



Grouard

Area Structure Plan

July 2018



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Project Team would like to thank the community members, organizations, and various stakeholders who contributed to the development of this Area Structure Plan by providing feedback, attending community workshops, and sharing their stories. We are excited to see your active participation in implementing the Grouard Area Structure Plan.

We would also like to thank Big Lakes County Council for their support of this Plan.

Finally, we would like to thank the Big Lakes County Planning and Development team and Administration who provided information and participated in the development of this Plan.

All photos in this Area Structure Plan were taken by the proponents, except those otherwise credited.

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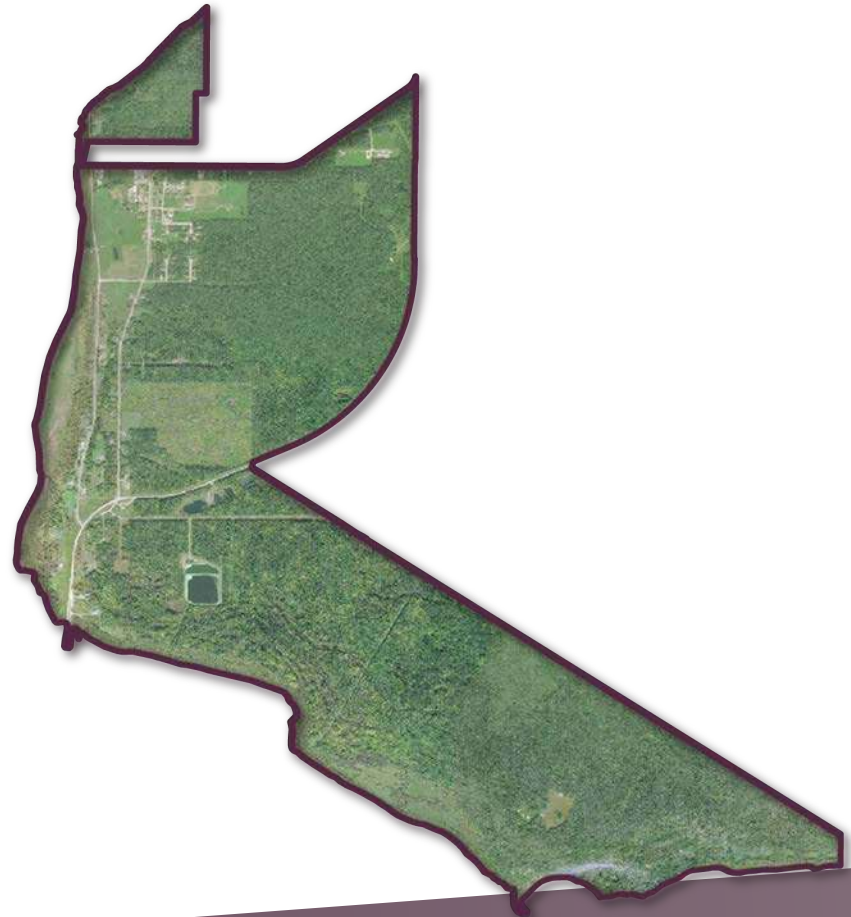
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(Source: Peel Postcard Library - University of Alberta)

PREFACE

The purpose of this Area Structure Plan (ASP) is to describe the land use concept, development policies, and vision for the Grouard community. This plan has been created as a joint action by the County, residents, and key stakeholders, engaging in Grouard's growth and renewal. People in the community of Grouard must believe in this plan and work together to achieve the outcomes of each character area: Old Town Area, Highway Development Area, Future Recreational Area, Future Residential Area, and Environmental Protection Area.

An ASP is a statutory document that requires Council adoption and is administrated by municipal planning staff once approved. The implementation of this plan must be driven by County leadership in order to realize Grouard's potential and restore community pride for future generations. The plan features implementation actions that can effectively implement the vision and policies in this plan. Actions are assigned to community stakeholders including the County, developers, and the community, as this plan makes each stakeholder accountable to the future of Grouard.



SECTION 01

THE PLAN



THE PLAN

01.1 Community Vision

“Grouard is a community of timeless potential that embraces and builds upon the breathtaking natural scenery and rich history to enrich itself as an attractive destination and place to call home.”

01.2 Character Areas

The Grouard Area Structure Plan has broken down the plan area into five distinct character areas based on similar attributes. Policies have been developed to apply to Grouard as a whole, as well as policies specific to each character area. Each character area has also been designated land uses, which will consider the area's characteristics to guide development through policies.

The five character areas for Grouard are:

- Old Town Area
- Highway Development Area
- Future Recreational Area
- Future Residential Area
- Environmental Protection Area

The **Old Town Area** consists primarily of the lands in the core where most people live, lands with access to municipal services, and home to much of the employment and heritage of Grouard. This area will focus on bringing back local commercial services to residents, providing better trail connections, and highlighting the hamlet's rich heritage. The area's proximity to the Kapawe'no First Nation provides an opportunity for collaboration.

The **Highway Development Area** consists of lands around Highway 750 between Lesser Slave Lake and Hilliard's Bay Road, which is currently a mix of residential and commercial uses. These lands present an opportunity to provide residents and visitors access to major commercial services, without having to go back to High Prairie.

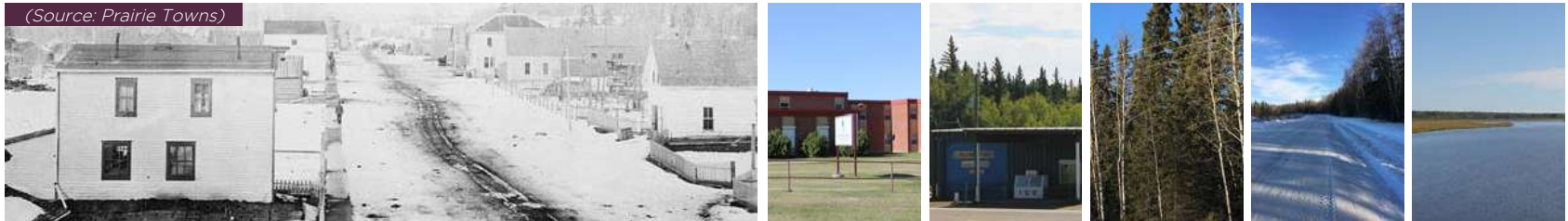
The **Future Recreational Area** consists of the majority of lands south of Highway 750 and Hilliard's Bay Road, most of which is currently undeveloped. The majority of these lands are also owned by the County with views of Lesser Slave Lake providing a key location for recreational uses. Its proximity to Shaw's Point Resort and the Highway Development Area make these lands crucial to the redevelopment of Grouard.

The **Future Residential Area** consists of lands east of the existing Old Town Area to the boundary of Grouard. This area is primarily Crown Land and rural in nature, but acts as a logical extension of the existing Old Town Area. The area's boundary along Highway 750 provides an opportunity for local employment opportunities.

The **Environmental Protection Area** consists of land around Buffalo Bay and Lesser Slave Lake, providing a buffer from existing and future development and the natural environment. This area is intended to ensure that public access is provided, the lake is protected, and residents of Grouard are connected with Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park.

HAMLET WIDE

(Source: Prairie Towns)



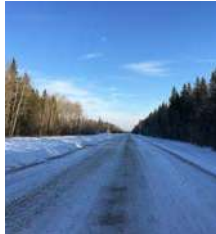
OLD TOWN AREA



HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT AREA



FUTURE RECREATIONAL AREA



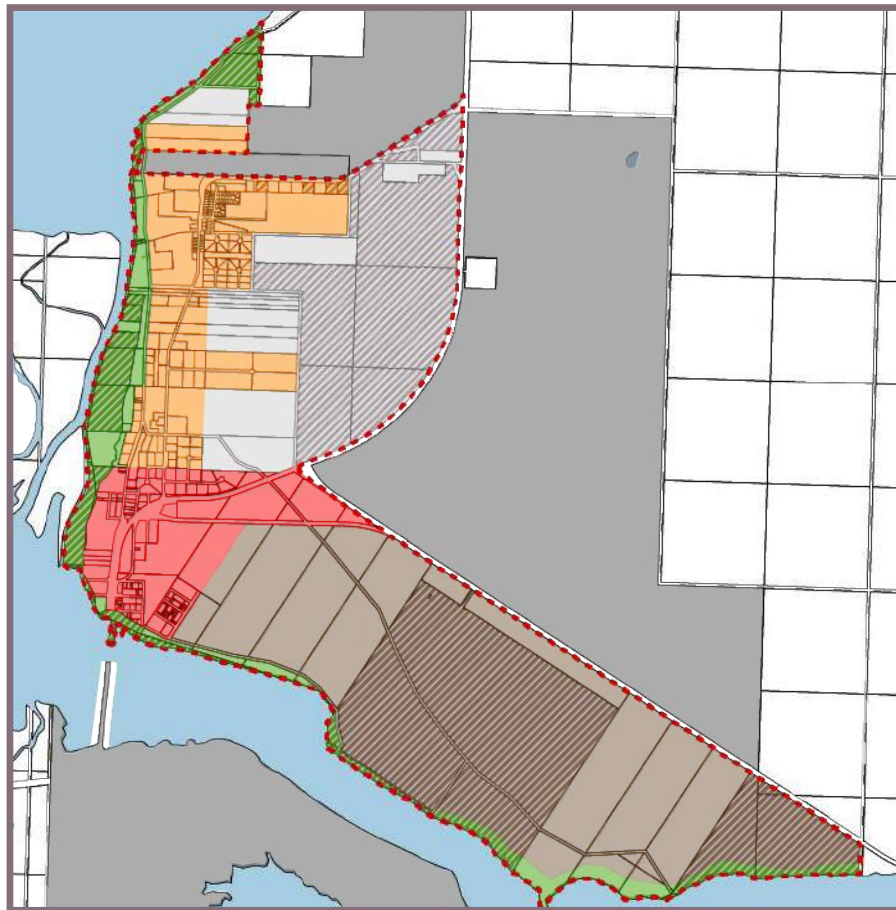
FUTURE RESIDENTIAL AREA



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AREA

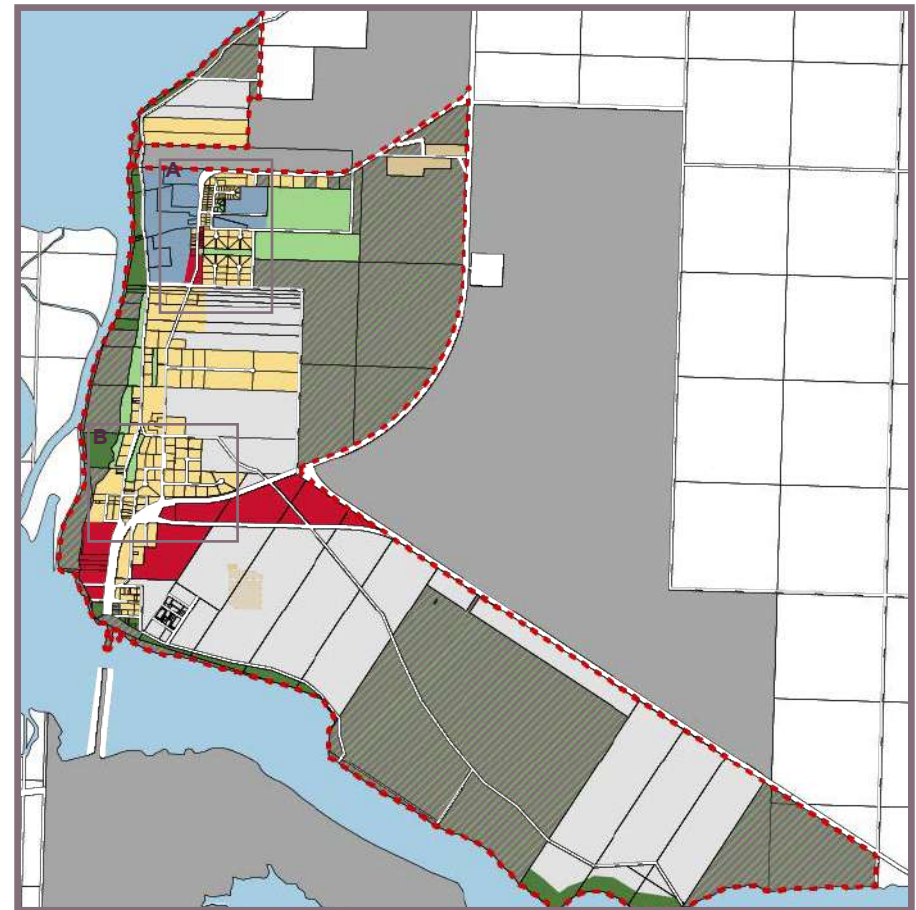


Figure 01 - Character Areas



- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| ASP Boundary | Old Town Area |
| First Nation | Highway Development Area |
| Crown Land | Future Recreational Area |
| | Future Residential Area |
| | Environmental Protection Area |

