

**General Comments**

**TOWN COMMITTEE'S**

**Sustainable Smithers Advisory Committee (SSAC)**

- Wow. This is a great document! This draft OCP is a significant improvement over the last OCP and is extremely well rounded. It incorporates planning ideas that have been around for 20+ years, but have been slow to be adopted, not only in Smithers, but other communities as well. There are many subjects, like climate change and a focus on densification and a vibrant downtown, that if followed, will ensure Smithers grows smartly, thus preventing many problems other communities have or are now facing, such as dying downtown cores, sprawl, lack of green space, and lack of community pride.
- The OCP has followed the best process of community participation Smithers has seen. A combination of a foreword thinking staff at the town office, the creation of a well balanced OCP Committee, the hiring of a talented and obviously experienced consulting company, and a good engagement process including the creative idea of a downtown charrette have been vital to the creation of such a state of the art plan. For the first time since I moved here 13 years ago, I am really excited about the future of Smithers. Changing this plan in any significant way (apart from providing more detail and creating monitoring indicators) will be a terrible blow to community participation.
- A plan is a hollow document without a monitoring plan with good indicators. How will we tell if the goals of the OCP have been met. If not, why and who is accountable? Where are the problems in implementation sourced? Real concerns about this plan been implemented as it is intended. Indicators need to be developed.
- Overall the effort and engagement of the OCP has been impressive and the Town is to be commended for its commitment to developing this very expansive document that really attempts to encompass all aspects of living within the Town of Smithers.
- This OCP is a huge improvement and a positive vision for the future of Smithers. Greatly appreciate that climate change is throughout the document as well as highlighted initially.
- One of the main aspects missing is the need for accountability. How do we monitor how well the Town is doing in terms of implementing or following the plan? Is there a way to incorporate reporting and review mechanisms per section? And/or have Councils refer new by-laws, policies and funding decisions in relation to OCP goals and/or objectives? It also might be worth keeping the OCP Committee and have them meet annually to review a report provided by the Town to help publicly monitor progress. Without such measures, residents might lose faith with the changing of Councils and again feel disillusioned by public process (which has actually been re-built somewhat by this OCP

engagement process).

- Within the document it states that the Town's boundaries should be strictly maintained... but there are struggles with governance more than any other issue on this point. It's almost as though there should be a "greater Smithers area" - where people might experience a slight increase in taxes for recreational and other services, but not need to be hooked up to water and septic (or pay for it). The other main benefit is that you would be allowed to vote for Council and on issues directly impacting you despite living "out of town" (even though there are several residents who can not leave their homes without having to go through Smithers). While I don't think we're close to having acceptance to boundary expansion at this time, I don't think that this OCP should preclude that the boundaries be maintained, as there might be some creative alternatives.

Advisory Planning Commission (APC)

- Bit concerned that this OCP is attempting to be 'all things to all people'. It reads like a storybook attempt to make the perfect community and yet important choices have to be made between 'all these things'. Some objectives and policies in one section are almost opposite to ones in another section. Tough for anyone to interpret.

Economic Development Committee (EDC)

- Council does not support on large-scale casinos or video lottery terminals. Will this be left open for the new council to decide how they feel?
- Resort Municipality (Community). Under the impression that a Resort Community must have a certain population base and that number needs to be looked at. Also if that is what the plan is to become what are the tax implications to our residents and the businesses if there are any. Smithers' tax payers are currently taxed at high enough rates now.

Document Section	Specific Comments
<b>Part 1: The Foundation</b>	
1. Vision & Goals	Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very well thought out</li> </ul> Sustainability Smithers Advisory Committee (SSAC): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vision is very positive - important and appreciate the reference to Wetsuweten territory; acknowledgement that Smithers really beyond town boundaries; and the need to be innovative to tackle climate change. Goals: Great. Address environment, social, economic and governance as well as need for</li> </ul>

