

Draft



Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan

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1.0 Plan Overview

Vernon's Waterfront plays many roles in the community. Historically, it was a centre for the movement of goods and people to and from the Okanagan Valley. It has a role to provide environmental health of Okanagan Lake. The area contains several wetlands, sensitive habitats and Vernon Creek, which drain into the lake and impacts water quality. It plays a recreational role both for residents and visitors. The Waterfront is an amenity of immeasurable value to Vernon residents.



Today, with population growth in Vernon, there is an interest in the development of a neighbourhood centre along the Waterfront.

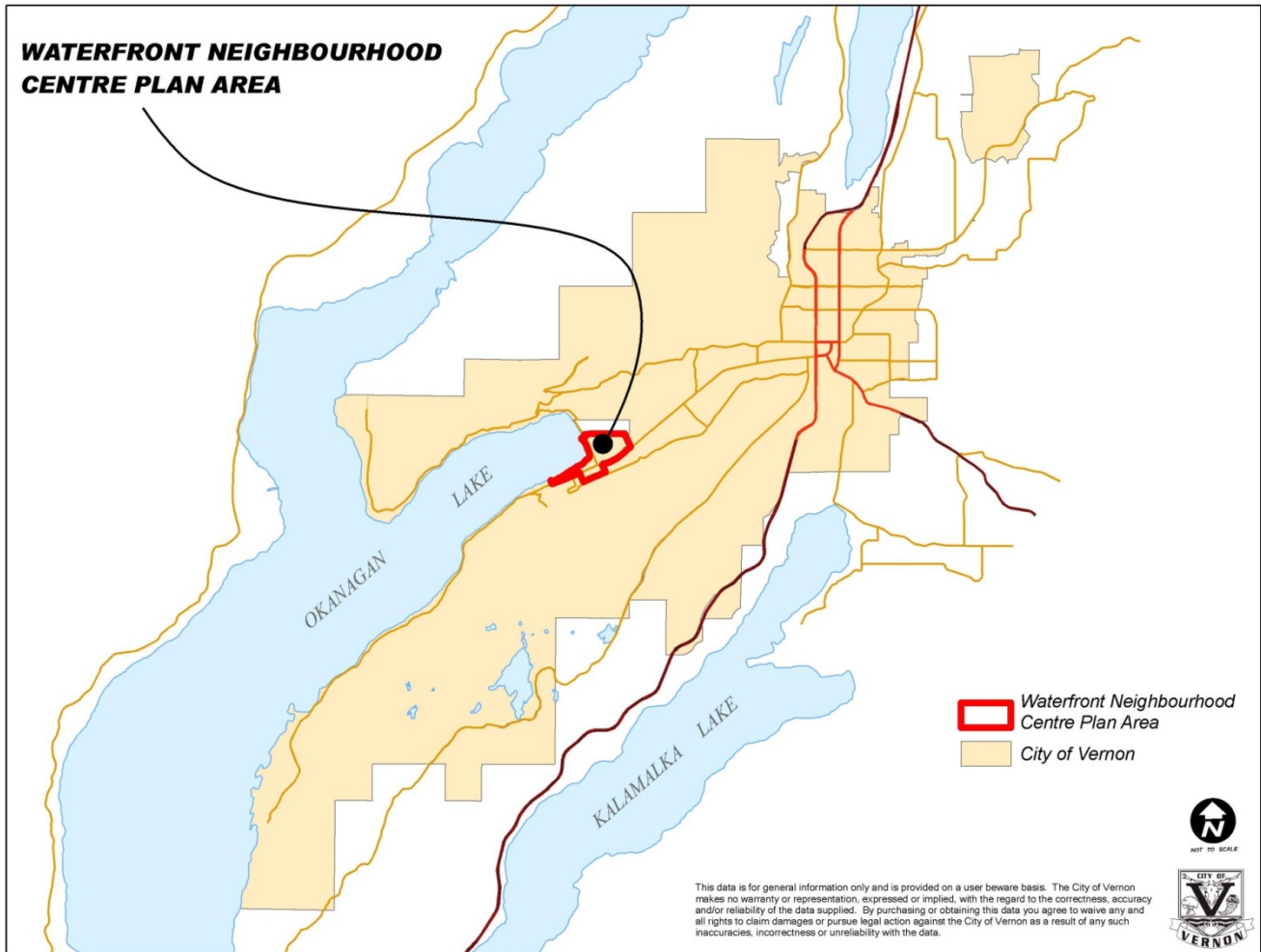
How this development will take place has been the subject of public debate for many years. There is a clear public interest in securing and maintaining access to Vernon's waterfront. Residents have raised concerns regarding the impact of development on nearby creeks and wetlands. Questions about the character of proposed development have also been raised.

There is an opportunity to plan for the Waterfront in a way that increases public enjoyment of the lake while creating a compact neighbourhood that meets the needs of Vernon residents. This plan proposes that the Waterfront develop as a "neighbourhood centre" as identified in Official Community Plan 2008. According to Section 7.0 of OCP 2008, neighbourhood centres are intended to be medium density, mixed use centres with commercial uses that are suitable to daily or weekly services, and are integrated with higher density residential development. By providing commercial uses closer to more residents, fewer people need to drive to get basic services and can instead walk, cycle or take transit. These neighbourhood centres act as hubs for alternative transportation, and therefore need to be easily accessed by public transit, have a high degree of cycling facilities and be pedestrian-oriented in design. They are intended to be highly integrated with their surrounding communities to promote easy access.

This plan provides a framework for future development of the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre. The primary features of this plan are:

- The creation of a mixed use core area, with commercial uses on the bottom floors and residential uses above;
- The design of streets for the pedestrian first, followed by bicycles, transit and automobiles;
- A mix of housing types, ranging from single detached homes to townhomes and apartment housing;
- The creation of a new lakeshore park;
- A pathway network along the lakeshore and throughout the neighbourhood centre;

- Protection and enhancement of wetlands;
- Identification and protection of sensitive habitats; and
- The creation of a community garden site.



Map 1

2.0 Neighbourhood Vision and Goals

2.1 Neighbourhood Vision

The vision for the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is guided by the community's interest in access to the lake and the creation of a vibrant, year round neighbourhood centre to serve both Vernon residents and visitors. The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is intended to be a place which:

- Caters to residents and visitors through a mix of compatible land uses that provide opportunities for living, commerce, community services, recreation and tourism;
- Provides a variety of housing opportunities;
- Is characterized by pedestrian-oriented shopping streets;
- Provides public access to Vernon's lakeshore;
- Provides opportunities for public interaction in a variety of locations, including parks and community facilities;
- Enables residents and visitors to walk, bicycle and take transit to their destinations;
- Is a safe place for children to walk or ride bicycles to and from school;
- Maintains the quality of the water in Okanagan Lake by enhancing local wetlands;
- Preserves sensitive habitat for threatened species; and
- Is integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods.



2.2 Goals

To achieve this vision, the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan has the following goals:

Increase Public Access to Okanagan Lake

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan increases the ways that the public can access and enjoy Okanagan Lake. The Plan recommends an increase in access points to a public lakeshore pathway and a new public park on the waterfront.

Create Enjoyable Public Spaces

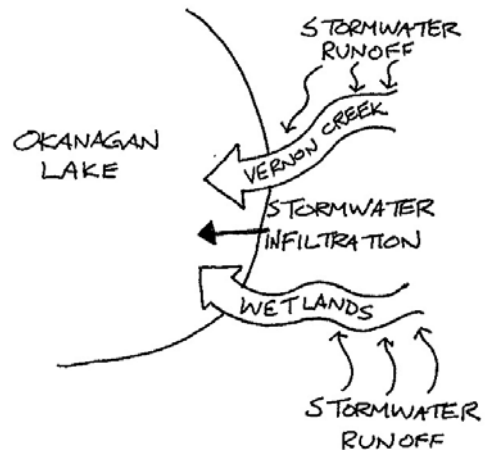
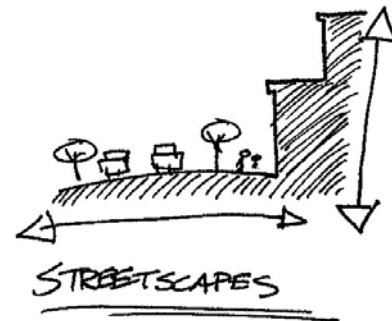
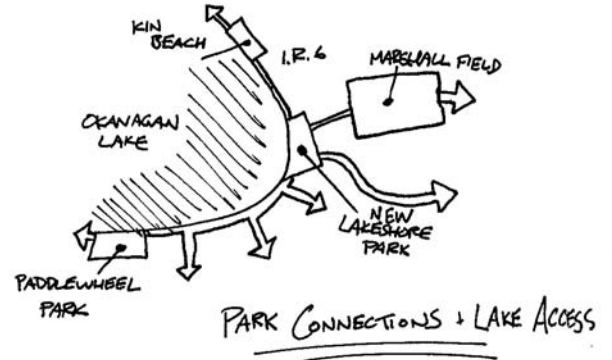
Development of Vernon's Waterfront represents an opportunity to create more public spaces that are enjoyable for residents and visitors alike. The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan proposes to create a new park as well as design guidelines for new development and attractive streetscapes to contribute positively to the creation of a place that people want to spend time.