Figure 02 - Land Use Concept



- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| ASP Boundary | Residential | Institutional |
| First Nation | Commercial | Agriculture |
| | Parks and Recreation | Urban Reserve |
| | Environmental Reserve | Crown Land |
- *Municipal Lagoon lot boundary to be defined

Figure 03 - Land Use Concept - Inset A

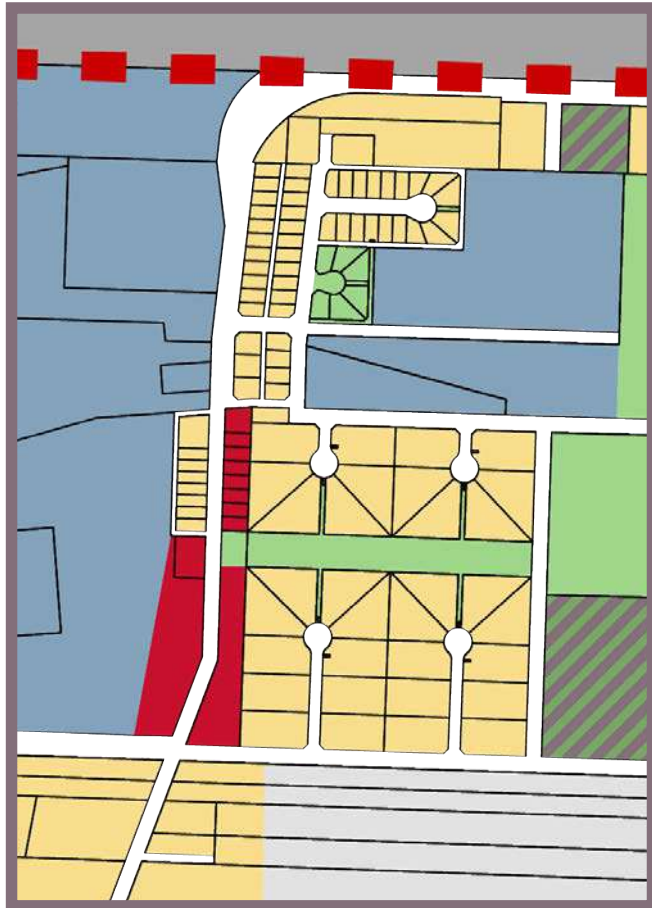
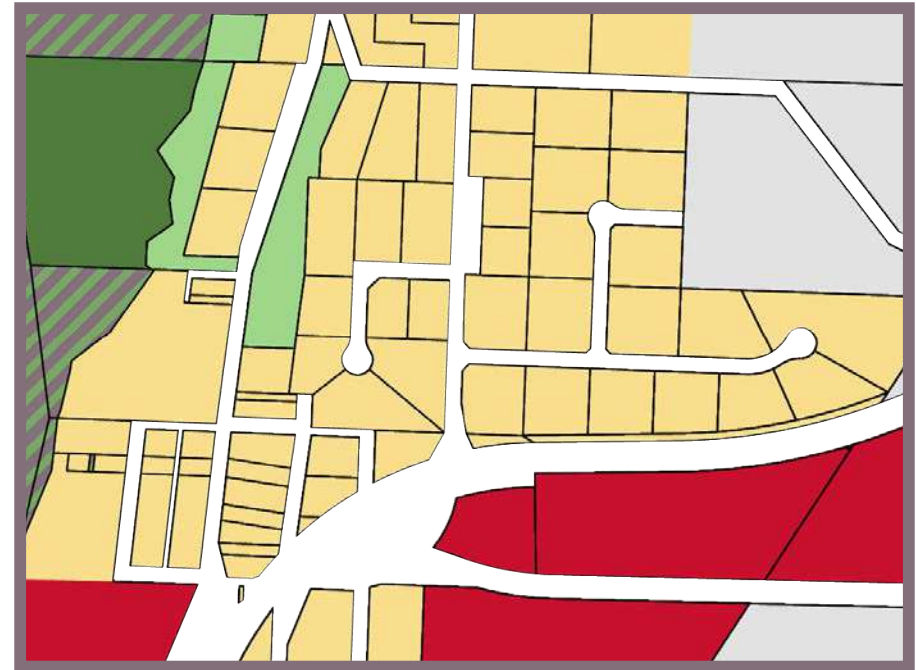


Figure 04 - Land Use Concept - Inset B



01.3 Hamlet Wide

Key Characteristics

- Rich and old history
- Beautiful views of Buffalo Bay and Lesser Slave Lake
- Demand for expansion of local services throughout hamlet
- High potential

The following policies guide the overall development of Grouard in order to achieve its vision, while supporting the development of each distinct character area. All development shall meet these policies, as these policies apply to the entire hamlet.

01.3.1 General Policies

- All subdivision and development applications within the Plan Area shall adhere to the regulations set out in Big Lakes County's Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw.
- All subdivision and development applications within the Plan Area shall conform to the policies and intent of this document.
- Character Areas should maintain their unique characteristics.
- Encourage the integration and identification of the community's history and heritage in the design of public spaces and wayfinding signage.
- Removal of natural vegetation and alterations to the natural drainage of lands adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas shall be discouraged.
- Incorporate the use of low-impact development principles in public spaces, where possible.



HAMLET WIDE POLICIES APPLY TO ABOVE AREA



HISTORY/HERITAGE IN WAYFINDING SIGNAGE



01.3.1(d)

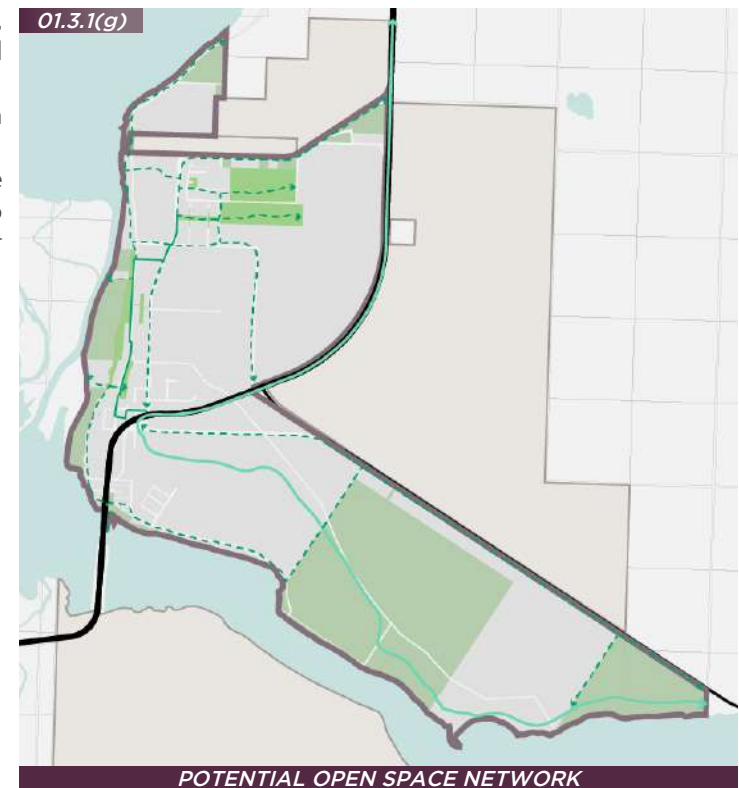
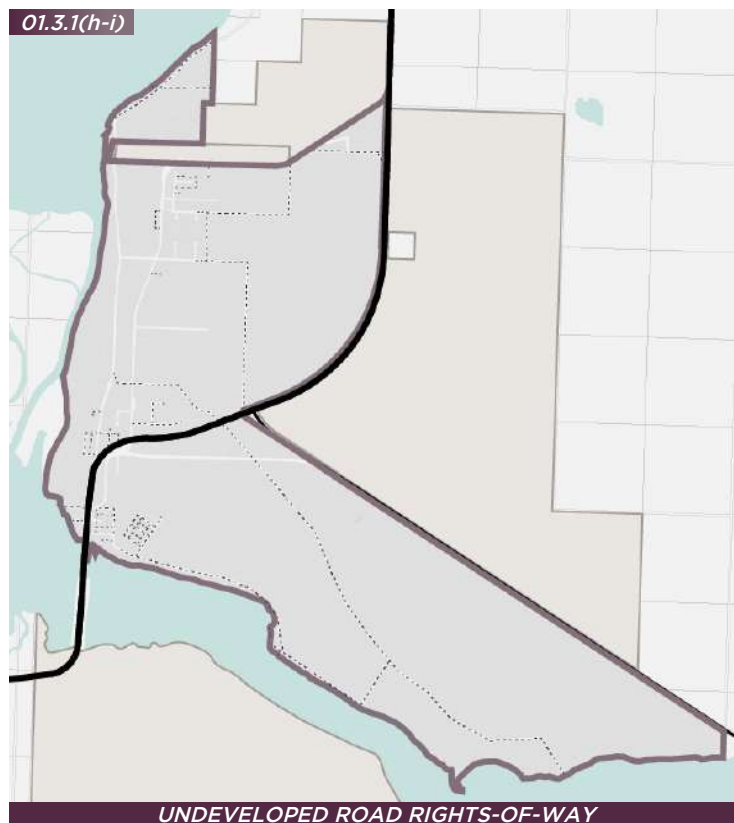


MAINTAINING NATURAL VEGETATION



LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

- g. Character Areas should be connected through sidewalks, walkways, and trails, while supporting all modes of active and permitted motorized transportation forms.
- h. Unnecessary road rights-of-way should be closed and consolidated with adjacent properties.
- i. Notwithstanding 1.3.1(h), road rights-of-way required for future development should be incorporated into the County's Capital Plan to generate a timeline for construction, or be conditioned on the developer to construct at subdivision or development permit stage.



- ASP Boundary
- First Nation
- Undeveloped Road Rights-of-Way

- ASP Boundary
- First Nation
- Park and Open Spaces
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Existing Trans Canada Trail
- Crown Land

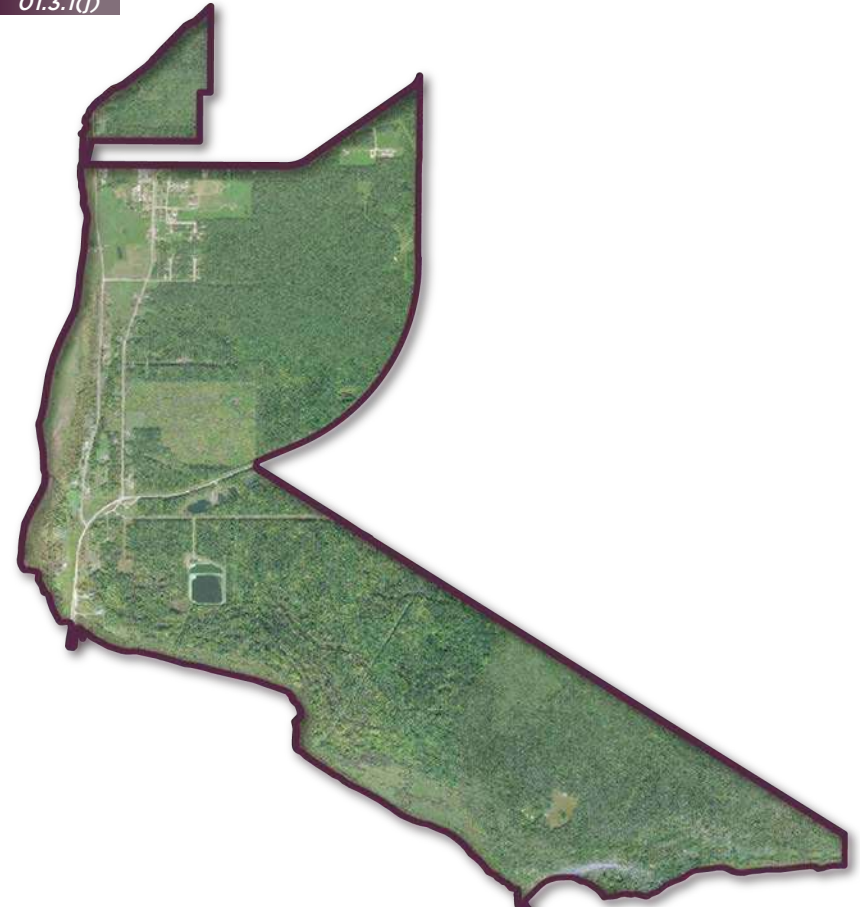
- j. The Plan Area shall not be expanded until the Future Residential Character Area begins to develop, and a Growth Study is prepared to support a boundary change.

