

LOWER TOWN STRATEGIC PLAN ***Summerland, B.C.***

1.0 BACKGROUND

Lower Town is a unique neighbourhood situated along Lake Okanagan, offering historical landmarks, community facilities, residential areas and parks. Lower Town comprised the first lands to be developed in Summerland as the waterfront became a community, business and transportation centre. The original plan of Lower Town reflected the importance of early investors through the street names of Shaughnessey, Robinson, Henderson, Kirchhoffer and Latimer.

The foreshore of Okanagan Lake has continued to play an important role in the development of Summerland, as the business and transportation centre became home to recreational and social activity hubs including sailing and racquet clubs, camping, accommodation, fruit transportation facilities, several wharfs and a historic pier. Places special to the community include Peach Orchard Park, public waterfront access points, together with the connecting trails and “walkable” streets.

The Lower Town neighbourhood has a north-south orientation primarily paralleling the lakeshore situated east of Highway 97. The Lower Town study area comprises approximately 90 hectares and is identified in Schedule “A”. Vehicular access to Lower Town from the remainder of the Summerland community is via Peach Orchard Road, Solly Road or Highway 97 (at Lakeshore Road South).

The intent of this section of the Official Community Plan is to provide strategic planning directions for future development and ongoing enhancement of the Lower Town neighbourhood. The policies provide area and site-specific designations providing greater certainty for the community, stakeholders and landowners for the future of Lower Town. These directions shall be considered together with the related Official Community Plan goals, objectives, policies and implementation plan. This section includes policies, actions and development permit guidelines specific to Lower Town, developed in response to directions collected in an open and interactive community engagement process.



“Summerland’s historical Lower Town successfully achieves a planned, balanced and cohesive community.”

(A vision direction developed by the Lower Town community working group)

2.0 OBJECTIVES

Lower Town has transitioned during the past hundred years from Summerland’s first townsite and commercial/industrial port to the present day mix of residential, recreational, and community uses. Although no longer the central core of Summerland, Lower Town is a special area where the community and visitors live and enjoy the activities and sights within and around Okanagan Lake. The following objectives consider general directions for the Lower Town area:

- .1 Ensure that Lower Town will be comprised of varied and complementing land uses offering diverse activities and experiences for both the Summerland community and visitors.
- .2 Approve only developments that are compatible with the form and character of Lower Town and the Summerland community.



.3 Protect the integrity of Lower Town’s unique and compact residential neighbourhoods.

.4 Consider only commercial uses in Lower Town that shall complement and not detract from Summerland’s downtown core.

.5 Provide continuous and connected waterfront access throughout Lower Town with walkways, parks and open spaces.

.6 Appreciate and enhance the importance of the Lower Town’s waterfront, history and physical character.



Lower Town Townsite

.7 Optimize view corridors of Okanagan Lake and the surrounding mountains.

.8 Respect and preserve the environmental and natural qualities of Lower Town and adjacent lands.

.9 Reduce the negative hazards created by the silt bluffs, as these works are paramount to the future development potential of Lower Town.

.10 Ensure the Lower Town Strategic Plan will be consistent with policies contained in the OCP, notably as they consider Hazard Areas, Heritage and the Environment.

.11 Maintain and expand Lower Town’s pedestrian oriented area, where automobiles are accommodated but do not dominate the character and design of the special place.

3.0 POLICIES

This sub-section considers the strategic directions for the following:

- Waterfront Parks and Open Spaces,
- Community, Social and Recreational Facilities;
- Future Development Areas; and
- Mobility and Connectivity.

The policies are further illustrated in Schedule “B” - *Lower Town Strategic Plan*.

3.1 Waterfront, Parks and Open Spaces

Lower Town includes over 8.0 hectares of parkland. The majority of the parkland is within Peach Orchard Park following almost a kilometer of the lakeshore, providing amenities such as a boat launch, children’s waterpark, playgrounds, a pier, and beaches. The southern end of Lower Town offers the 0.4 hectare Kinsmen Park.

The District has to date provided approximately 1.2 kilometers of waterfront walkways from Peach Orchard Park to the Summerland Waterfront Resort. The District has also acquired approximately 1.4 hectares of waterfront lands at the south end of the study area for a future park amenity.



