

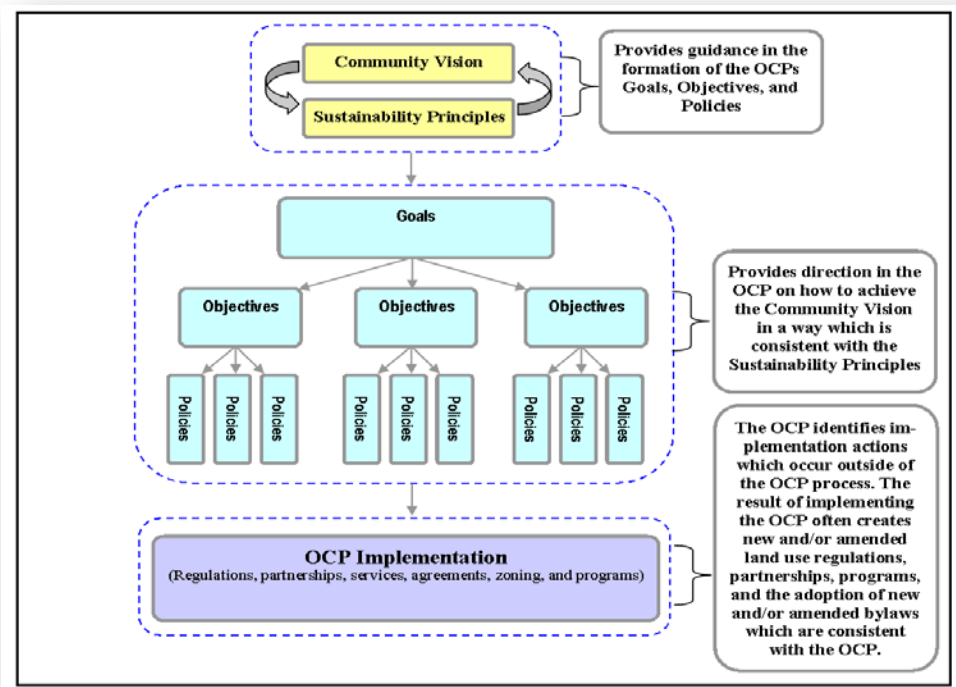
3.0 Vision, Principles and Goals

The Electoral Area ‘A’ OCP review process brought the community together to develop a Community Vision titled ‘A Shared Community Vision’. The community also contributed to drafting Sustainability Principles, goals, objectives, and policies for this OCP.

The Community Vision identifies a desired future for Electoral Area ‘A’ and provides a set of guiding principles. The Vision helped guide decisions on what was included in the OCP and will assist the RDN in making sound land use decisions in the future to ensure that Area ‘A’ works towards becoming a more sustainable community. The objectives and policies provide direction for how to achieve the Community Vision and goals in a way which is consistent with the Sustainability Principles. Therefore, development proposals considered in the plan area should be consistent with this plan’s policies, objectives, and goals, and should also be consistent with the Sustainability Principles and help work towards achieving the Community Vision.

It is important to understand the relationship between the Community Vision, Sustainability Principles, goals, objectives, policies and implementation. *Figure 3* below provides an overview of this relationship. It is important to note, regulations fall outside of this plan, but are critical to the plan’s success and in achieving the Community Vision. The act of transforming the policies contained in this plan to regulations is called implementation. Implementation is required to realize the potential of this plan’s policies.

Figure 3 – Relationship between vision, principles, goals, objectives, policies and regulations



3.1 A Shared Community Vision

Electoral Area 'A' is a diverse, caring community full of local talent, which respects its cultural and historical roots in agriculture, mining, forestry and other resource uses. Electoral Area 'A' includes portions of the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw and Stz'uminus First Nations.

Electoral Area 'A' is also a community with a strong desire to preserve its existing rural values, which are deeply entrenched in the community and passed down through generations. Rural village feel, lands in agricultural and resource production, quietness, open spaces, opportunities to interact and be in touch with and appreciate nature, clean air and water are some of the values which contribute towards area residents' way of life and is the reason we call Electoral Area 'A' home.

On December 6, 2008, the community came together to develop 'A Shared Community Vision'. This Vision recognizes that environmental, social, or economic changes may be needed to ensure that the things the community values today are preserved and enhanced for future generations. It also ensures that the community continues to work toward sustainability in consideration of the potential global impacts of climate change.

