

**2010 Watson Lake Official Community Plan  
Bylaw 10-11**

**VISION STATEMENT**

*"Watson Lake will be a progressive community with a vibrant, diversified economy - a regional centre that is a good place to live, work and visit".*

**1.0 COMMUNITY GOALS**

Watson Lake will:

- 1.1 Continue to be the regional service centre for the Alaska and Highway 37 corridors in southeast Yukon and northern British Columbia with a diversified economic base and appropriate infrastructure to support a sustainable population of 2-3,000 people.
- 1.2 Be known as a safe, environmentally and socially responsible community that promotes healthy lifestyle options - a good place to live, work and visit.
- 1.3 Strive to be a stable, attractive and well-managed community; a good land steward that supports orderly development and environmental protection.

**2.0 REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**2.1 Regional Economic Development Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 2.1.1 Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation and local business organizations to prepare a community economic strategy within 2 years that strengthens the role of the community as the primary regional service centre for government, forestry, tourism, big game outfitting, agricultural, mining and the emerging oil and gas industry.
- 2.1.2 Ensure sufficient land and municipal services are available and appropriate land development policies in place to accommodate the needs of a renewed forest and mining industry, the developing oil & gas sector and the changing needs of the tourism industry by reviewing and updating the community economic profile and ensuring current business development information is readily accessible to our business development partners.
- 2.1.3 Cooperate with the Government of Yukon and Liard First Nation to ensure a consistent, coordinated approach to economic development and regional planning in southeast Yukon and northern BC that maximizes local employment and regional service centre business opportunities through benefit impact agreements, land use

planning policy, industry consultation, and the identification and reduction of economic leakage.

## **2. 2 Regional Economic Development Policies**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 2.2.1 Consult with its economic development partners and the community at large, to build an economic development work plan that identifies partner responsibilities, action priorities and implementation funding requirements.
- 2.2.2 Assist the Government of Yukon and Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce to track regional economic development activity identifying emerging opportunities and constraints, local land supply and labour force needs, service gaps and possible synergies to strengthen the regional economy and the health and well being of communities and businesses between Lower Post and Upper Liard.
- 2.2.3 Study and pursue opportunities to improve the community's sustainability by exploring possibilities to reduce the reliance on diesel power generation, encouraging the local delivery of advanced education and employment training opportunities, monitoring the supply and availability of affordable land, and supporting the provision of a range of housing options consistent with local and regional needs.
- 2.2.4 Work with the Government of Yukon to remove barriers that result in economic leakage and assist the government to identify opportunities to keep the cost of living competitive.

## **2.3 Regional Industry Development Objectives**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 2.3.1 Promote the community as the regional gateway and service centre to the transportation, tourism, forestry, mining and emerging oil & gas industries by identifying and directing industry towards serviced and un-serviced land in appropriate locations within municipal boundaries.
- 2.3.2 Encourage the Government of Yukon to continue to demonstrate its support for the regional service centre "gateway" concept by continuing to decentralize and/or locate regional government services in Watson Lake thereby enhancing population and community economic stability.
- 2.3.3 Foster the sustainable development of the southeast Yukon forest industry by lobbying the Government of Yukon to establish a forest research capability in the community that promotes value added wood processing, forest husbandry and integrated resource management practices.

