



# **THE CHASE RIVER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**Consolidated Version**

# Executive Summary

---

## **Purpose**

This Neighbourhood Plan is intended to be a working document that will assist area residents; the development community, City Staff and Council make thoughtful decisions about land use within the prescribed area. The Plan was prepared with a "horizon" of twenty-five to thirty years, during which time it is expected that the majority of vacant land within the Neighbourhood planning area will be developed.

## **Background**

When the Official Community Plan (OCP) for Nanaimo was completed in July 1996, it was acknowledged by the Plan Nanaimo Steering Committee, Council and City Staff that more detailed Neighbourhood Plans would need to be developed. Where the OCP is general in nature, Neighbourhood Plans could address issues unique to each Neighbourhood.

In 1997, members of the Chase River Community sought and gained Council's support to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan. As a requirement of Council, a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee was formed from a cross-section of area residents, to oversee the development of the Plan.

## **Methodology**

The Chase River Neighbourhood Steering Committee sought the input of area residents through a series of surveys, workshops, open houses, "kitchen table" meetings, and presentations to elementary and high school students.

Collected information and resident opinions, were assessed by the Steering Committee based on common planning practices, the goals and specific objectives of the City's Official Community Plan, and the shared wants and needs of area residents. Draft policies were subsequently formulated and tested with area residents.

The final document was reviewed with Council, Committee's of Council, City Staff and external agencies such as the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and the Ministry of Environment. Council ultimately adopted the Neighbourhood Plan in May 1999.

## **Key Issues and Recommendations**

### **■ Long-term Vision for the Community**

If there is one common vision of area residents it is to retain the "rural character" of Chase River, while welcoming new people and businesses to their Neighbourhood by focusing higher density development to the "Town Centre". The large residential lots and farms that exist in the area in part create the "rural character" of Chase River. As well, the three creeks run through Chase River to the estuary, providing habitat for wildlife and enjoyment for residents add significantly to the "rural" atmosphere.

### **■ Building a Complete and Viable Neighbourhood**

In acknowledging the need to accommodate their equitable share of the City's growth over the next thirty years, area residents are committed to the idea of focusing growth to a "Town Centre". The "Town Centre" will build on the established commercial node at the intersection of Tenth Street and Lawlor Road. The Town Centre has been designed to accommodate approximately 2500 new residential units, and 100 000-sq. ft. of new commercial floor space.

### **■ Protecting the Environment**

Chase River has an abundance of environmentally sensitive habitat. The Neighbourhood Plan attempts to balance the demands of growth with the protection of these features. Towards that end the Plan includes policies promoting:

cluster development; density bonusing for environmentally sensitive development; the acquisition of such land for Park; and the development of a "greenway" along the area's most significant waterway.

#### ■ ***Managing Urban Growth***

Given the strong desire of area residents to maintain the "rural" atmosphere of their Neighbourhood, the Plan clearly states that alterations to the current Urban Containment Boundary are not be supported.

#### ■ ***Improved Mobility and Servicing Efficiency***

The most significant contribution the Neighbourhood Plan makes to improving mobility and servicing efficiency is directing growth to the Neighbourhood's Town Centre. The Plan further support this objective by promoting the delivery of basic commercial services within Neighbourhood (see Local Service Centres), and by supporting the development of alternative mobility options through the expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian network.

#### ■ ***Ongoing Neighbourhood Involvement***

To ensure the ongoing management of the Neighbourhood Plan involves significant input from area residents, policies were adopted requiring residents' involvement in all amendment applications. In addition, public input is required as part of pre-development discussion as part of proposed Rezoning.

### **Companion Documents**

Council adopted the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan on April 26<sup>th</sup> 1999. After the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Chase River Steering Committee developed general Design Guidelines, which were adopted by Council on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2000.

# Table of Contents

<b>1. The Planning Process</b>	<b>3</b>
A. What is a Neighbourhood Plan?	3
B. How did the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan come to be?	3
C. How does the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan relate to Nanaimo's Official Community Plan?	3
D. What does a Neighbourhood Plan mean for Chase River?	3
E. Implementing the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan	4
F. Can the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan be amended? How?	4
<b>2. Community Identity</b>	<b>5</b>
A. Community History	5
B. Vision Statement	5
<b>3. Building Complete And Viable Neighbourhoods</b>	<b>7</b>
A. Town Centre	7
B. Local Service Centres	10
C. Neighbourhoods	11
D. Industrial	12
E. Rural Resource	12
F. Services	13
G. Trails, Parks & Recreation Opportunities	13
H. Natural Environment	13
I. Heritage	15
J. Gateway	16
K. Neighbourhood Benefits	16
<b>4. Ongoing Neighbourhood Involvement And Planning</b>	<b>18</b>
A. Ongoing Neighbourhood Involvement	18
B. Ongoing Planning	18
<b>5. Schedules</b>	<b>19</b>
A. Future Land Use and Mobility (Planning Area)	
B. Sandstone Master Plan	
C. Potential Trails and Recreation Opportunities	20
D. Development Permit Areas, Environmentally Sensitive areas and Natural Hazard Areas	
E. Potential Greenways	
F. Historic Sites and Buildings	
<b>6. Appendices</b>	<b>21</b>
A. Historic Chase River Names	22
B. Gateway	23

# 1. The Planning Process

---

## A. What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a set of guidelines, which outlines how an area will change and grow over time. A Neighbourhood Plan typically deals with such issues as land use, traffic and services (e.g., storm water, sewer and water).

## B. How did the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan come to be?

When the Official Community Plan (OCP) for Nanaimo was completed in July 1996, it was acknowledged by the Plan Nanaimo Steering Committee, Council and City Staff that more detailed Neighbourhood Plans would need to be developed. Where the OCP is general in nature, Neighbourhood Plans can address issues unique to each neighbourhood.

In 1997, members of the Chase River Community sought and gained Council's support to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan. The Chase River Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee was formed from a broad cross-section of area residents to oversee the development of this plan.

In the months that it took to prepare the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan, the Steering Committee sought the input of area residents on how they would like to see their community accommodate growth over the next twenty-five to thirty years. The results of surveys, workshops and other meetings were compiled and are the basis for the policies contained within this Plan.

## C. How does the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan relate to Nanaimo's Official Community Plan?

Neighbourhood Plans must build on the foundation laid by the Official Community Plan (OCP) as such, some sections of this plan simply refer to the corresponding sections of the OCP. The Chase River Neighbourhood Plan is the guiding document for all land use decisions in Chase River. Where the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan is silent on a particular issue, the City's Official Community Plan will be consulted for direction. Where a conflict exists between the Official Community Plan and the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan, designations and/or policies of the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan take precedence.

## D. What Does a Neighbourhood Plan Mean for Chase River?

The long-term benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan include:

- Residents have a framework for making decisions about change and growth in their Neighbourhood. Through the plan residents can focus on issues which are important to the area, develop solutions and direct change;
- Developers have a better understanding of what area residents want to see built in Chase River. When developers understand area concerns and goals, they are better able to develop a project that is supported by local residents;
- City Staff gain a better understanding of about how the neighbourhood would like to accommodate growth, and what elements of their community they would like to see protected and/or enhanced; and
- Council is better able to make decisions that will benefit the neighbourhood, when it understands local residents' expectations.

## **E. Implementing the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan**

The implementation of the goals and objectives of this plan will occur in three ways:

- Development driven, through rezoning, development permit and subdivision applications;
- Neighbourhood driven, through volunteerism; and
- Community driven, through Council.

It is important to note that the goals and objectives of this plan will not become reality overnight. The implementation of this plan relies heavily on the residents of Chase River, as well as the health of the economy. This plan is a framework for how your neighbourhood will develop and accommodate growth in the years to come. For this plan to work, residents must actively support the plan, and work with developers, City Staff and Council. Being knowledgeable on issues and remaining open to new and different ideas is important in realizing a situation where all parties can benefit.

For residents it is important that you remain actively involved in the maintenance of your Neighbourhood Plan. Many aspects of the plan, namely the development of the gateway, implementing a historic site signage program or implementing a Town Centre banner program can occur through volunteerism. How much effort Chase River residents put into the implementation of the plan will ultimately determine its success. It is also important to remember that developers take risks in building your neighbourhood and the greater community. Working with developers, seeking common ground and looking for solutions where both parties gain, can be very productive.

For developers it is important that consultation with area residents occurs early and often during the development process. Poor quality developments are more often remembered than well designed projects. Trust and respect are imperative in developing property in this area. Most commercial and higher density residential development in Chase River will require a rezoning, as land in Chase River is generally zoned for single family housing. City Staff support for your project can only help you to a certain point; public participation is the key to successful development in Chase River.

## **F. Can the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan be Amended? How?**

Yes. All plans need to be reviewed periodically to accommodate new ideas and address the changing times. Changes to the plan will require public input and should be in keeping with the goals and objectives of the City's Official Community Plan.

Amendments to the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan will be considered as part of the overall Official Community Plan amendment process that currently takes place twice a year.

## 2. Community Identity

---

### A. Community History

In 1852 Governor James Douglas's militia pursued and caught one of two murder suspects along a creek south of Nanaimo, and thus the name "Chase River" was born.

Apart from aboriginal settlement, Finnish immigrants were the predominant settlers of Chase River in the last half of the 19th Century. They made their living working in the coal mines and forests, as well as farming. In 1910 they worked together to build a community centre, the "Finn Hall", at the site of the present Moose Hall.

Chinese settlers, who had come to work in the mines, had market gardens in the present Cinnabar Valley area. Louis Stark, a black settler, farmed a 500 tree orchard on the present school site, and his original barn still stands near the Stark's Railway Crossing.

The first school, Southfield, was built in 1891 on Haliburton Street and still exists as a private residence. A second school was built on Cedar Road at Fielding in 1898, but it burned down in 1942. The present school was opened in 1951 with two classrooms. A Methodist Church, later to become a United Church, opened its doors in 1912 on 13th Street east of Cranberry Avenue. A volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1949 and still serves the community today as Station 4 of the Nanaimo Fire Department.

The present commercial centre is located in the approximate area of the original village core.

From 1949 until 1975 Chase River was an autonomous District of Nanaimo and extended from Robins Street in the north, and bounded by the communities of Cedar, South Wellington and Extension to the south. In 1975 Chase River was amalgamated with the City of Nanaimo.