01.3.1(j)



2009 AREA STRUCTURE PLAN BOUNDARY

01.3.1(j)



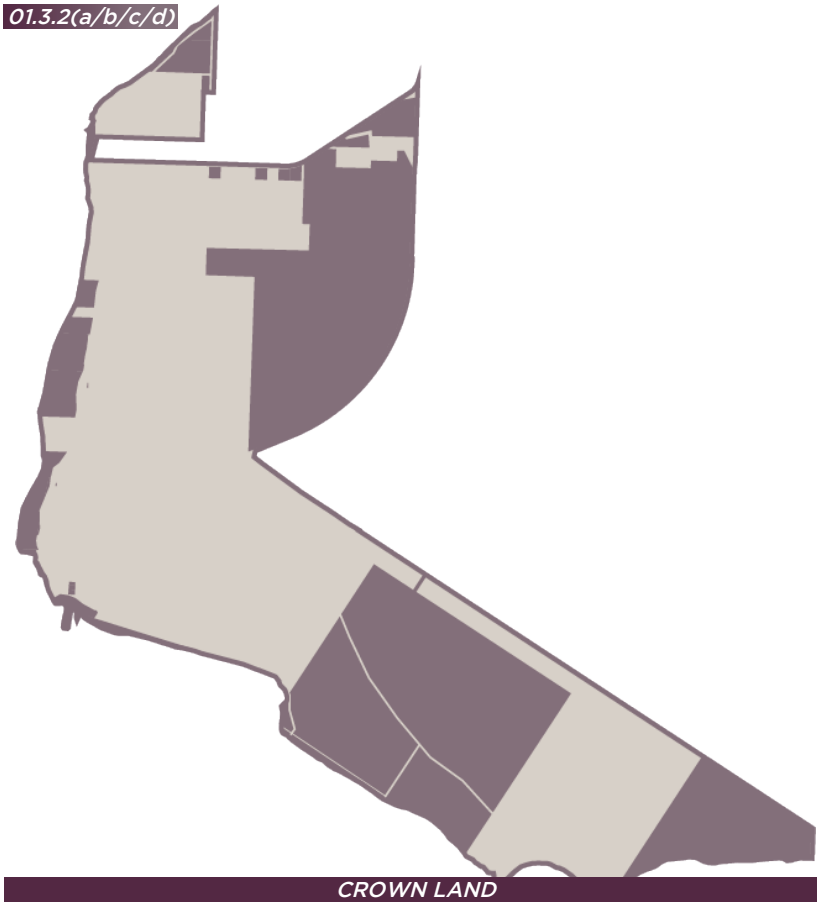
2018 AREA STRUCTURE PLAN BOUNDARY

01.3.2 Crown Land Policies

- a. Existing leases shall be permitted to continue, and may be renewed to the satisfaction of Alberta Environment and Parks.
- b. New leases should consider adjacent land uses and should coordinate with Big Lakes County's Development Authority.
- c. The County and Alberta Environment and Parks should identify potential parks and recreational opportunities together that expands the Open Space Network, where possible.
- d. In the event that Crown Land is transferred to private ownership, the land shall be redistricted to an appropriate land use district suitable to its Character Area.

01.3.2(a/b/c/d)

ASP Boundary
Crown Land

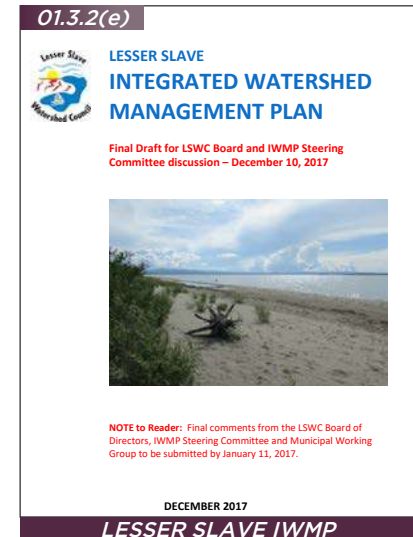


01.3.3 Subdivision and Development Policies

- a. Development that deviates from the intent of the land use concept shall require an amendment to the Area Structure Plan.
- b. Infill development shall consider the height, setbacks, and character of existing adjacent buildings.
- c. New subdivision or development proposed within the 1:100 year flood plain of Buffalo Bay or Lesser Slave Lake shall be prohibited.
- d. New development applications within 1km of Public Lands or bed and shore of Buffalo Bay or Lesser Slave Lake shall be referred to Alberta Environment and Parks.
- e. A traffic impact assessment (TIA) may be required for:
 - i) Multi-lot residential development;
 - ii) Major commercial development that generate significant vehicular traffic;
 - iii) Major recreational and/or RV resort development;
 - iv) Any development within 800m of Highway 750, refer to Alberta Transportation
 - v) Any other development, at the request of the Development Officer
- f. Subdivision applications and significant development applications shall be referred to Alberta Culture and Tourism to determine if a Historic Resources Application is required.

01.3.4 Servicing Policies

- a. New development should be required to connect to municipally-owned water and sewer services, at the sole expense of the developer.



01.4 Old Town Area

Key Characteristics

- Largest residential population
- Major employment area
- Access to local services
- Community facilities
- Proximity to Buffalo Bay
- Underdeveloped land

01.4.1 General Policies

- The Old Town Area should support a mix of hamlet residential, hamlet commercial, institutional, park and recreational uses, and urban reserve uses.
- Existing historic and heritage buildings shall be protected and preserved in accordance with the County's Heritage Inventory, where feasible.
- Development should be compatible to adjacent uses and provide appropriate buffering, if required, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.

01.4.2 Residential Policies

- Single detached dwellings shall remain the predominate form of residential development. Other dwelling forms, including duplex, row house, manufactured homes, and apartment buildings, shall be supported, where appropriate, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.
- Duplex, row house, and apartment buildings should be located along Mission Street.



OLD TOWN AREA POLICIES APPLY TO ABOVE AREAS



- c. Residential development along Mission Street should be street-oriented to support the creation of a “main street.”
- d. Social, senior, and affordable housing should be located on County owned lands in residential areas, where possible.
- e. Home based businesses should be encouraged within residential areas provided they are compatible with adjacent land uses, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.

01.4.3 Commercial Policies

- a. Commercial development in the Old Town Area shall be located along Mission Street.
- b. Commercial development should be street-oriented to support the creation of a “main street.”
- c. New commercial development should be developed under the Hamlet Commercial District.
- d. New commercial development should connect to the existing sidewalk connection.
- e. Commercial development should be small-scale and offer services to local residents and nearby rural areas, including restaurants, hotels, and retail stores.
- f. Commercial development should locate parking to the side or rear of the building to support the creation of a “main street.”
- g. New commercial development should only be undertaken in such a manner as to minimize any negative impacts on the residential areas, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.

01.4.4 Institutional, Parks, and Recreation Policies

- a. Connections to existing trails and sidewalks should be provided, where possible, to provide safe and comfortable access for residents.
- b. Park and recreational spaces should be connected to the Hamlet’s Open Space Network.
- c. Landscaping should be used along Mission Street to enhance the appearance of the community and develop a “main street.”
- d. Trails and sidewalks should incorporate design principles that increase safety and reduce crime, such as lighting, and landscaping.



01.4.5 Urban Reserve Policies

- a. Lands designated as Urban Reserve shall require redistricting prior to urban development.
- b. Existing uses shall be permitted to continue until urban development commences. However, any new uses or development shall conform to the regulations set out in the Land Use Bylaw.



01.5 Highway Development Area

Key Characteristics

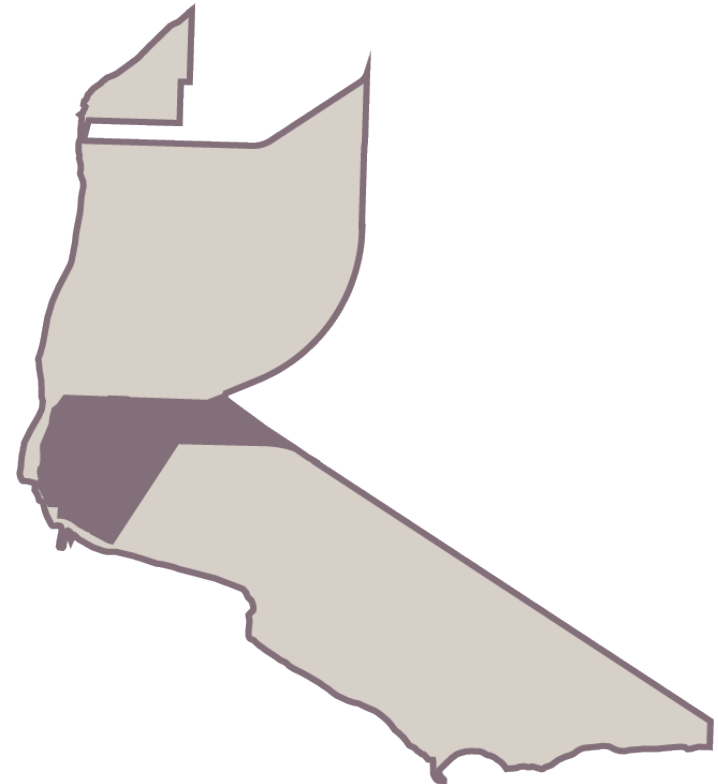
- Proximity to Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park
- Highway visibility
- Underdeveloped and vacant land

01.5.1 General Policies

- The Highway Development Area should support highway commercial, residential, and urban reserve uses.
- New development within 800m of Highway 750 shall be referred to Alberta Transportation.
- New development should not be accessed directly from Highway 750, but rather from a County roadway.
- Future development may require upgrades to municipal roads and improvements to intersections of municipal roads with provincial highways, at the sole expense of the developer.

01.5.2 Commercial Policies

- Commercial development in the Highway Development Area should be located along Highway 750.
- New commercial development should be developed under the Highway Commercial District.
- Commercial development should be larger-scale to offer services to the travelling public as well as area residents, including hotels, motels, restaurants, and service stations.



**HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT AREA POLICIES
APPLY TO ABOVE AREA**



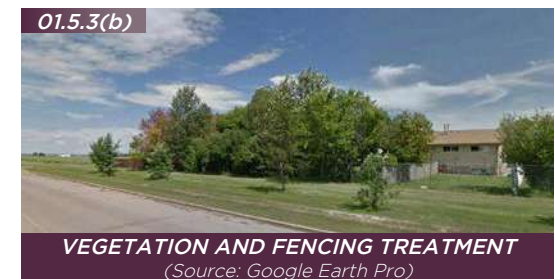
- d. Commercial development may include a mixed-use component, such as office development on a potential second floor.
- e. Appropriate transitions and buffers between commercial and adjacent residential uses shall be provided through setbacks, separation spaces, landscaping, and screening measures, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.
- f. County owned lands should be consolidated and be subdivided when a purchase agreement between a developer and the County is prepared.

01.5.3 Residential Policies

- a. New residential development should include higher density residential development when located adjacent Highway 750.
- b. New residential development adjacent to Highway 750 should implement an appropriate urban design treatment between the highway and residential areas, such as berming, fencing, vegetation, or signage.
- c. Home based businesses are encouraged within residential areas, provided they are compatible with adjacent land uses, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.

01.5.4 Urban Reserve Policies

- a. Lands designated as Urban Reserve shall require redistricting prior to urban development.
- b. Existing uses shall be permitted to continue until urban development commences. However, any new uses or development shall conform to the regulations set out in the Land Use Bylaw.



01.6 Future Recreational Area

Key Characteristics

- Primarily owned by County
- Accessibility to Lesser Slave Lake
- Proximity to Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park
- Difficultly shaped, treed covered lots

01.6.1 General Policies

- a. The Future Recreational Area should support parks and recreational uses, hamlet commercial, and agriculture uses.
- b. County owned lands should be consolidated to support the development of recreational uses and subdivided in accordance with new development.
- c. Commercial Recreation uses may include campgrounds, parks, resorts, and extensive and intensive recreational uses.
- d. New development along the shoreline should not impede on existing viewpoints of Lesser Slave Lake.
- e. New or extended internal roads within a multi-lot residential development, resort development, or campground shall be restricted to the outer edge of forested areas to support contiguous development, where possible.