## 2.4 Regional Industry Development Policies

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 2.4.1 Work with the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce to prepare an appropriate four-season streetscape beautification plan for the community with priority attention given to the Alaska Highway and adjacent frontage roads.
- 2.4.2 Review its road hierarchy, trail and sidewalk network to assess the type and nature of improvements needed to accommodate increased regional activity in the transportation, mining, forestry and oil & gas sector to minimize the potential for conflicting demands for truck parking that have occurred in the past during periods of industry prosperity. Specifically the Town will work with the Government of Yukon to assess the nature of improvements required in the Alaska and Campbell Highway corridors and ensure such improvements complement parallel streetscape beautification efforts.
- 2.4.3 Identify and work with the Government of Yukon to protect public access to Watson and Wye lakes, the Liard River corridor, and other areas of the community that residents from time to time identify as having special aesthetic value and scenic quality of interest to resident and visitor alike.
- 2.4.4 Work with the business community, the Government of Yukon and others to ensure unattractive existing development and new industrial development is suitably screened within the Alaska and Campbell highway corridors.
- 2.4.5 Partner with the Kaska Forest Resources Stewardship Council or its successor and the Government of Yukon to examine the forest harvest options of lands within municipal boundaries with due regard to the potential of such areas for future land development and forest fire risk abatement. The establishment of forest harvesting areas will be based on sustainable forest management practices including the recognition of other aesthetic, recreation and wildlife values.
- 2.4.6 Identify opportunities for innovative partnerships; explore regulatory reforms and other incentives that foster a positive, stable, competitive and environmentally responsible business climate consistent with the community's sustainability goals.
- 2.4.7 Assist the tourism industry to attract multi-day stays and year round tourism by improving the aesthetic appearance of the community, especially along the Alaska Highway and Campbell Highway corridors; developing the community trail network; supporting the periodic revision of the regional tourism plan and incorporating tourism marketing and promotion into the annual community economic development work plan.
- 2.4.8 Identify and pursue those businesses to locate in Watson Lake that will enhance community sustainability by diversifying the economy, strengthening the employment

base and providing the range of goods and services that make the community a desirable place to live, work and visit.

## **2.5 Regional Transportation and Communication Development Objectives**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 2.5.1 Encourage the governments of Yukon and British Columbia to complete the upgrading and hard surfacing of the Stewart Cassiar and Campbell highways within 10 years to support regional development and Watson Lake's regional service centre role.
- 2.5.2 Lobby the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and Northwestel to extend broadcast transmitter and cell phone coverage boundaries around Watson Lake to facilitate the regional service centre function and meet business-to-business needs.
- 2.5.3 Work with industry and government to connect Watson Lake to the North American rail network by identifying and protecting possible future rail alignment(s) through the community including the location of a divisional service base within municipal boundaries.
- 2.5.4 Work with the business community and Government of Yukon to restore scheduled air service as soon as possible to make more effective use of the under-utilized existing airport infrastructure thereby reinforcing the regional service centre role.
- 2.5.5 Cooperate with the communities of Lower Post and Upper Liard to investigate the transportation and recreation potential of the Liard River while preserving public access to the river corridor to the greatest extent possible.
- 2.5.6 Identify a consistent, sustainable municipal infrastructure service standard by periodically reviewing the level of municipal services provided and evaluating opportunities to improve operational efficiency and service life.
- 2.5.7 Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation and private property owners to upgrade and extend municipal services throughout the developed portion of the community in an orderly and cost effective manner consistent with need and population growth.

## **2.6 Regional Transportation & Communications Policies**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 2.6.1 Include a systematic review of municipal infrastructure as part of each OCP review cycle and link required upgrades and recommended enhancements to the Capital Plan.
- 2.6.2 Require developers to enter into a Development Agreement to cover payment for any upgrade, extension and installation costs related to the connection of the new

development to municipal services and roads. The Development Agreement will outline service development standards, respective obligations for maintenance and repair and such other matters as the Parties deem appropriate.

- 2.6.3 Incorporate changes from the updated Airport Master Plan in the Zoning Bylaw in a timely manner. The airport land use plan should address lands surplus to airport needs, public access to Watson Lake, the associated float base needs of the air services industry and include a marketing strategy directed at promoting onsite economic development and resumption of year round air service.
- 2.6.4 Work with the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce and the aviation industry to encourage aviation related uses to locate directly on the airport or on lands surplus to airport needs but suited for the intended purpose.
- 2.6.5 Supports the extension of rail service from British Columbia to the community and will work with the Government of Yukon and rail access proponents to identify a suitable alignment through the community, as access to railhead will contribute to the community's long-term economic viability.
- 2.6.6 Work with the Government of Yukon to finalize a route and schedule the long-standing realignment of the Campbell Highway in the vicinity of the High School to improve safety and access to adjacent industrial properties.
- 2.6.7 Work with the Government of Yukon to identify alignments and preferred intersection locations for future resource roads within community boundaries.
- 2.6.8 Supports as a matter of policy future upgrades to the Campbell and Stewart Cassiar highways to facilitate regional economic development and lower transportation costs.