### B. Vision Statement

A vision statement is a composite of peoples' ideals and values, that indicates to the reader what is important to area residents and how their neighbourhood will accommodate future growth and change. The vision statement below was developed by the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee from public input received during the planning process.

*The character of the Chase River neighbourhood is unique within the City of Nanaimo, in that the area has retained its rural atmosphere while being situated only a short distance from Nanaimo's downtown. As well, Chase River acts as the southern gateway to the City, and has a distinct Finnish history.*

*If there is one common vision of area residents it would be to retain the "rural character" of Chase River, while welcoming new people and businesses to their neighbourhood by focusing higher density development into the Town Centre, where more services will be added as the market increases. The "rural character" of Chase River is in part created by the large residential lots and farms that exist in the area. As well, three creeks run through Chase River to the estuary, providing habitat for wildlife and enjoyment for residents who walk along side and explore these environmental assets.*

*The ability of Chase River to retain its “rural character” is hampered by existing residential zoning. Approximately 95 percent of the land within the Urban Containment Boundary is zoned for either single family housing similar in density to that found in north Nanaimo, or a more intensive land use (e.g. commercial, multiple family, industrial). Changing the zoning of these lands to allow less dense development is not supported by the Official Community Plan.*

*The only “rural” zoned lands inside the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) lie east of the Trans Canada Highway. These lands were ultimately considered to be worthy of inclusion inside the UCB and to be designated “Neighbourhood” as part of the adoption of the Official Community Plan in 1996. Given the lengthy discussions that have already occurred with area residents regarding the future of these lands, altering the designation of these lands as part of the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan was not felt to be appropriate.*

*Given the limitations placed on the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan by existing zoning and agreements made as part of the adoption of the Official Community Plan, maintaining the “rural character” of Chase River will mean different things depending on one’s area of focus.*

*Outside of the Urban Containment Boundary land is predominantly zoned for rural use. The “rural atmosphere” of this area can be maintained by not supporting expansion of the Urban Containment Boundary.*

*Inside the Urban Containment Boundary it is more appropriate, and achievable, to strive for a “green” rather than “rural” neighbourhood through: planting and maintaining trees in existing and new subdivisions; maintaining mature trees in new subdivisions; developing greenways and walking trails along all waterways; further protecting environmentally sensitive areas through alternative forms of development such as cluster subdivisions and cluster housing; acquiring more park land where possible; and enhancing existing parks.*

*Chase River is a well established and close-knit neighbourhood. The residents of Chase River have expressed and shown through their actions, a strong neighbourhood spirit and commitment to the future of their area. Involvement of residents, protection of the area’s rural qualities where possible, promotion of “green” neighbourhoods, preservation of the environment, preservation and promotion of the area’s history, and addressing the safety and support of the area’s residents, is paramount to the success of future development in Chase River.*



### **3. Building Complete and Viable Neighbourhoods**

---

#### **A. Town Centre**

##### **Commercial:**

Commercial designated areas are meant to serve the need of the travelling public and/or vehicle/land intensive uses such as larger scale retail. Examples of acceptable land uses in this designation are: service stations; vehicle, bicycle and boat sales; hotels; restaurants; home centres; garden centres; indoor recreation facilities; retail; wholesale outlets; and the like.

##### **Policy:**

- The following uses are not permitted in the Commercial designation: Automobile salvage or wrecking yards; scrap and/or part yards; commercial card lock facilities; storage yards/facilities not associated with a lumber store, home centre garden centre or commercial nursery; stand alone gaming halls; and similar uses.

##### **Mainstreet:**

Mainstreet designated areas define the core of the Town Centre.

##### **Policy:**

- Permitted uses in the Mainstreet designation are those outlined in the Mainstreet Zone in the City's Zoning Bylaw.
- The maximum number of storeys for developments on Mainstreet designated properties is three (3). Third storeys must be wholly contained within the roof structure, in an effort to minimize the mass of the buildings along the "Mainstreet"

##### **Medium-High Density Residential:**

Medium-High Density Residential designated areas are meant to accommodate the majority of the residential density for the Town Centre.

##### **Policy:**

- Continued development of Southgate Mall may proceed according to the Mall's phased plan up to the entrance on Lawlor Road. Between the entrance and the corner of Tenth Street and Lawlor, new development should reflect the Mainstreet design. Future redevelopment of the Mall site should incorporate Mainstreet design elements along Lawlor Road.
- The target density for the Medium to High Density Residential designation is 100-150 units per hectare (40-60 units per acre).
- Permitted building forms include 3 storey residential structures, up to 8 storey towers.

**Low-Medium Density Residential:**

Low-Medium Density Residential designated areas act as transitional housing between the higher densities of the Town Centre core, and the lower densities found in surrounding areas.

**Policy:**

- The target density for the Low-Medium Density Residential designation is 50 units per hectare (20 units per acre).
- Permitted building forms in this designation are townhouse and 3 and 4 storey apartments/condominiums.

**City Park:**

City Park designated areas denote park-land owned by the City of Nanaimo.

**Other Parks and Open Space:**

Other Parks and Open Space designated areas indicate lands held as Regional or Provincial park land, or undeveloped land held by the Province or Crown. Private open space as part of commercial or residential developments is not included in this designation.

**Utility/Services:**

This designation notes land used for public utilities and services (e.g. hydro, pump station, etc.).

**Institutional:**

Institutional designated lands allow for institutional uses such as assembly halls, clubs, lodges and the like.

**City of Nanaimo Land Reserve:**

This land is held aside for the future development of a storm water detention pond, and part of the Cranberry Avenue-Tenth Street connector road.

**Policy:**

- City of Nanaimo Land Reserve not required for the construction of the City's detention pond and the connector road, between Cranberry Avenue and Tenth Street, will be considered for City Park.
- Properties within the Town Centre that are adjacent to Wexford Creek may have additional restrictions placed upon them in regard to suitable land uses and setbacks, as a result of the environmental studies being undertaken in 1999. The environmental studies being undertaken in regard to Wexford Creek have to do with realigning the portion of the creek between Tenth Street and Thirteenth Street. The possible realignment and the enhancement of the riparian environment of this portion of Wexford Creek is an effort to better facilitate the development of a Mainstreet along Lawlor Road.
- Rezoning and/or subdivision applications for lands within the Town Centre and adjacent to Wexford Creek, will not be supported if they impede the ability to realign Wexford Creek.

### **Site Design and Building Form and Character:**

#### **Policy:**

- Within the Chase River Town Centre, the Design Guide: Chase River Town Centre applies.
- All other developments in the Town Centre need to comply with the relevant policies of the Official Community Plan related to site design and building form and character, and the principles outlined in the “General City of Nanaimo Design Guidelines”.

#### **Notwithstanding the above policies:**

- Commercial designated properties adjacent to the Trans Canada Highway should develop their Highway frontage in a manner that focuses buildings towards the Highway. The term focus implies orienting the main entrance of the building to the Highway and/or glazing no less than 30% of the building facade, which faces the Highway.
- All parking is to be located behind, to the side, within or under the building(s), and screened from the street. Screening must be predominantly in the form of soft landscaping rather than strictly fencing. Notwithstanding, a drop off area at the front of residential buildings (excluding Mainstreet residential buildings) is permissible along with a maximum of five (5) visitor parking stalls.
- Defined pedestrian walkways (e.g., elevated and/or a noticeable change in materials) through all parking lots need to be provided. The routing of the walkways must be relatively direct to the main entrance of the building. Marked pedestrian crossings should be provided over main drive aisles for commercial developments, where appropriate.

### **Roads and Boulevard Design:**

#### **Policy:**

- The road network for the Town Centre is to be developed per Schedule A.
- On street parking is encouraged (except for Tenth Street, Maki Road, the Trans Canada Highway and Cranberry Avenue).
- The use of traffic calming measures where appropriate to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety is encouraged.
- Improvements to pedestrian crossings on the Trans Canada Highway (increased crossing time and improved crosswalk markings) are strongly encouraged.
- The implementation of Landscaping in City Streets Guidelines is required as part of subdivision, development permit and rezoning applications in the Chase River Town Centre.

## **B. Local Service Centre**

A Local Service Centre is a small commercial development located in a residential area, meant to serve the basic retail needs of area residents. By locating basic commercial services in residential areas, walking or biking to the store is encouraged and reliance on the automobile is reduced. Local Service Centres also allow for residential units on the second floor, above commercial shops, providing residents of Chase River with alternative housing options. Housing above shops also provides an added level of security for the commercial businesses when they are closed.

Residents were asked to identify services they would like to see developed in Local Service Centers. As a point of information to developers, the greatest emphasis was placed on retail and service commercial (including a pub) followed by a Community Service Centre, medical services and restaurants/cafes.

### **Policy:**

- A maximum of two (2) Local Service Centres are supported within the Chase River Neighbourhood.
- A Local Service Centre is supported in both of the following general locations:
  - a) On Extension Road between the intersections of Roberta Road/Roberta Road East And Cinnabar Drive; and
  - b) On Cedar Road at the intersection of either Fielding Road or Frew Road. No direct access to Cedar Road will be permitted as part of the development of a Local Service Centre at either of these locations.
- Local Service Centres can build out slowly over time, based on market demands. A “corner store” with a residential unit(s) above is the minimum land use requirement for developing under the Local Service Centre designation.
- Building(s) must be sited close to the street with all on-site parking located to the rear of the building(s).
- On-street parking is encouraged.
- The total area of the ground floor should not exceed 1000 square meters (10 764 sq. feet).
- The maximum building height is three storeys. A third storey will be permitted only where it is wholly contained within the roof structure (i.e. the building appears from the outside to be a two storey structure, with a pitched roof).
- Parking variances will be considered for mixed use developments.

## **C. Neighbourhoods**

### **Housing in Neighbourhoods**

#### **Policy:**

- Development of housing in “Neighbourhood” designated areas will continue to be regulated through the policies of the Official Community Plan.
- In an effort to achieve additional onsite open space and/or protect environmentally sensitive areas, cluster housing and cluster subdivisions are strongly encouraged.

#### **Special Needs Housing in Neighbourhoods:**

Examples of special needs housing are: a seniors’ facility; a transition house for battered women, drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility or a group home for people who are mentally and/or physically challenged.