	<p>diversity.</p> <p>Advisory Planning Commission (APC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not sure the number one goal of the OCP should be dealing with growth. Given the last 20 years and the project for the next 20, maintaining population is more important than growth.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Our Climate Change Commitment</p>	<p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should acknowledge that Community Energy Plan and baseline energy data exists (although aware that this is also on page 31 - but a continuation to monitor using baseline data important). Should also recommend somewhere the adoption of the CEP (or follow-through on recommendations).</li> </ul> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like the section on reducing GHG but need to have a graph on others GHCs beside CO2 and have some measures for reducing these.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Demographic Information &amp; Projections</p>	<p>TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perhaps too much faith has been put on mining. With what has happened over the past year and the future does not look very good. Seems odd that our average income is above the BC average as it does not seem to reflect in the wages of a lot of the current personal in town.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anything greater than 5% represents a 'population decline' (or increase). But 0.7% seems like such a small amount to merit mention of Smithers' suffering a population decline. Or at least 2 to 3% variance seems natural.</li> </ul> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are amenity migrants part of the employment graph on page 9 or not? How do they fit or not fit into the employment picture?</li> <li>• The town needs a policy that would restrict absentee landlords.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Background</p>	<p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In regards to “recent phenomenon known as amenity migration” - not been a recent development. Many people have moved to Smithers or traveled through and chosen to stay because of it’s intrinsic beauty and</li> </ul>

	<p>extraordinary environment and community, for years...perhaps in the last few years a new cycle of this phenomena has happened, but that has been Smithers' secret for many years. It is important to recognize this part of the population as a perhaps a more stable group than that of resource industry workers who may be more transient.</p>
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**Part II: Community Objectives & Policies**

<p>5. Land Use &amp; Growth Management</p>	<p>TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is suggested that all clothing, groceries, home goods should only be located in the downtown main street and not along highway 16. I do not see how main street could handle the large stores like Safeway, Zellers etc. This area should be relooked at.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hope that we don't just aim to attract people through mining and ski hill development... should also note that we aim to attract new residents to maintain or increase population by maintaining the small-town feel, a vibrant main street, healthy environment, etc (the vision).</li> <li>• Policy 6.2.1 to reassess in 5 years is the only reference to re-looking at a policy within the OCP. As noted in general comments, need to monitor progress (although appreciate that OCP isn't subject to change at will with changing Councils - it's more of an accountability measure that's needed).</li> <li>• Policy 6.2.2. first promote infill before developing new areas is extremely positive and should be followed by Council.</li> <li>• Not sure if this is where a policy to decrease the number of required parking spaces for downtown businesses should go but it wasn't clear to me in any section.</li> <li>• Please maintain the current town boundaries - do not expand the Smithers boundaries</li> <li>• In regards to down town appearance, it is not only the exterior of a building and its' surrounds that matter to the appeal of Smithers. One must take into consideration the content / interior of the retail downtown and for that matter all of Smithers. The wonderful feel of Smithers downtown is that is has so many locally owned quality small businesses retail</li> </ul>
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stores.... Any consideration to big retail stores need to look at content and quality as well to fit within the downtown framework to maintain that “ amenity migration” and feel of Smithers that is paramount.

- Perhaps to address vandalism from another tack could be to actually supply areas for graffiti artists to express and display there work rather than always wiping out expression and creating repression and challenge.

APC:

- “Expand the town’s boundaries, limit growth in certain areas, control the town’s rate of growth”. These priorities seem to be at odds with a compact core. I think the town should decide one way or another. The future does not appear to be urban spread.
- We need to pay particular attention to ‘noise’ in the downtown core. If we are going to attract residents we must find ways to limit noise and also to soften lighting.

EDC:

- No retail or tourist accommodation at the airport or adjacent land maybe okay. We understood the Town supported industrial development and airport related businesses locating at or near the airport. Assuming this to be true which say that in the OCP?
- We agree with selling industrial lands at market value but have major concerns how and who would determine “the existing capacity is maximized”. How and why would the Town want to prioritize and restrict the sale of industrial lands to purchasers “who demonstrate application of the principles of eco-efficiency and eco-industrial development.” All industrial developers will conform modern environmental standards and the market pricing of fossil fuels will dictated how eco-efficient they become. This type of in your face “greening” of our community does little or nothing to encourage development and enhance our chances of attracting industry!
- We are in total agreement with buffering but would suggest the dropping of “with vegetation”. The how of buffering can be handled in zoning by-laws or development permits.