### **3.0 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1 General Community Development Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.1.1 Provide sufficient land in appropriate locations to support a range of land uses by ensuring development occurs in an orderly, efficient and cost effective manner that discourages sprawl and favours a compact urban form.
- 3.1.2 Encourage choices, where feasible, in living environments, business, employment, and community life by adopting prudent, sustainable community management practices, and pursuing those land use policies that enhance the quality and diversity of community life.
- 3.1.3 Work with other governments, the private sector and community residents to protect and strengthen public and private investment in the community by

identifying and pursuing those opportunities that enhance the community's stability, self-reliance and long-term sustainability.

### **3.2 General Development Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.2.1 Reserve and make sufficient land available that is technically suitable for development for a full range of land uses for the short, medium and long term planning horizons. Lands suitable for development and redevelopment are illustrated on the Future Land Use Map.
- 3.2.2 Initiate, facilitate and/or entertain subdivision, extension of municipal services or amendments to the Zoning Bylaw where the applicant can demonstrate that such actions are consistent with orderly development or redevelopment; respond to a demonstrated public need; and are not inconsistent with the goals of this plan.
- 3.2.3 Develop and adopt a land development policy that allows the private sector to undertake the extension of municipal services at their initiative and cost, where such service extensions are consistent with orderly development and built to the same standard as municipal services. The developer may be required to prepare an Area Development Scheme (ADS) and enter into a development agreement to ensure that the terms and conditions of the proposal requiring land subdivision, lot consolidation and/or rezoning are followed through.
- 3.2.4 Discourage the continuation of non-conforming land uses and not support spot rezoning or further disposition of crown land where sufficient vacant or under-utilized private land already exists for the intended use.

### **3.3 Health and Social Services Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.3.1 Foster a safer community by identifying and incorporating environmental design principles appropriate to the needs of the community.
- 3.3.2 Work towards improving the quality of community life by building partnerships with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation, Social Service agencies and the business community to address specific issues such as housing affordability, improved availability of health care services including the provision of facilities to accommodate the specialized needs of residents living with disabilities and an aging population.
- 3.3.3 Foster a healthy community by ensuring the availability of safe drinking water, the proper disposal of solid waste and sewage, the provision of safe roads, sidewalks and

trails and the development of parks, recreation facilities and programs that support healthy lifestyle options.

### **3.4 Health & Social Services Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.4.1 Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation, Social Service agencies and community organizations to ensure the range of health services available to the community are consistent with its regional service centre role.
- 3.4.2 Review and adopt appropriate land use regulations and best management practices for the protection and enhancement of the community's surface and groundwater resources.
- 3.4.3 Assess the practicality of relocating the municipal landfill taking into account the substantial remaining service life, the limitations of the present location on future adjacent land use and the associated fire risk. Uses that commonly create odour, noise, dust or other forms of emissions that constrain the use and enjoyment of adjacent properties will be encouraged to co-locate near the municipal sewage lagoons to the extent practical.
- 3.4.4 Review and assess the need for changes or improvements to the Zoning Bylaw to ensure appropriate buffers, setbacks and other environmental measures are incorporated into development standards to minimize the risk of pollution and resident discomfort due to air, noise, odour and similar concerns that from time to time may arise.
- 3.4.5 Work with the Government of Yukon and affected landowners to investigate ways to reduce and mitigate air quality issues arising from the impacts associated with woodsmoke emissions that are related to seasonal air inversions.

### **3.5 Community Protection Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.5.1 Review and update the community's emergency measures plan to identify and address risks associated with wildfires, the potential for surface and groundwater pollution from accidents, toxic spills and malfunctioning equipment, the loss of power and communication and such other events as may be anticipated to reasonably be foreseen.
- 3.5.2 Work with the Government of Yukon, Northwestel and Yukon Electric to identify infrastructure deficiencies and establish priorities for remedial action

- 3.5.3 Reduce wildfire risk by continuing to implement the community fire smart program and coordinating fire smart planning with future community land development and timber harvest initiatives that may occur within community boundaries.

### **3.6 Community Protection Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.6.1 Work with the *Government of Yukon and Liard First Nation* to investigate opportunities to expand, upgrade, and refine community protective service capabilities.
- 3.6.2 Educate residents on good fire risk management practices and continue to undertake fuel reduction measures working with the *Liard First Nation and Government of Yukon* to maintain the community firebreak. As a matter of policy, all new subdivisions will incorporate fire smart planning as part of the design and construction process with any necessary fuel reduction measures initiated prior to lot sale.