#### **Policy:**

- Special Needs Housing, will be supported in “Neighbourhood” designated areas if it complies with the housing and Neighbourhood policies outlined in the Official Community Plan.

#### **Road Network in Neighbourhoods:**

The majority of Chase River residents live along the Extension Road corridor. Residents of this area have limited vehicular access to their neighbourhood. The existing access to the Cinnabar Valley is not considered adequate by residents in regard to safety (i.e. access for emergency vehicles.) Given the low densities proposed, additional road access is a long-term goal.

#### **Policy:**

- Consideration should be given to developing an emergency access, in the event that the primary access along Cranberry Avenue/Extension Road becomes blocked.
- Should the City of Nanaimo undertake a review of options for the alignment and design of a secondary road access from the Cinnabar Valley, a public participation component must be undertaken.

#### **Road and Boulevard Design in Neighbourhoods:**

#### **Policy:**

- The implementation of “Landscaping in City Streets” guidelines is required as part of subdivision, development permit and rezoning applications.
- Where appropriate, the use of traffic calming measures, per the specifications outlined in the Transportation Association of Canada document titled “Canadian Guidelines For Traffic Calming” is encouraged.
- All medians and areas between the edge of pavement and private property lines must be landscaped (i.e. vegetation and/or ornamental paved treatment e.g. river rock.)
- Raised concrete is preferred over asphalt walking shoulders as part of any road rehabilitation projects. Asphalt walking shoulders are not supported due to the ease with which they can be mounted by vehicles and/or utilized for road side parking.

## **D. Industrial Lands**

Under the City's Official Community Plan, two areas in Chase River were designated for "industrial" use. Changes to the boundaries of these industrial areas are not proposed as part of the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan, nor are additional industrial designated areas contemplated at this time.

### **Policy:**

- Perimeter landscaping above and beyond City standards is encouraged as part of industrial developments in an effort to mitigate acoustic and visual impacts on adjacent non-industrial land uses.
- Industrial businesses are encouraged to use the technology available to reduce/eliminate odours, and other pollutants emitted by their business.

## **E. Rural Resource Lands**

Under the City's Official Community Plan, almost one third of Chase River is designated for Rural Resource use. The Rural Resource designation allows the following general land uses: resource-based economic activity (e.g. farming, forestry, silviculture); parks and recreation opportunities; rural businesses (e.g. boarding kennels, unserviced campgrounds, nurseries); rural residences; and any other uses that are similar in nature to those previously listed.

Given the strong resident support for maintaining the rural quality of Chase River, no alterations to the boundaries of these lands are proposed as part of the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan. As all of the Rural Resource designated lands lie outside the Urban Containment Boundary, any development of these lands requires the owner(s) to pay for all service extensions.

### **Policy:**

- In an effort to maintain as much of Chase River's "rural" quality as possible, expansion of the Urban Containment Boundary is not supported.

### **The Landfill and Solid Waste Management:**

The Chase River Neighbourhood would like to see the landfill site closed as soon as possible. It is important to note that the time between closing a landfill site, and the ability to use the site for a recreational use (e.g. park, golf course) is likely to be twenty years or more. Conversion of a landfill site to a community use requires time due to the need to address the matter of soil stability, gas emissions and other health and safety issues

### **Policy:**

- Closing of the Landfill site and its adaptive reuse as a golf course and/or park/greenspace is strongly encouraged.
- The use of new technology to minimize odours, and other pollutants is strongly encouraged while the landfill is still in active use.
- Council is encouraged to support the Regional District of Nanaimo in the continuance of the public information program related to landfill and solid waste management issues.
- Council is encouraged to request that the Regional District of Nanaimo develop a multi-use trail around the perimeter of the landfill, while still an active landfill. The trail would provide an amenity to the community and mitigate some of the negative impacts of the landfill by providing much needed recreation opportunity to the area.

## **F. Services**

The provision and maintenance of services is important to the health and well being of area residents, and of the environment.

### **Policy:**

- Encourage the provision of a city sewer system for all areas of Chase River, excluding land designated as Rural Resource. Emphasis should be placed on those areas currently using septic systems adjacent to bodies of water, in an effort to ensure leachate does not negatively impact environmentally sensitive areas.

## **G. Trails, Parks and Recreation Opportunities**

Multi-use trails, and active and passive recreation opportunities were identified most frequently by area residents, as amenities they would like to see developed in their neighbourhood.

### **Policy:**

- An aggressive land acquisition program for parks, open space and other recreation opportunities is strongly encouraged by area residents.
- The negotiation of Neighbourhood benefits as part of development applications will focus on the creation and enhancement of recreation opportunities. This would include trail development, park land acquisition and development, and greenway development. (For a more detailed list of neighbourhood benefits area residents would like to see developed, please refer to Section 3K of this plan.)
- The master trail network plan outlined on Schedule B is the basis for negotiating trails in the Chase River Neighbourhood. The proposed trails shown on Schedule B indicate general locations only. Exact alignment of trails will be determined through development application negotiations, or in discussion with individual property owners as part of any City driven initiative.
- Utilizing the list of historic Chase River names (see Appendix A) is encouraged when naming area parks, trails and recreation buildings.
- Area residents encourage Council's continued support of the Volunteers in Parks (VIP) Program.

## **H. Natural Environment**

### **Environmentally Sensitive And Natural Hazard Areas:**

#### **Policy:**

- Development in Chase River within Environmentally Sensitive and/or Natural Hazard Areas is regulated through the policies of the Official Community Plan. For convenience, the Official Community Plan Map outlining Development Permit Areas and Sensitive Areas is attached to this Plan as Schedule C.
- In an effort to further protect noted Sensitive Areas during the development process, cluster subdivisions/housing are supported.

### **Development On Steep Slopes And Erosion Control Areas:**

#### **Policy:**

- Development in Chase River on steep slopes and in erosion prone areas is regulated through the policies of the Official Community Plan.
- In an effort to assist in developing steep slope and/or erosion prone areas in a sensitive manner, cluster subdivisions/housing are supported.

### **Greenways:**

A greenway is a buffer on either side of a creek, lake or wetland that is maintained in its natural state, or enhanced where vegetation is sparse, and provides a wildlife and vegetation corridor.

Wetlands have an ecological value, as well as a significant value to Chase River's vision of maintaining a rural character. Wetlands should be further protected where possible by enlarging and enhancing existing leave strips.

#### **Policy:**

- Enhancement and/or expansion of leavestrips is encouraged as part of all development applications for lands adjacent to bodies of water noted on Schedule D. Expansion of leave strips can occur via dedication of land, securing the protection of areas through a preservation covenant, and/or increased setbacks from the body of water.
- The primary purpose of enhancing and/or expanding leave strips is to protect and enhance the body of water and surrounding habitat. Development of trails, viewing points and rest areas within greenways will be supported when done in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- In an effort to assist in the development of greenways, cluster subdivisions/housing are supported.

### **Tree Retention and Protection:**

The preservation of trees during development, and the retention of trees on sites where development is not contemplated in the near future is of importance to the residents of Chase River.

#### **Policy:**

- Tree removal in Chase River is regulated through the City's Tree Protection Bylaw.

### **Notwithstanding the policies of the City's Tree Protection Bylaw:**

- As part of Rezoning application negotiations tree retention on development sites above and beyond the policies of the Tree Protection Bylaw is strongly encouraged; and
- Native tree and plant species should be utilized where possible when landscaping development sites.



## **I. Heritage**

The cultural and built heritage of the Chase River neighbourhood is important to area residents. Remnant farms and large rural lots stand as reminders of the area's early agricultural history. Three Edwardian era farmhouses still remain on Cranberry Avenue and Quinn Lane and have been noted in the City of Nanaimo's inventory of significant heritage resources as examples of the residential architecture typical of the neighbourhood's early development.

Independent of Aboriginal settlement, the area was first settled as a Finnish farming community. While few physical examples of the area's Finnish heritage remain, residents are proud of this cultural history and have noted in Schedule E. that the Finn Hall was located where the Moose Hall now stands. Schedule E. represents a record of important community sites such as schools, churches and halls that are gone but not forgotten as well as those significant buildings that still remain.

In order to preserve the neighbourhood's remaining built heritage and to promote its cultural history the following policies have been developed.

### **Policy:**

- Proposed redevelopment (e.g. rezoning) of sites noted on Schedule E. will not be supported unless the adaptive reuse of the heritage structure and/or preservation of historic features is incorporated into the development plans for the site.
- The interpretation of Chase River's cultural and architectural history should be encouraged through on-site signage.
- Utilizing the list of historic Chase River names (see Appendix A) is encouraged when naming streets, parks, trails, and public squares throughout Chase River.

## **J. Gateway**

A gateway is a marker that lets people know they have entered a distinct area. In the case of Chase River the primary goal behind developing a gateway is to help create a sense of place. The gateway is meant to let people know that they have entered a unique area within the City. The Chase River Gateway has been designed to openly and subtly reflect the historic character of Chase River.

### **Policy:**

- All properties developing (e.g. rezoning) adjacent to the Trans Canada Highway, between the Parkway Overpass and the rail overpass, are required to develop their Highway (Trans Canada) frontage as outlined in the Chase River Gateway Document (see Appendix B.). This requirement does not eliminate the need to address the policies of the City of Nanaimo's Landscape Bylaw.
- Notwithstanding the objectives of the Neighbourhood Benefit Policy Section this Plan, amenity negotiations as part of Rezoning applications for properties within the Gateway plan area will focus on the installation of street scaled trees in the Highway right-of-way.

## **K. Neighbourhood Benefits**

"Neighbourhood benefits" are those items, which improve the quality of life in the area where you live. Neighbourhood benefits can be realized in a number of ways, namely:

- locally driven (by residents through volunteerism);
- development driven (negotiated as part of a rezoning application); or
- community driven (for example the new theater).

The following list of desired benefits was generated from surveys completed by area residents and from comments received at public workshops. The desired amenity list is not prioritized. The results from the collected data indicate that the residents of Chase River place the greatest value on recreation opportunities, both passive and active, along with retail (including a pub) and personal services, sidewalks, a satellite RCMP station and a community health centre.