The following policies consider the strategic directions for the Lower Town waterfront, parks and open spaces:



- .1 Explore opportunities to increase the public access and parkland along the lake, including continuing parkland acquisitions at the south end of Lower Town.
- .2 Expand opportunities and activities available for the public “in and on” Lake Okanagan.
- .3 Protect swimming areas from boat traffic.
- .4 Facilitate additional public boat docking facilities along the waterfront including consideration of a publicly accessible wharf.
- .5 Improve and post access points of existing publicly owned waterfront properties.
- .6 Require a continuous and connected public waterfront walkway through new development and redevelopment proposals situated adjacent to the lakeshore.
- .7 Continue to support existing and future recreation activities along the waterfront.
- .8 Identify, protect and expand areas of environmental significance notably riparian areas.
- .9 Introduce public and semi public amenity areas and open spaces into existing and new developments.
- .10 Maintain and expand the Centennial Trail and the other trail networks linking Lower Town to the remainder of Summerland.

3.2 Community, Social and Recreational Facilities

Lower Town is home to a number of established community, social and recreational facilities including the South Okanagan Sailing Association, the Summerland Lakeside Presbyterian Church, the Summerland Yacht Club, the Summerland Trout Hatchery, the Lakeshore Racquet Club, the Peach Orchard Campground, and the public boat launch. These publicly accessible places draw people all year from the surrounding region. These facilities are key to the vitality and sustained success of Lower Town.

The following policies consider the strategic directions for community, social and recreational facilities:

- .1 Protect, support, and where feasible expand existing community, social and recreational facilities.
- .2 Support and enhance the historic, interpretive and educational value of the Summerland Trout Hatchery.



- .3 Encourage the development of additional public and private facilities that address the needs of both residents and visitors.
- .4 Recognize community amenities as vital to the vibrancy of Lower Town including facilities, waterfront access, parks, walkways and gathering spaces to facilitate social, recreational, arts, and cultural events and festivals.



Summerland Trout Hatchery

3.3 Future Development Areas

There is increasing interest in development along the foreshore of Okanagan Lake. Summerland and Lower Town are being discovered as desirable locations for residential and tourist accommodation, notably on larger (formerly industrial) parcels and the renovation or demolition of smaller residential homes. Lower Town offers established, primarily single family neighbourhoods as well as areas with development potential including the lands surrounding the wharf and the former Cannery site, the Lakeshore neighbourhood and the Shaughnessey Springs parcel. The potential development areas have been identified in Schedule “B” as the *Lower Town Waterfront*, *Lakeshore South* and *Shaughnessey Springs*.

The following policies consider the strategic direction for future development areas:

- .1 Provide a vibrant, mixed use and attractive waterfront and streetscape for the *Lower Town Waterfront*, permitting higher densities at the appropriate massing and height as not to detract from the small town character of Lower Town.



Waterfront Walkway / Development

- .2 The redevelopment of the lands on the east side of Lakeshore Road within *Lower Town Waterfront*, should focus on local convenience and tourism related commercial uses, supported by commercial accommodation. It is recognized that the centre of the *Lower Town Waterfront* is the ‘Lurtz Property’ legally known as Lot 1, District Lot 455 and District Lot 5085, Plan 5896 and therefore in addition to the commercial uses the redevelopment of the property shall also all be permitted residential housing.
- .3 The redevelopment of the lands on the west side of Lakeshore Road within *Lower Town Waterfront*, shall also permit residential housing supported by local convenience uses. These commercial uses shall only be permitted where there business has direct frontage onto Lakeshore Road.