- Are there sufficient lands designated for industry?
- Priority for the release of industrial lands - how exactly would this work? If two parties have interest in the same piece of property owned by the Town, what would the process be to determine who the property is sold to? I've just never heard of a land seller in a commercial transaction differentiating on anything other than the commercial terms of the offer. And are these principles of eco-efficiency and eco-industrial development to be applied only to the development of the property in question, or to the buyer's entire business operations? If the latter, I reiterate my first question. If the former, then isn't this something that the Town might consider addressing through building by-laws?
- The language is very awkward, and a bit unclear. I think what is being said is "Require green belt buffers between industrial and non-industrial lands." Is that correct?
- Understand the desire to create/maintain a vibrant retail corridor in downtown Smithers. However, have real concerns that a zoning change of this type will make it difficult for Main Street property owners to adapt to changing market forces. If we look at development on the street in the past few years, the demand has been primarily for office space; I am not convinced that long-lived retail ventures would have filled the spaces where BVCU insurance, Vandergaag CGA and the relocated doctors' offices are now situated. Believe it is important that the retail hub remains in the central, or downtown commercial, area, and that Town planning and policy decisions need to support that outcome; further restricting land use options specifically on Main Street, however, may actually work against the desired result. To put it very simply - just because no more offices are allowed on the ground floor on Main Street does not mean that retailers will fill the empty spots. I believe an extraordinary set of circumstances must exist to remove an entire group of property owners' existing rights.
- My comment here is to do with operations, not planning. Smithers' walkability has been highlighted a great deal lately, and while I don't walk to town,

	<p>when I go to town to do my chores, I park my car at one end of town, and walk to all of my destinations. Most of the year. There are long stretches in the winter where I find walking on downtown Smithers sidewalks very difficult, and the town is anything but walkable. Pardon the pun, but in order to "walk the talk" the Town needs to step up to the plate by implementing and enforcing snow-removal bylaws and taking other measures to ensure that maneuvering sidewalks and crossing the street downtown during the winter is safe and simple.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When we speak of Main Street I think it is very important to keep the flow of traffic (pedestrian &amp; automobile). There needs to be a draw to the Alfred Ave end of Main Street.</li> <li>• EDC applauds the Council and the OCP that they "will revise the parking regulations in the zoning bylaw to encourage retail uses on the ground floor in the downtown." We also would recommend that as part of this revision Council would see an opportunity to review the existing parking and bring some logic and equity to parking in downtown Smithers.</li> <li>• The Town of Smithers must be consistent in regards to decisions made with businesses especially with the parking in the downtown town core.</li> <li>• By "Temporary Commercial Uses" we assume it means roadside truck vendors? It should not be "supported" by the Town but only continued to be permitted with costly licensing fees and only for very short term durations.</li> </ul>
<p>6. Environment</p>	<p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No mention of the community forest in the introduction.</li> <li>• Appreciate the note regarding regulating development.</li> <li>• Objective 7.2.3, Policy 6 (page 40) - disagree with this policy. Not all pine-beetle infected trees should be "removed or destroyed". Eg. there are some currently on Hudson Bay Mtn visible to the town that should be left to maintain visual quality as well as diversity of actions in addressing beetle problem (clearcutting everything not the answer). Perhaps a policy is needed for their safe removal within town</li> </ul>

	<p>where potential hazards exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify goal with by inserting “Natural” in front of environment. Like the intent to provide leadership. This seems to be a new concept. A couple things that don’t seem to be addressed are people / wildlife interactions. Need direction to become a bear-smart community. Sustainability needs to be in the forefront of this goal. A number of the other goals (transportation, housing, infrastructure) contain aspects of environmental responsibility. This goal needs to be an overarching goal as almost every other goal fits under the goal of environmental responsibility. I would like to see strategies to do with solid waste management (beyond recycling) and implementation of the community energy plan.</li> <li>7.2.3 Policy 6: Pine bark beetle removal, is necessary if pine beetle are active and or fire is of considerable danger, but if such removal is for cosmetic reasons I would question this. Cosmetic alteration on any scale often does not fit in with ecological progression, thus I would hope that this is taken into account. As well the pine bark beetle infestation is also a reminder of climate change and rather than cut and remove, perhaps we all need some kind of daily reminder of the impact we are having on the environment, thus a stand of “ natural forest” could be left to observe how nature, un enhanced by man, accommodates this phenomena.</li> </ul> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the management objectives Community Forest Special Management Zone 2 is to promote public education of the environment. The town should include an objective to promote public education of the environment.</li> <li>Protect the Environment - Policy - plan, implement, a <b>green space</b> plan for the town. If the green spaces are not connected with other green spaces they need to be connected by walk and bicycle paths.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Housing</p>	<p>TAC: To have mobile homes located in a good clean area in the downtown area would be a great advantage.</p> <p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shouldn't just focus on potential population increases with mining and tourism, but also through amenity migration, arts and culture, retirement, virtual</li> </ul>

businesses, etc.