A Shared Community Vision:

In 2033 Electoral Area 'A' is a highly desirable place to live, work, and play and as a result has become more socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable. The community has evolved over time through careful planning and guidance provided by the OCP, which has been upheld by the RDN and strongly supported by members of the community. The OCP is based on the concept of sustainability and 'smart growth', which seeks to minimize the impacts of human activities. This has been accomplished by managing natural resources, as well as economic, environmental, and social systems in a way that enhances the quality of life, yet does not diminish the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Electoral Area 'A' has become a leader in local food production and sustainability and is often showcased as a model community due to its environmental stewardship and protection policies, growth management strategies, innovative use of alternative technologies, green building programs, recreational and sports opportunities, diverse culture, artistic talent, and excellent multi-modal transportation system.

After nearly 25 years of well managed development, rural values are not only maintained and protected but are also enhanced. Young families and seniors are now attracted to and are staying within the community. There are opportunities for local employment which pay a livable wage, contribute to the local economy, and have minimal impacts on the environment. Per capita greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced and continue to decline as the economy prospers.

Growth is directed into well-defined rural centres. Growth and development outside these areas has largely been avoided as agriculture, resource use, and conservation of biodiversity have become the top priority for these areas.

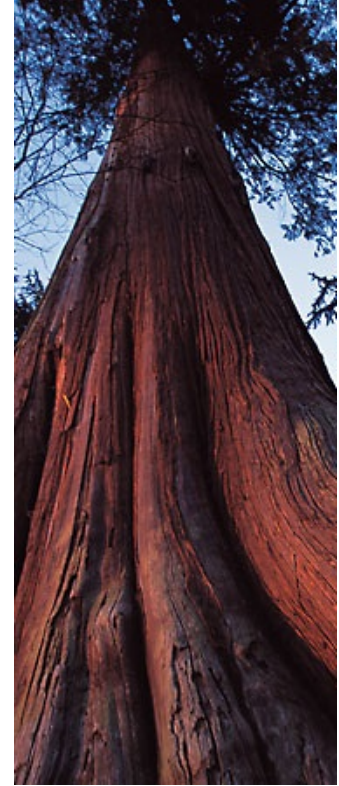
The community is a vibrant place to live where a diversity of residents from all economic levels and ethnic backgrounds are welcomed and have an enhanced sense of community pride. Electoral Area 'A' residents feel safe in their community and enjoy the personal freedom a rural lifestyle provides.



3.2 Sustainability Principles

In the pursuit of becoming a more sustainable community, it is recognized that when making decisions, economic, social, and environmental factors are interdependent and must not be considered in isolation. In addition, it is recognized that decisions made today not only affect the current generation, but are also a major determinant in the quality of life to be enjoyed by future Electoral Area 'A' generations.

Electoral Area 'A' residents have worked together to define what is important to ensure that the plan area continues to be a great place to live, work, and play as well as to work towards what is required to become a more sustainable community. Nine Sustainability Principles are presented below which provide guidance for making sound decisions and form the foundation for the goals, objectives, and policies of this OCP. These Sustainability Principles are intended to provide guidance to the Regional Board, RDN staff, other government and non-government agencies, stakeholders, developers and community members in making decisions that will result in a positive impact on Electoral Area 'A'.



Principle 1 Nature Has Value

Electoral Area 'A' residents believe that nature has value beyond what can be extracted, harvested, or derived from it. Area 'A' residents are committed to environmental stewardship and conservation.

Electoral Area 'A' residents' health and well-being relies upon functioning healthy ecosystems which are critical to a sustainable long-term future. This includes not only biologically diverse local flora and fauna, but also the quality and quantity of drinking water and the protection of services provided by a healthy ecosystem such as clean air, water, and soil.

Nature is complex, diverse, and unpredictable and Electoral Area 'A' residents understand that to protect and enhance the natural environment, it is necessary to continually adapt to changing conditions and strive to better understand and mitigate the potential impacts of our actions and important land use decisions.

Principle 2 Maintain Local History, Culture, and Rural Character

Local history, culture, rural character, and rural lifestyles are highly valued and are of critical importance to residents of Electoral Area 'A'. Although there is no single definition of rural character, it is generally characterized by low population density, a focus on agricultural and resource uses, and has an abundance of large expanses of open and green space which typically include larger land holdings than compared to suburban and urban areas. Some area residents say rural character is '*food production*' while others believe that it is about living closer to the land and its aesthetic qualities. Rural character also provides residents with a lifestyle different than what would be encouraged and expected in an urban environment which includes lack of urbanized sights, sounds, services, amenities, peace and quiet, close social networks, safety and the sound and smells of active agriculture.



Principle 3 Leaders in Local Food Production, and Local Marketing

Over half of the plan area is located within the ALR and agriculture is an important contributor to the local economy. Area residents wish to become leaders in local food production as a means of reducing dependence on imported food. Residents wish to see land located in the ALR being used wisely and for its intended purpose in a sustainable fashion. Area residents discourage uses which may create conflicts with agricultural uses such as non-farm related residential, commercial, or industrial growth on lands located within or adjacent to the ALR. Residents encourage more intensive land use and higher densities within clearly defined areas within the GCBs and in a way which minimizes the impacts of these uses on agricultural operations.

