood quality of life.
4. Encourage commercial development and consider residential and institutional land uses in the area along and immediately surrounding Highway 62.
5. In the long term, the area commonly referred to as Lot 103 provides opportunities for future commercial land use opportunities. Any proposals or consideration to develop in this area must be in accordance with policies laid out in Section 3.5 Open Space – Future Development Potential.

3.3 Industrial Land Use

There are no industrial land uses in the Village of Hazelton today, in fact there was little, if any in the past. The community and Council are not adverse to industrial development however, choice of the type of industrial development is important. At present the easily accessible and serviced areas are mostly occupied leaving only Lot 103 with the potential for development.

“The objective, when considering any industrial development proposals is a prudent assessment and consideration of community values.”



Policies:

1. Any proposal for industrial development will require a detailed site plan and a full description of all activities.
2. The area commonly referred to as Lot 103 provides opportunities for future industrial land development. Any proposals or consideration to develop in this area must be in accordance with policies laid out in Section 3.5 Open Space – Future Development Potential.

3.4 Institutional Land Use

Health, education and public service facilities are the pillars of Village of Hazelton and indeed the region's socio-economic fabric. As illustrated on the Land Use Map, Institutional use is one of the dominant land uses. Further, and speaking to the encouragement of mixed land uses, institutional facilities occupy much of the Historical Downtown.

The community and the Council recognize that institutional facilities are dependent on public funds and therefore, a flexible and encouraging environment is key to maintaining and growing institutional services.

“When considering institutional land uses the objective is to encourage, advocate and provide leadership to maintain the existing services and accept new opportunities.”

Policies:

1. Support existing and future health, education and public service facilities and related land uses.
2. Recognize not-for-profit and private initiatives which are assuming the role previously provided by senior levels of government.
3. Support a fully integrated mix of institutional and residential land uses, including permanent and temporary residential uses in areas designated as institutional use.



3.5 Open Space-Parks and Open Space- Development Potential

While on the map lines are representative of what is on the ground, the reality is quite different. The charm of northern rural communities is that much of our living spaces are carved out of forest and the backyards melt into the “back forty” which is simply undeveloped land. All is good until development takes place on the neighbouring property and lot lines become much closer than expected.

In general the “back forty” is the ‘bush’ through which trails provide access to the river or simply access between two places. These trails are sometimes on private property and sometimes on public property and are freely used. This is simply a way of life and contributes to the quality of life in the community. However, it is prudent to formalize access to forestall any issues that may arise when the land is developed in the future.

Existing parks and trails are well cared for and well utilized and valued by the community, and all see benefit and seek more. In this document areas with a high potential to evolve into formal recreation areas are designated as Open Space-Park.

The “Open Space with Development Potential” often referred to as Lot 103 is perceived as Open Space but has a good potential for future development. In this document, this area has been referenced in previous sections and under this land use designation deserves specific attention.

“The objective in considering any works within the Open space – Parks and Open Space – Development Potential land use designation will require detailed proposals and prudent decisions with long term considerations of legacy for future generations.”

Policies:

1. Continue diligent search for resources to increase community park base and organized trails.
2. When considering any future development encourage and seek formalized access agreements for trails.
3. Regulate development to continue to provide physical and view access to the river banks.
4. District Lot 103 possess significant development opportunities as noted in previous land use policies. To ensure orderly development any proposal, unless opportune presents earlier, must be preceded by a comprehensive development plan of all lands.



3.6 Climate Action

The Village of Hazelton is one of a few communities which did not sign the (2007) Climate Charter. This is not because the Council is indifferent to the climate and environment in general but because it was difficult to understand how a very sophisticated instrument, which is more suited to urban communities, could be managed in a small, rural and northern Village.

This OCP includes a number of mixed use policies not necessarily developed to reduce the number of trips between home and the place of work and policies to advocate for public transit that are not necessarily intended to reduce the number of cars on roads. In both of these examples the outcome is what Climate Action Plan contemplated however, in Village of Hazelton it is simply a necessity.

"The objective is respect to climate action in particular and environment in general is to be mindful of our resources in all decisions relating to the land use policies and land development."

3.7 Transportation and Mobility

The main access to the community is controlled access Highway 62 maintained and controlled by Ministry of Transportation Highways and Infrastructure. Highway 62 is both a collector and an arterial route. The remaining roads are local roads feeding onto the highway, a very flat hierarchy road system which appears to function well.