### **3.7 Heritage Protection Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.7.1 Work with the *Government of Yukon and Liard First Nation* to identify, inventory and evaluate community heritage conservation opportunities by identifying places, trails, buildings and events of historical and cultural significance within community boundaries.
- 3.7.2 Partner with property owners, governments and community organizations to conserve, protect and interpret the community's history by defining the municipality's role, responsibilities and capabilities to assist in the conservation and interpretation of community history through planning policy and zoning regulation.

### **3.8 Heritage Protection Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 3.8.1 Work with the *Government of Yukon and Liard First Nation* to catalogue and evaluate the significance of the community's heritage resources including making residents of Watson Lake and visitors to the community aware of the heritage resources present and the potential merits of conservation and interpretation.
- 3.8.2 Investigate the feasibility of amending the Zoning Bylaw or adopting a separate heritage preservation bylaw that sets out the procedures for municipal designation, review of demolition and/or renovation requests, and the inclusion of incentives to encourage private property owners to protect the relevant heritage values.

## **4.0 LAND USE**

### **4.1 Commercial Development Objectives**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 4.1.1 Focus and enhance local and tourist commercial development in the downtown core and existing development nodes along the Alaska Highway corridor by encouraging infill development and the extension of supporting utility infrastructure in an orderly manner.
- 4.1.2 Concentrate highway commercial uses along the Alaska Highway frontage roads and at the intersection of the Campbell Highway by giving priority to infill development before rezoning further land; increasing lot sizes to ensure sufficient parking is available; improving the Zoning Bylaw landscape provisions and ensuring municipal services can be extended to accommodate demand in an orderly manner.
- 4.1.3 Encourage as many offices, government, retail, and professional service activities to co-locate in the downtown core within walking distance of each other by updating the Zoning Bylaw to support mixed use buildings and such other incentives that will promote such uses. .
- 4.1.4 Resolve longstanding concerns related to downtown traffic and pedestrian circulation by reorganizing parking, reviewing Zoning Bylaw requirements and improving the appearance of these streets.

### **4.2 Commercial Development Policies**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 4.2.1 Review existing lot sizes and encourage lot consolidation to facilitate infill development before rezoning additional land for downtown and highway commercial development.
- 4.2.2 Modify the Zoning Bylaw to encourage multi-tenancy buildings including ground floor retail with residential or office development above the ground floor in the downtown core.
- 4.2.3 Update the Zoning Bylaw provisions for landscaping and parking to accommodate the needs of highway commercial landowners and the community's desire to improve the appearance of the Alaska and Campbell Highway corridors through the community.
- 4.2.4 Support a compact urban form by encouraging retail, office, government service, tourism and personal service enterprises to locate in the Downtown Core.

- 4.2.5 Prepare an Downtown Streetscape Circulation and Beautification Plan that addresses seasonal traffic congestion, parking and safe circulation, to improve the convenience and attractiveness of the Downtown Core for residents and tourists alike.

### **4.3 Residential Development Objectives**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 4.3.1 Provide a range of lot sizes in different settings that accommodates resident lifestyle differences and the needs of a growing population.
- 4.3.2 Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation, private sector and local housing association to encourage the provision of affordable, adaptive and energy efficient housing options in a timely manner that meets the community's changing demographics.
- 4.3.3. Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation and private sector to maintain a healthy, stable real estate market by maintaining an inventory of serviced and un-serviced residential lots sufficient for 5 years of growth.

### **4.4 Residential Development Policies**

The Town of Watson Lake will:

- 4.4.1 Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation, Yukon Housing Corporation and the business community to monitor the condition and availability of affordable building lots and housing types within the community.
- 4.4.2 Zone and support a residential land supply sufficient for 5 years of projected growth. Infill development and replacement of substandard housing will be encouraged with higher density and mixed commercial/residential development centrally located near the downtown core and community facilities.
- 4.4.3 Identify those areas most suitable for development and utilize the recommendations in the 2006 Infrastructure Condition Assessment to determine future development priorities, service area capacities, and sewer and water service extension possibilities.
- 4.4.4 Work with the Government of Yukon to investigate if there is any potential groundwater and/or lake contamination arising from existing development and surface runoff in the Belleview, Wye lakes and Watson Lake shoreline subdivisions.
- 4.4.5 Provide guidance to the Government of Yukon on the timing, appropriate zoning and development restrictions that should be applied prior to the disposal and potential

re-use of surplus airport lands identified as suitable for country residential development.