- Like the policies that support establishing housing co-ops and other non-profit associations to ensure affordable housing exists.
- Under Housing quality and character (page 48), might want to add that new homes should take into account potential future uses (eg. aging parents with wheelchairs, converting to rental suites when kids moved out, etc.). This could prevent the need for massive renovations in the future.
- Appreciate the energy efficiency and renewable references under Housing Quality.
- All good concepts here that provide good leadership. The trick will be enforcing these ideas. Rules and zoning around housing and development seem to be some of the most commonly altered parts of a plan. Rezoning is often a rubber stamping process.
- Like the focus on higher density, people friendly neighbourhoods
- The current sidewalk network in town needs to be expanded
- Like to see promotion of district heating infrastructure for new development - i.e. geothermal for a subdivision - created prior to building houses.
- Included within this housing policy, there could be an awareness of not only the visual appeal of the housing but also the provision of community spaces and community garden spaces at large.....housing / subdivisions create micro communities that can be further enhanced and characterized by sense of space and place.
- As well to add to the requirements of any new subdivision/ community a designated space for the recycling bins/ micro drop off centres. Although there is currently no provision for across the board recycling in Smithers, this too should be a commitment made in light of a sustainable community

APC:

- I think the plan should stress quality-building materials and also consider incentives to upgrade existing house to code standards.

<p>8. Parks, Open Space &amp; Recreation</p>	<p>TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can we not use the empty lots on main street and make them into green spaces that the public could use and it would certainly make main street look also more attractive. A multi purpose rec centre would be greatly used by all.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9.2.1 Policy 8 - Yea! A parkette/town square on Main St.!</li> <li>• 9.2.3 Missing a note to ensure continue working with Regional District and Telkwa on a connecting bike trail (maybe to be under transportation).</li> <li>• Smithers stands to loose many of the trees in its parks due to the mountain pine beetle. Young trees need to be planted now so they are established when the mature pine die.</li> <li>• To include that community garden spaces also be connected to bike trails and walking paths would be of benefit.</li> </ul> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elks park was missing in table 1. Need more designated parks. Town should take responsibility for the Northeast Slope Trails because they provide a important recreation attraction to the town. The town could expand it boundary to include parks as they do not require expensive services</li> </ul>
<p>9. Food, Agriculture &amp; Lands</p>	<p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing a policy to be able to have chickens in town (eg. up to 8 hens)</li> <li>• Also need a policy that the local government should work toward or ensure that provincial legislation supports local objectives in food security (eg. the recent farm gate sales, our past food inspector who created problems for local producers, etc.).</li> <li>• Another potential policy that the town could support or help facilitate is to have rural land owners who don't farm but are within the ALR, donate or lease their land for long-term loans to potential farmers who live in town (or as another immigration potential). While many do this, it's almost all for hay crops and a greater diversity is needed. Tax shifting</li> </ul>

	<p>probably lies more with the regional district however... This is something that may come out of a Regional Agriculture Plan which is needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsure what “maintaining rural values” means.</li> <li>• Plan could be improved with language that supports community gardens and possibly roof top gardens within the town boundaries.</li> <li>• Composting - the town could install composting facilities, then allow residents to use the compost for their gardens.</li> <li>• Recognizing that people living outside of Smithers are part of this community, how can they be incorporated into decision making? In the past councillors have conveniently indicated that they do not need to listen to people who live outside the town boundaries (especially when those people are against something the council wants to do.)</li> <li>• This has some great concepts and vision for food security and small scale farming, which does not rely on economy of scales and potential for unsustainable practices.....it also addresses the current limitations of the ALR and perhaps can inspire change within such blanket regulations.</li> <li>• Policy # 3: Highly commend this thought of farm gate sales but to do this one must then tackle the current health regulations that currently stifle farm gate sales and community farming systems. Such regulations ultimately block freedom of choice by the consumer of where ones food comes from.</li> </ul>
<p>10. Transportation</p>	<p>TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety in the down town area at all times of the day would be a concern for people to walk more or to ride bike cycles etc.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the introduction, it should be noted that transportation accounts for the largest amount of GHG emissions in Smithers.</li> <li>• I haven't read the transit strategy, but I hope that improved public awareness, increased after-school hours (eg. a bus to Telkwa for working parents to reach home by the time school's out), and services to</li> </ul>