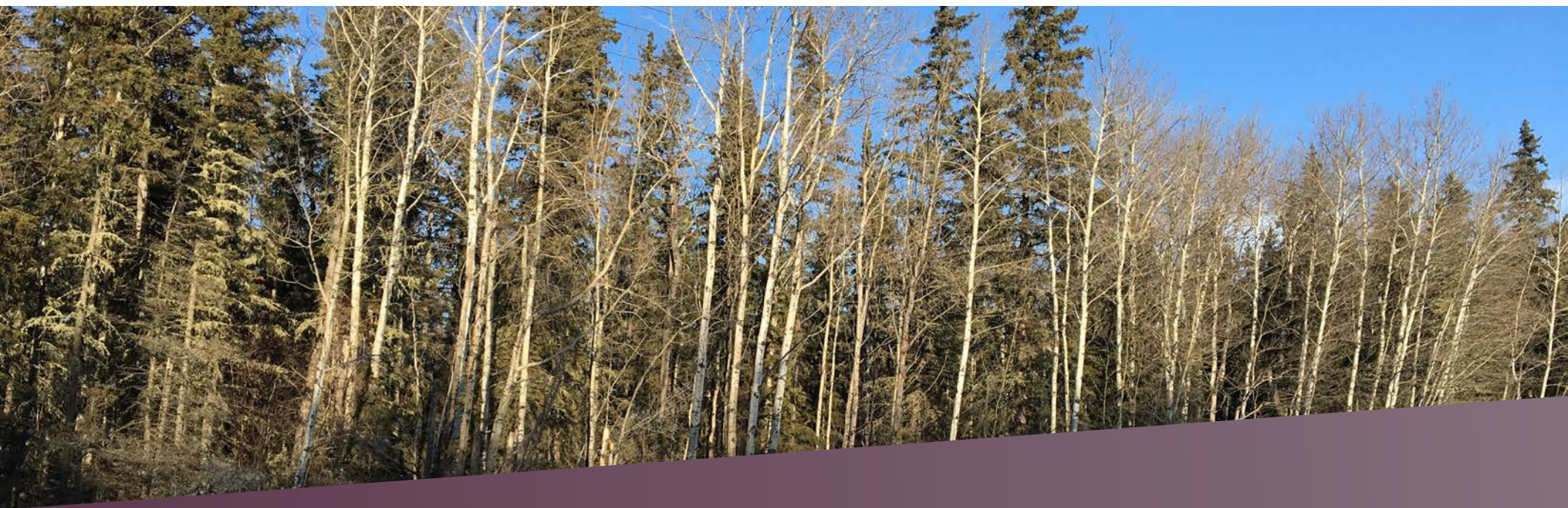


01.6.2 Agriculture Policies

- a. Agriculture uses shall be limited to municipal lagoons.
- b. The lands containing the municipal lagoon shall be consolidated, subdivided accordingly to define the boundary of the municipal service, and redistricted in order to prevent incompatible development.

01.6.3 Urban Reserve Policies

- a. Lands designated as Urban Reserve shall require redistricting prior to urban development.
- b. Existing uses shall be permitted to continue until urban development commences. However, any new uses or development shall conform to the regulations set out in the Land Use Bylaw.



01.7 Future Residential Area

Key Characteristics

- Primarily Crown owned, tree covered land
- Proximity to Old Town Area
- Proximity to Highway 750

01.7.1 General Policies

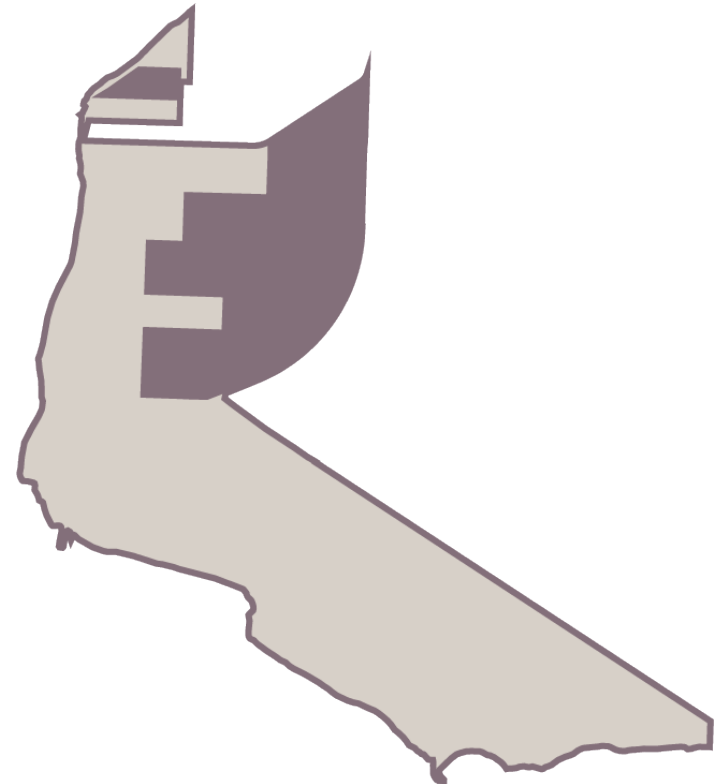
- The Future Residential Area should support hamlet residential, hamlet commercial, institutional, parks and recreational, and limited agriculture uses.
- Existing historic and heritage buildings shall be protected and preserved in accordance with the County's Heritage Inventory, where feasible.
- Development should be compatible to adjacent uses and provide appropriate buffering, if required, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.
- Future development may require upgrades to municipal roads and improvements to intersections of municipal roads with provincial highways, at the sole expense of the developer.

01.7.2 Agriculture Policies

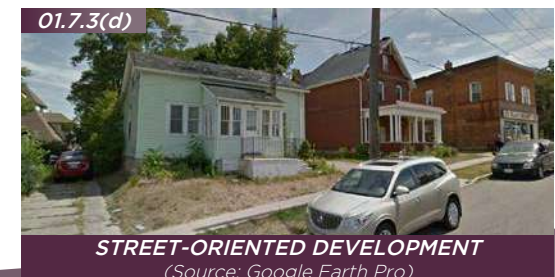
- Agriculture uses shall be limited to waste transfer stations or waste management purposes.

01.7.3 Residential Policies

- Residential development should be predominately single detached dwellings, and duplexes.
- Row houses may be located along Mission Street.
- Apartment buildings shall be located along Mission Street or adjacent to Highway 750.
- Residential development along Mission Street should be street-oriented to continue the creation of a "main street."
- Social, senior, and affordable housing should be located on County owned lands in residential areas, where possible.



FUTURE RESIDENTIAL AREA POLICIES APPLY TO ABOVE AREA



STREET-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
(Source: Google Earth Pro)

- f. Residential development should be compatible with the existing development in the Old Town Area, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.
- g. Garden suites and garage suites shall be allowed on lots with single detached dwellings.
- h. Home based businesses should be encouraged within residential areas, provided they are compatible with adjacent land uses, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer.

01.7.4 Commercial Policies

- a. Commercial development in the Future Residential Area shall be located along Mission Street, or Highway 750.
- b. Commercial development should be street-oriented to continue the creation of a “main street.”
- c. Commercial development should be developed under the Hamlet Commercial District.
- d. Commercial development should connect to the existing sidewalk connection.
- e. Commercial development should be small-scale and offer services to local residents and nearby rural areas, including restaurants, hotels, and retail stores.
- f. Commercial development should encourage side and rear parking, where possible.

01.7.5 Institutional, Parks, and Recreation Policies

- a. Connections to existing trails and sidewalks should be provided, where possible, to provide safe and comfortable access for residents.
- b. When Municipal Reserve is dedicated, it should expand and connect to the existing Open Space Network, where possible.
- c. Landscaping should be used along Mission Street to enhance the appearance of the community and develop a “main street.”
- d. Trails and sidewalks should incorporate design principles that increase safety and reduce crime, such as lighting, and landscaping.



01.7.6 Urban Reserve Policies

- a. Lands designated as Urban Reserve shall require redistricting prior to urban development.
- b. Existing uses shall be permitted to continue until urban development commences. However, any new uses or development shall conform to the regulations set out in the Land Use Bylaw.



01.8 Environmental Protection Area

Key Characteristics

- Proximity to Lesser Slave Lake
- Floodplain of Buffalo Bay and Lesser Slave Lake
- Proximity to Police Point Natural Area and Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park

01.8.1 General Policies

- a. The Environmental Protection Area will support parks and select recreational uses.
- b. The exact delineation of the Environmental Protection Area shall be determined through an Ecological Network Report, with its boundaries subject to change.

01.8.2 Development and Environmental Policies

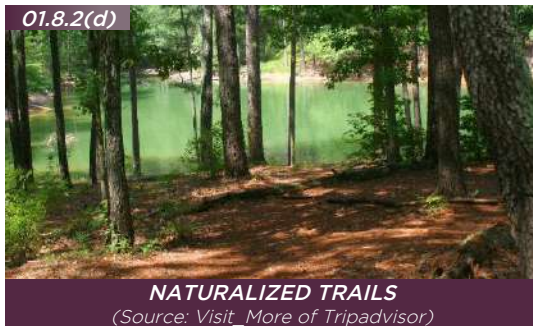
- a. A minimum 30m environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement shall be required from the top of bank of Lesser Slave Lake and Buffalo Bay.
- b. A minimum 15m environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement shall be required from all wetlands and the 1:00 year flood line of permanent streams.
- c. Environmental reserve and environmental reserve easements may be increased due to steep slopes, erosion, shallow ground water, or particular sensitive contamination concerns at the discretion of the Subdivision or Development Officer.
- d. All environmentally sensitive natural features within parks and open spaces shall remain protected, conserved, and sensitively integrated in any recreational use.
- e. The waterfront of Buffalo Bay and Lesser Slave Lake shall remain public, with access provided where environmentally feasible.
- f. Formal trails for motorized recreational activities shall not be permitted within the bed and shore of Buffalo Bay and Lesser Slave Lake.



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AREA POLICIES
APPLY TO ABOVE AREA**

01.8.3 Recreational Policies

- a. Recreational interventions shall demonstrate sustainable and ecological design and implementation, to the satisfaction of the Development Officer, and Alberta Environment and Parks when applicable.
- b. Winter recreational uses that have minimal negative impact on the natural ecology of Lesser Slave Lake and Buffalo Bay shall be allowed, such as ice fishing, curling, and skating, to the satisfaction of Alberta Environment and Parks.
- c. Low impact recreational development shall be allowed outside of the shore lands and riparian areas, such as hiking, bicycling, cross country skiing, and snow shoeing, where environmentally feasible.



SECTION 02













THE IMPLEMENTATION














THE IMPLEMENTATION

















02.1 Actions

The below table outlines the actions that are required to implement this plan. This plan is required to be implemented by multiple stakeholders including the County, developer, and the community. Each action is linked to the policy it is implementing, who is responsible, and the priority of the action. The priority of each action is defined as the following:

- S** Implement in the Short Term - Implement immediately to 1-2 years
- M** Implement in the Medium Term - Implement within 3-5 years
- L** Implement in the Long Term - Implement within 6-10 years

<i>Policy(s) Action</i>		<i>Responsibility</i>			<i>When</i>
		<i>County</i>	<i>Developer</i>	<i>Community</i>	
General	Dedicate a personnel to implement/coordinate the implementation of the Grouard Area Structure Plan.				S
General	Explore and collaborate with the Kapawe'no First Nation on shared infrastructure and services to benefit both communities.				S-L
General	Enter into Intermunicipal Development Plans with M.D. of Lesser Slave River, Woodland County, M.D. of Greenview No. 16, M.D. of Smoky River No. 130, and Northern Sunrise County in order to protect the Lesser Slave Lake Watershed.				S
General	Redistrict land to reflect the Area Structure Plan's land use concept.				L
General	Obtain a qualified person/organization to develop an inventory of environmentally sensitive areas.				S
01.3.1.b 01.3.1.c	Adopt the updated Grouard Area Structure Plan.				S
01.3.1.d 01.4.1.b 01.7.1.b	Establish a heritage committee or coordinator to maintain and update the County's Heritage Inventory, and to implement public spaces initiatives.				M
01.3.1.e 01.3.3.c 01.3.3.d 01.3.4.d 01.8.1.b 01.8.2.c 01.8.2.d	Work with the Lesser Slave Watershed Council and Alberta Environment and Parks to determine where environmental reserve and Environmental Protection Area should be dedicated/delineated, determine the classification of existing ecological features, and establish a referral program with said agencies. Studies and mapping of existing ecological features, and any supporting documents should be completed.				M

Policy(s)	Action	Responsibility			When
		County	Developer	Community	
01.3.1.f 01.4.4.c 01.7.5.c	Incorporate landscaping and low-impact development in parks, roadways, and developments adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas.				L
01.3.1.g 01.3.2.c 01.4.4a 01.4.4b 01.7.5.a 01.7.5.b 01.8.2h	Develop an Open Space Network that connects sidewalks and trails from existing and new development in the hamlet, and delineate how pedestrians, cyclists, and ATVs will use the network.				M
01.3.2.d	Private landowners and developers shall redistrict their purchased Crown Lands to an appropriate district, to the satisfaction of the County				L
01.3.1.i	Review existing road rights-of-way and determine what roads are excess, what roads are to be developed and to be added to the County's Capital Plan, and what roads can be conditioned on future stages of development.				S
01.3.1.j	The County should pursue a Growth Study when development in the Future Residential Area begins in order to determine when and where the plan's boundary should be amended.				S
01.3.3.a	Establish a process to amend Area Structure Plans within the County.				S
01.3.3.e 01.5.1.d 01.7.1.d	Establish when traffic impact assessments and roadway upgrades will be required with new development with the County's Public Works department.				S
01.3.3.f	Conduct and maintain a Historic Resource Inventory for the Plan Area.				S
01.3.4.a	Establish the signing of development agreements as a requirement of the subdivision process.				S
01.4.2.c 01.4.3.b 01.4.3.f 01.7.3.d 01.7.4.b 01.7.4.f	Update the Land Use Bylaw to include street-oriented/"main street" development in Hamlet Residential, Hamlet Commercial, and Hamlet Mixed-Use with reduced front setbacks and parking to the side or rear.				S