### **Policy:**

The following list will be used as a resource by City Staff during negotiation of community benefits as part of development applications:

#### **General:**

- Nature parks
- A network of multi-use trails
- Access to the waterfront, marshes, creeks and lakes
- Implementation of the chase river gateway
- Installation of street scaled trees in new/existing subdivisions and the Town Centre
- Cluster housing to further protect an environmentally sensitive area or increase open space
- Recreation centre/ library
- Preservation of natural green spaces
- Multi-use parks
- Playground equipment
- Signage for and development of existing parks

- Sports playing fields
- Sidewalks to schools and along major roads
- Neighbourhood services for children, teens and seniors
- Satellite RCMP station
- Community health centre
- Better(more pedestrian friendly) street crossings
- Horse trails
- Street-scaled trees in boulevard
- RV sanitation dump
- Basketball and volleyball courts in parks
- Protection and enhancement of historic buildings/sites, through the retention of buildings and/or historic signage noting the importance the site.

**Town Centre:**

- Quality building materials and superior building design
- Well designed publicly accessible squares and plazas, street furniture
- Implementation of the gateway plan
- Street banners
- Street furniture
- Public squares
- Landscaping above and beyond the city landscape bylaw
- Public art
- Development of pedestrian ways
- Decorative stamping and/or materials for sidewalks along the “Mainstreet”
- Bus shelters in keeping with the architecture of the Town Centre
- Playgrounds - industrial quality equipment, seating for parents, fencing.
- Provision of interpretive signage (historic, environmental, pedestrian ways etc.)
- Banking of money for the for the gateway mural, park land, recreation Centre etc.

## 4. Ongoing Planning and Involvement

---

### A. Ongoing Neighbourhood Involvement

As previously noted this plan forms part of the City's Official Community Plan (OCP). Amendments to the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan will be considered twice a year as part of the larger OCP amendment process.

#### Policy:

- Three (3) local area residents will be appointed by the Chase River Community Association, to act as representatives on the Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee (PNAC), when an amendment to the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan is being considered.
- The three local area residents will be able to fully participate in all PNAC meetings, but will not have voting privileges. In addition the three representatives must appoint one person from their group to act as spokesperson, to ensure clarity and consistency of ideas.
- Prior to proceeding to Council, all persons applying to amend the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan must meet at least once with the Chase River Community Association, to discuss their application and receive comments.

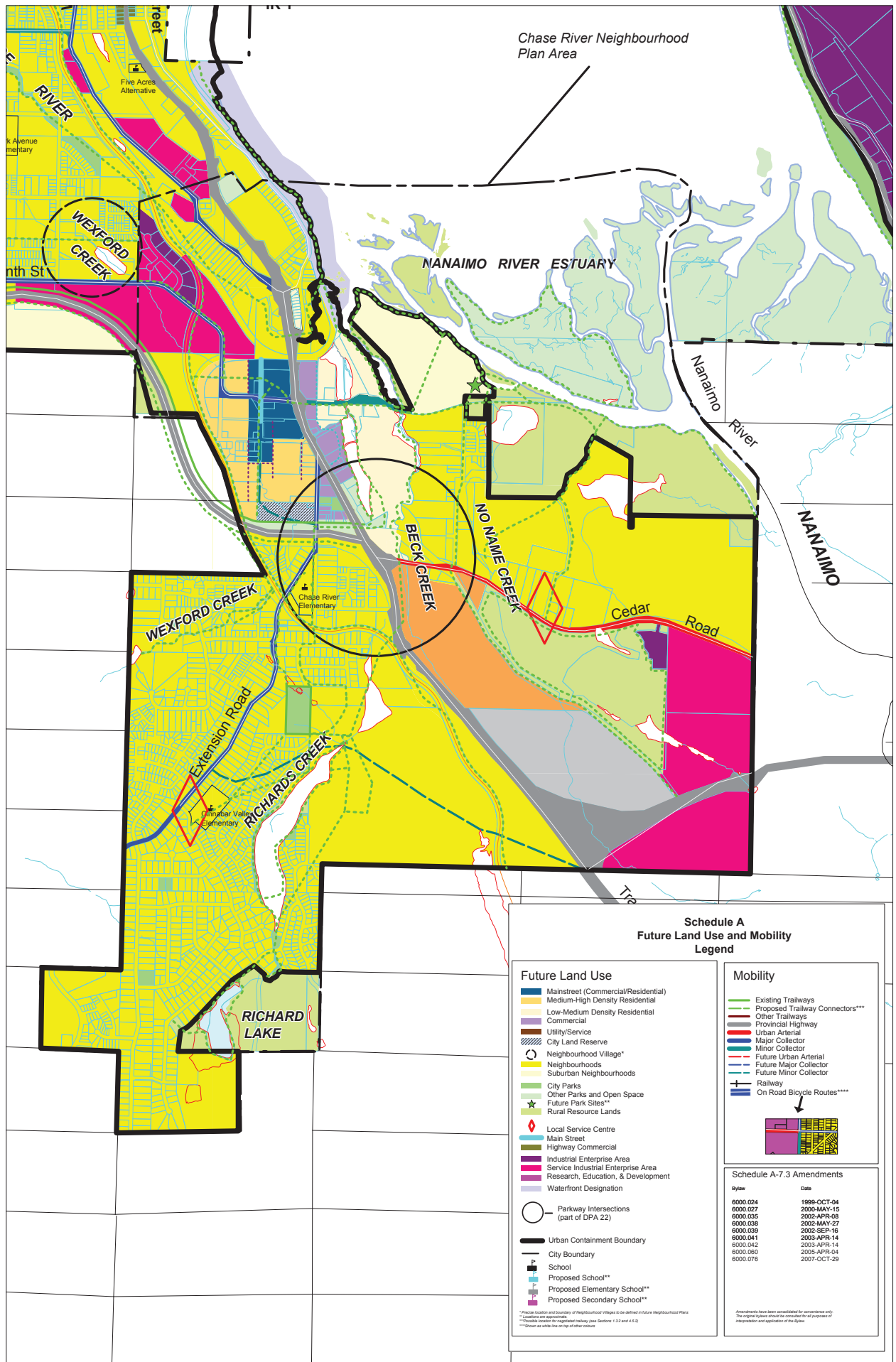
### B. Ongoing Planning

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan additional work needs to be undertaken. City Staff will undertake the following work, with input from the Chase River residents.

Item	Status
Design Guidelines for the Chase River Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adopted May 15<sup>th</sup> 2000</li> </ul>
The Cranberry Avenue to Tenth Street Alignment Study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alignment Study is in final draft form.</li> <li>▪ The Alignment Study will be finalized once a decision has been made, and support received from the Province, regarding the proposed road crossing over the wetlands, south of Twelfth Street.</li> <li>▪ In order to gain support from the Province, the Integrated Storm Water Management Plan must be completed (see below).</li> </ul>
An assessment of the feasibility of, and potential process for realigning Wexford Creek.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Integrated Storm Water Management Plan Study is in final draft form. (See Engineering Department for latest information on the status of the report)</li> </ul>
Finalize land uses in the Town Centre, based on the outcome of the previous two studies noted above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pending decision on Alignment Study &amp; Integrated Storm Water Management Plan Study. (See Engineering Department for latest information on the status of the reports)</li> </ul>

# 5. Schedules

---

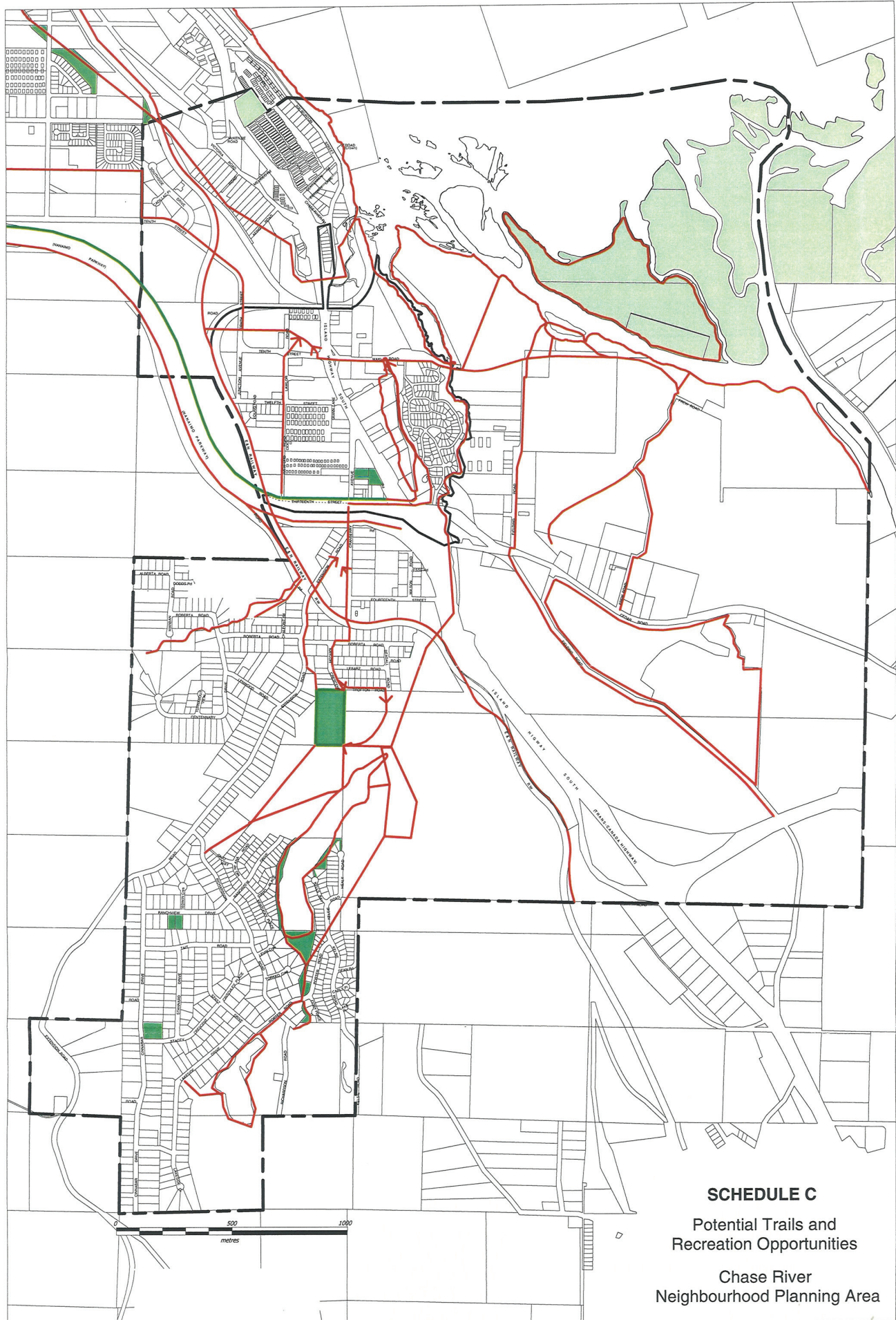


Schedule A - Future Land Use and Mobility

# **SCHEDULE B – Sandstone Master Plan**

---

(See separate document - Part of Schedule C - Official Community Plan Bylaw 2008 No. 6500)