Maintain and Enhance Ecosystem Services

This plan recognizes the need to maintain ecological processes and to maintain sensitive habitat for threatened species while protecting the integrity of the Vernon Creek. Existing wetland habitat along Okanagan Landing Road that leads to Okanagan Lake should be protected and enhanced as development proceeds. These ecosystems would also provide residents with the opportunity to learn more about the functions of Vernon's natural ecosystems in a public place.

Create a Complete Year-Round Neighbourhood for Locals and Tourists

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan proposes to create a complete neighbourhood that is active year-round and meets the needs of residents and tourists. To create a complete neighbourhood, a variety of housing is needed to meet the demand for a range of household and family types. Population density resulting from the increased housing options will help to support businesses in the neighbourhood centre year-round.



3.0 History

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is located within the Okanagan Landing neighbourhood, which is named for its historic role in passenger and goods transport. Prior to the construction of road networks throughout the Okanagan Valley, the Okanagan Landing was the site from which goods were shipped up and down Okanagan Lake. The Landing was the site for the terminus of a spur line through Vernon that connected to the Canadian Pacific Railway line. This allowed the shipment of goods from the Okanagan Valley to the rest of Canada and the world.



Photo courtesy of the Greater Vernon Museum and Archives.

Passenger service allowed people to travel from Vernon to other locations along Okanagan Lake. This service ended in 1936, with freight service ending in the 1960s. At this time, more residential development was taking place in the Landing and the population grew from 150 in 1947 to approximately 5,000 in 2000.¹ The Okanagan Landing was annexed into the City of Vernon in 1993. At the time of annexation, the area had evolved into a residential community, including a local school and volunteer fire department.



Photo courtesy of the Greater Vernon Museum and Archives.

On January 27, 2003, Vernon City Council adopted the Tourist Commercial Waterfront Plan. This plan proposed a mixed-use neighbourhood that acted primarily as a tourist destination. Subsequently, some tourist commercial development has taken place, but the build-out proposed by this plan has yet to be realized, with most of the properties vacant or waiting for development.

Since the adoption of the plan in 2003, there have been a number of proposed changes to the plan's policies, including alterations to the proposed road network and amendments to the land use designations. Due to the number of proposed changes, Council authorized staff to undertake a comprehensive plan update in 2006. However, this update was suspended to allow for the adoption of the new Official Community Plan in 2008 and for the design of the enhancement of the wetlands area, which would play a large role in the development of the updated neighbourhood plan.

¹ Historical information on Okanagan Landing courtesy of Ms. M. L. Jayne in a document entitled Okanagan Landing: A Very Brief History. Published by the Okanagan Landing and District Community Association.

On October 14, 2008, Council adopted Vernon's new Official Community Plan (OCP 2008). The OCP designated a network of neighbourhood centres which are envisioned as medium density, mixed use centres that offer commercial services to surrounding residents and act as hubs for public transportation and cycling infrastructure. This new designation required that the Tourist Commercial Waterfront Neighbourhood Plan be revisited to ensure that it is consistent with this neighbourhood centre designation and the Guiding Principles of OCP 2008.

A detailed design for the enhancement of the wetlands area was completed in 2009. With the completion of this design, work could begin on the update to the Tourist Commercial Waterfront Plan.

4.0 Context

4.1 Physical Context

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is unique in Vernon's otherwise semi-arid climate, due to the presence of saturated soils, creeks and wetlands. Over the land use history of Vernon, the neighbourhood centre lands have provided both agricultural land as well as important habitat for regionally significant species. As Vernon has grown and developed, the saturated soils which separate this area from the rest of the city have gradually been built up, filled in and drained to permit the development of recreation spaces, houses and roads.

This neighbourhood is located on soils with a high watertable. This land is at a low elevation, which places the majority of the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre at or below the high water mark of Okanagan Lake. Stormwater management to maintain the natural drainage pattern while directing water away from new development will need to be addressed to provide aesthetic, functional and easy to maintain solutions that fit the neighbourhood.

Vernon and BX Creeks drain into Okanagan Lake through the neighbourhood. Stormwater collected throughout Vernon is drained to the creeks and into the lakeshore.

The remaining wetland ecosystem on the northeast end of the neighbourhood plan area is uniquely valuable feature. The wetlands have ensured the steady input of clean, clear water to Okanagan Lake, attracted recreational and agricultural activity, provided habitat for kokanee, painted turtles, spadefoot toads, migratory and water birds, and will continue to provide this function as Vernon grows if urban development in the area is carefully managed. The wetland will only continue to increase the value and significance of these contributions as the neighbourhood develops.



4.2 Community Context

Okanagan Lake provides numerous recreational opportunities which not only serve Vernon residents, but also contribute to the city's tourism industry. The creeks and wetlands that flow into the lake capture most of the stormwater from the city, filtering it before it empties into the lake. Views of the lake contribute to Vernon's identity and the community's sense of place in the Okanagan Valley. Residents feel very strongly that development along the Waterfront should not compromise the role that it plays in the community.

As it develops, the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is intended to provide amenities and services to a number of growing neighbourhoods in the City of Vernon. It is within one kilometre of many proposed and approved residential developments including the Villages at Okanagan Landing (Hesperia Lands), Okanagan Crossing, the Oaks and a number of multi-family

developments further west along Okanagan Landing Road. The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is also the closest Neighbourhood Centre to communities in the Bella Vista West Neighbourhood Plan Area, and for residents along Eastside Road. The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is well-positioned to act as the commercial, social and recreational centre for these neighbourhoods.





5.0 Land Use Concept

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is envisioned to be a mixed-use neighbourhood that provides residents and visitors with opportunities to enjoy Vernon's waterfront. This neighbourhood centre would offer a range of shops, restaurants and services adjacent to a new park along the lakeshore. A variety of single family, townhouse and apartment developments are proposed, which would allow more residents to live close to these amenities, encouraging more of them to walk to and from their destinations. Much of this housing would be accommodated above the commercial uses, though ground-oriented options are also provided. Hotel accommodation in the neighbourhood would promote tourism in Vernon by allowing visitors to enjoy the amenities the Waterfront offers.

Opportunities for community interaction are to be provided through the inclusion of a new lakeshore park, a trail network and a community garden within the neighbourhood centre boundaries. The natural water features of the neighbourhood, Okanagan Lake, Vernon Creek and the wetlands would be conserved and retained as will sensitive habitat for threatened species. Trails, interpretative opportunities and natural recreation areas will be developed in conjunction with the improvement and enhancement of these areas.

The policies proposed for land use in this plan are designed to create pleasant streetscapes along Okanagan Landing Road, Lakeshore Road and Cummins Road. By requiring development to be oriented to the street, the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan can encourage the development of a neighbourhood that is enjoyable to explore on foot, visit year-round and is appealing to both residents and visitors. An example of such a streetscape is illustrated in Figure 1.

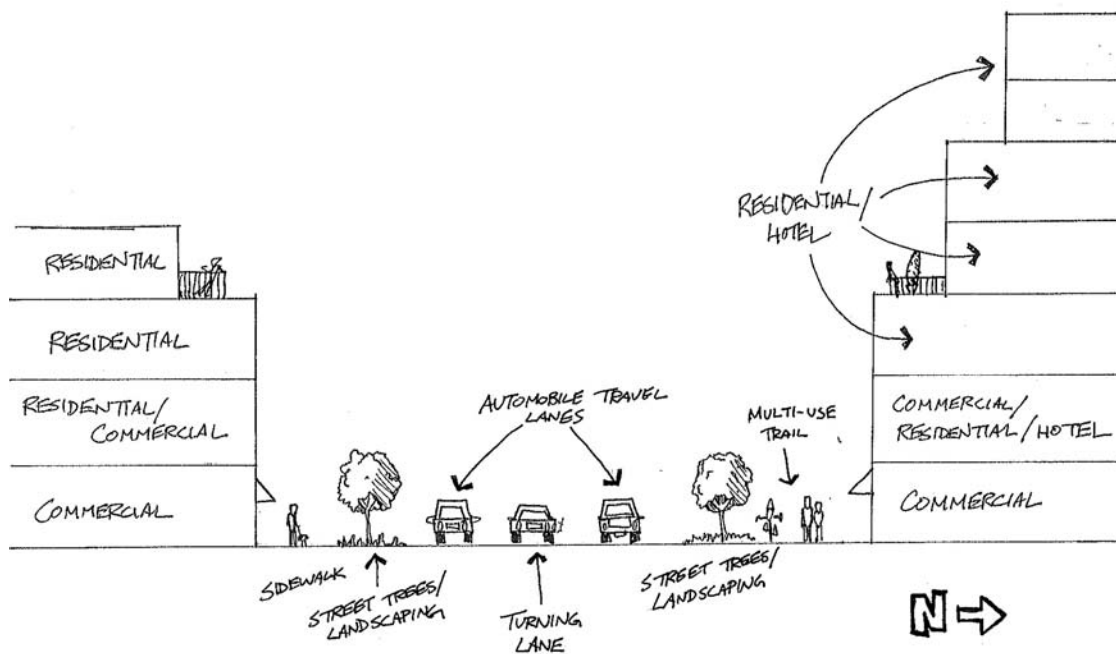


Figure 1: Streetscape Concept Example.