Policy(s)	Action	Responsibility			When
		County	Developer	Community	
01.4.2.d 01.7.3.e	Explore partnerships with not-for-profit organizations, private organizations, or governments to develop social, senior, or affordable housing on County owned lands.				M
01.4.2.f 01.5.3.c 01.7.3.g	Provide information brochure on starting home based businesses.				M
01.4.4.a	Partner with Northern Lakes College to connect trails through the College's property, connecting the College's sports fields to municipal park spaces.				M
01.4.5.a 01.5.4.a 01.6.3.a 01.7.6.a	Lands that are districted Urban Reserve require the landowner to redistrict their lands prior to urban development. Redistricting should follow the land use concept in the Area Structure Plan.				L
01.5.1.b	Establish a referral system with Alberta Transportation.				S
01.5.1.c	Coordinate with Alberta Transportation on the timing of Highway 750's upgrade to remove direct access from the highway.				M
01.5.2.f 01.6.1.b 01.6.2.b	Consolidate County owned lands to improve saleability, and subdivide in accordance with new development or land purchases. The lagoon requires the consolidation of County owned land, subdivision of the lagoon area, and redistricting to place it within a compatible district.				M
01.6.1.d	Amend the Land Use Bylaw to contemplate height restrictions within all hamlet, and park and institutional districts.				M
01.8.2.a 01.8.2.b 01.8.2.g	Dedicate environmentally sensitive lands as environmental reserve or environmental reserve easements.				S

02.2 Redistricting and Subdivision

Redistricting and subdivision applications shall be commenced by developers and landowners when necessary and correspond to the land use concept specified in this Area Structure Plan. Redistricting and subdivision applications shall be guided by the County's bylaws, such as the Big Lakes County's Municipal Development Plan, Land Use Bylaw, and any requirements necessary for each application.

02.3 Area Structure Plan Amendment Process

Policies, text, and figures found within the Grouard Area Structure Plan may be amended from time to time, in order to respond to broader or more specific issues affecting the Plan Area. Any amendments made shall be in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, and any other applicable County bylaws, policies, and procedures.

(Source: Peel Postcard Library - University of Alberta)



SECTION 03

THE CONSULTATION

THE CONSULTATION

03.1 Summary

An extensive engagement strategy was developed to consult local residents and stakeholders on the development of the plan. These stakeholders included residents, local business owners, school and education boards, representatives from neighbouring First Nations, and local bylaw enforcement.

A community workshop was held on October 20, 2017, with open houses held on January 22, 2018 and April 10, 2018. The community workshop collaborated with local residents to learn more about their community, while the open houses were to receive feedback on the proposed Character Areas, Land Use Concept, and draft Area Structure Plan. Surveys were also distributed by mail and available at events during each phase of the project to notify landowners of future events, provide background information, and collect preliminary feedback.

03.2 Phase 1: Community Surveys, Workshops, and Visioning

The first phase of preparing the Area Structure Plan consisted of gathering background information of the community, meeting with stakeholders, and learning from those who live or own property within Grouard. The Project Team engaged local residents by sending out Community Surveys to landowners to provide a local perspective on the community, meeting with local residents with a Community Workshop, and sending a Visioning Survey based on the feedback from the workshop. Some of the key themes include:

- Support community members continuing to work together to make Grouard a place to be proud of, building its **identity** through the breathtaking views and natural landscape to make the community a destination on the map
- Incorporate and commemorate Grouard's rich **history** that is still found in the community today
- Preserve **nature** and the natural landscape so all residents can enjoy the recreational activities associated with them
- Improve and extend basic **public services and infrastructure** throughout the community in order to attract new development and visitors
- Improve existing **public spaces** to incorporate socializing and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages





Grouard Area Structure Plan Review
WHAT WE HEARD
October 18, 2017 Community Workshop

Big Lakes County recently adopted a new Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw, and is currently reviewing and updating the Grouard Area Structure Plan (ASP).

The Area Structure Plan (ASP) establishes a vision for the future of Grouard and is the tool that will help the County manage growth in the hamlet over the next 20 years. The ASP provides the framework that generally describes current and future land uses, roadway locations, and servicing schemes.

A Community Workshop for Grouard ASP Review was held on October 18, 2017 from 6pm to 9pm, at the Northern Lakes College. The Grouard Community Workshop was intended to be a formal introduction of the project to the public and the first opportunity to gather community information and feedback. Previously, residents had only been introduced to the project through a Community Survey that was distributed October 6-18, 2017 to obtain background information and included a formal invitation to the community workshop.

The purpose of this session was to provide background information on the project and discuss the past, present, and future of Grouard to create the foundation of the Grouard Area Structure Plan. The information gathered was used to create a vision for Grouard which was distributed for public comment November 6-24, 2017.

 3 Attendees  4 Community Surveys  1 Feedback Form




Continued 1/3

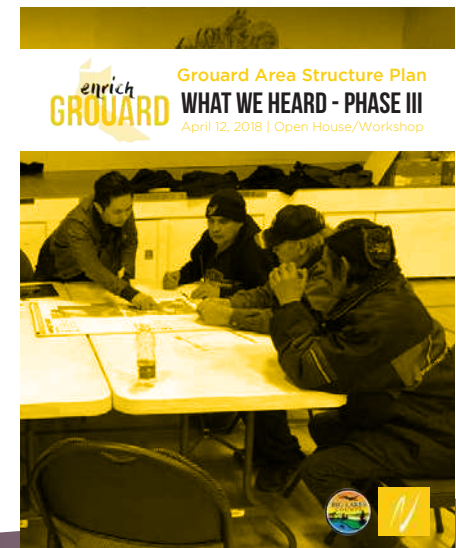
03.3 Phase 2: Open House - Character Areas / Land Use Concept

The second phase of preparing the Area Structure Plan was to develop the Land Use Concept and Character Areas for the community. Incorporating the key themes above, Character Areas were developed from areas that shared similar attributes, such as location, history, or existing land use. The Land Use Concept was derived from the Municipal Development Plan's land use concept, feedback from engagement surveys, and from local residents interested in their specific lots. The Project Team engaged local residents by once again surveying landowners on the proposed Character Areas and the Land Use Concept, followed by hosting an open house to receive additional feedback. The feedback received was primarily focused on specific lands owned by the attendees of the open house, with the concept updated to reflect the comments heard.



03.4 Phase 3: Open House / Workshop - Draft Plan

The third phase of preparing the Area Structure Plan was to draft the document itself, including writing the policies of the plan, preparing the figures for the plan, and establishing an implementation action program for the plan. These policies were created from the information provided in previous engagement sessions, ensuring what residents had told us were important were preserved, supported, and actionable. The Project Team engaged local residents by inviting them out to an open house/workshop to review the draft policies, concepts, and implementation action program.



SECTION 04

THE CONTEXT



THE CONTEXT

04.1 Authorization

The Grouard Area Structure Plan repeals and updates the existing Grouard Area Structure Plan adopted in 2009. The preparation of the ASP was authorized by County of Big Lakes on April 5, 2017 by request for proposal, selecting the successful proponent on August 28, 2017.

04.2 Location

Grouard is located on the shores of Buffalo Bay and Lesser Slave Lake and is bounded by the Sucker Creek First Nation and Kapawe'no First Nation. The community is accessible by Highway 750, 20km north of Highway 2. Grouard is located on the way to Shaw's Point, Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park, and Hilliard's Bay Estates, which attract thousands of seasonal tourists. The hamlet is 33 kilometers northeast of the Town of High Prairie, and approximately 365 kilometers northwest of the City of Edmonton.

History of Grouard

04.3

Grouard is one of the oldest settlements in Big Lakes County and was founded on a rich Indigenous history. Prior to the arrival of fur traders and explorers, Grouard was occupied by a diverse array of First Nation cultures. In the early 1800s, Grouard was established as a Northwest Company trading post known as Lesser Slave Lake Settlement. The influx of fur traders into the area developed Grouard into a unique cultural location with peaceful co-existence of non-Aboriginal, Metis, and First Nations people by late 1800s.

The hamlet's name is derived in honour of Roman Catholic Bishop Grouard who opened a Mission in Grouard in 1872. In the early 1900s, Grouard population had grown to approximately 1500 people and acted as an important regional service centre offering a variety of local goods and services. 1914 marked a heavy blow to Grouard's growth with the Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia Railway deciding to bypass the Town and build on the south shore of Lesser Slave Lake. Grouard's economy steadily declined due to the arrival of the railway in northern Alberta with many of the residents and businesses moving to High Prairie to benefit from the passing railway.

Today Grouard's history is still present in the landscape. St. Bernard Church built in 1902 and Moosehorn Lodge built in 1937 still exist as important landmarks in the community. Northern Lakes College was built in 1970, known as the Alberta Vocational Centre in Grouard, which currently maintains the Native Cultural Arts Museum, and provides employment, education, and recreational opportunities to residents.