#### **4.5. Industrial Development Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 4.5.1 Ensure industrial land is available within municipal boundaries for 5 years growth by regularly reviewing the location, amount and type of industrial land available to accommodate a mix of industries and their specific land requirements.
- 4.5.2 Support industrial development in appropriate locations by defining the types of uses to be located in industrial areas, ensuring the level of infrastructure service available is consistent with their needs and encouraging poorly located uses to relocate to more suitable sites.
- 4.5.3 Work with industry to ensure industrial uses are sited in locations with due consideration to the impacts of their activities on adjacent land uses by establishing such land use regulations as are necessary to limit impacts associated with traffic, noise, vibration, odour, and related emissions.

#### **4.6 Industrial Development Policies.**

Watson Lake will:

- 4.6.1 Establish a mix of land use zones to meet local industry needs with lots sized accordingly, in locations appropriate to the type of use.
- 4.6.2 Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation and the private sector to ensure a 5-year supply of affordable, serviced and partly serviced lots are available to accommodate industrial expansion and new business establishment.
- 4.6.3 Identify and work with property owners whose businesses are no longer appropriately situated in residential and commercial zones to move to more suitable industrial zones. Where relocation is not an option, the municipality will adopt such regulations as are necessary to minimize the impacts of such businesses on the health, safety, use and enjoyment of adjacent property owners.
- 4.6.4 Require as a minimum operating standard, that industries adopt the "best practices" standards of their respective industries for health and safety, emissions reduction and recycling of wastes associated with the nature of their operations.
- 4.6.5 Review the Zoning Bylaw regulations for industrial land use to ensure the parking, landscaping, screening and storage provisions adequately address community health, safety, aesthetic and environmental concerns.

#### **4.7 Community, Recreational, and Institutional Development Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 4.7.1 Work with the *Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation* and community organizations to provide a range of social, educational and recreational opportunities for residents consistent with the community's size, resources, cultural diversity, and health and wellness priorities.
- 4.7.2 Ensure adequate land is reserved for educational, recreational and institutional uses by identifying and reserving appropriately located, accessible sites within the community for these purposes.
- 4.7.3 Encourage the *Government of Yukon* to consolidate government services in the downtown in recognition of the community's regional service centre function.
- 4.7.4 Work with its community partners to identify the supporting links between the *Official Community Plan* and the *Integrated Community Sustainability Plan* to foster seamless integration of the recreation, social, cultural, environmental and capital infrastructure development needs of the community.

#### **4.8 Community, Recreational, and Institutional Development Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 4.8.1 Work with the *Government of Yukon* to upgrade its physical presence in the community by encouraging the consolidation of government services to the extent practical in the downtown core and to relocate departments to Watson Lake.
- 4.8.2 Review the *Zoning Bylaw* to ensure bylaw provisions encourage universal accessibility to public buildings and spaces for residents and visitors alike.
- 4.8.3 Work with the *Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation* and community organizations to encourage co-location, joint and multiple use of community facilities to encourage efficiency of operation and economies of scale consistent with the size and capabilities of the community.

#### **4.9 Parks, Open Space, and Environmental Protection Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 4.9.1 Provide residents and visitors of all ages with a range of year round, accessible outdoor spaces suitable for passive and active recreation by developing a public open space system linked to all parts of the community.

- 4.9.2 Work with community residents, the Government of Yukon and Liard First Nation to identify, inventory and protect lands within the community that are: environmentally sensitive to disturbance such as wetlands and steep slopes; aesthetically important for their scenic value; contain important seasonal or year round wildlife, bird and fish habitat; provide flood and enhanced groundwater protection; or support a range of year round outdoor pursuits.
- 4.9.3 Enhance the quality of public open space by preparing a comprehensive public open space plan that balances and integrates requirements for wildland fire management, surface runoff and groundwater protection, seasonal recreation use and protection of environmentally sensitive lands into a parks and recreation system that meets the needs of current and future residents.