Map 3

5.1 Mixed Use Core

The Mixed Use Core would provide residents and visitors with a neighbourhood centre that offers a variety of shops, restaurants, services, housing, employment and accommodation opportunities. This core area of the neighbourhood centre would provide for all of these uses in a mixed, compact, walkable format, with commercial uses primarily at street level and residential uses above. See Figure 2.

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre would be compact to use land more efficiently, to provide a resident population to support local business and to increase the viability of services like public transit. Mixing residential uses with commercial services allows residents to walk or bicycle for their day-to-day needs. This designation provides these properties with an opportunity to develop a large supply of the residential opportunities in the Waterfront.

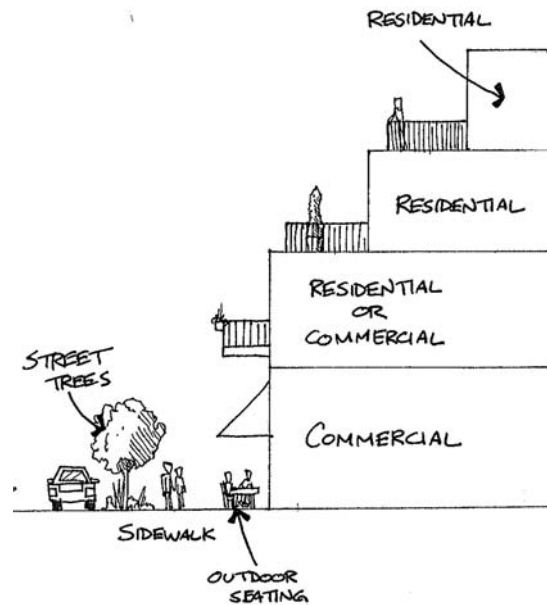


Figure 2: Mixed Use Building Diagram.

The properties identified for mixed use development are adjacent to two major roads, both of which have existing or proposed transit service. Cycling and recreational trails are in close proximity and would be within easy walking distance of commercial services.

The Mixed Use Core is divided into four areas that would each have their own distinct character and policies.

Area A

Area A is intended to have a pedestrian-oriented commercial street that offers shops, restaurants, cafes at street level, some commercial or residential uses on the second floor, and residential units above. Lakeshore Road would redevelop into a commercial street, providing residents and visitors with a pleasant walking experience. See Figures 3 and 4.

The uses supported at street level in this designation are small scale commercial uses intended to maximize the number of different business along the street, creating a more interesting walkable urban area. Office uses on the second floor would provide opportunities for local services at the neighbourhood level.

Maximum building heights are restricted to between two to ten storeys due to airport runway safety requirements. These restrictions ease towards the south end of Lakeshore Drive, where higher buildings would be permitted.



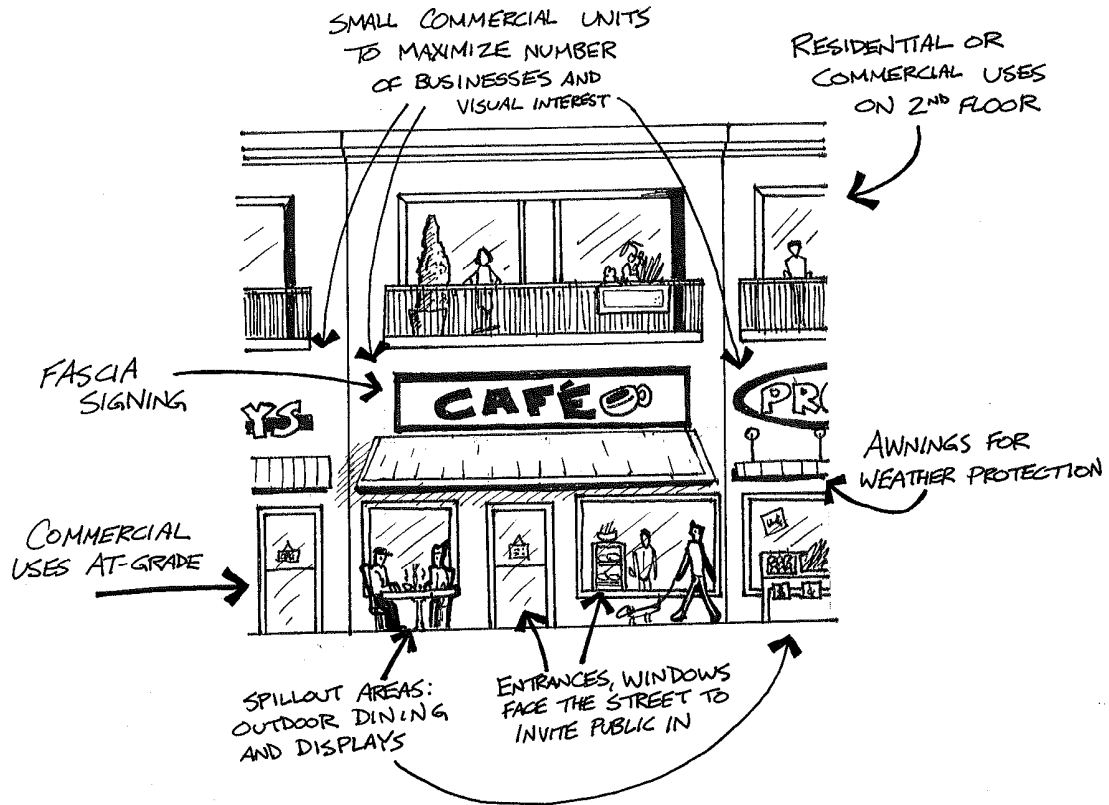


Figure 3: Building Façade Example.

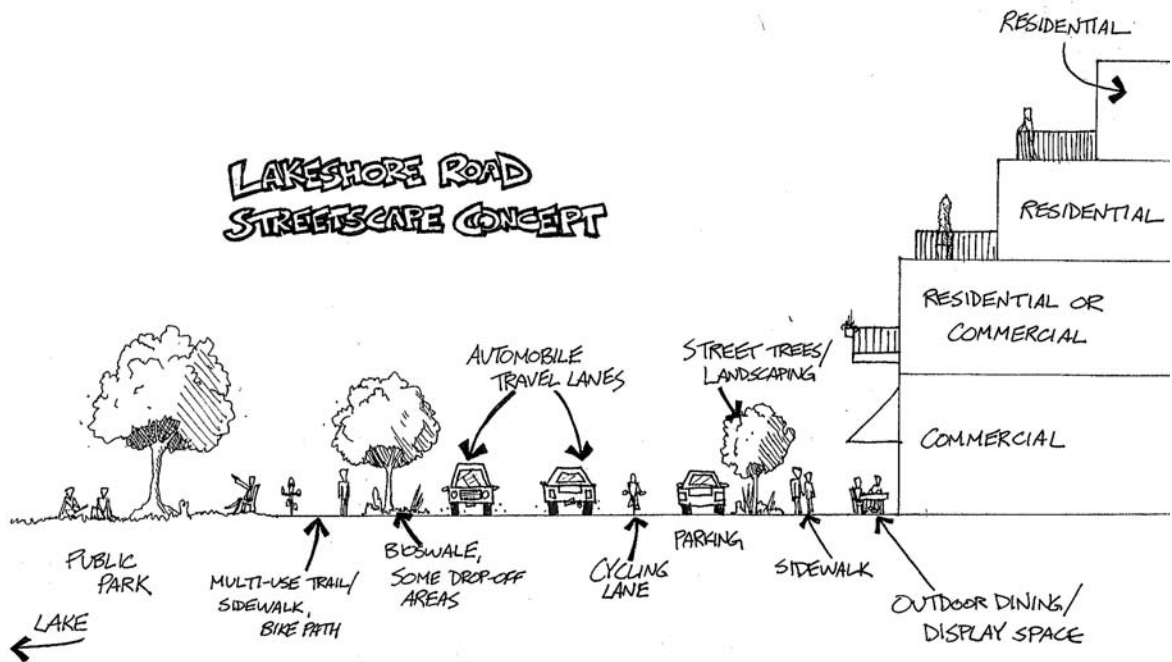


Figure 4: Conceptual Drawing of Lakeshore Road Streetscape.

Area B

Area B would develop as a mix of commercial, residential, hotel and convention uses that is oriented to Okanagan Landing and Lakeshore. Commercial uses will front the streets, transitioning to residential or hotel uses on higher floors. While hotel and convention uses are permitted, full-time residential units is included in this designation.

Due to the allowable heights permitted and the size of the properties, design guidelines will reduce the shadowing impact of development on neighbouring properties and on the wetland area.