**SCHEDULE C**

Potential Trails and  
Recreation Opportunities

Chase River  
Neighbourhood Planning Area

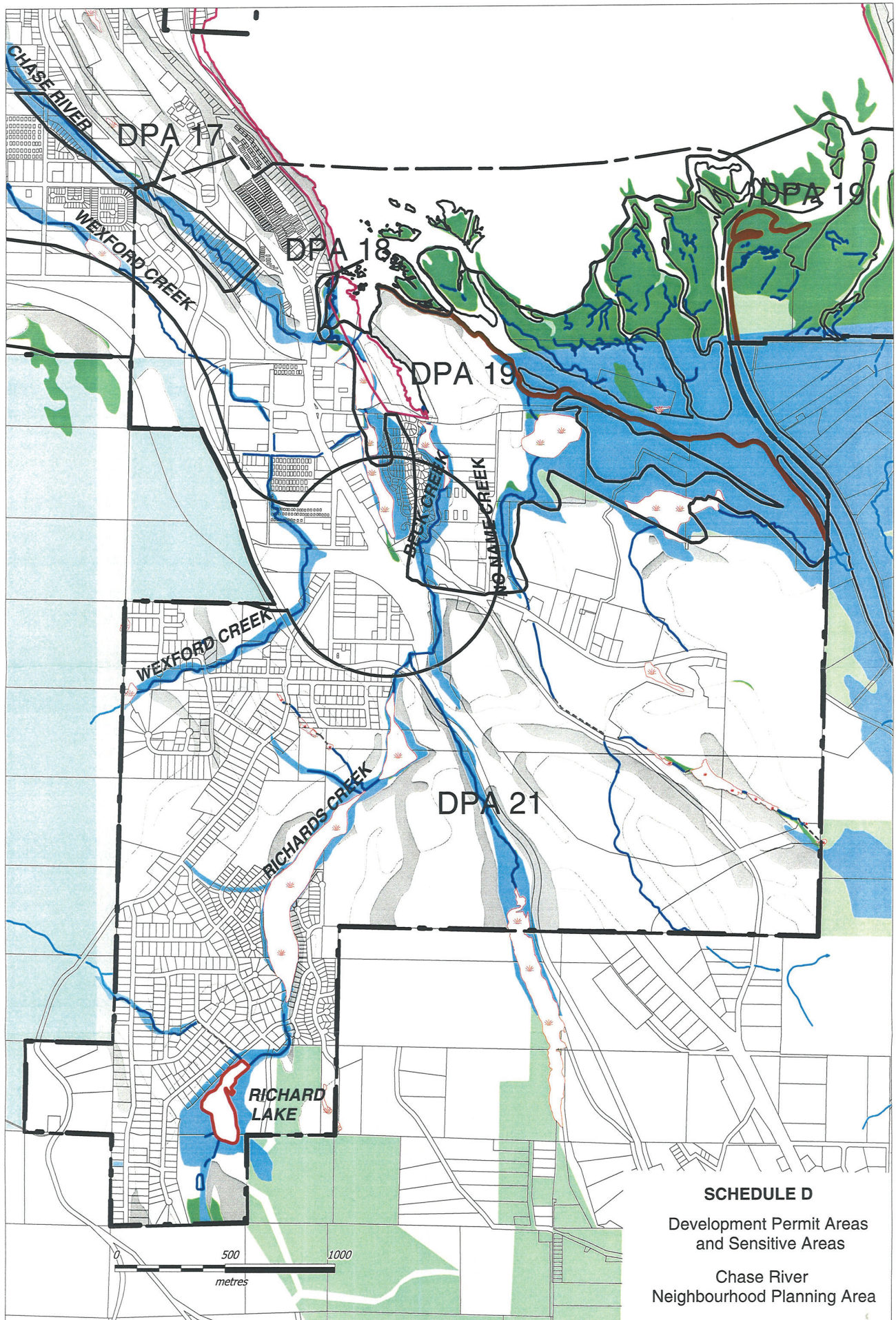


## **Schedule C - Recreation Opportunities**

---

The following list are recreation opportunities that the residents of Chase River would like to see developed in their neighbourhood.

- Nature parks
- A network of multi-use trails
- Access to the waterfront, marshes, creeks and lakes
- Recreation centre
- Signage for and development of existing parks
- Multi use parks
- Playground equipment
- Sports playing fields
- Neighbourhood services for children, teens and seniors
- Horse trails
- Basketball hoops and volleyball nets in parks
- A water park