#### **4.10 Parks, Open Space & Environmental Protection Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 4.10.1 Develop and adopt land use planning strategies and regulations that reflect and demonstrate community values and priorities for environmental stewardship, waste recycling and social interaction.
- 4.10.2 Create a Parks & Recreation Master Plan including a section on trails, open space management, public access and four-season recreation use. The plan will include guidelines for the resolution of land use conflicts, direction on open space planning within future subdivisions and strategies to link and coordinate open space management policy with strategies for wild land fire management, groundwater aquifer protection, wildlife habitat preservation and the management of environmentally sensitive lands.
- 4.10.3 Set aside and retain in the public domain a minimum of 10% of the land in new residential subdivisions for parks and community playgrounds.
- 4.10.4 Apply as a general rule a minimum property line environmental setback of 30.4m for developments proposed along lakes, and watercourses or around ponds and wetlands within municipal boundaries. Council will consider individual requests for variations of this policy in exceptional circumstances where the nature of the use proposed or specific site conditions merit consideration of a waiver.
- 4.10.5 Review and update the sign control provisions of the Zoning Bylaw to improve the quality, aesthetic appearance and placement of community information, traffic and business signage throughout the community.
- 4.10.6 Work with adjacent property owners and the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce to identify and pursue streetscape beautification opportunities appropriate to all four seasons.

- 4.10.7 Work with the Government of Yukon and adjacent property owner to prepare and implement a comprehensive master plan for the Sign Post Forest, including the adjacent Visitor Reception Centre and the link to the Northern Lights Centre in recognition of their strategic tourism value.
- 4.10.8 In conjunction with Liard First Nation and the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce, identify and preserve potential points of interest, viewpoints and related interpretive site opportunities within community boundaries.

## **5.0 INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **5.1 Transportation - Roads, Sidewalks & Trail Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.1.1 Complete an assessment of the existing road, sidewalk and trail network by September 2012 to confirm operational capacity, serviceability and life cycle refurbishment priorities.
- 5.1.2 Establish a convenient, safe and integrated network of roads, trails and sidewalks to meet current and future resident needs by establishing a hierarchy of standards for construction and maintenance and ensuring the network provides convenient, direct options for residents to get around the community on foot, vehicle and by other forms of seasonal transportation.
- 5.1.3 Establish sufficient, convenient parking for residents, tourists and businesses by reviewing and updating the parking standards in the Zoning Bylaw, examining current on street parking practices and evaluating the effectiveness of directional and information signage.
- 5.1.4 Evaluate the need for improvements to the Alaska Highway service roads by assessing options to improve the safety, parking and circulation especially in the downtown and integrate any recommended changes with plans for related streetscape beautification.
- 5.1.5 Work with the Government of Yukon to review the Alaska and Campbell Highway corridors to improve intersection safety, examine the need for more defined pedestrian crossings, and the feasibility realigning the Campbell Highway by the High School.

### **5.2 Transportation - Roads, Sidewalks & Trails Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.2.1 Review the existing road hierarchy and classification system to reflect current design, construction, and maintenance standards.

- 5.2.2 Adopt BST as the minimum roadway surface standard for all new subdivision development and identify road resurfacing priorities consistent with traffic volumes, maintenance history and road priority.
- 5.2.3 Work with the Government of Yukon to inventory and review the number, condition and placement of traffic, information and advertising signage within community boundaries.
- 5.2.4 Review the need for sidewalks and trails to connect all parts of the community and provide options for residents and visitors to access public facilities and recreational areas in a safe, convenient basis year-round.
- 5.2.5 Identify and protect future road alignments and identify priorities for land acquisition to improve alignments, ditches and additions of sidewalks or bike lanes as appropriate.
- 5.2.6 Prepare a plan for safer and more efficient traffic movement and parking in the Downtown by defining more clearly lanes for vehicle movement, improving sidewalks for pedestrian movement, and designating appropriate locations for parking of itinerant and, oversized vehicles including highway trucks, and by reviewing the Zoning Bylaw requirements for on-site parking and loading zones.