Area C

Area C is intended to accommodate a variety of commercial uses that may not be well-suited in the small-scale commercial format offered along Lakeshore Road. Larger format commercial uses, such as a supermarket or a small shopping centre, for example, would be appropriate in this site. Such uses play an important role in the establishment of neighbourhood centres by providing commercial anchors that draw customers that may frequent other businesses in the area. As in Areas A and B, Area C allows for residential development above the ground floor.

Despite the allowance for a shopping centre, development should nonetheless be oriented towards the street with parking in the rear, as the residential development in the Neighbourhood Centre would greatly increase the number of residents able to access the site on foot. See Figure 5.

Area D

Area D is intended to develop into a mix of residential and commercial uses. Commercial services will be provided at street level, with office and residential uses on the second story, and residential uses above.

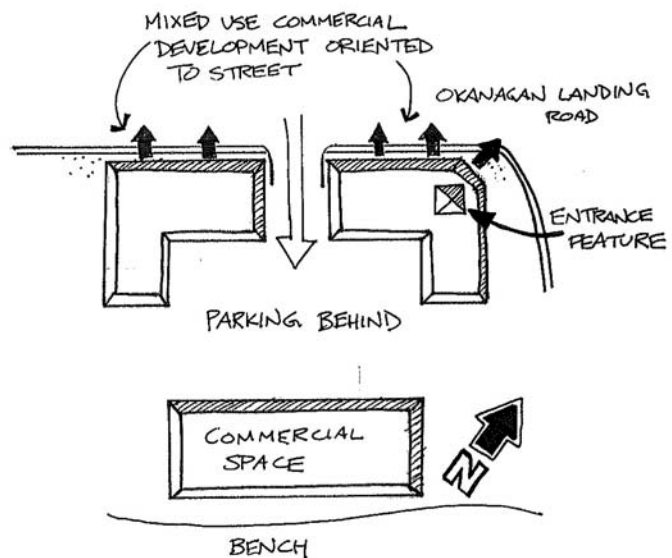
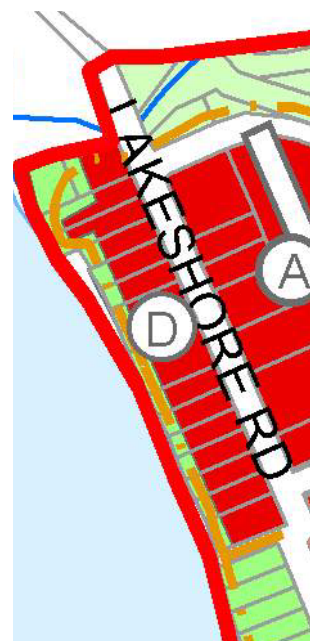


Figure 5: Area C Conceptual Layout.



Design guidelines for Area D will encourage the preservation of views of Okanagan Lake by gradually decreasing the size of higher storeys. See Figure 6.

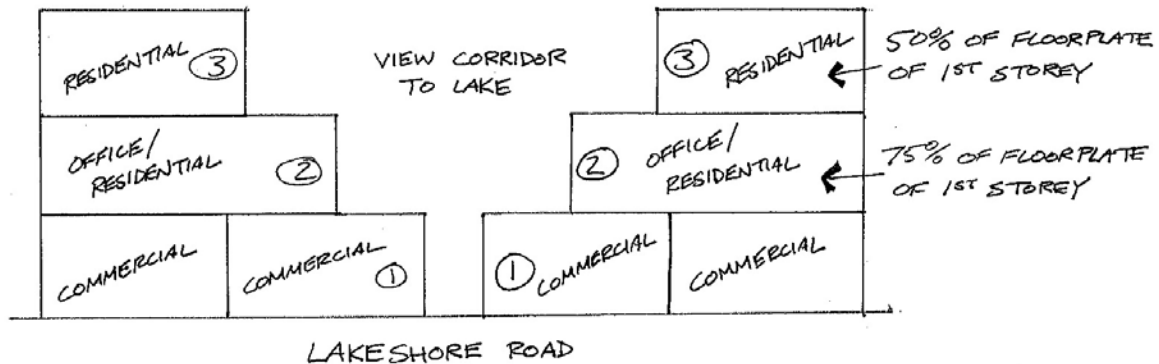


Figure 6: Area D Elevation Example.

Policies: All Mixed Use Core Areas

1. At rezoning, permitted uses will be amended to the following:

- Amusement arcades, minor
- Artist studios
- Cultural exhibits, private
- Food primary establishment
- Financial services
- Health services
- Liquor primary establishment, minor
- Personal services
- Retail stores, convenience/general/licensee
- Retail street services

Permitted uses, at grade or second floor

- Food primary establishment
- Health services
- Liquor primary establishment, minor
- Offices

Permitted uses, second floor or higher

- Apartment housing
- Special needs housing

2. All development will be required to obtain a Development Permit as outlined in Section 8.

3. On site-parking will be provided at the rear of properties or underground. This parking shall not front Okanagan Lake.

4. Proposals for reduced parking requirements for the residential component of a development will be supported if it can be demonstrated that higher transit usage, shared parking opportunities and other long-term incentives to reduce reliance on the single occupant vehicle are provided. This reduction shall not result in any less than 1 parking stall per unit.
5. Opportunities for a cash-in-lieu program for commercial off-site parking areas will be explored on a site-by-site basis. Off-site parking opportunities in the area will be explored.
6. Streetscape amenities are to be provided which include, but are not limited to, street trees and street lighting along Lakeshore Road, Okanagan Landing Road and connecting side streets.
7. Building façades must incorporate surface depth and relief in the design to create a visually interesting structure.
8. Towers must incorporate a podium portion of a building that faces the street, with the tower portion set back to reduce the visual impact of the building. Tower portions of buildings are to be small, narrow and sited on the podium to minimize the impact on views and shadowing. See Figure 7.

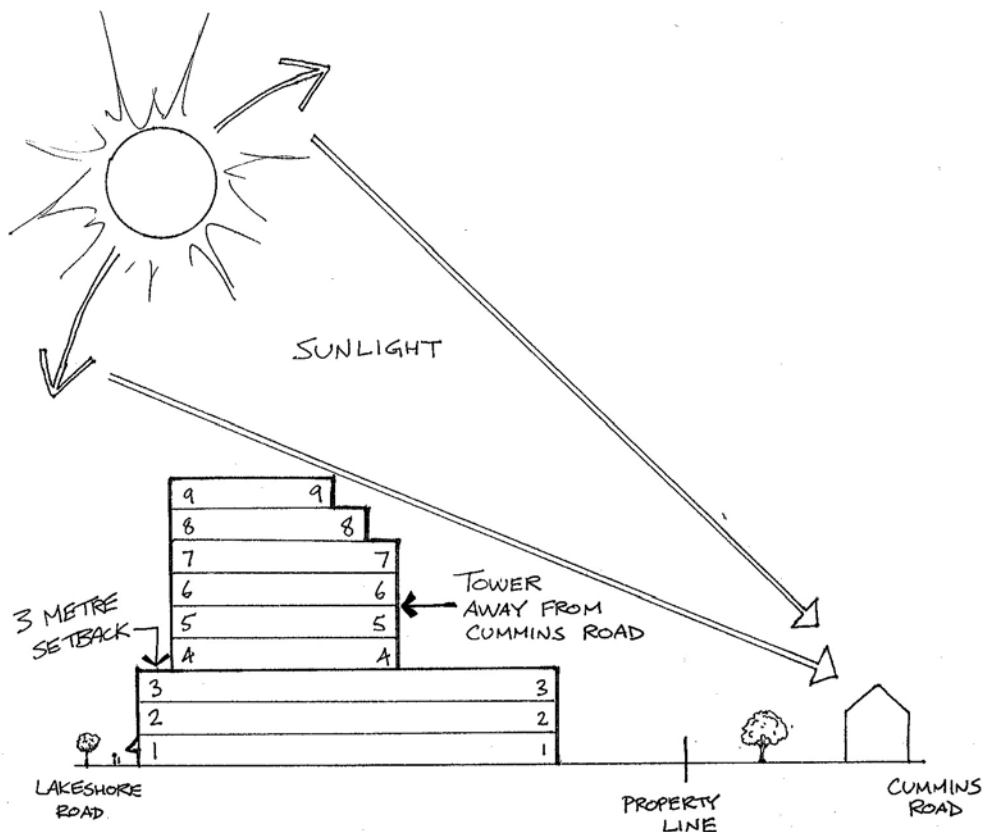


Figure 7: Tower Setbacks and Orientation

9. No single portion of a building over three storeys may have a floorplate greater than 650m². Minimum separation between these portions shall be 24m². See Figure 8.

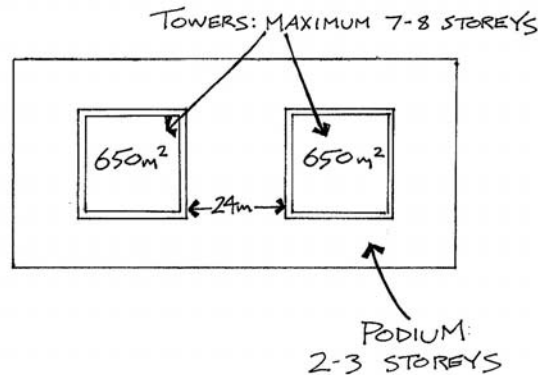


Figure 8: Maximum Tower Floorplate Sizes.