DPA 17

DPA 18

DPA 19

DPA 19

DPA 21

CHASE RIVER

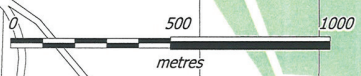
WEXFORD CREEK

WEXFORD CREEK

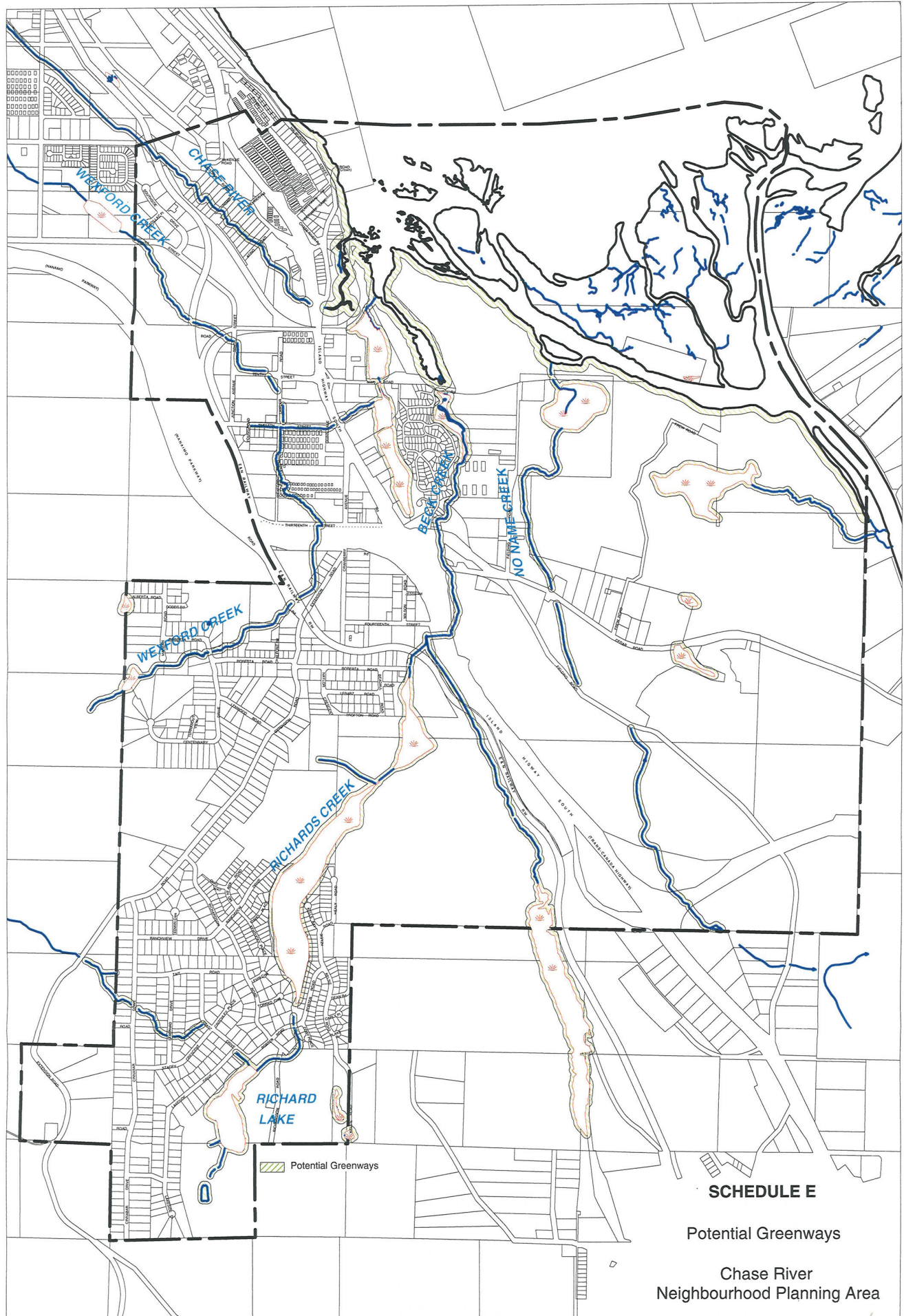
RICHARDS CREEK

RICHARD LAKE

NO NAME CREEK



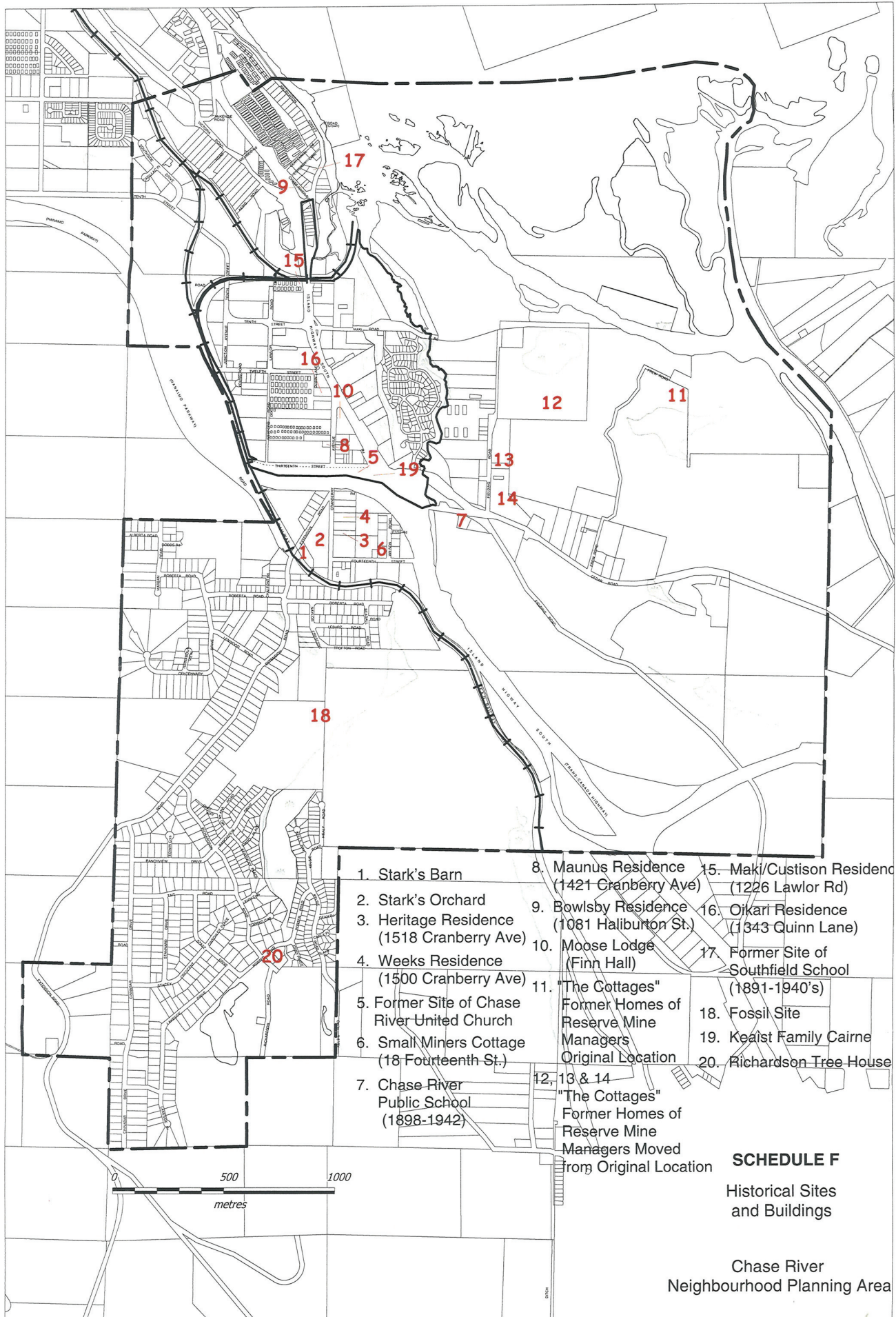
**SCHEDULE D**  
Development Permit Areas  
and Sensitive Areas  
Chase River  
Neighbourhood Planning Area



**SCHEDULE E**

Potential Greenways

Chase River  
Neighbourhood Planning Area



- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Stark's Barn                             | 8. Maunus Residence (1421 Cranberry Ave)   | 15. Maki/Custison Residence (1226 Lawlor Rd)       |
| 2. Stark's Orchard                          | 9. Bowsby Residence (1081 Haliburton St.)  | 16. Oikari Residence (1343 Quinn Lane)             |
| 3. Heritage Residence (1518 Cranberry Ave)  | 10. Moose Lodge (Finn Hall)  | 17. Former Site of Southfield School (1891-1940's) |
| 4. Weeks Residence (1500 Cranberry Ave)     | 11. "The Cottages" Former Homes of Reserve Mine Managers Original Location                     | 18. Fossil Site                                    |
| 5. Former Site of Chase River United Church | 12, 13 & 14. "The Cottages" Former Homes of Reserve Mine Managers Moved from Original Location | 19. Keaist Family Cairne                           |
| 6. Small Miners Cottage (18 Fourteenth St.) |  | 20. Richardson Tree House                          |
| 7. Chase River Public School (1898-1942)    |  |  |

**SCHEDULE F**  
Historical Sites and Buildings

Chase River  
Neighbourhood Planning Area

## **7. Appendices**

---

## Appendix A - Historic Chase River Names

---

- Aitkens
- Bakakala
- Bowsby
- Blunt
- Bradley
- Brant
- Critchley
- Custison
- Davey
- Fewkes
- Gilfillan
- Greenaway
- Haapala
- Harris
- Hautenan
- Hendrikson
- Hieta
- Houston
- Ibister
- Keaist
- Luoma
- Maasanen
- Maki
- Marwick
- Maunus
- Miles
- Morgan
- Neen
- Oikari
- Perry
- Richardson
- Rowbottom
- Salo
- Smith
- Soterpaka
- Stafford
- Stamp
- Stark
- Stewart
- Walker
- Wilkinson
- Wright

## **Appendix B - Gateway**

---

# Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway





# Design Rationale

The following study is undertaken in conjunction with the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan process. The purpose of the gateway plan is to assist the Chase River neighbourhood plan steering committee develop design ideas that support the unique community identity of Chase River.

The study area is the Highway 19A corridor beginning at the highway overpass at the south and continuing north to the railway overpass. The corridor includes two key intersections at Cranberry Road and Tenth Street.

## Opportunities and Constraints

The gateway design has been developed to emphasize positive aspects of the existing roadside landscape. The diagram on the following page summarizes this site analysis and illustrates how existing conditions have been used to provide direction for key elements of the gateway design.

### 1. South Gateway

At the south end of the study area the Chase River Gateway is framed by the overhead ramp for the Parkway. The parkway bridge provides a strong physical framework for this entrance. Specifically, there is an opportunity with the parkway overpass to develop the retaining structure and landscaped area on the southeast corner of the intersection as an introduction to the Chase River Neighbourhood.

The retaining wall offers a vertical surface with prominent exposure to incoming traffic. This surface could be painted with images of Chase River's agrarian history and/or current vitality.

The existing highway roadside landscape in this area could also be modified to include some of the plant species present now at the Tenth Street intersection. Repetition of similar plant species through the study area will help to reinforce the existing landscape image.

### 2. Rural Natural Area

Immediately north of the Parkway bypass, the existing roadside landscape is still largely undeveloped. On the east side of the highway the land falls away from the highway toward an adjacent wetland area. The overall development potential of this land is restricted by steep grades, and by the setbacks required to protect the wetland area.

On the west side of the road the land rises above the level of the highway for several metres. The land use on this side of the highway is largely in public use, including open park area, tennis courts, the fire hall and the nearby Moose Hall. From the road, the predominant feature is the grass bank in the foreground.

### 3. Urban Community Area

The area just south of the Cranberry Avenue, north to 10<sup>th</sup> Street is at a grade close to the level of the highway. The neighbourhood plan anticipates commercial development along the highway in this area.

One of the planned changes along the east side of the highway is the movement of the service road so that new commercial developments will be as close as possible to the roadway. The gateway proposals for this part of the corridor identify landscape development characteristics that build on these changes.

### 4. Railway Bridge Portal

At the north end of the study site, the existing railway overpass provides the framework for a north gateway.

## Concept Design

### South Entrance Portal

The proposal for the south entrance portal takes advantage of the entrance features of the parkway overpass.

The Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway Plan envisions a new entry feature designed in conjunction with the existing retaining structure. A key element would be the creation of a new mural to be painted on the existing retaining wall. This mural would be used to introduce some of the imagery associated with the agrarian past of the community and its Finnish heritage. The mural should also be designed to incorporate a colour palette that will be repeated in streetscape elements throughout the neighbourhood.

Additional developments considered as part of this gateway feature could include: the renovation of planting beds to frame the mural, and the introduction of a unique palette of plant material similar to the feature planting at the Tenth Street intersection. Feature lighting and rock detailing will also be part of this landscape feature.

As with all aspects of the gateway design, the entrance feature should be developed so that it is permanent, durable, and timeless. This requirement implies that the entrance feature would be simple in its design and concept, and that details of implementation and maintenance are determined in cooperation the MOTH as part of the design development process.

### Rural, Natural, Open, Roadside Design

As suggested in the identification of opportunities and constraints the roadside design should emphasize the rural character of the neighbourhood.

Along the east side of the highway, from the overpass to the proposed new Cranberry road intersection, it is recommended that constraints from wetland setbacks and existing recreational uses are recognized and that land use decisions allow for the protection of local and regional open space connections.

The design section for this part of the site illustrates the opportunities to regrade the roadside and develop an open space with native grasses and trees. Existing recreational trails would be formalized to provide off-road access into Chase River and protect environmental values in the wetland area.

Along the west side of the highway the upslope grade should be planted with Cedar and Douglas fir to provide a buffer between adjacent parkland uses and focus the view toward the wetlands and estuary.

## Urban, Community, Roadside Design

An important transition between rural landscape and urban community should be emphasized and reinforced as a key element of the Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway Plan. The proposal to realign the Cranberry Road intersection provides an opportunity to do this. As much as possible, the new intersection should provide a transition point with natural open landscape to the south, and urban streetscape to the north. This transition is suggested by the changing roadside grade which encourages street fronting commercial development between Cranberry Road and Tenth Street.

A key element of this design section is the realignment of the existing frontage road along the east side of the highway. The new frontage road would provide commercial access and allow the development of a more enclosed community streetscape.

The design section for the east side of the highway envision a curb and gutter and sub-surface drainage system consistent with the transition to an urban community. The introduction of curb and gutter eliminates the existing drainage ditches and replaces them with irrigated grass boulevards.

Within the grass boulevard a 2.4 metre wide crushed stone walkway is included to provide pedestrian access along the east side of the highway.

Street trees will be planted in two rows along both sides of the highway to provide shade and enclosure. The row of trees closest to the travel lanes would be similar in size to the existing purple leaf cherries at the tenth street intersection. The outer row of trees would be a much larger species such a London Plane, or Red Oak.

A stone fence further defines the separation between public and private space. The fence will provide a durable and long lasting image for the neighbourhood. The stone fence will also provide a screen for parking and storage as required by the future buildings in the area.

Along the west side of the highway the concept design shows large trees located in private property adjacent to the road ROW. Several underground and overhead utilities will restrict the location of large trees along this side of the highway. A detailed design review will be required to determine the best location for these trees. The row of smaller trees is shown within the road ROW. A review of utility locations will affect the placement and species selection of trees in this location.