	<p>Moricetown are being considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective 11.2.3 is missing a policy to build a pedestrian/cycling bridge over the Bulkley River where old bridge was (at end of Main St.)</li> <li>• Need to make accessing bike stands more readily available to encourage cycling (or increase # generally). We tried to get one from the Town for 7 years and were never successful. As a cyclist, more places to lock up your bike would improve its convenience.</li> <li>• 11.2.4. Downtown parking - totally disagree that we need MORE parking. It's always easy to find parking, if not right on Main St, on one of the side streets. We need to reduce the # of parking spaces required by businesses and instead give tax breaks (or requirements) to those who have transit, car pooling and/or cycling policies.</li> <li>• This goal needs to be clarified. I don't believe it is up to the town to provide transportation (apart from transit) (i.e. the town should not be providing cars, bicycles - except for the blue bike program) I think this goal should be "To provide FOR a diversity of transportation choice." (i.e. bike lanes promote cycling, sidewalks promote walking, buses promote public transportation).</li> <li>• I would like to see specific strategies to improve the sidewalk system in town. There are many areas without sidewalks. This is dangerous, particularly for children, who are forced to share the road with cars.</li> <li>• With the latest expansion and up grade of the highway from Smithers to Telkwa there is still no reasonable provision for cyclists. To revisit a dedicated bike trail that is open all year round would encourage more cycling. The current widening of the highway is a better option but is not safe given the amount of traffic and speed one must deal with when cycling to Smithers. Thus to look at a dedicated route that could also double as a ski trail between Smithers and Telkwa would be wonderful.</li> </ul> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The focus on transportation should to ensure GHG are limited not just to CO2.</li> </ul>
<p>11. Infrastructure, Utilities &amp; Green</p>	<p>TAC:</p>

<p>Buildings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would like to see more recycle bins etc so that there is somewhere for people to dispose of the items that should be recycle. The dump is along ways off for a lot of people to get there. Let’s make it easier for people to do their share.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12.2.1 Energy Infrastructure and Bldgs - Policy 9 needs to be changed or need to add a policy that requires all new home owners to fill out an Energy Efficiency questionnaire (already developed and in the hands of the town). It’s a tool to help raise awareness of energy efficiency measures and potentials. The final policy should not just be to provide information, but also to open up or help create training opportunities. Also, not sure if there needs to be mention of the provincial green building code.</li> <li>• The Town of Smithers also committed itself, under the CAEE program with MEMPR, to achieve EGH 80 in all new homes and something like a 17% increase in EGH 80 in existing homes (commitments passed by Council). This is not noted anywhere nor is there any way of measuring success or plans to reach the target. The policies listed here are good ones but this specific goal should be mentioned (along with plans to measure how it’s doing).</li> <li>• Policy 12 should almost be a requirement - that the Town should lead by example and ensure that their buildings and operations meet the highest standards of energy efficiency and showcase green building design and/or renewable energy technologies.</li> <li>• 12.2.9 under waste reduction, should also consider implementing a strategy to ban plastic bags in Smithers. The Town should also adopt a green procurement policy and, again, lead by example.</li> <li>• Opportunity to promote district heating - geothermal, solar or other means in new housing developments.</li> <li>• In regards to the solid waste management plan, it must be acknowledged that the RDBN Solid Waste Management Plan was made in 1996 and has not met it’s stated goals, and dare one say is out of date. Revision for this document will be within the next five to eight years from now. The implementation of the 30- 50% reduction of solid waste by 2000 has not been met, nor has there been a delivery of commitment to</li> </ul>
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	<p>the three R's that the RDBN aspires to within it's Solid Waste Management Plan. Rather the RDBN is currently researching WTE options that really negate any concept of the three R's. Town needs to be active in pushing for more accountability and for independence from the RDBN's current system if it does not meet the needs and wishes of the population within Smithers and it's surrounds or the mandate of the Town's OCP. In saying that it would benefit the Town of Smithers to request that there be tipping fees and facilities for recycling collection and to commit to a program that educates it's population on the three R's which will lead to a further sustainability. If the RDBN are unable to accommodate the Town may one suggest that the Town works with the neighbouring Regional District of Kitimat Stikine who currently are adopting a Zero Waste Management Policy in regards to solid waste management. To not address the lack of solid waste management in relation to the Towns desires and the RDBN within current and new development is not sustainable or responsible.</p> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be a policy to reduce light pollution by ensuring that light focuses and or is shaded downward and not upward.</li> </ul> <p>EDC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With so much discussion and talk of the environment and go green in the OCP the Town should seriously consider or plan for the future a "curbside recycling" program both residentially and commercially. I believe there would be far less waste and more recycling of cardboards, plastics, etc. There have been discussions about moving the recycling to the Waste Transfer station. Many people do not have transportation to take there recycling to the depot. Would we not be better to reduce gas emissions by having curbside recycling.</li> </ul>
<p>12. Heritage, Arts, Culture &amp; Education</p>	<p>TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More opportunity for our local area talents to show off their works. Perhaps a multiyear theatre that could hold some larger concerts plus showcase our locals.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just noticed no mention of Old Church as a venue.</li> <li>• Unsure of whether this goes here, under development permits, Open Spaces or Housing, but should encourage public art and the installation of quality, local art when developing new buildings.</li> <li>• Suggest the goal be changed slightly to “Celebrate and PROMOTE our history and culture”</li> <li>• Perhaps the town could organize volunteers, or others to give historical tours, First Nations tours, or natural tours (i.e. along the perimeter trail) for tourists and campers who stay at Riverside Park.</li> <li>• Promote and fund the museum.</li> </ul> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ‘Old Church’ should be mention in the arts and culture section.</li> </ul>
<p>13. Community Services &amp; Facilities</p>	<p>TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If our schools would be available to use after hours and during summer month this would give the community a lot of more room to expand our services for seniors etc to enjoy and have spots that would be friendly and save.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Planning (p. 95) - should include mention of a youth centre or need for more infrastructure for youth</li> <li>• I disagree that new churches should be planned for within residential areas given the amount of traffic and noise on (usually) Sunday mornings. Or if within residential areas, should be able to advertise the name of the church only, and not campaign materials (such as anti-abortion signs).</li> <li>• 14.2.1. Policy 3 could also include community recreation centres or other community education uses (vs. just having Chandler be allowed to be re-developed into another school). If not a school, it should remain for public and community use.</li> <li>• I don’t see a reference to the pool / arena</li> <li>• In regards to schools, and whether “current enrolments exceed existing needs” one must determine what is a healthy sustainable school environment, for both teacher and student a like.</li> </ul>