- .4 The highest priority for development in Lower Town are projects that include the remediation and stabilization of the hazardous lands due to the silt bluffs, notably along the west side of Lakeshore Drive subject to geotechnical, safety, character, height and visual impact considerations.
- .6 Centralize higher development densities in the *Lower Town Waterfront*, to ensure that commercial and service uses are within a comfortable walking distance to accommodation and parking.
- .7 Ensure an appropriate scale for new development in the *Lower Town Waterfront* should maximize public access and step building heights down where adjacent to Lakeshore Road and the shoreline.
- .8 Encourage new developments proposed in the *Lower Town Waterfront* to include complementing community and/or tourist related amenities welcoming residents and tourists alike.
- .9 Encourage new developments in the *Lower Town Waterfront* to greet visitors from the lake, providing docking and mooring opportunities for public boats, and accommodating a continuous waterfront walkway.
- .10 Optimize views, publicly oriented uses and access along the shoreline, reinforced by appropriate signage/wayfaring landmarks identifiable for residents and visitors.
- .11 Consider the opportunities for existing community, social and recreational facilities to be sustained and enhanced during the review and consideration of development applications in the *Lower Town Waterfront* or *Lakeshore South*.
- .12 Encourage the retention and enhancement of the unique historic and character buildings particularly in the *Lakeshore South* and along the west side of Lakeshore Road within the *Lower Town Waterfront*. If historic or character buildings need to be removed due to geotechnical hazards it is preferred that they be relocated rather than demolished.
- .13 Explore the opportunities for additional residential development on the *Shaughnessey Springs* properties, encouraging increased residential densities, for lands not within the Agricultural Land Reserve. New development must be sensitive to surrounding character of the neighbourhood, hazardous conditions, safe access and address the need for affordable and/or seniors housing.



Lakeshore South Character

3.4 Mobility and Connectivity

The topography of Lower Town provides both advantages and challenges to the connectivity within the neighbourhood and to the remainder of Summerland. The level shoreline and the linear nature of Lakeshore Road provide excellent vehicular and pedestrian access to the lake and other amenities. Alternatively, the significant grade change, the barrier of the controlled access highway and the distance to downtown (2 km) limit the ease of access to the Lower Town neighbourhood.



The Centennial Trail has enhanced the pedestrian and bicycle access, although the terrain is challenging and in some instances conflicts with vehicular traffic. The District has also provided approximately 1.2 km of trail/sidewalk along the waterfront and Lakeshore Drive for the community’s leisurely enjoyment of the waterfront and parks. There are several parking areas within Peach Orchard Park, while there is no public transit accessing the area. There are limited opportunities for public use boaters to dock along the Summerland waterfront.

The following policies consider the strategic directions for mobility and connectivity to and from Lower Town:

- .1 Continue to require the public waterfront walkway or boardwalk along the shoreline connecting south to Trout Creek and north to Crescent Beach. The waterfront walkway will continue to be pedestrian oriented connecting the lakeshore activities and amenities and accommodating passive recreational uses.
- .2 Complete safe, easily recognizable, and shared use trail and sidewalk connections between downtown Summerland and Lower Town, notably the connections along or adjacent to Peach Orchard and Solly Roads. Provide pedestrian connections to existing trail and sidewalk networks adjacent to Lower Town. Encourage community stewardship in the maintenance and enhancement of the trails.
- .3 Cycling is a primary mode of travel throughout Lower Town and should be accommodated as not to conflict with motorized vehicles and pedestrians.
- .4 Develop a Lower Town mobility strategy to consider alternative transportation options and enforcement to improve the connectivity to and from the area.
- .5 Work towards enhancing existing and constructing new waterfront walkways to provide universal access for wheelchairs and other physical challenges.
- .6 Increase public boat access opportunities along the waterfront including consideration of a publicly accessible wharf improving accessibility from Lake Okanagan to Summerland. Consider alternative transportation options for visitors arriving to Lower Town by boat.
- .7 Improve the community awareness of existing public access points to the waterfront.
- .8 Explore alternative approaches to meet average summer parking needs for the Lower Town waterfront while not compromising the aesthetic or pedestrian oriented character of the area.
- .9 Increase surface parking opportunities at the south entrance, near or adjacent to public parks, the sailing club and access point and investigate the possibility of using



Waterfront Walkway and Amenities



lands designated as hazardous for parking use only if the District deems the temporary use not to be a public safety issue.

.10 Introduce traffic pattern refinements that improve the safety, but not the speed of vehicular travel along Lakeshore Road.

.11 Enhance the gateway elements of the southern access of Lower Town from Highway 97 and Peach Orchard Road through signage and landmarks.

.12 Develop a signage (orientation and interpretation program) following a common theme connecting key locations throughout Lower Town.



Connection to the Water

.13 The expansion or realignment of roadways for the purposes of accommodating vehicular movement should not negatively impact community parks and facilities.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The following action items further direct the fulfillment of the Lower Town Strategic Plan. They are referenced to the corresponding objective and policies, together with the priority and responsibility that are needed to achieve the preferred directions. The remaining objectives and policies are addressed in the Development Permit Guidelines.