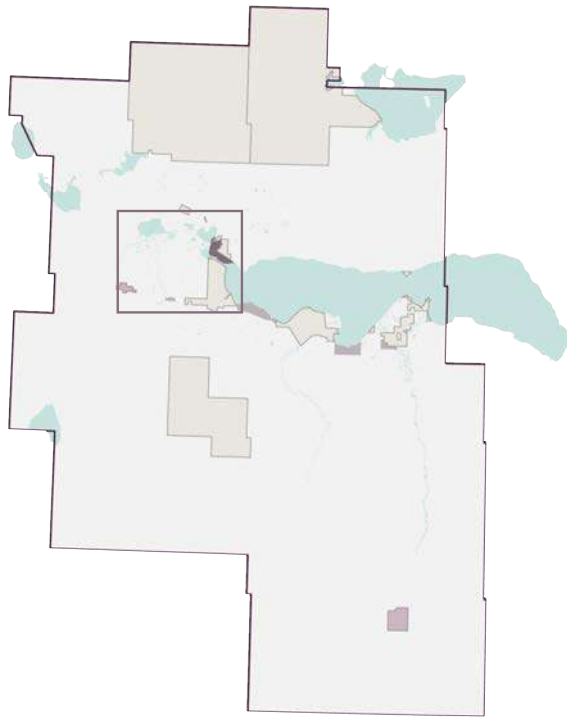


Figure 05 - Context Plan

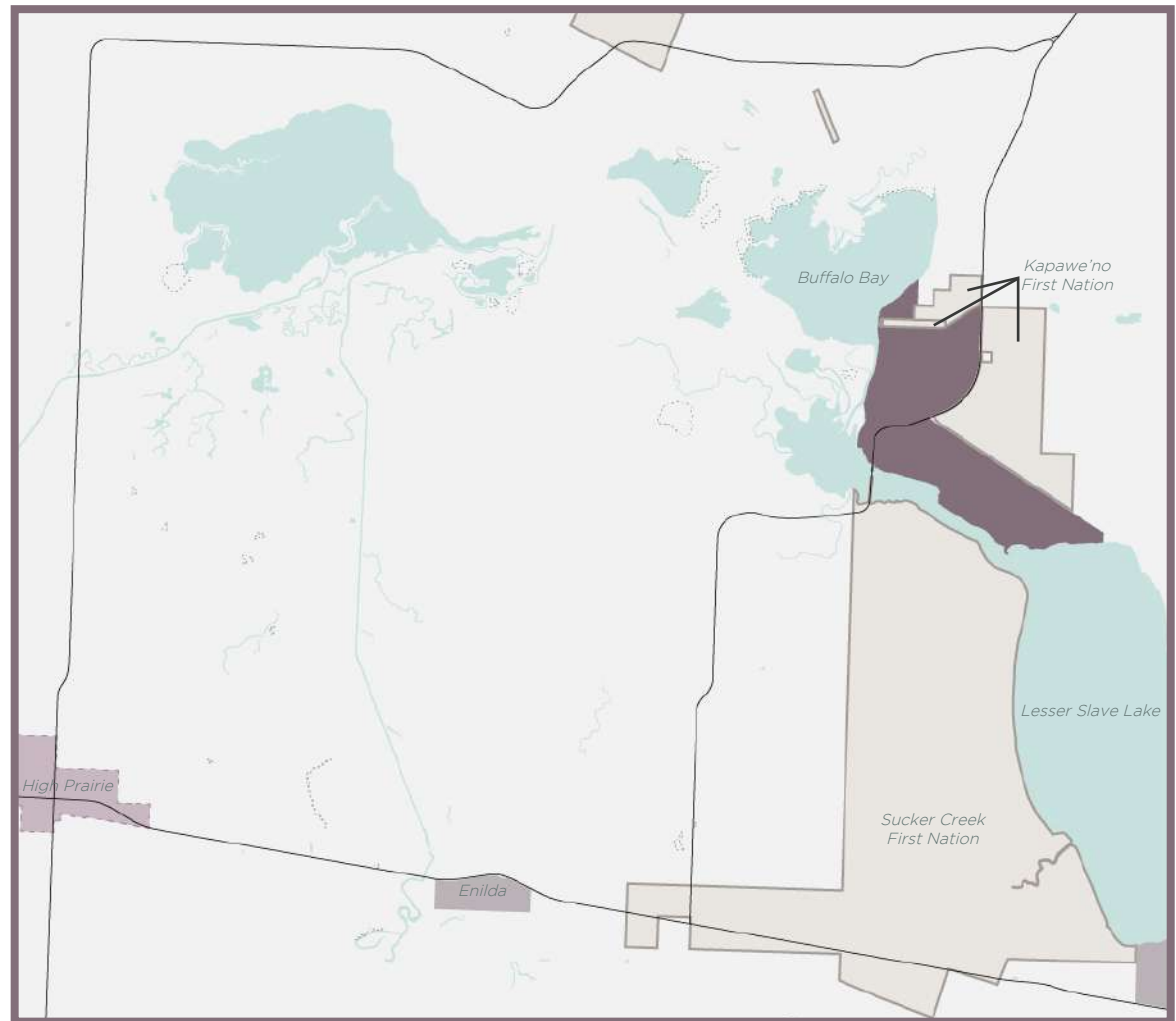
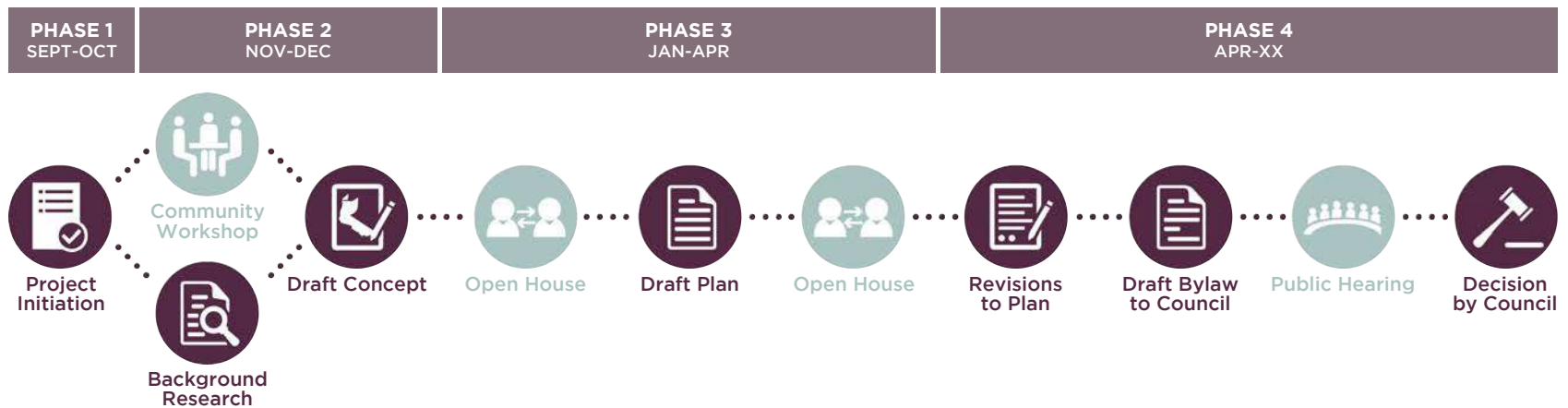


Figure 06 - Regional Context Plan

04.4 Planning Process



The Plan was developed with a high level of community engagement in order to produce a plan that built upon the unique local context, while expressing the different priorities within the community. Community feedback and input were received at multiple stages in the planning process in order to ensure appropriate interventions were developed through the community, allowing them to embrace these decisions as their own. Key engagement activities included a community workshop, meeting with local stakeholder groups, an open house to review the land use concept, and an open house to review the Plan's policies.

04.5 Ownership

Grouard presents a unique situation where the majority of the lands are held by Big Lakes County and Crown Lands, consisting of 81.23% of the land. The remaining 18.77% of land is privately held, primarily located along Highway 750, Mission Street, and 1st Street.

Ownership Breakdown (ha)			
	Crown Land	626.41	42.96%
	Private Land	273.65	18.77%
	County Land	558.19	38.28%
	Total	1,546.96	100%

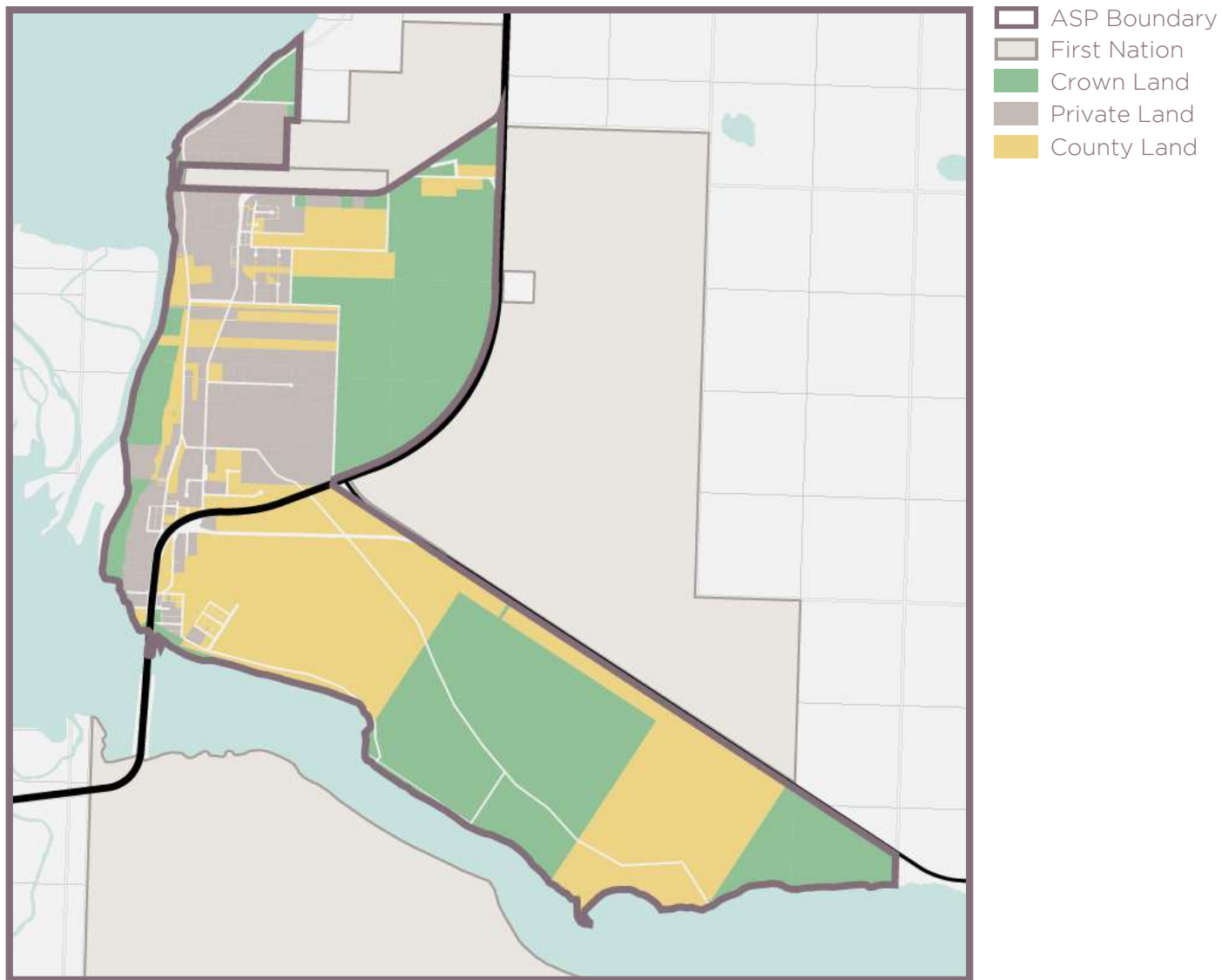
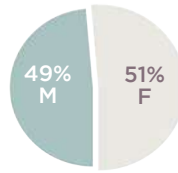


Figure 06 - Land Ownership (July 2017)

04.6 Community Profile

The Hamlet of Grouard has had a declining population over the last decade and a half, with a current population of 255 people. Grouard has a higher than average household size (3.0 vs 2.7), but lower median household income (\$41,003 vs \$69,935) in comparison to Big Lakes County. This could be attributed to the younger population in the Hamlet, as much of Grouard's population is found in the younger age brackets. Grouard also has a lower median age compared to the County, 32 and 49 respectively. The lack of diversity in housing types could also attribute to the larger household sizes, as the predominate dwelling type in the Hamlet is single detached dwellings. Grouard's rich history accounts for the diverse first languages spoken by residents, which include English, Cree, and French. The Community Profile reveals that initial interventions will need to be County or externally based to encourage new developers to see the potential of the community, and for existing landowners to support them.

GENDER
BREAKDOWN



AVERAGE
HOUSEHOLD SIZE



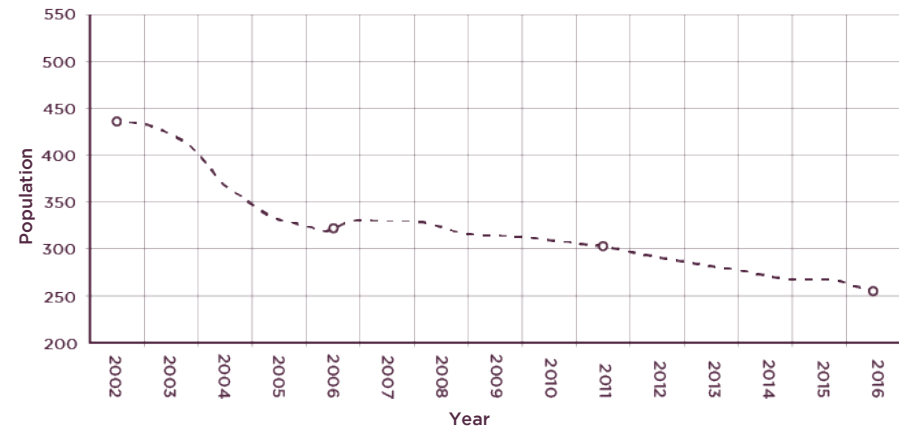
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD
INCOME



RESIDENTS WHO
LIVE ALONE

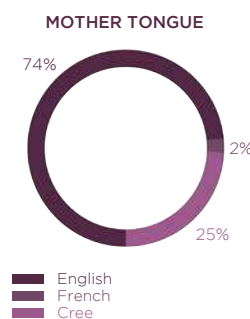
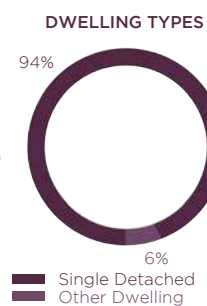
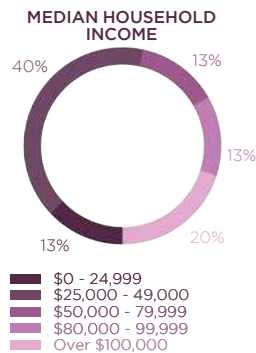


POPULATION GROWTH

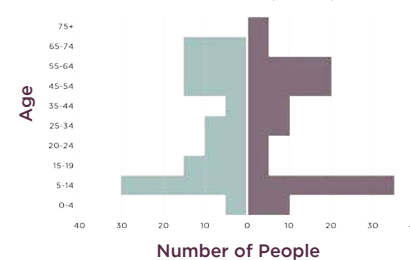


32 GROUARD
MEDIAN
AGE

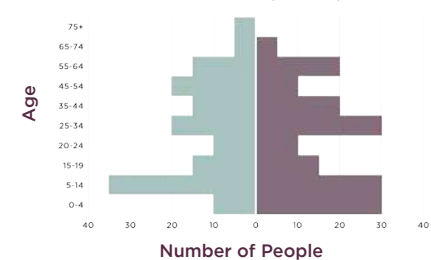
49 COUNTY
MEDIAN
AGE



GROUARD POPULATION
PYRAMID (2011)



GROUARD POPULATION
PYRAMID (2016)



MALE FEMALE

04.7 Existing Land Uses

The existing land uses in the Plan Area are primarily a mix of hamlet residential, urban reserve, and Crown Lands. Other uses found in the Plan Area include Commercial, Agricultural, and Parks and Institutional uses. The Commercial uses are located along Highway 750 providing high exposure for future and existing commercial uses. The Agricultural use is utilized as a Transfer Station that acts as a recycling centre for the Hamlet. Finally, the parks and institutional uses include all park spaces, Northern Lakes College, and Northland School.