10. All rooftops, including podium and any tower tops, are encouraged to incorporate landscape amenities or green roofs in order to achieve aesthetic and environmental benefits.

5.1.1 Area A: Additional Policies

1. In addition to the uses in the Mixed-Use Core, the following uses are permitted in this Area as secondary uses:
 - Hotel
2. All development is to be oriented towards Lakeshore Road.
3. Entrances to commercial uses at-grade must be from Lakeshore Road.
4. Development will be subject to a build-to line from Lakeshore Road to contribute to consistency along the street.
5. All development is to provide a variation in the building façade and windows that front Lakeshore Road.
6. Maximum heights for buildings shall be in conformance with the Vernon Regional Airport Bylaw.
7. Commercial units will be narrow to maximize the number of businesses along Lakeshore Road.
8. Where development fronts Cummins Road and faces existing residential development, that portion of development must be residential and be oriented to the street. Each residential unit at grade must have front doors and windows facing Cummins Road to promote surveillance. This portion of the building is to adhere to a build-to line from Cummins Road.
9. Fascia signing is the only permitted signage in this designation.

5.1.2 Area B: Additional Policies

1. In addition to the uses in the Mixed-Use Core, the following uses are permitted in this Area as secondary uses:
 - Apartment housing, tourist
 - Exhibition and convention facilities
 - Hotel
2. Public waterfront access comprised of a 15m wide corridor from the natural boundary of the lake will be negotiated with the landowner upon application for rezoning. The purpose of this corridor is to allow for a public pathway along the lakeshore.
3. The design of any development must include a landmark feature or design at the intersection of Okanagan Landing Road and Lakeshore Road to act as an entry point for the community.
4. Construction of docks is subject to the requirements of the Private Moorage Policy as adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.
5. All properties in this designation are subject to a Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) assessment to determine the Streamland Protection and Enhancement Act (SPEA) setback from Okanagan Lake and other bodies of water.
6. Development shall be designed to maximize the amount of sunlight the Marshall Wetlands receives. See Figure 9.

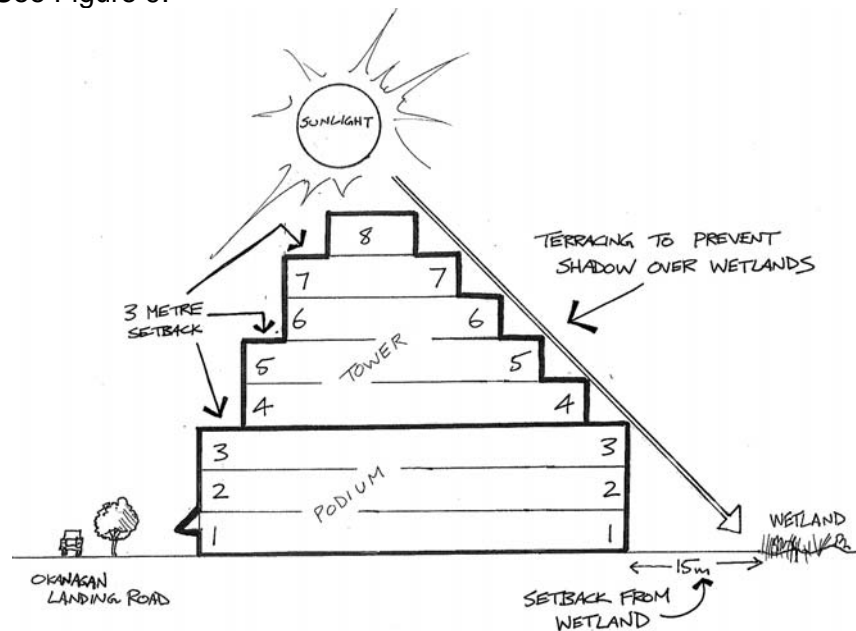


Figure 9: Shadow Impacts on Neighbouring Wetlands.

5.1.3 Area C: Additional Policies

1. In addition to the uses in the Mixed-Use Core, the following uses are permitted in this Area:
 - Shopping centre

2. The design of any development must illustrate pedestrian circulation routes that connect the surrounding properties to ensure ease of access to, from and through the property.
3. These properties are subject to the Hillside Development Guidelines.

5.1.4 Area D: Additional Policies

1. Public waterfront access comprised of a 15m wide corridor from the natural boundary of the lake will be negotiated with the landowner upon application for rezoning. The purpose of this corridor is to allow for a public pathway along the lakeshore.
2. Construction of docks is subject to the requirements of the Private Moorage Policy as adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.
3. All properties in this designation are subject to a Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) assessment to determine the Streamland Protection and Enhancement Act (SPEA) setback from Okanagan Lake and other bodies of water.

5.2 Tourist Commercial

Many of these properties are zoned as tourist commercial or are currently in the rezoning and/or development permit process. Some have seen recent development completed with tourist apartment housing. The remainder of these properties are anticipated to develop in a similar fashion.

Allowing for some tourist commercial uses in this part of the Neighbourhood Centre would provide a transition from the commercial uses in the Mixed Use Core to the residential uses to the west. The commercial uses permitted in this designation have been reduced to focus commercial opportunities in the Mixed Use Core.



Policies

1. At rezoning, the City will require that the owner register a Restrictive Covenant, limiting the use of the property to the following uses:
 - Apartment housing
 - Apartment housing, tourist
 - Artist studio
 - Cultural exhibits, private
 - Personal services
 - Retail stores, convenience
 - Row housing
 - Stacked row housing

2. Require all development on land in this designation to obtain a Development Permit as outlined in Section 8.
3. Public waterfront access through a 6m wide corridor from the natural boundary of the lake will be negotiated with the landowner upon application for rezoning. The purpose of this corridor is to allow for a public pathway along the lakeshore.
4. A 4m wide corridor from Brooks Lane to Okanagan Lake will be negotiated with the landowner upon application for rezoning. The purpose of this corridor is to allow for public access from Brooks Lane to the lakeshore public pathway.
5. Proposals for reduced parking requirements for the residential component of a development will be supported if it can be demonstrated that higher transit usage, shared parking opportunities and other long-term incentives to reduce reliance on the single occupant vehicle are provided. This reduction shall not result in any less than 1 parking stall per unit.
6. Where more than one building is proposed on a property, the development proposal must allow for a clear view from Brooks Lane, through the property, to the lake.
7. Streetscape amenities are to be provided which include, but are not limited to, street trees and street lighting along Lakeshore Road, Okanagan Landing Road and connecting side streets.
8. Construction of docks is subject to the requirements of the Private Moorage Policy as adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.
9. All properties in this designation are subject to a Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) assessment to determine the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Act (SPEA) setback from the Okanagan Lakeshore.

5.3 Medium Density Residential

The Medium Density Residential designation is intended to create a mix of row housing, stacked row housing and small apartment buildings in close proximity to the Mixed Use Core. Where fronting a street, these residential structures are to be oriented towards that street, providing a community friendly feel while keeping eyes on the street for neighbourhood safety.

This form of residential development would provide a transition between the Neighbourhood Plan area and the surrounding low density residential neighbourhoods, while contributing to the need for greater housing variety in Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre.

Policies

1. Require all development on land in this designation to obtain a Development Permit as outlined in Section 8.
2. Where a property fronts Okanagan Lake, public waterfront access comprised of a 6m wide corridor from the natural boundary of the lake will be negotiated with the landowner upon application for rezoning. The purpose of this corridor is to allow for a public pathway along the lakeshore.

3. Should the subject property fall within the “Lakeshore Access Area” indicated in Map 4, a 4m wide corridor from Okanagan Landing Road to Okanagan Lake may be required at rezoning. The purpose of this corridor is to allow for public access from Brooks Lane to the lakeshore public pathway.
4. On site-parking for lands in this designation be provided away from the street and Okanagan Lake.
5. Proposals for reduced parking requirements for the residential component of a development will be supported if it can be demonstrated that higher transit usage, shared parking opportunities and other long-term incentives to reduce reliance on the single occupant vehicle are provided. This reduction shall not result in any less than 1 parking stall per unit.
6. Where more than one building is proposed on a property, the development proposal must allow for a clear view from Okanagan Landing Road, through the property, to the lake.
7. Streetscape amenities are to be provided which include, but are not limited to, street trees and street lighting along Lakeshore Road, Okanagan Landing Road and connecting side streets. Where a property fronts Okanagan Landing Road, the provision of a 4 metre multi-use trail will be required.
8. Construction of docks is subject to the requirements of the Private Moorage Policy as adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.
9. Properties along Okanagan Landing Road are subject to a Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) assessment to determine the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Act (SPEA) setback from the Okanagan Lakeshore.