To become leaders in local food production requires significant changes to the status quo including much more emphasis on marketing the plan area from an agricultural and local food production perspective.

Principle 4 Manage Growth Carefully

Area residents support and understand that to protect the rural character of Electoral Area 'A' and the quality of life enjoyed by rural residents, it is necessary to limit the rate of change in rural areas. This plan achieves this by discouraging new non-agricultural and resource development in rural areas and encouraging it into well-defined areas within GCBs, which are not recognized by this plan as being 'rural'. In addition, infill and intensification of existing residential areas on lands within the GCB is strongly encouraged and necessary to preserve the rural character of the plan area.

Principle 5 Safe, Healthy, and Active Communities for all Residents

The creation of safe, healthy and active communities is critical to the overall livability of Electoral Area 'A'. Residents who live in communities which provide a range of opportunities for safe and efficient interconnected forms of transportation which include opportunities for walking, cycling, and other forms of human-powered transportation are more likely to choose non-vehicular modes of transportation. Providing opportunities for active transportation reduces obesity, improves community health, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, improves social networking opportunities, and improves safety as more people use active transportation routes.

Principle 6 Participatory Democracy

Electoral Area 'A' residents value the ability to participate in decisions that affect them. Effective public participation provides early and ongoing opportunities to engage citizens in a way that is meaningful, transparent, and inclusive. It is recognized that participation by all stakeholders affected by a decision is crucial in developing good plans and making sound decisions.

Principle 7 A Diverse Community

Electoral Area 'A' is comprised of a diverse group of individuals who have different educational backgrounds, economic status, religious beliefs, and interests who when combined contribute towards a sense of community in Electoral Area 'A'. A diverse population also means that the community has a broad range of needs including transportation, housing, recreation, medical, and education. Area 'A' residents wish to support and encourage diversity in the community and as such, it is recognized that the community must provide for a diverse range of needs including transportation and mobility, education, employment, and housing.



Principle 8 A Diversified Local Economy

A healthy local economy provides a range of employment opportunities catering to a diversity of interests and skill sets which meet the needs of the community. A local economy is diverse and includes a range of services and employment options. Electoral Area 'A' residents wish to strengthen and diversify the local economy and support economic development, which makes a positive contribution to the local economy without negatively affecting the environment or sacrificing rural integrity or local resident's quality of life. Preference is given to well-designed, pedestrian-oriented developments within appropriate areas designated by this plan.

Principle 9 Efficient and Cost Effective Services

The provision of community services such as parks and trails, water, sewer and transit are important in creating healthy livable communities. However, it is important to ensure that delivery of these services does not place an undue burden on plan area residents. Therefore, Electoral Area 'A' residents support the provision of a variety of community services in an efficient and cost effective manner.

3.3 Community Goals

A number of community goals were developed at a series of four community workshops and from responses to a number of workbooks submitted by the community.

The purpose of the community goals is to provide general direction on how the community would like to achieve its vision in a way which is consistent with the Sustainability Principles designated in Section 3.2 above. The community goals also form the basis for the objectives and policies contained in this plan.

Growth Management

1. Increase the diversity of locally produced agricultural products and the number of farms which operate using a system of sustainable agricultural.
2. Decrease the percentage of development that is located on lands outside of the GCB.
3. Increase the percentage of development that is located within well-defined areas on lands within the GCB.
4. Ensure that the demand for water does not exceed the sustainable supply.
5. Ensure that the community is provided an opportunity to be involved in decisions that affect them.
6. Ensure that all policies in the Official Community Plan are clear and understandable.

Community Well being

7. Protect the rural character of Electoral Area 'A' from the impacts of future development.
8. Increase community diversity.
9. Ensure that neighbourhoods have distinct identities and lively public spaces that promote social interaction.
10. Ensure that community services are geared towards all ages including active transportation, recreation, culture, sports, the arts, and education.

Environmental Integrity

11. Increase the amount of green development which makes efficient use of land, energy, and resources.
12. Ensure that biodiversity, groundwater resources, and natural habitat are preserved, protected, and enhanced.



13. Increase public awareness of environmental issues and the importance of environmental stewardship.
14. Ensure that the impacts of development on the natural environment are identified and minimized.
15. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Economic Health

16. Increase economic diversity.
17. Ensure that opportunities exist for economic development which creates opportunities for local employment, minimizes negative environmental impact, and does not detract from the quality of life enjoyed by area residents.
18. Ensure that infrastructure and community services are provided in an efficient manner.

Please note, at the beginning of each section of this plan, a reference is provided indicating which of the above community goals that section helps to achieve.