### **5.3 Transportation - Air Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.3.1 Encourage the Government of Yukon to invest in airport improvements and rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure to support the airports essential role as a gateway to southeast Yukon, air tourism, forest fire tanker base and weather alternative to Whitehorse for jet traffic.
- 5.3.2 Ensure the sustainability and viability of airport lands by adopting appropriate zoning and land use development controls to preserve its long-term operational integrity.
- 5.3.3 Encourage aviation related uses to locate at the airport and work with the Government of Yukon to finalize an updated airport master plan that considers the needs of the local aviation community and the necessity of restoring scheduled airline service consistent with Watson Lake's function as a regional service centre and to attract economic diversification.

#### **5.4 Transportation - Air Policy**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.4.1 Update the Zoning Bylaw as required to reflect the updated Airport Land Use Plan.
- 5.4.2 Work with the Government of Yukon to determine appropriate land uses for lands deemed surplus to airport needs.
- 5.4.3 Support refurbishment of airside and groundside infrastructure including the restoration and re-use of heritage buildings for aviation related purposes.
- 5.4.4 Work with the Government of Yukon to review current development restrictions to identify innovative strategies, appropriate incentives and actions that can be taken to attract new aviation related business to the community and facilitate the renewal of scheduled air service to Whitehorse and southern locations.

#### **5.5 Transportation - Water Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.5.1 Work with Liard First Nation to identify and secure public recreational access to local lakes within municipal boundaries and the adjacent Liard River by identifying suitable access points, parks and trails for use by residents and visitors alike.

#### **5.6 Transportation - Water Policy**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.6.1 Investigate the feasibility of providing a good access road to the Liard River from the town site to a point at which rafting and riverboat expeditions can be launched and reserve sufficient land for the development of a riverside park or picnic grounds.
- 5.6.2 Work with the Government of Yukon to include a public swimming beach on Watson Lake at the airport on lands surplus to airport needs.

#### **5.7 Water Supply and Distribution Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.7.1 Provide a safe and secure water supply to the serviced area and expand the serviced area to allow for future growth as required.

## **5.8 Water Supply and Distribution Policy**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.8.1 Commission a review of the existing municipal water supply and distribution system to determine adequacy to support existing and future growth, service area extensions, refurbishment and replacement priorities, and appropriate groundwater quality protection requirements.

## **2.5 Sanitary Sewage Collection and Disposal Objective**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.9.1 Provide a safe and reliable communal system for sewage collection and treatment within the serviced area of the community by commissioning a review of the existing municipal sewage collection and disposal system to ascertain adequacy to support existing and future growth, service area extensions, refurbishment and replacement priorities.

## **5.9 Sanitary Sewage Collection and Disposal Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.9.1 Work with the authorities having jurisdiction to ensure private property owners take appropriate measures to install, and maintain their systems in good working order.
- 5.9.2 Work with the Government of Yukon and Liard First Nation to ensure compliance with Environmental Health standards for the protection of groundwater and lakeshore in both the Belleview and Watson Lake shoreline subdivisions.
- 5.9.3 Establish a minimum lot size for country residential and un-serviced commercial or industrial development based upon adequate soil testing for groundwater depth, adequate soil percolation rates, and professional design of the septic tank and tile field system.

## **5.10 Stormwater Drainage Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.10.1 Develop a safe, reliable storm management routing system by diverting stormwater from the sewage disposal system, encouraging onsite infiltration where feasible and implementing such environmental measures as are technically appropriate to control sedimentation and the discharge of pollutants into surface waters.

### **5.11 Stormwater Management Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.11.1 Complete an engineering review of current stormwater management problem areas and ditch management procedures to determine options and priorities for improvement by the end of 2012.
- 5.11.2 Develop a stormwater management strategy to reduce run-off and encourage natural infiltration where possible, trap sedimentation and prevent surface water contamination.

### **5.12 Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Objective**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.12.1 Operate and maintain in conjunction with the Government of Yukon a safe, efficient regional domestic and commercial collection and disposal service by identifying an appropriate location to meet long-term needs, encouraging recycling and waste diversion where appropriate.

### **5.13 Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.13.1 Work with the Government of Yukon and Liard First Nation to investigate the practicality of relocating the landfill.
- 5.13.2 Identify an appropriate future use for the existing landfill after relocation and reclamation that is compatible with adjacent land use, if relocation is feasible.

