

## **COUNCIL REPORT**

**To:** Mayor and Council

**From:** Administration

**Date:** November 19, 2025

**Subject:** Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1528, 2025

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council receives this report for information.

### **BACKGROUND:**

In April, the District of Mackenzie (District) contracted L&M Engineering to conduct a review and update to the District's housing needs report and a subsequent Official Community Plan Bylaw update.

The new Housing Needs Report was completed in July 2025. The next phase of the project was incorporating housing needs data and community input into an Official Community Plan Bylaw update, which kicked off with an Open House held on June 24<sup>th</sup> at the Mackenzie Recreation Centre along with resident and business surveys open until July 13, 2025 and a workshop with the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

Following this engagement and completion of the Housing Needs Report, L&M Engineering prepared a draft Official Community Plan Bylaw. A second round of public engagement occurred in September and October to solicit community feedback on the updates to the bylaw. The bylaw was also sent for agency, community partner, and technical referral. A final draft has been attached to the Bylaw section of this agenda for Council's consideration.

### **Public Engagement Phase 2 – "What We Heard"**

Phase 2 Public Engagement invited residents to give their feedback on the draft Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1528, 2025, which was developed and updated using community input collected during the Phase 1 engagement period. Resident input on the draft Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1528, 2025 was collected through a community survey which was advertised through platforms including the District's social media pages, the dedicated project webpage on Let's Chat Mackenzie, and a community-wide mailout.

Responses to the engagement during Phase 2 were low. A copy of the “What We Heard” report has been attached and includes the survey data and advertising reach including a summary of the response results.

Staff anticipate participation in the survey was low due competing engagements and timing. There were several other community surveys, engagement activities, and local events in September and October which may have influenced the result. In future, staff recommend timing engagement during a less busy time in the community and possibly offer an additional in-person opportunity as the first phase open house was well attended.

### Referrals

In addition to the community engagement, the District referred the draft Official Community Plan Bylaw 1528, 2025 to several external agencies and community partners including the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, School District No. 57, Ministry of Transportation and Transit, Ministry of Environment, area First Nations, the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, and to legal representation for review, feedback, and technical input into the draft presented to Council today.

### Key Changes from the 2014 Official Community Plan Bylaw 1304

Overall, the 2014 Official Community Plan (OCP) had a lot of useful and important policies that remain relevant to this day, as such a refresh of the existing OCP was completed to strengthen and rethink key aspects of community building to better address the current housing needs, new Provincial legislation, and re-evaluate whether the existing OCP vision would still be reflective for community members today or over the next 20 years.

The following outlines the main changes/enhancements of the new OCP:

- **Framework:** The updated overall 2025 OCP framework focuses more on the current and projected housing need of the community and how the District can meet that housing need through not only the land use designations but housing and community related policies. This was required to be done as per the Province’s new legislation.
- **Section 1.2 Mackenzie Today and Tomorrow** was rewritten.
- **Section 1.3 Relationship with Indigenous Neighbours** was added to set preliminary policies as a stepping stone for the District to work collaborative with its indigenous neighbours in the future.
- **New Section 1.5.2** - While the 2014 OCP did outline community goals and an overall community vision, for the 2025 OCP, instead of one general vision, community input themes were added in section 1.5.2 that have mini vision statements which allowed us to truly encompass the great input received during that first round of engagement into the new policies.

- **Section 1.6.1 Land Use Designation Changes:**

2014 OCP	2025 OCP	Reason for Change
NE: Natural Environment	Combined in with NC: Conservation & Recreation	In 2014 both the NE and NC land use designations had the same overall intent, so for convenience they were combined into one land use designation.
RS: Single Residential	SS: Small Scale Residential	Conformance with provincial legislation to allow gentle density housing options such as duplexes, townhomes, etc.
RS-R: Single Family Residential Reserve	SS-R: Small Scale Residential Reserve Lands	To align with the new SS land use designation
PS: Parks and Schools	PR: Parks & Recreation	We moved school sites into P1: Public Institution land use designation as the overall land use intent of schools fit better into the P1 land use and then reworded the parks designation to Parks and Recreation to align with standard practice.

- **Section 2.1 Housing** has updated policy to reflect the new small scale residential land use designation and also has new policy to ensure that new small-scale development is integrated appropriately with adjacent uses.
- **Section 2.2 Commercial** now directly refers to the Downtown Vision and Action Plan (DVAP) to ensure that the OCP and the DVAP work in harmony in the future. A lot of the 2014 commercial policies were reflected in the DVAP, so most of this section has remained the same for consistency purposes, with some policies updated with more modern wording but the overall intent is the same.
- **Section 2.3 Industrial** was refreshed to include a riparian leave strip under policy 2.3.5 and then a new Industry and the Economy section was added.
- **Section 2.4 Parks and Recreation** was a portion of the OCP that was re-written with stronger policy to support a parks and recreation system that will meet the needs of future generations.
- **Section 2.5 Community Services** was a new section of the OCP to focus on health, social planning and educational goals.
- **Section 2.6 Utilities** remained the same with some wording refresh within policies, but the overall policy intent has remained.
- **Section 2.7 Transportation** objectives were more defined into Road Network, Active Transportation and Transportation, and Parking with corresponding policies that were refreshed from the 2014 OCP and with newly added policies, such as referencing the District's Active Transportation Plan.

- **Section 2.8 Natural Environment** remained relatively the same as the 2014, with most 2014 policy wording getting a refresh, but the overall policy intent remained. Policy 2.8.5 was added regarding collaborating with local First Nation neighbours and the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George to develop a comprehensive trail network plan and we also added in policy 2.8.10.
- **Section 2.9 Climate Change** is a required section as per the *Local Government Act*. This is a new section that refers to the District's Corporate Energy and Emissions Plan and outlines policy on how the District will work to minimize their impacts for climate change.
- **Section 2.10 Inclusive and Vibrant Community** is a new section of the OCP. The policies within this section were largely developed through our engagement findings of our workshop with the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee as well as the youth engagement that was conducted.
- **Section 2.11 Thriving Economy** was carried over from the Economic Development section of the 2014 OCP, with some words refreshed in policy, but overall the policy remained the same.
- **Section 2.12 Temporary Use Permits** was rewritten in the 2025 OCP to be more concise.
- **Section 3.0 Implementation** is a new section that was added in as the 2014 OCP was missing this.

### Next Steps

The draft Official Community Plan Bylaw 1528, 2025 is attached to the Bylaw section of this agenda. Council may choose to give the bylaw up to first two readings at this meeting. A public hearing must be held prior to the third and final readings of the bylaw.

To maintain the project timeline and meet public notification requirements, staff scheduled a Public Hearing for Wednesday November 26, 2025. However, this can be changed if Council does not wish to give first and second reading of the bylaw at this time. L&M Engineering project representatives have indicated they will come to a public hearing to provide a presentation on the bylaw and be available for questions from Council and attendees.

### **BUDGETARY IMPACT:**

There is no current budget impact at this time, however it should be noted that the new requirements for updated Housing Needs Reports and subsequently Official Community Plans on a 5-year basis will commit budget and staff time in the future. This project was fully funded by the Province of BC, however that is not guaranteed for future iterations.



**COUNCIL PRIORITIES:**

**Strong Governance and Finances**

- As the municipality's elected governing body, we serve all residents and businesses in the community. We engage residents and stakeholders on important issues and make our decisions through open and transparent processes. We are careful in our use of resources, mindful of the need to maintain programs and services, while also meeting the community's infrastructure needs.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Emily Kaehn, Director of Corporate Services

**Reviewed By:** Corporate and Financial Services

**Approved By:** Chief Administrative Officer