Priority References

- O/I = Ongoing/Immediately
- <2 = Less than 2 years
- >2 = More than 2 years

Responsibility Reference

- D = District
- S = Stakeholder Interests and Community Groups
- LO/D = Land Owners/Developers
- C = Community Involvement



#	Obj./ Policy	Actions	Priority	Responsibility
4.1	2.0	Amend the District of Summerland's zoning bylaw, related policies and guidelines to be consistent with the Lower Town Strategic Plan.	O/I	D, C
4.2	2.0	Council adopt the Lower Town Strategic Plan as part of the District of Summerland's Official Community Plan.	O/I	D,C
4.3	2.0	In the pre-application stage of a development proposal, ensure that proponents are provided the Lower Town Strategic Plan for incorporation of the strategic directions in the development proposal.	O/I	D, LO/D
4.4	2.0	Encourage representation of Lower Town residents on the Advisory Planning Commission (provided a seat is available and the required APC selection process has been followed) to participate in the pre-application and review of major development applications for the <i>Lower Town Waterfront</i> .	O/I	D
4.5	2.0	Encourage landowners and developers, prior to submitting major development applications, first present the project in a community meeting prior to the preparation of implementing bylaws and the statutory review process.	O/I	LO/D
4.6	2.0, 3.3.1 3.3.2	Encourage developers to initiate a process to identify the appropriate programming and amount of retail and service uses for the needs of both residents and visitors.	O/I	LO/D, C
4.7	3.1.5 3.1.9	Negotiate with the Yacht Club the opportunity to provide public access to the wharf.	<2	D, S
4.8	3.1.1	Continue to acquire additional waterfront properties through land dedications and, where feasible, purchase from private owners and the province.	<2	D, LO/D
4.9	3.1.5	Install "recognizable" signage at the public waterfront access points. Continue to ensure that publicly owned lands are retained for community use only.	O/I	D
4.10	3.2.1	Continue and Enhance partnerships with community and recreational groups in Lower Town, promoting the sustained health of their activities, services and facilities.	O/I	D, S
4.11	3.3.9	Review the Zoning Bylaw for <i>Lakeshore South</i> to determine if the regulations will retain the historic character and scale of the neighbourhood.	<2	D, S, C
4.13	3.3.2 3.3.2 3.3.4	Prepare the Lower Town Design Guidelines for the Lower Town Waterfront, considering building massing, architectural character, landscaping standards, streetscapes, waterfront areas, public spaces, walkways and service areas.	<2	D, LO/D
4.14	3.3.4	Designate the <i>Shaughnessey Springs</i> area a development permit area for multifamily medium density development	>2	D, LO/D
4.15	3.3.9	Further investigate the funding opportunities to facilitate the preservation, protection of recognized heritage properties (i.e. the Presbyterian Church).	<2	D, S
4.17	3.4.3 3.4.4	Include Lower Town in the District's proposed Transportation Plan to advocate and give priority to pedestrians and cyclists rather than the single occupancy vehicle. The Transportation Plan should establish trail and sidewalk connections, consider transit service and facilities, parking areas, and parking management.	<2	D, S



	Obj./ Policy	Actions	Priority	Responsibility
4.1 8	3.4.7 3.4.9	Following the completion of the Transportation Plan, extend the Lakeshore Road street plan identifying areas for surface and on street parking, road safety improvements, streetscape design standards and a signage program.	<2	D, LO/D
4.1 9	2.0	Continue to host public events and festivals in Lower Town considering public private partnerships, showcasing art, culture, environment and recreation.	O/I	D, S
4.2 0	2.0	Explore opportunities to eliminate the noxious smell from the sanitary outlet near the boat launch.	<2	D
4.2 1	3.4.2	Design and implement a “walkable” streets program that considers road striping, signage and widening to make pedestrian movements through neighbourhoods safer.	>2	D
4.2 2	3.4.2	Enhance walkway connections to adjacent trails or amenities (such as the Bird Sanctuary, Crescent Beach and Trout Creek).	>2	D, S
4.2 3	3.4.2	Identify and secure a safe pedestrian access from Lower Town to downtown via Peach Orchard and Solly Road.	>2	D, C

5.0 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA

The following provides the location and the guidelines for the Lower Town Development Permit Areas. The categories and justification of the designations have been provided in the previous sections of the Lower Town Strategic Plan.