The Hamlet is bounded by Buffalo Bay and Lesser Slave Lake to the west and south, Highway 750 to the south and east, Kapawe'no First Nation to the east and north, and Police Point Natural Area to the north.

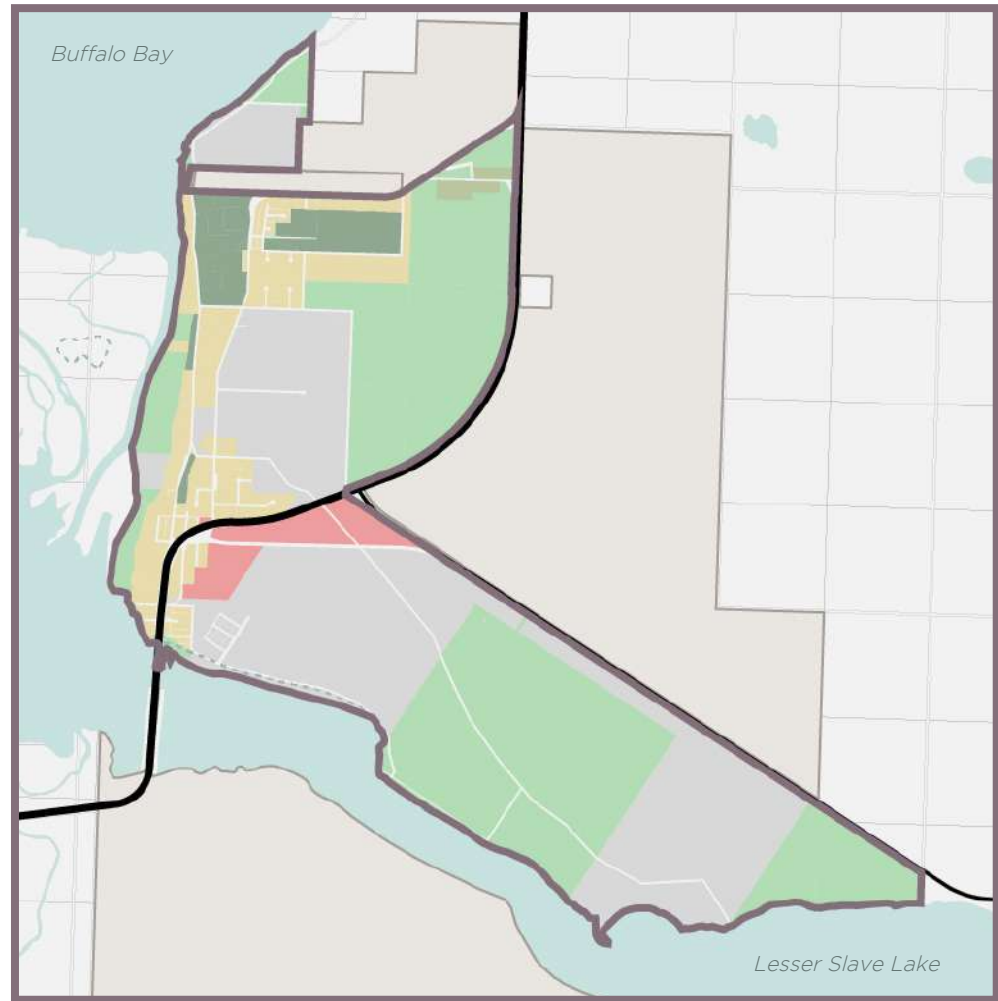
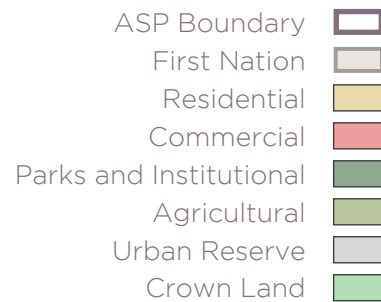


Figure 08 - Existing Land Uses

04.8 Existing Municipal Infrastructure

The majority of the municipal infrastructure is located in the northern half of the hamlet, within the Hamlet's core. The Hamlet is serviced by water, raw water, and sewer infrastructure, providing these services to lands primarily located within the hamlet's core.

- ASP Boundary
- First Nation
- Existing Water Main
- Existing Raw Water Supply
- Water Structures

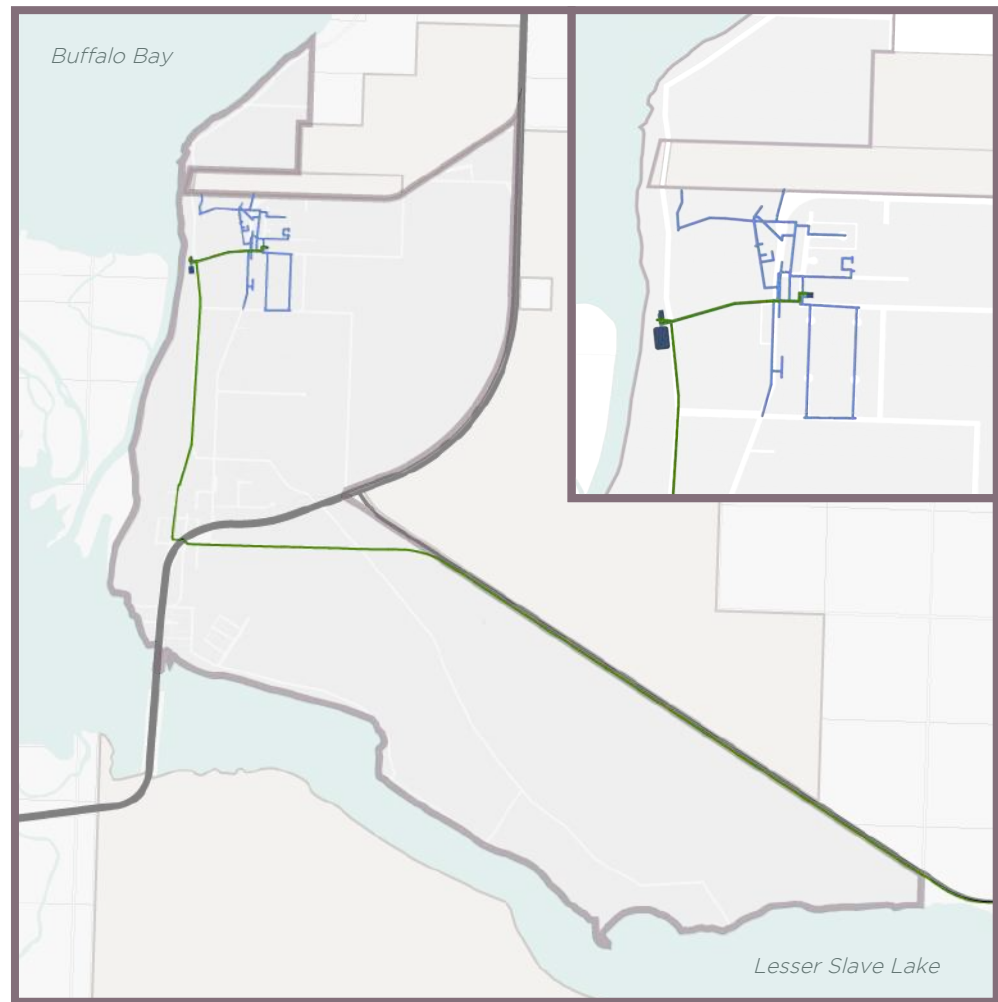


Figure 09 - Existing Water Municipal Infrastructure

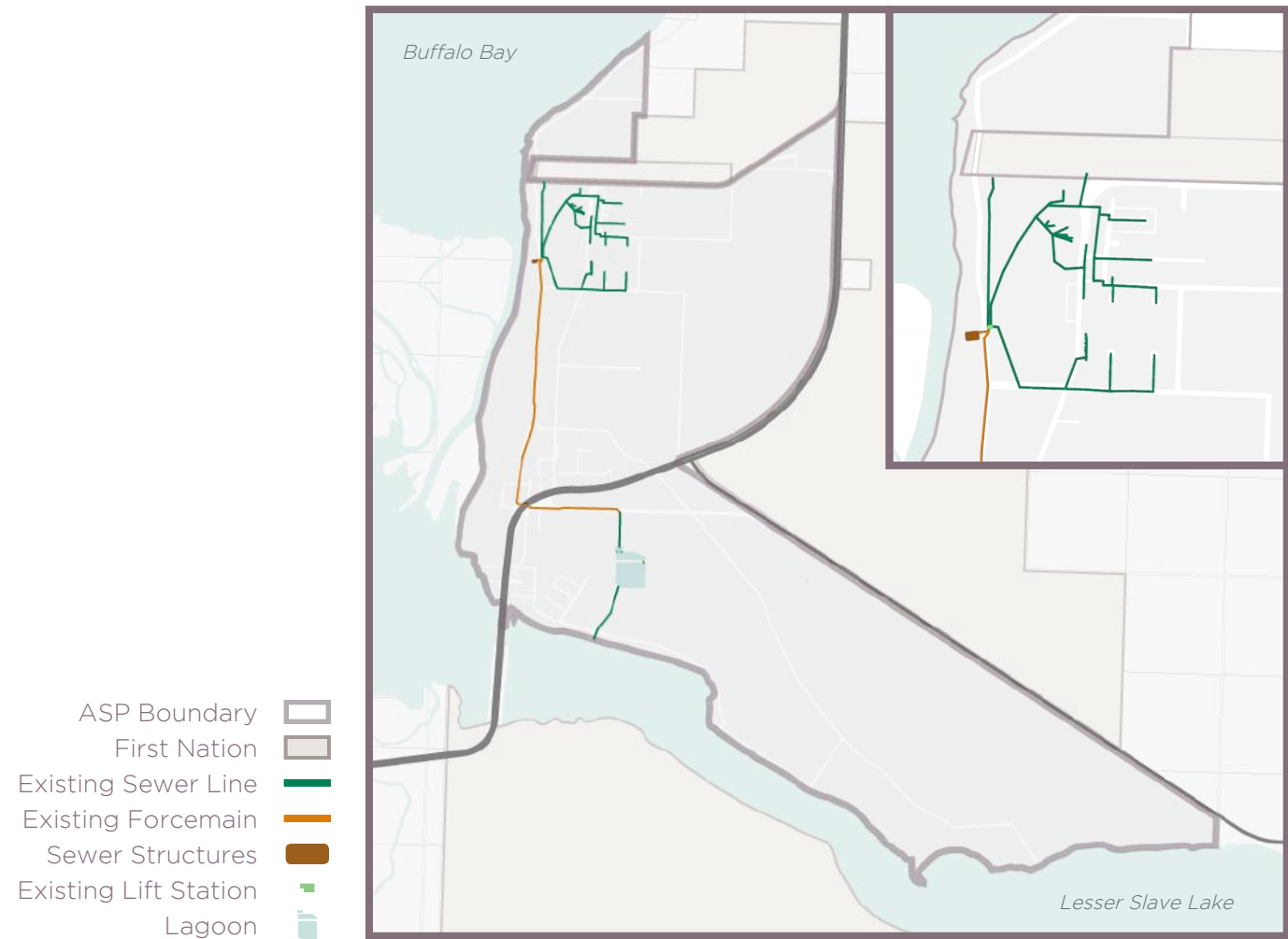


Figure 10 - Existing Sewer Municipal Infrastructure

04.9 Existing Transportation Network

Grouard is bisected by Highway 750, which connects Highway 2 near Enilda to Highway 88 near Red Earth Creek. The majority of the roadways in the hamlet are local roadways, with the exception of Township Road 760A and Lagoon Access Road, both providing access into municipal service areas. In the northern half of the hamlet, two local roadways connect Highway 750 into the core of the hamlet, with one connecting to the northern part of the hamlet (1st Street), while the other connecting back to the highway (Mission Street). In the southern half of the hamlet, an arterial roadway travels along the boundary of the hamlet towards Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park, with the remaining roadways being local.