5.4 Low Density Residential

Providing a mix of housing in this neighbourhood would meet the needs of more residents. While the plan area is in close proximity to a large supply of single family homes, providing this type of housing within the plan area ensures that there is more variety in housing choice in close proximity to the services that the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre will offer. This designation maintains the low density residential designation that currently exists on these properties.

Policies

1. Residential development at street level will be oriented to Cummins Road, with front doors and windows all facing that street.
2. Streetscape amenities are to be provided which include, but are not limited to, street trees and street lighting along Cummins Road and connecting side streets.



5.5 Parks and Open Space

Two distinct parks spaces would characterize the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre: Marshall Field and a new park, tentatively referred to as the Lakeshore Neighbourhood Park. Both of these parks would be supplemented by a network of pathways and trails, including those that follow the lakeshore and wetland areas. Marshall Field would continue to provide facilities for organized sports and for large sporting events.

The Lakeshore Neighbourhood Park is envisioned as a centre for community interaction in the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre. The uses within the park would be designed to maximize the amount of activity that takes place in the park at different times of the day and throughout the year. These year-round uses aim to keep residents and tourists alike coming to the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre, making businesses more viable and the park itself a safer, more vibrant place to be. The Greater Vernon Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies the subject properties as valuable for waterfront park use and some of these properties are in Regional District ownership.

The creation of a neighbourhood park along the Waterfront would allow more local residents to enjoy the lakeshore. It would provide a large central area for residents to meet and socialize, hold special events or simply enjoy the views of the lake. This neighbourhood park would foster greater community interaction, promote health and well being and act as a hub for the network of trails going to and from the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre.

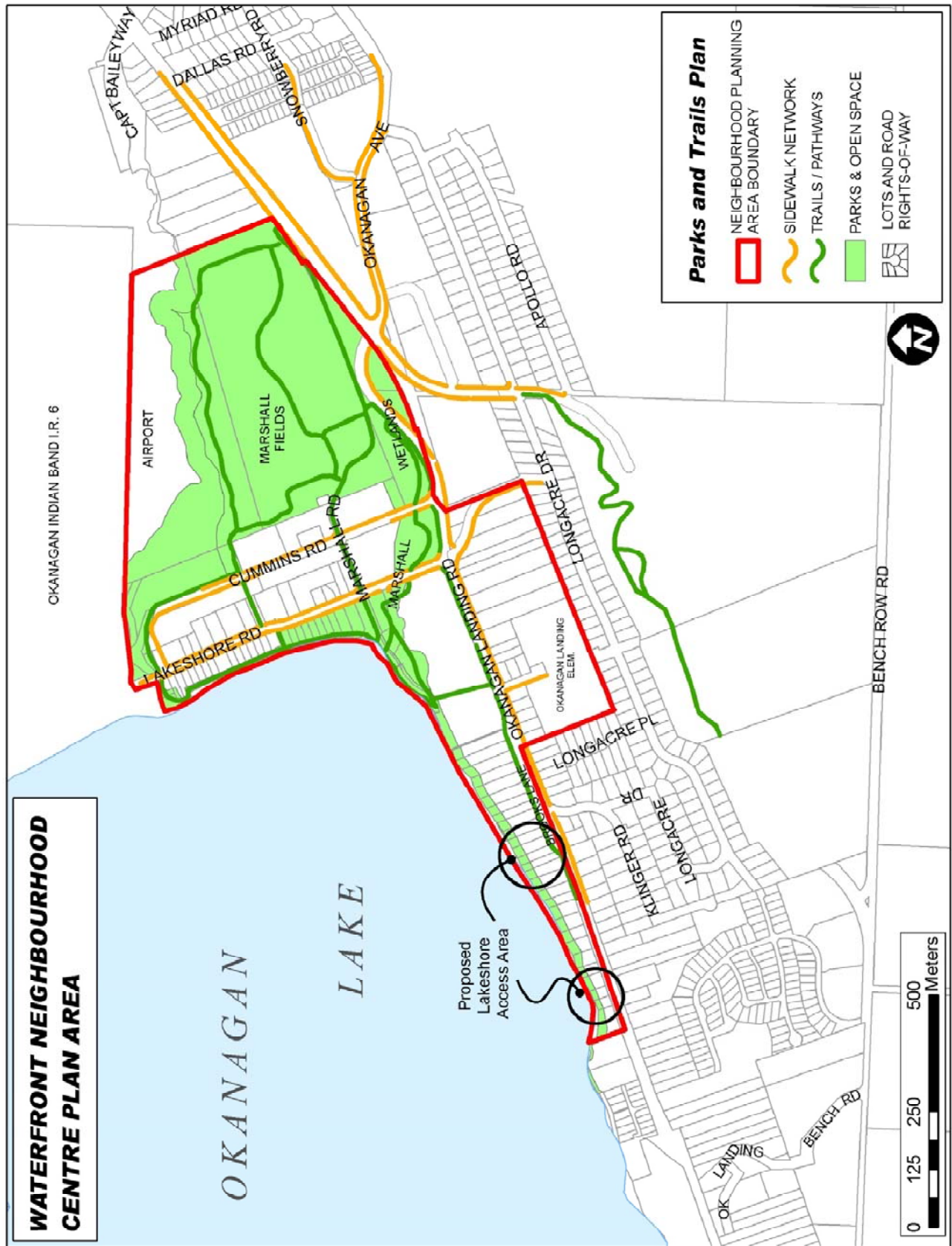
One of the goals of the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan is to increase access to Okanagan Lake and to connect parks both within the Plan Area and in the City. Policies in the Land Use Designation and Transportation Demand Management sections of this Plan speak to the creation of a public pathway along the lakeshore. The Marshall Wetlands would include a pathway from Okanagan Landing Road to the lake. Marshall Field provides a network of pathways, and Okanagan Landing Road would have a multi-use trail that connects the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre to Paddlewheel Park in the west and the City Centre in the east. See Map 4.

Increased access to the lake for non-motorized watercraft, such as canoes or kayaks, has also been identified as a desirable park amenity for Okanagan Lake. Access to Okanagan Lake for such a use would be accommodated within the Neighbourhood Centre.

A public pier or wharf would be a valuable amenity and should be explored.

Policies

1. All properties in this designation are subject to a Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) assessment to determine the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Act (SPEA) setback from the Okanagan Lakeshore and Marshall Wetland.
2. In partnership with the Regional District of North Okanagan, property owners, and the Ribbons of Green Trails Society, complete the trail and pathway network as indicated in Map 4.
3. Provide launch space for non-motorized watercraft.



Map 4

5.6 Habitat Protection

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is bounded on three sides by significant ecosystem features, Vernon Creek, Okanagan Lake and the wetland.

Each of these ecosystem features provide opportunities to conserve the existing ecosystem health of the north end of the lake and to use the ecosystem services they provide to ensure ongoing lake health, water quality for recreation and habitat for the rare and protected species.

Vernon Creek and the wetland drain Vernon and BX creeks. Both creeks receive stormwater throughout Vernon, and provide the surface sources of the headwaters of Okanagan Lake. The health and viability of these systems provide the first significant contributions of safe, clean, healthy water into the lake that defines the Okanagan. The protection, enhancement and support of these systems both within the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre, and throughout the rest of the city, determine the ongoing health and viability of our end of Okanagan Lake. Should the quality of the water and ecosystems in the lake be impacted, the appeal of this neighbourhood as well as one of the most significant features of Vernon will be lost.

The waterfront neighbourhood area has been gradually filled in for the development of neighbourhood space, playing fields and waterfront access. Vernon Creek and the wetland which borders the east boundary of the neighbourhood provide both surface water sources for the north end of the Vernon Arm of Okanagan Lake, and viable fish habitat for Kokanee and habitat for painted turtles, spadefoot toads, migratory birds and many other species.

These species are also found in the ponds which remain following the closure of the Lakers Golf Club. While these species are not considered to be economic species, each contributes to the health of area ecosystems and regional identity. The remaining ecosystem features in this area are the remnants of what has otherwise been a flood plain and wetland area. The remaining habitat areas are the last significant habitat areas for these species at the north end of Okanagan Lake and need to be conserved, enhanced and celebrated.

5.7 Marshall Wetlands

The wetlands which line the south side of Marshall Fields provide habitat for several protected and threatened species including spadefoot toads and painted turtles. These wetlands are among the few remaining, healthy wetland systems in Vernon. This rare ecosystem provides significant stormwater management capacity to the waterfront area and helps to protect the health of the north end of Okanagan Lake while maintaining sensitive habitat.

In 2008, the City undertook the creation of a detailed design for the wetlands which combined the need for ongoing stormwater management with the enhancement and conservation of the wetlands. The detailed design process involved the affected property owners, City technical staff and representatives from both the Ministry of Environment (MOE) and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). The detailed design process was completed in the spring of 2009, with agreement in principle from the senior levels of government, as well as preliminary direction and input on the required environmental permitting requirements necessary at the point of development.

The *Waterfront Development Stormwater Wetland Design (2009)* provides detailed engineering design for the enhancement and conservation of the wetlands through the area and provides stormwater capacity for the properties immediately surrounding the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre.