5.1 Area

The lands identified in Schedule “C” as *Lower Town Waterfront*.

5.2 Justification

Lower Town is designated in part a Development Permit Area in accordance with Section 919.1 of the Local Government Act considering the following designations:

- a) Protection of development from hazardous conditions;
- b) Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystem and biological diversity; and
- c) Establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, and multifamily residential development.

The Development Permit Guidelines for High Hazard Areas are contained within the Official Community Plan shall be referred to in the consideration of designated hazardous lands in the Lower Town Area.

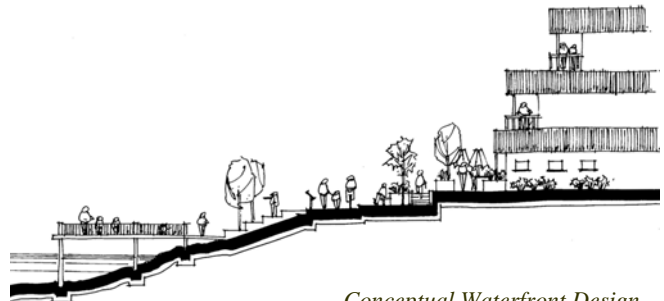
The *Lower Town Waterfront* has been designated for the protection of the natural environment and for the form and character of commercial and multifamily residential development (east side of Lakeshore Road is commercial exclusively, while the west side of Lakeshore Road is residential and commercial). The Development Permit designation is intended to recognize the uniqueness of Lower Town in its future redevelopment and enhancement. The *Lower Town Waterfront* lands are intended to become the focal point of the area recognizing the unique location, physical and historical characteristics, notably:



- the proximity to the waterfront and minimizing the impacts on the riparian riparian features, notably the shoreline and watercourses;
- the high hazard classification of the surrounding silt bluffs;
- the history of the lands, as the early settlement of Summerland and the existing industrial remnants of the cannery operations;
- the need to protect the existing human-scale and small town character of Summerland and the Lower Town area; and
- to ensure that new development is both pedestrian and waterfront oriented.

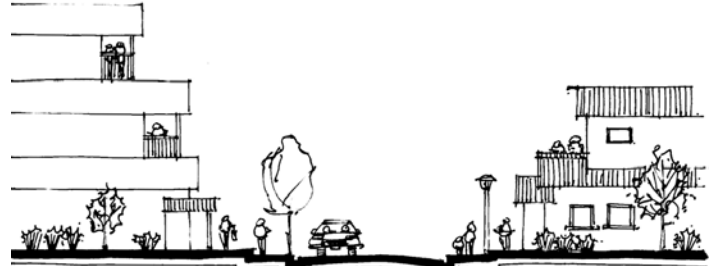
5.3 Guidelines

- .1 Developments must enhance the natural waterfront setting. Significant physical changes to the existing shoreline must enhance and improve riparian areas.
- .2 Where physical alterations including wharfs, and jettys are proposed, an environmental impact assessment shall be completed for review and approval of applicable local, provincial and federal agencies.
- .3 Developments shall provide continuous public access to the shoreline through the dedication of lands or a right of way for a connected public walkway. The walkway should provide universal access.
- .4 The waterfront walkway should provide areas of interest such as viewpoints, informal gathering places, public art, seating, boardwalks and docks.
- .5 Lake activities should be animated introducing increased commercial or public opportunities for recreational activities along the shoreline including rental concessions, tours and swimming areas.
- .6 Development should include additional public docking and mooring facilities. Private docking should be consolidated and maintain public access across and around the foreshore.
- .7 A site specific geotechnical and environmental review is required to determine the feasibility of developing lands on the west side of Lakeshore Road, within and adjacent to High Hazard Area. Developments adjacent to the silt bluffs shall recognize the stability problems associated with these features. A complete assessment of soil capabilities certified by a geotechnical engineering firm shall be provided prior to the issuance of a Development Permit for lands located in the District's established High Hazard (Red Zone).
- .8 The historic signage program for Lower Town should be consistent with the Lower Town Building Design Guidelines.