With the lack of public transportation the primary mode of transportation is by private vehicle however, many people depend on alternative modes such as walking and biking. The trails and sidewalks are well used and seem to be adequate for local mobility however, the access within “the Hazeltons” is severely hampered by the lack of public transportation.

"The objective of Mobility and Transportation polices is to advocate for better public transportation means and urge all new development to standards which include sidewalks and trails suitable for pedestrian and cycling".

Policies:

1. Advocate for better public transit
2. Consider all land use plans within the context of providing adequate space and land for the Bulkley River Second Crossing.



3.8 Infrastructure

Municipal water supply/treatment and sanitary sewer treatment are jointly owned and managed by the Village of Hazelton and the Gitanmaax Band.

Solid waste disposal is provided at the regional level and Village of Hazelton is an active participant in solid waste disposal plans and efforts to reduction and recycling.

"The objective when concerning infrastructure is to provide municipal services at the standards to meet provincial health and safety standards."

Policies:

1. Continue cooperation with Gitanmaax in maintaining commonly owned and operated water and sewer facilities.
2. Evaluate any future development plans and proposals keeping in mind the capacity and practiced standards.
3. Continue to be keenly involved in the regional solid waste planning.
4. Utility operations and distribution systems are permitted in all land use designations subject to consultation with the Council and applicable regulations.



Source: <http://www.hazelton.ca/>

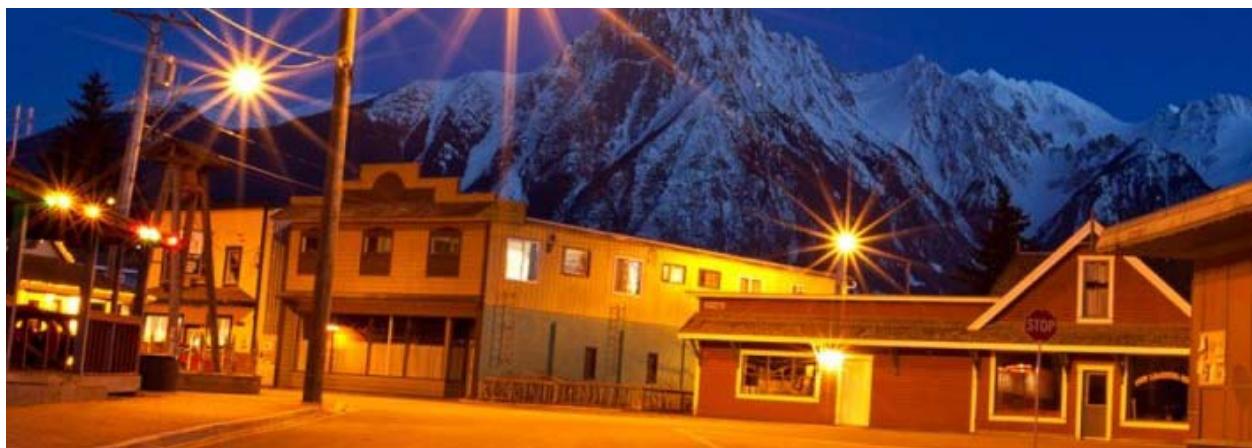
4 Development Permit Areas

Further to land use policies, the *Local Government Act* also provides an option to designate Development Permit Areas (DPAs) to achieve specific purpose:

- a) Protection of natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity
- b) Protection of development from hazardous conditions
- c) Protection of farming
- d) Revitalization of an area in which commercial use is permitted
- e) Establish objectives for the form and character of intensive residential development
- f) Establish objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multi-family residential development

Areas designated for any of the above specific purposes in an OCP must describe the special conditions or objectives to justify the designation, and specify guidelines regarding the manner by which special conditions or objectives will be addressed.

Keeping with the intent that OCP is a land use policy document, the Village Council will establish DPAs as noted below. The actual guidelines as to how the special conditions or objectives will be met remain to be developed and will be attached to the Zoning Bylaw as schedules.