5.8 Community Garden

The provision of local food is becoming an increasingly important issue as energy prices continue to rise and food that must be transported long distances becomes more expensive. With this in mind, more and more people in Canada are turning to their own backyards and converting them into vegetable gardens as a source of fresh, local food.

OCP 2008 speaks directly to the need for community gardens in its agricultural policies, specifically in sections 12.14 and 12.15:

12.14: Support rural and urban agricultural practices within the city, including support for community and neighbourhood gardens and urban food production whenever possible, and encourage the development of a year-round, indoor farmers market.

12.15: Encourage new development to include contiguous space intended for food production and garden space for residents. Density bonusing may be considered for multiple family developments which allocated roof top garden space for residents. A covenant would be required to guarantee its ongoing maintenance and protect resident access to the facility.

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan proposes new townhouse and apartment development, and residents who live in these types of housing will not have access to a yard of their own to plant a garden. For these residents, a community garden would allow them to enjoy the benefits of gardening and local food without the need for a back yard. The proximity of the proposed community garden site to these residents would allow those residents to easily access the garden by walking.

The community garden could also act as a draw for other regular users of the area, such as parents who are taking their children to Marshall Field for sports. Many of these families may not have access to a back yard and would benefit from having a conveniently located community garden in an area to which they frequently travel.

Policies

1. Support the creation of a community garden on lands in this designation.
2. This property is subject to a Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) assessment to determine the Streamland Protection and Enhancement Act (SPEA) setback.
3. The uses proposed on this property must not negatively affect adjacent habitat.
4. Ensure that no fertilizer, pesticide or any other chemical that may have a negative impact on the adjacent habitat, are used in the community garden.

5.9 Public Institutional

Public Institutional facilities in the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre include the Okanagan Landing Elementary School, the Okanagan Landing Fire Hall, and the Marshall Road Pumpstation. The school, fire hall and the pumpstation are currently in use and would be retained as part of this plan.

6.0 Transportation Demand Management

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) creates opportunities to use transportation resources more efficiently to provide safe, reliable transportation options that meet the needs of the public. TDM policies can reduce reliance on increasingly expensive fossil fuels while also reducing the impacts of transportation on climate change and improving public health. TDM initiatives focus on transit, cycling and pedestrian investments to encourage residents to use a range of travel types. These policies are coupled with a reduction in parking and road space dedicated to single occupant vehicle use.

TDM forms a large component of the Official Community Plan 2008. One of the guiding principles of that Plan is to provide transportation alternatives for residents, particularly in the City Centre District and in the Neighbourhood Centres. The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is well-positioned to deliver transportation options to residents and visitors.

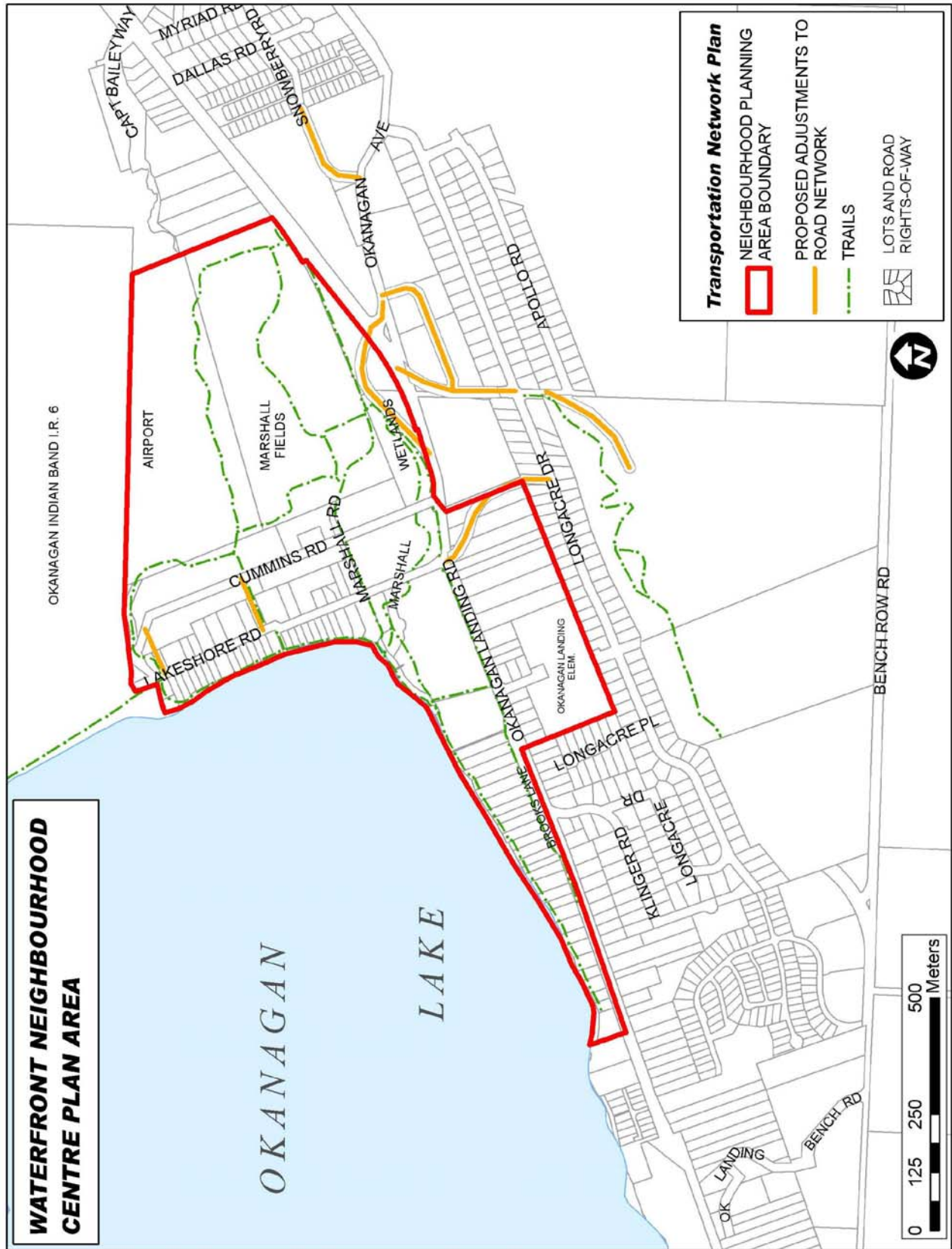
The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan proposes a network of multi-use and walking trails that connect the neighbourhood to other destinations in the city. The City Centre District would be accessible through the completion of a multi-use trail along Okanagan Landing Road and 25th Avenue that would provide off-street walking and cycling facilities. Transit service is proposed to be improved, as outlined in the 2008 Transportation Plan, through increased frequency and increase in hours of operation being proposed to make the service more attractive.

Parking is proposed to be provided on selected streets, such as an off-site parking area off of Cummins Road. Where possible, shared parking strategies would be employed to maximize the use of parking facilities.

Policies

1. Create user-friendly streets throughout the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre to support the vision for streetscapes, complete with emphasis on the pedestrian first, followed by bicycles, transit and the private automobile.
2. Re-align Okanagan Landing Road, at the intersection with Okanagan Avenue, to allow for the creation of the Eastside Connector as per the 2008 City of Vernon Transportation Plan. See Map 6.
3. Extend Lakeshore Road south of Okanagan Landing Road to connect to Longacre Drive. See Map 6.
4. Partner with BC Transit to increase service frequency and hours of operation of transit service to and from the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre as per the 2008 Transportation Plan.
5. Partner with BC Transit to implement express bus service from the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre to the Okanagan Landing Neighbourhood Centre, the City Centre District and the Polson Neighbourhood Centre as these neighbourhood centres develop as per the 2008 Transportation Plan.

6. Partner with BC Transit to explore a Park n' Ride and a Park n' Bike site in the area. This Park n' Ride could act as the transit hub for the Neighbourhood Centre. It should be easily accessed by pedestrians and include bicycle parking and storage.
7. Create a new road that connects Cummins Road to Lakeshore Road north of Marshall Road to ensure multiple access options between these two roads and to ensure pedestrian connectivity throughout the neighbourhood centre. See Map 6.
8. Realign the existing intersection of Cummins Road and Lakeshore Road as per the 2008 City of Vernon Transportation Plan. See Map 6.
9. Complete the multi-use trail along Okanagan Landing Road in coordination with development. See Map 6.
10. Install sidewalks along the south side of Okanagan Landing Road near Okanagan Landing Elementary School and up Grant Road in part to address safety concerns for students walking to and from the school.
11. Integrate trail systems to provide options for residents and visitors travelling to, from and within the plan area.
12. Encourage the use of shared parking facilities to meet the varied needs of visitors to the Waterfront while minimizing the land dedicated to parking.
13. Provide on-street parking in selected areas, with public off-street parking provided off Cummins Road.
14. Transportation investments should support the Okanagan Landing Elementary School Travel Planning Initiative.



Map 6

7.0 Infrastructure

Expansion of infrastructure will be required to accommodate the development proposed as part of the land use plan. Map 7 illustrates the utility servicing concept for the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan.