- .9 Developments should ensure that public and semi-private spaces are attractive and welcoming to the waterfront walkway and street, and may include gathering areas, public squares, roof top patios and balconies.
- .10 Building heights should be limited to a maximum of 3 storeys stepping down to the waterfront and Lakeshore Road, permitting breaks in the building massing for visual access to the waters edge. Building massing should be varied as not to create a wall or barrier to access or views to the lake and respect the human-scale of Lakeshore Road.

Notwithstanding, Schedule C identifies certain properties where the maximum heights may increase to a maximum of 5 or 10 storeys. It is the intent that the increased heights will enable a more attractive and vibrant waterfront hub or contribute to the stabilization of the silt bluffs. The increased building heights are intended to provide an enhanced site design and therefore will be subject to detailed review of possible impacts to the area and surrounding properties through the review of proposed site and building profiles, view corridors, and shadow studies. The District shall only consider heights to a maximum of 10 storeys on the west side of Lakeshore Road (as shaded in Schedule C) where the development is stabilizing the slope and is terraced into and follows the profile of the natural terrain.

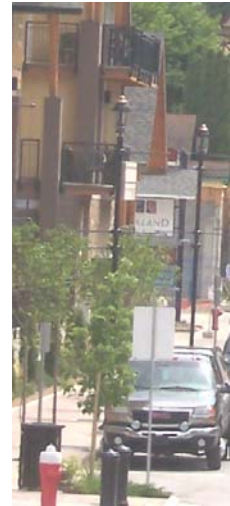


Conceptual Lakeshore Road Streetscape

- .11 The *Lower Town Waterfront* shall be the focal point of the Lower Town Area. As to ensure the necessary critical building mass and density will be developed the floor area ratio for lands designated in Schedule C that permit a maximum of 5 storey and 10 storey buildings shall be permitted to increase to 1.5 provided the development is consistent with the policies of the OCP and Development Permit Guidelines
- .12 Developments abutting the shoreline shall consider the visual appearance along the waterfront and the Lakeshore Road street façade.
- .13 Publicly oriented commercial uses fronting either the street or the waterfront, and shall be constructed at “build-to” setback requirements as to ensure vitality and animation along Lakeshore Road. Waterfront commercial uses should have a direct relationship with the shoreline location, activating the area with commercial uses such as equipment rentals, restaurants and pubs.
- .14 On the east side of Lakeshore Road, commercial uses and amenity space accessible to the general public shall occupy the entire ground floor while accommodation or residential uses can occupy all other areas. In addition to Policy 3.3.3, on the west side of Lakeshore Road commercial uses and amenity space accessible to the general public shall occupy the ground floor for the space fronting Lakeshore Road while accommodation and residential uses can occupy all other areas. The design and orientation of the development to the street and public spaces should be outwardly attractive providing interest through architectural and landscaping features.



- .15 Parking areas and loading areas should be situated below grade or screened from the street and waterfront, not interfering with pedestrian and vehicular movements along Lakeshore Road.
- .16 Lot consolidation should be considered with new developments within the *Lower Town Waterfront* in order to provide efficiencies and coordinated design of amenities, parking and open spaces. The development should be designed in a manner where building massing is broken up to establish a human scale and create an attractive appearance, while complementing and reinforcing the character of Lower Town.
- .17 The architectural qualities of development should draw on the historic character of the Lower Town area and the Okanagan region.
- .18 Developments shall provide views and consider the visual impact and access from Lakeshore South through to the waterfront.
- .19 Opportunities should be provided to preserve and appreciate the ecological and recreational qualities of the shoreline.
- .20 The landscaping, street furniture and lighting themes introduced by the District and the Summerland Resort should be continued and enhanced.
- .21 Consideration should be given in the building design to shared use of commercial and community facilities whereby peak summer seasons may accommodate tourist functions, while in the off-season the same storefronts accommodate community activities.
- .22 Public open spaces and the continuous waterfront walkway should be coordinated with adjacent properties to maximize the opportunity of the amenities.
- .23 The minimum right of way for the waterfront trail should be a minimum of 4.0 metres. A minimum sidewalk width of 2 metres is required along Lakeshore Road.



Summerland Waterfront Resort