Source: <http://www.hazelton.ca/>



The OCP designates the following Permit Areas:

4.1 DPA 1 - Historical Downtown - Village Core

The intent of the design guidelines is to govern both new projects and redevelopment to meet the following objectives:

- Ensure that the historic form and character are preserved
- Encourage mix of land uses
- Encourage pedestrian accessibility



Source: www.lonniewishart.com

4.2 DPA 2 – Flood Plain

The entire riverbank along the Historical Downtown - Village Core is exposed to flooding. The Flood plain mapping from Data BC provides the extent and the following objectives will be addressed in specifications:

- All development to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Environment
- Confirm Ministry of Environment Flood Mapping and appropriate setbacks
- Prescribe restrictions and regulations for any development within designated flood plain



Source: www.lonniewishart.com



Village Of Hazelton

Official Community Plan

Long Range Land Use Plan and Development Permit Areas

Schedule 'B'

LAND USE

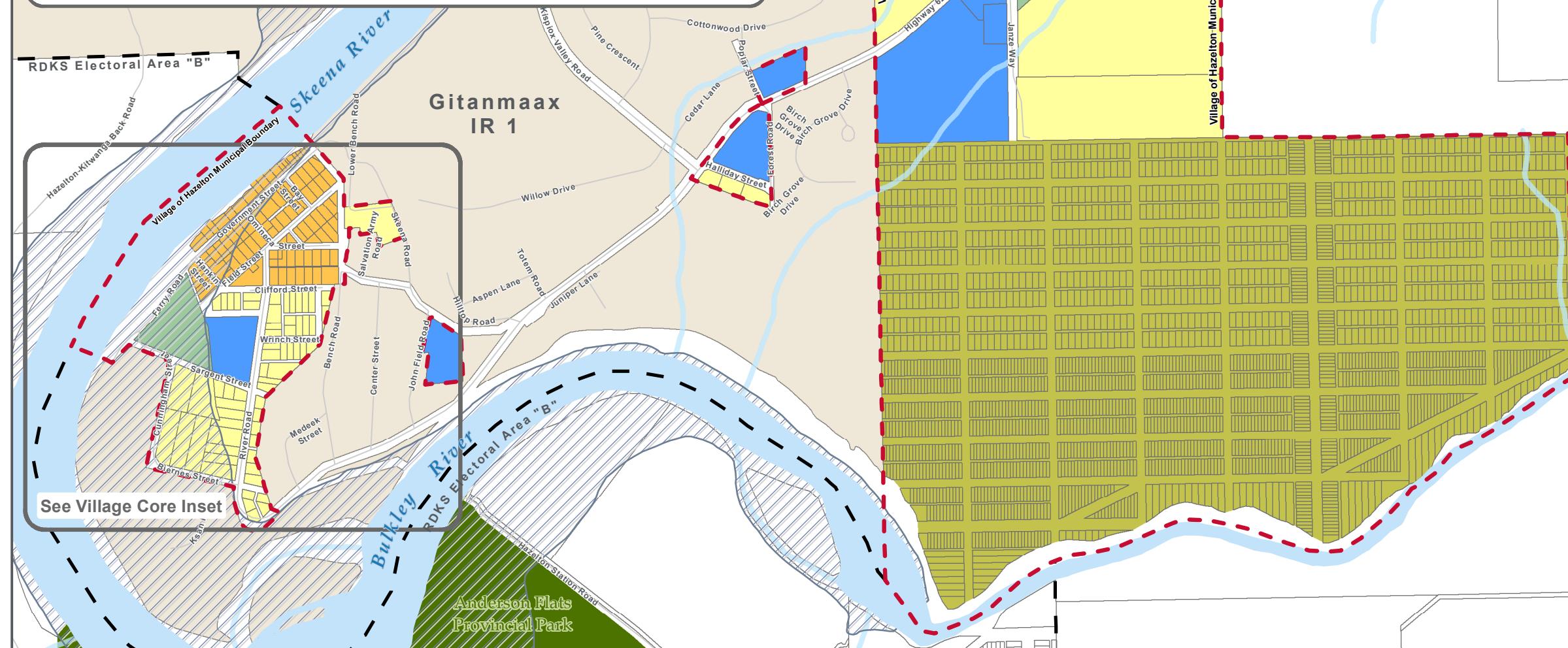
- | | | | |
|---|---------------|---|------------------------------------|
|  | Residential |  | Open Space - Development Potential |
|  | Commercial |  | Open Space - Park |
|  | Institutional | | |

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS

-  DPA 1 - Historical Downtown
 -  DPA 2 - Flood Plain
200 Year Level

First Nation Reserve

 Village of Hazelton Municipal Boundary



I hereby certify that this is a true copy of Schedule 'B' in the Village of Hazelton Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 473, 2015

CLERK

DATE