Vernon Creek and the wetland are significant features in the Vernon stormwater management system. Each receive stormwater from large areas of the city and through their natural functions, provide stormwater quality improvement and space for large volumes of rain and runoff water to be detained for slow, season long release into Okanagan Lake without the need for pipes, mechanical systems or expensive annual maintenance costs. This ecosystem service is invaluable and needs to be protected.

Stormwater from runoff in the waterfront neighbourhood occurs near the soil surface. This area is unique in its flat landscape, which sits near the high water mark of Okanagan Lake. Due to the high water table and continuous subsurface water connectivity, catchbasins and drainage pipes are not effective mechanisms for draining rain and flood water away from buildings and recreation spaces. As the area does not provide sufficient difference in land heights to provide enough gravity potential for drainage to be effective, other techniques would need to be implemented.

Surface stormwater management can be managed in several ways. Drainage of surface water to the wetland and land near Vernon Creek provide receiving areas for stormwater. Drainage to these features can be provided on the surface through the use of bioswales, landscaped buffers and riparian setback areas. Stormwater quality improvements runoff volume control may be provided through the existing ecosystems, including the additional volumes that the development of the immediate neighbourhood area will contribute to these systems. The use of bioswales along park spaces and those portions of the neighbourhood area which are identified for habitat conservation will also provide an aesthetic buffer between streets, commercial and residential areas and the natural features of the neighbourhood.

Policies

1. Infrastructure will be constructed as per Map 7.
2. Encourage water conservation in existing and new development.
3. Wherever site conditions will allow, on-site storm water management will be required. This includes stormwater retention along public streets.
4. Ensure that the pre-development drainage is maintained whenever possible.

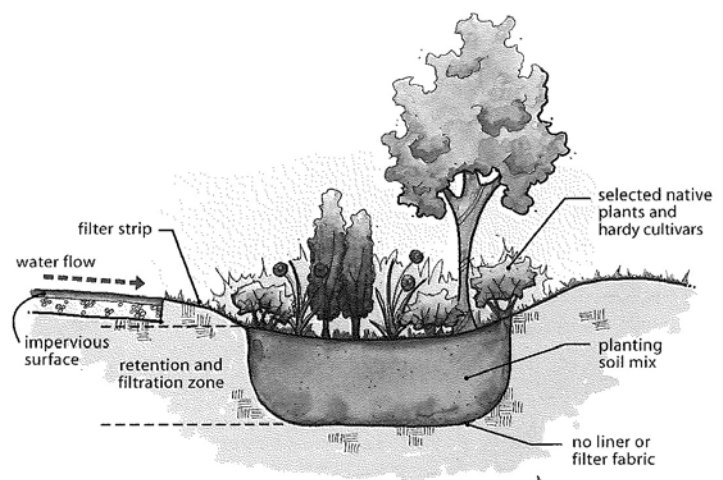
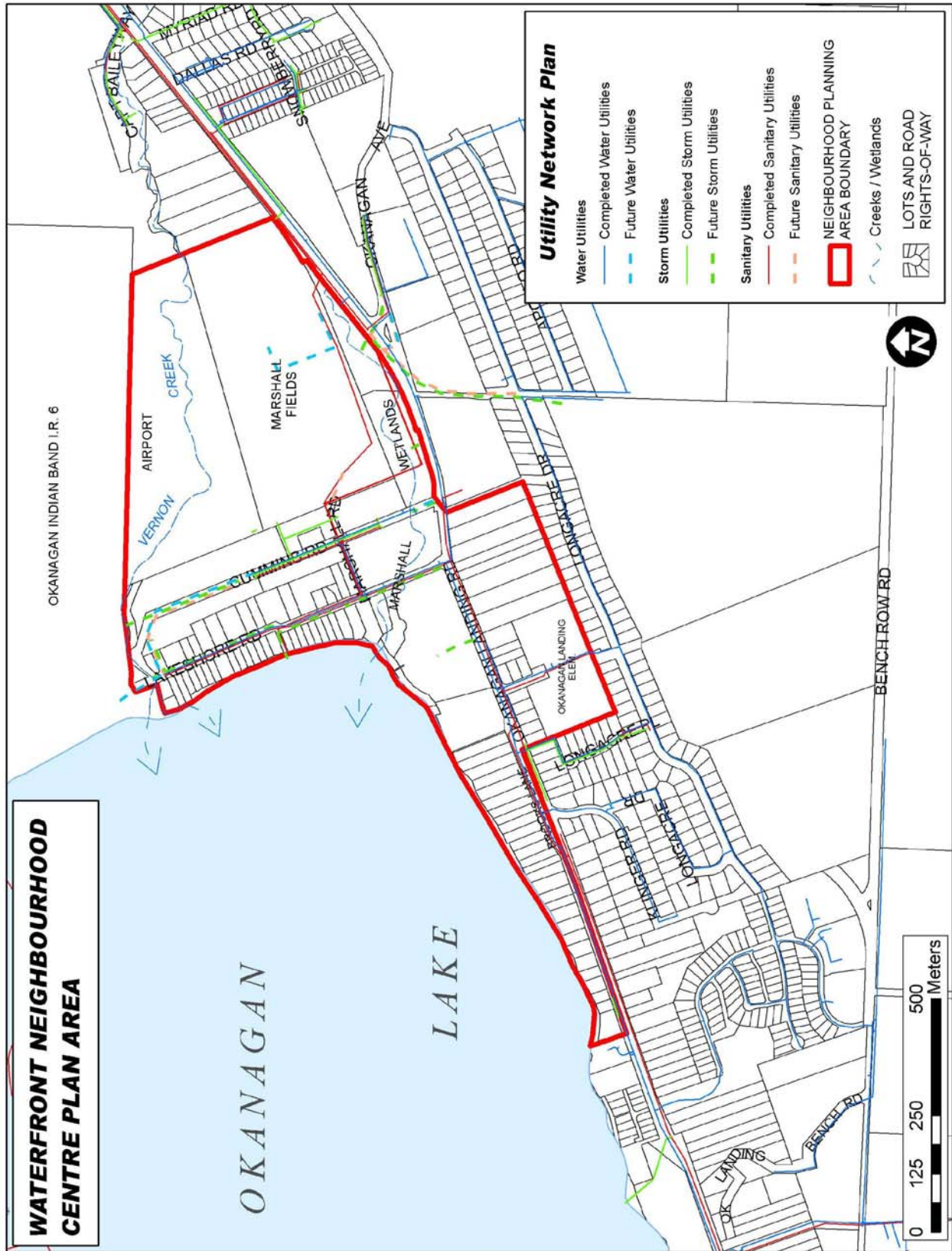


Figure 10: Cross-section of a basic bioretention cell.
Source: Puget Sound Action Team and the Washington State University, Pierce County Extension. Low Impact Development: Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound. 2005. p. 67.



8.0 Development Permit Guidelines

The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre is located in Development District 2: Neighbourhood District, which has Development Permit guidelines outlined in the Official Community Plan 2008. Development District 2 is comprised primarily by Vernon’s established neighbourhoods, such as East Hill, Mission Hill, Harwood, and portions of Okanagan Landing, South Vernon, and North Vernon. It also encompasses the Okanagan Landing Neighbourhood Centre, the Polson Neighbourhood Centre in addition to the Waterfront.

This composition means that most development taking place has a direct impact on existing adjacent neighbourhoods. Appropriate Development Permit guidelines aim to enhance the design of new development in the area without negatively impacting the character and uniqueness of existing neighbourhoods. This is accomplished through guidelines that enhance the form and character of development.

Detailed guidelines for Development District 2 all apply to the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre and can be found in Sections 23.0 and 25.0 of OCP 2008. The following regulations will also apply to development in the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan:

1. Proposed sites for new development shall be of a configuration that does not result in remainders of land that would be difficult to develop for the uses described in Section 5.
2. Where a Development Permit proposes a structure over three storeys or 10.5m, a building shadow analysis will be required showing the shadow created by the building in the morning, noon and evening in June and in December. The purpose of this shadow analysis is to determine how the form and massing of the proposed development impacts the access to sunlight of other properties in the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre.
3. Development Permit applications will require a context statement outlining how the proposed development will contribute to the vision of the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre Plan.
4. Properties that have the Mixed Use Core Designation will adhere to the following variances to the development regulations for the proposed zone:

Area	Maximum Height	Build-to Line	Other
A	Podium: 3 storeys/10.5m Total: 10 stories/36m subject to Vernon Airport Bylaw	1m off Lakeshore Road; 3m off Cummins Road where across from residential development	Maximum 7.5m frontage per business 0m side yard setback
B	Podium: 3 storeys/10.5m Total: 8 storeys/30m	2m off Okanagan Landing Road and Lakeshore Road	
C	Podium: 3 storeys/10.5m Total: 4 storeys/15m	2m off Okanagan Landing Road	
D	Total: 3 storeys/10.5m	1m off Lakeshore Road	Second storey has a maximum floorplate size of 75% of the first storey Third storey has a maximum floorplate of 50% of the first storey