A trail connects just north of Highway 750 to 1st Street to Mission Street, and is the only active transportation corridor in the hamlet, as there are limited to no sidewalks within the core of Grouard.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| ASP Boundary | |
| First Nation | |
| Highway | |
| Arterial | |
| Collector | |
| Local | |
| Trail | |

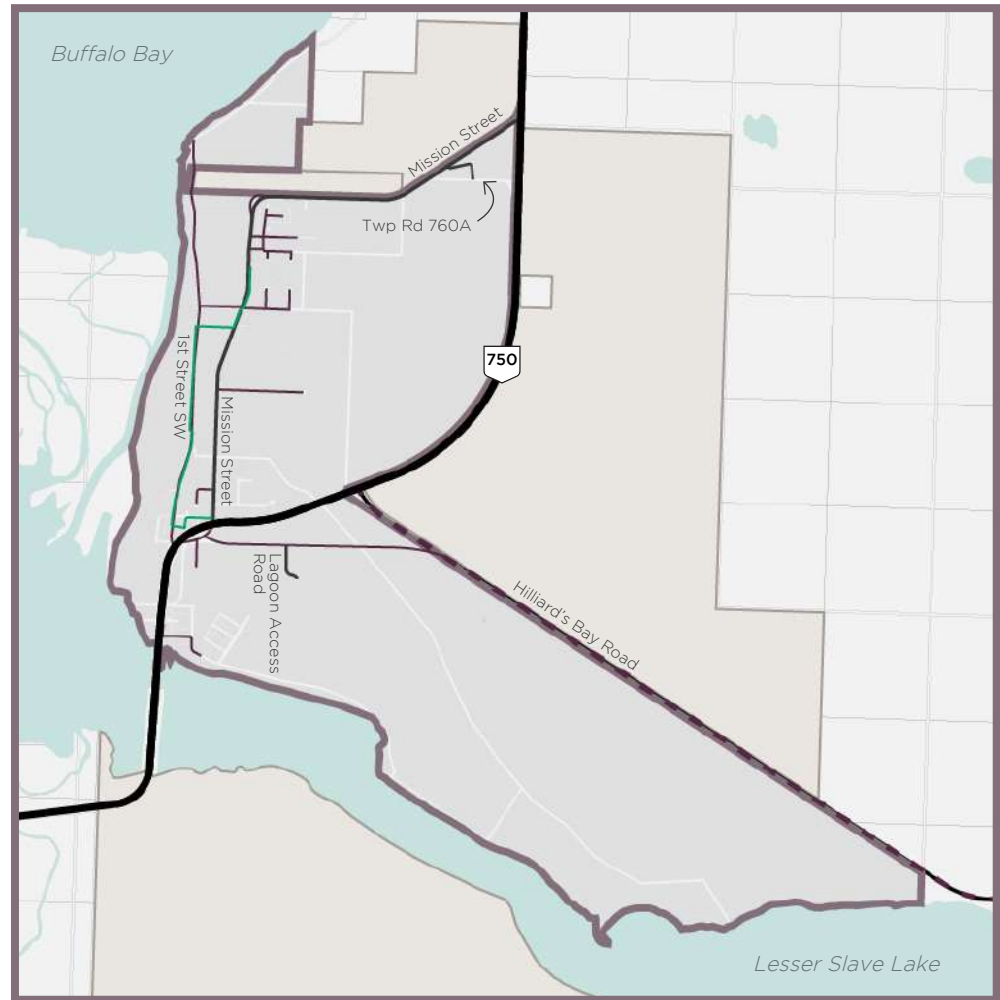


Figure 11 - Existing Transportation Network

04.10 Site Features and Considerations

Grouard has many historical features that have much significance to the region including Police Point, St. Bernard Mission Church, and the Moosehorn Lodge. Two major institutional facilities located in the core of the hamlet: Northern Lakes College and Grouard Northland School, which provide the majority of the programmed open space for residents.

Seven wells are located within Grouard's boundary: four of which have been abandoned, one has been reclamation certified, and two have been reclamation exempt, due to reclamation occurring prior to 1964.

License Number	Licensee	License Status	Latitude	Longitude
0000177	BP Canada Energy Group ULC	RecExempt	55.528768	-116.158785
0000180A	BP Canada Energy Group ULC	RecExempt	55.499092	-116.093849
0323763	Canadian Rockies Petroleum Corp.	Abandoned	55.545777	-116.129548
0332920	Canadian Rockies Petroleum Corp.	Abandoned	55.541853	-116.12441
0033264	Great Basins Petroleum Ltd.	RecCertified	55.517682	-116.145048
0231152	Whitecap Resources Inc.	Abandoned	55.51969	-116.158238
0255418	Whitecap Resources Inc.	Abandoned	55.519744	-116.158254

- ASP Boundary
- First Nation
- Open Space
- Abandoned Well
- Reclamation Exempt Well
- Certified Well

- ① Police Point
- ② Northern Lakes College
- ③ Native Cultural Arts Museum
- ④ Moosehorn Lodge
- ⑤ Grouard Northland School
- ⑥ St. Bernard Mission Church
- ⑦ Fire Hall
- ⑧ Municipal Services Facility
- ⑨ Post Office
- ⑩ Fishing Dock

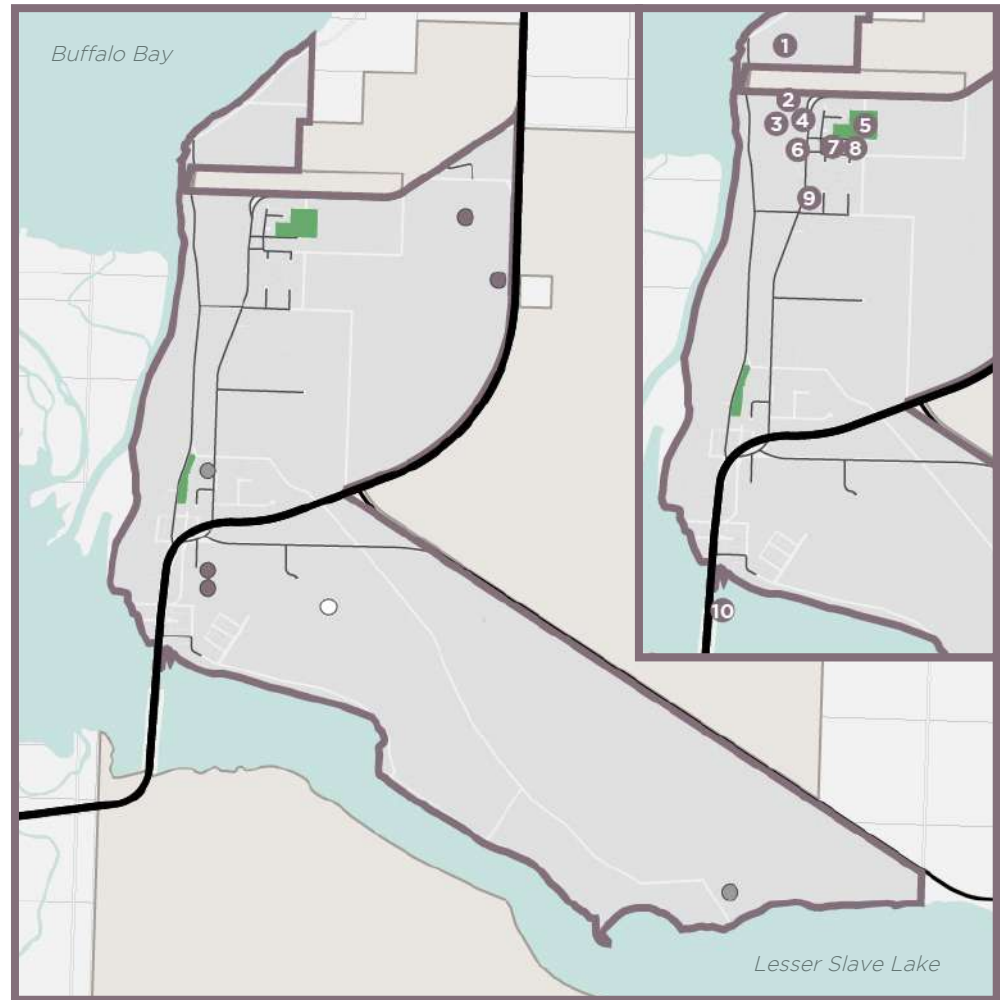


Figure 12 - Existing Site Features and Considerations

SECTION 05

THE APPENDIX

05.1 Policy Context

0.5.1.1 Big Lakes County Municipal Development Plan

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) was adopted by Big Lakes County on May 17, 2017, and provides a policy framework to guide future land use and policy decisions within the County. The Plan is intended to help inform decisions on how the County grows, and direct the development of Area Structure Plans and the Land Use Bylaw. The MDP identified the Hamlets as the preferred location for residential and small-scale commercial growth in the County, however understanding the importance of growth management within the Hamlets is vital to reduce future land use conflict.

Big Lakes County Municipal Development Plan 2017



Big Lakes County Municipal Development Plan	ASP Compliance
4.0 Parks, Trails, and Recreation <i>4.2 Open Space Linkages</i>	
Policy: The County shall encourage the linkage of open space areas, municipal and environmental reserves spaces, where possible, to create a comprehensive open space network.	The Plan has developed a conceptual Open Space Network that the County could implement utilizing County land to provide residents with access to Police Point Natural Area, Buffalo Bay, Lesser Slave Lake, and Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park.
<i>4.6 Lakeshore Access</i>	
Policy a) The County shall recognize the lakeshore (especially around Lesser Slave Lake) as a primary location for recreation and public enjoyment, and endeavour to maintain and increase public access opportunities where possible;	Lands around the lakeshore have been designed as environmental reserve and recreation/park space in order to ensure their future protection, maintain and increase public access, and locate future recreational opportunities in these areas.
Policy d) Where suitable, the County shall require the dedication of MR lands along the lakeshore to facilitate future public access and recreation opportunities.	Policies have been incorporated that require the dedication of lakeshore lands to be dedicated as environmental reserve and/or municipal reserve.
<i>4.7 Trail Development</i>	
Policy b) Network - The County should encourage the development of a system of walking trails within hamlets that connect residents to lake access and commercial points as stated in the Tourism Development Strategy - 2011	A conceptual trail network is proposed that utilizes primarily County and Crown Lands. The proposed network will connect residents to the lakeshore, Police Point Natural Area, and Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park.
5.0 Housing <i>5.2 Location of Residential</i>	
Policy: Residential development shall be prioritized within existing built-up areas, including hamlets, to maximize the efficient use of existing municipal service networks and land.	Infill development and future residential development are planned around the Hamlet's core, the location of Grouard's existing municipal services and population. The lands around the core are intended for future residential development, acting as logical extensions of the existing area.

6.0 Commercial	
6.3 Hamlet Commercial Development	
Policy a) The County shall encourage smaller-scale commercial development that serves the everyday needs of the local population to locate within hamlets.	Policies for commercial development in the Old Town Area encourage small-scale commercial development to serve the day to day needs of local residents.
Policy b) The County shall support commercial development within hamlets provided the scale, design and use is compatible with adjacent residential uses, and the character of the settlement.	High quality urban design and transitions between commercial and residential uses will be utilized to ensure compatibility between adjacent uses, while maintaining the character of Grouard.
6.5 Highway Commercial Development	
Policy b) Type/Use - Highway commercial developments shall be of a larger-scale and use, not compatible for location within hamlet centers, and provide services and uses for the travelling public and regional residents, including eating establishments and accommodation;	The Highway Development Area provides policies to accommodate for larger-scale commercial development, and appropriate transitions between this area and surrounding areas.
Policy c) Aesthetics - Due to its high visibility, highway commercial development shall have a high-standard of building design, landscaping and signage, and may be required to submit a landscaping plan, at the discretion of the development authority.	High quality commercial development will be encouraged through the policies in the Highway Development Area.
8.0 Crown Lands	
8.3 Best Interests of County Residents	
Policy: The County may not support the sale and/or lease of Crown Lands to private interests where the sale or lease is, in the opinion of Council, not in the best long-term interests of the residents of the County.	The Grouard ASP has designated future uses for Crown Land in the event that these lands are purchased or leased. These uses are intended to ensure the compatibility of how these lands develop with the existing surrounding development.
9.0 Hamlets	
9.3 Area Structure Plans	
Policy b) All existing hamlet ASPs shall be amended to be consistent with the general land use concepts and policies outlined within this Plan;	The Grouard ASP has been revised to comply with the policies outlined within the Municipal Development Plan.

<i>9.8 Heritage Preservation</i>	
Policy: The County shall work with local and regional community groups and agencies to identify heritage assets within hamlets, and support the conservation of these assets.	Heritage assets within Grouard have been identified within the plan, and support their continued conservation and protection.
<i>9.11 Crown Land in Hamlets</i>	
Policy: The County can suggest future land uses for Crown Lands within hamlets, with an aim to provide direction for underutilized spaces, provide additional development opportunities, and promote contiguous hamlet development.	The Grouard ASP has designated future uses for Crown Land in the event that these lands are purchased or leased. These uses are intended to ensure the compatibility of how these lands develop with the existing surrounding development.
<i>11.0 Natural Environment</i>	
<i>11.4 Development Near Waterbodies</i>	
Policy: The County shall require development setbacks from all waterbodies and watercourses (permanent and intermittent) in accordance with the LUB.	The Environmental Protection Area effectively acts as a setback from waterbodies, set out to protect the lakeshore and provide public access. Further environmental studies will need to be complemented to determine the exact delineation of this Area.

05.2 References

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