Pedestrian access is via a 1.5 metre pathway on this side of the roadway.

## Tenth Street Intersection

The most important intersection in the study area is at Tenth Street/Maki Road. A design concept for the intersection illustrates how the design ideas might be applied in this location.

### Southeast Corner

The anticipated use for this property is a gas bar development. Key elements of the design for this corner are:

The service road is located at the east side of the property.

The existing service road is rehabilitated/replotted as part of the development site.

The existing planting is incorporated into the walkway design providing separation from vehicles and pedestrians.

The walkways are designed as crushed stone to provide a rural community feel.

The gas bar building is located as close as possible to the front of the property with vehicle circulation away from the street.

Additional parking and storage is located behind the proposed stone fence.

Street tree planting is illustrated.

### Northeast Corner

The anticipated use for this property is a hotel/motel development. Key elements of the design for this corner are:

The service road is located at the east side of the property.

Drop off access and parking are provided in the front of the development site. All other parking would be in the rear of the site.

The existing planting is incorporated into the walkway design providing separation from vehicles and pedestrians.

The walkways are designed as crushed stone to provide a rural community feel.

### Northwest Corner

Smitty's restaurant and associated landscape are illustrated as part of the design concept in this location.

Although curb & gutter are illustrated throughout this intersection the design concept illustrates how the existing grade and large specimen Willow could be protected and incorporated into a streetscape design. Pedestrian access is provided across a small footbridge and grades around the existing willow are maintained.

### Southwest Corner

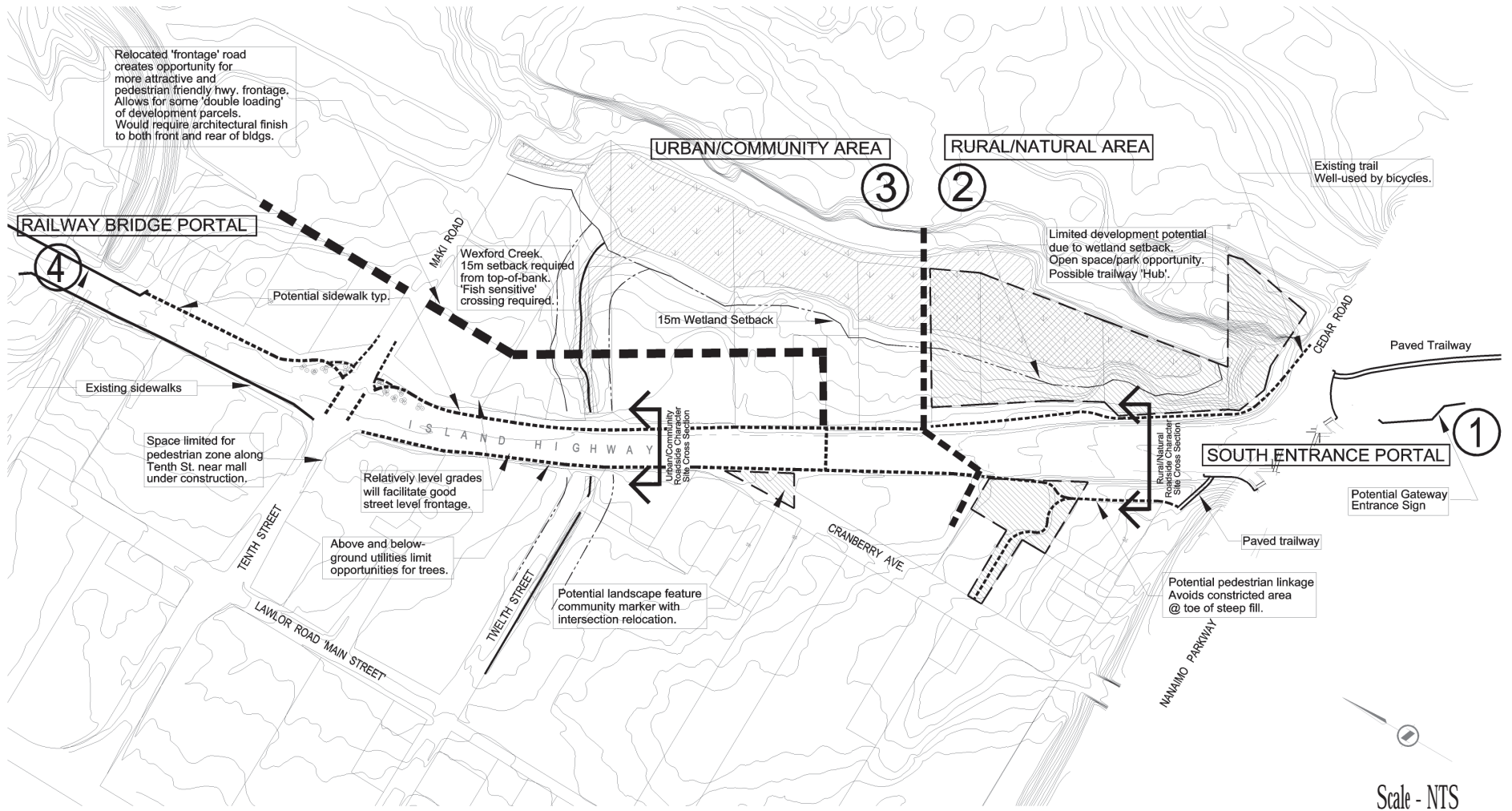
The South Parkway Plaza and associated landscape are illustrated in the concept design.

## Railway Bridge Portal

At the north end of the study site the existing railway overpass provides an entry portal for the neighbourhood.

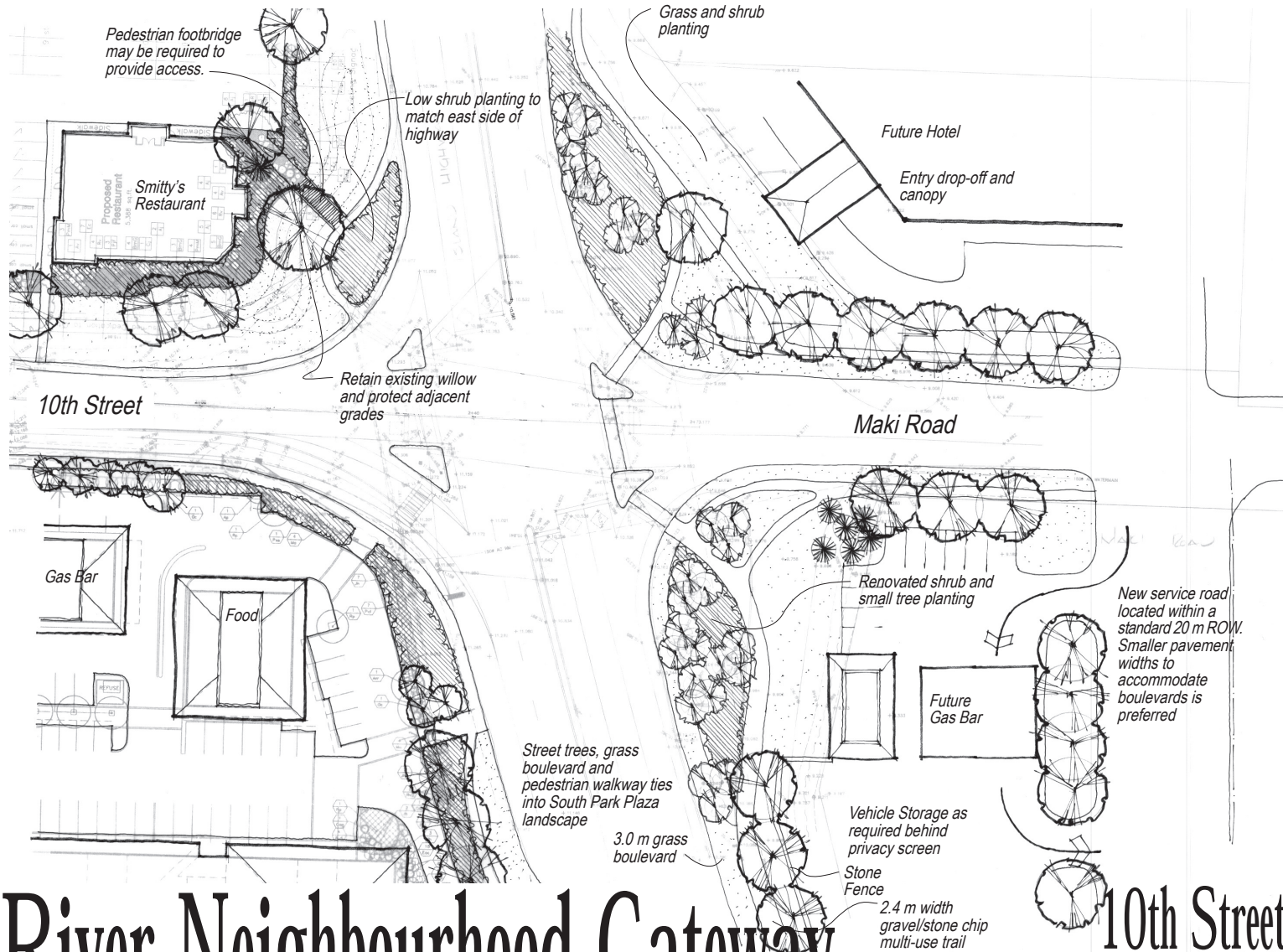
The design concept for this gateway is to suggest minor revisions to the railway structure. These changes would include subtle items such as painting the bridge structure in a colour that can be identified a part of the Chase River Neighbourhood.

The role of the bridge as an entry gateway could be developed more in consultation with the owner and might include opportunities for the installation of decorative railing and community signage.



# Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway

# Opportunities and Constraints



# Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway

# 10th Street Intersection Roadside Design Concept

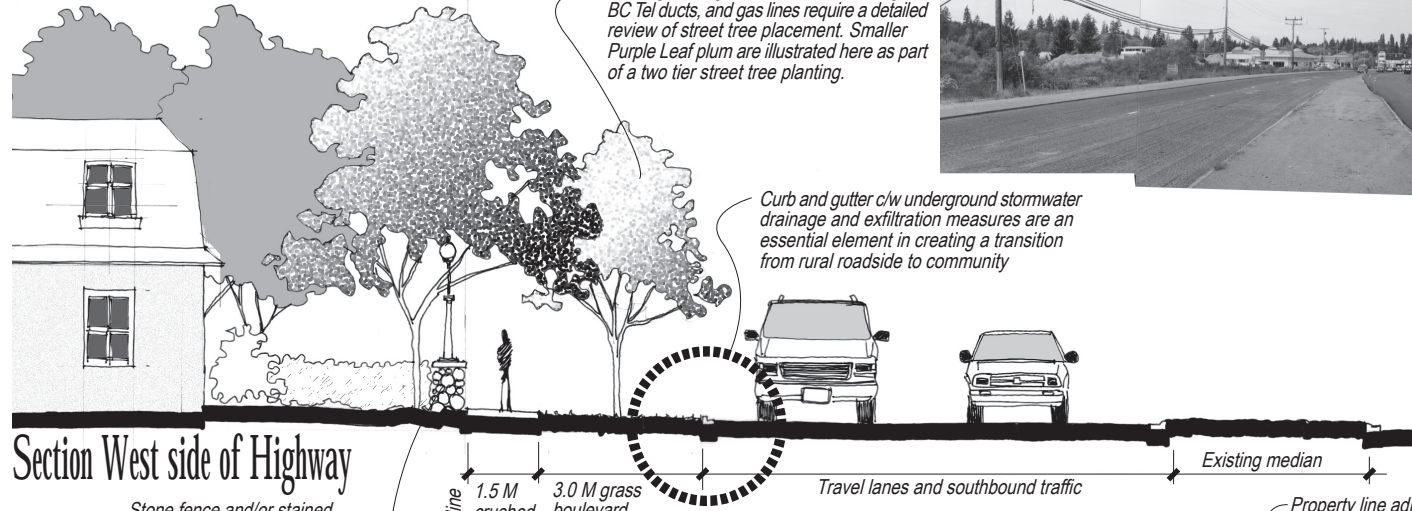
Larger deciduous trees are located on adjacent property outside of the road ROW. placement should be back from the property line to minimize impact with overhead utility lines.

Existing underground utilities, including BC Tel ducts, and gas lines require a detailed review of street tree placement. Smaller Purple Leaf plum are illustrated here as part of a two tier street tree planting.

Curb and gutter c/w underground stormwater drainage and exfiltration measures are an essential element in creating a transition from rural roadside to community



View of Existing Conditions



Section West side of Highway

Stone fence and/or stained timber alternate is continuous through this section as a separation between public and private uses

Existing property line

Existing median

Travel lanes and southbound traffic

Property line adjusted to illustrate changes resulting from service road relocation



Section East side of Highway

Parking, access, and storage requirements are all partially concealed with stone fence

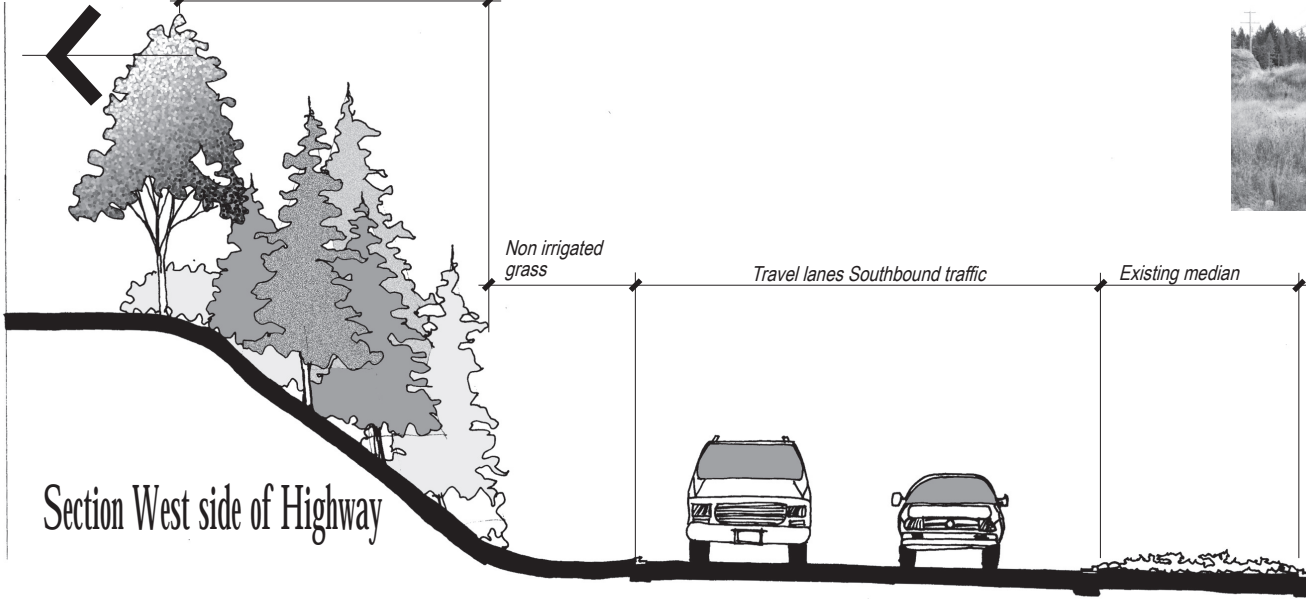
Existing Property line with service road to the west

Where buildings are located close to the new service road, parking and access is likely to occur in the back as shown here

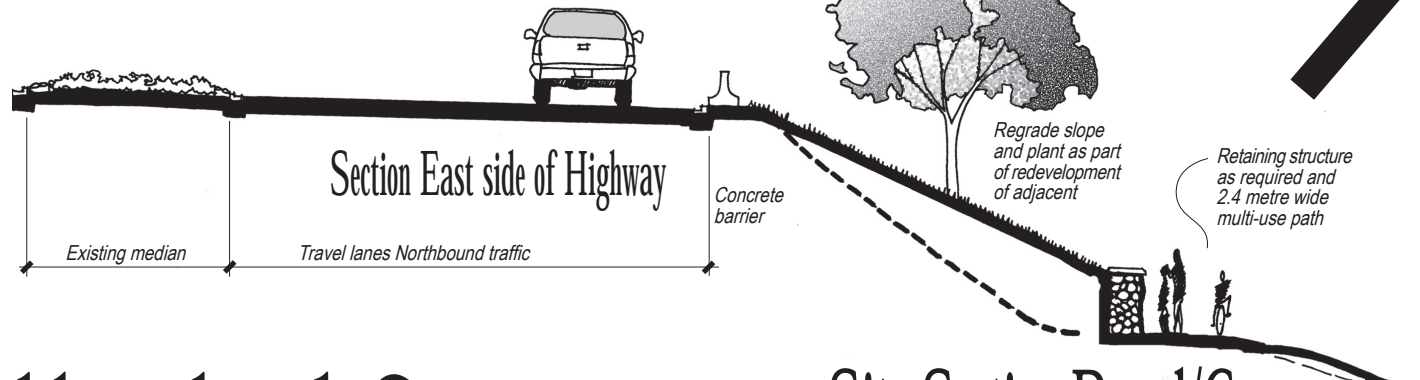
# Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway

## Site Section Urban/Community Roadside Concept Design

Slope planted with fir and cedar close spacing and a variety of sizes

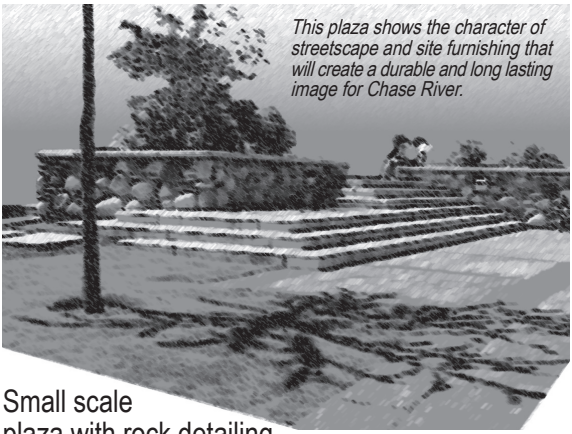


View of Existing Conditions



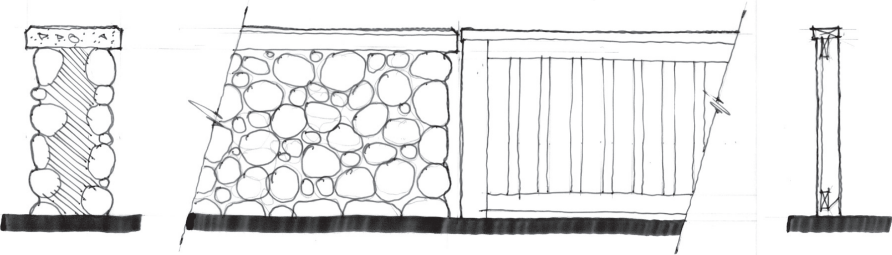
# Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway

# Site Section Rural/Community Roadside Concept Design

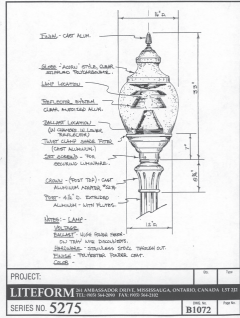
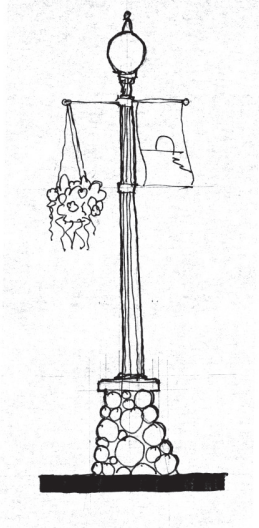


*This plaza shows the character of streetscape and site furnishing that will create a durable and long lasting image for Chase River.*

Small scale plaza with rock detailing



Concept details for private open space screens. Alternatives for stone cobble or stained wood finish



Pedestrian scale lighting illustrating stone cobble base and potential banners, hanging baskets, etc.



Proposed entry mural. The image illustrated draws from Finnish heritage. The actual image would illustrate the Chase River Story and identify the entrance to the community. A similar treatment could be contemplated for the railway crossing at the north end.

# Chase River Neighbourhood Gateway