### **5.14 Electric Power and Heating Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.14.1 Work with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation and industry to develop a long-term, sustainable supply of affordable energy to meet the needs of residents and industry by examining short and long-term supply options including the utilization of waste heat, cogeneration, natural gas and hydro development, wind, solar and ground heat to remove the community's dependence on diesel generation.
- 5.14.2 Support energy conservation in association with government, industry and community groups, by adopting best practices for energy management in public buildings, and promoting resident and business awareness of energy conservation opportunities

## **5.15 Electric Power and Heating Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 5.15.1 Continue to explore with the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation, industry and the business community the full range of options to reduce the community's dependence on diesel generation.
- 5.15.2 Investigate options to reduce wood smoke pollution in those areas of the community most susceptible to air inversions.
- 5.15.3 Support waste heat utilization and similar measures as an interim step until it is economically feasible to phase out the community's reliance on diesel generation.

## **6.0 ADMINISTRATION**

### **6.1 Bylaw Enforcement Objectives**

Watson Lake will:

- 6.1.1 Foster public understanding and support for the goals, policies and development regulations contained in the OCP and Zoning Bylaw by making information on the land use rules and development regulations accessible, easy to understand, and follow.
- 6.1.2 Establish a simple, transparent and equitable enforcement procedure by examining options for a graduated enforcement, penalty and appeal process that provides incentives for timely and consistent compliance.

### **6.2 Bylaw Enforcement Policies**

Watson Lake will:

- 6.2.1 Adopt a bylaw enforcement procedure that sets out the steps and timelines to be taken by the Development Officer to enforce the provisions of the OCP and Zoning Bylaw.
- 6.2.2 Require the Development Officer to issue a Stop Work order whenever a development is commenced without first obtaining the appropriate municipal Development Permit for the work proposed.

### **6.3 Future Land Use Map Interpretation**

- 6.3.1 The Future Land Use Map shows the community as a whole with the boundaries of inset map areas. The four inset areas are shown on a second map labelled Future Land Use - Details at an enlarged scale for greater reader clarity.

- 6.3.2 The overlay zones shown on the Future Land Use Map are for information purposes only to illustrate planning intent with the exception of the Federal Government Aeronautics Act Zoning Restrictions (OIC 1984-3970) which take precedence over the OCP and Zoning Bylaw.
- 6.3.3 References to features such as possible future road locations, a rail corridor and suggested management prescriptions (e.g. need for fire smart activities, opportunities for selective logging, boundaries of possible area development schemes etc) are intended to illustrate policy interests and opportunities that merit consideration in more detailed planning. No specific timing is implied.
- 6.3.4 The future development intent is shown in the underlying colour in the Future Development Holding Zone Overlay. The overlay shows where these areas are, their relative size and approximate boundaries. Councils intent is to ensure these lands are developed in an orderly, comprehensive manner as required. No amendment to the OCP is required prior to development unless the proposed development is inconsistent with the underlying intended land use category.
- 6.3.5 Liard First Nation Interim Protected lands are shown as an overlay pending settlement of their land claim. The boundaries, size, configuration and intended land use of these parcels may change during finalization of that land claim agreement. In the interim the Laws of General Application apply.

## **7.0 IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN**

The Town of Watson Lake will undertake to do the following:

1. Review and adopt this Official Community Plan and update the Zoning Bylaw as required by the end of 2012.
2. Engage the Government of Yukon, Liard First Nation, Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce and the public in regular reviews of this plan to ensure a coordinated, sustained effort is made to implement the policies and priorities on a bi-annual basis.
3. Incorporate the findings of the 2006 Infrastructure Condition Assessment Report into the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and Capital Plans.
4. Prepare and maintain at appropriate scales, utility record plans and town site base plans. Review and update all forms and make them available online to facilitate public access and dissemination. Ensure the OCP, Zoning Bylaw and any subsequent planning documents are available on-line in a downloadable form.
5. Link the timing for future review and updating of the Official Community Plan with the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan and Capital Plan processes to ensure seamless integration of priorities and coordinated action steps.

6. Engage in regular, joint meeting with the Liard First Nation in accordance Liard First Nation/Town of Watson Lake Socio-economic co-operation Accord of March 17, 2004, to coordinate community planning, economic development and capital plan implementation to achieve cost and service efficiencies.