	<p>The current public high school suffers from serious overcrowding which ultimately effects the school population and quality of education and inter human relationships. Perhaps the Town does not have jurisdiction in this area, but it must be considered in regards to social planning issues.</p> <p>EDC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the Town ensure access to services such as child and elder care? I can see that the Town works with other levels of government and support agencies to facilitate access to these services, but unless the Town pays for the delivery of these services, it can't ensure them.</li> <li>• We would suggest the dropping of "such as child and elder care" ending the sentence at services. The OCP should and could direct future Councils to help with "ensuring access to appropriate and affordable housing". The Town has many means to assist with the development of housing.</li> </ul>
<p>14. Economic Develop.</p>	<p>TAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a plan for new business coming into area is outstanding. It lets them know what is expected and what size etc is available to them.</li> </ul> <p>SSAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15.2.1 The <i>Objective: To guide the sensitive integration of small-retail commercial stores format and chain stores.</i>” should have after stores: when applied for (or when sought - meaning that Council or the Town shouldn't actively seek to promote Smithers for Walmart or other chains and instead make it attractive for smaller, independent businesses to set up).</li> <li>• Policy 5, limiting chain stores to 30,000 sq. feet is excellent, although I'd like to see it applied to everywhere in Smithers, not just in downtown core...</li> <li>• Like the key directions of making the downtown core “people centred”. The key directions are varied and play on our strengths.</li> <li>• Like to see some language regarding capitalizing and maintaining the unique character of Smithers.</li> </ul>

- Good to see mention of self reliance here.
- Like the language around large format retail, although we have not had proper debate regarding “big box” stores. First, do big box stores fit within the vision for Smithers, and if so, where and how? It seems like the OCP assumes we want and need big box stores and jumps to the where and how. Perhaps Smithers could be different than all the rest of the communities in North America that are overrun with big box stores. Perhaps we could be unique and market ourselves as such. We have a great opportunity if we make the right decision now.
- Policy #5: Strongly oppose this policy, 30,000 feet is a large-scale store for the downtown core and it is not the just the visual quality of what it looks like from outside that is the main issue at large. Again content must be considered and the effect to other smaller business must be acknowledged and assessed before commitment. If this policy is to be kept in place I would request that their be public hearing and consultation, as well as merchant input as to whether such a development could or should go ahead. Larger stores so often deal with volume selling of products that perhaps are not sustainable or responsible for the community/ environment/ waste management. Realize one cannot approve the content or stock choice of a store but one can be informed of type of store and potential, which may influence whether it is appropriate for the downtown core.
- Must be very careful to not only think of economic consumer growth as a way of maintaining a strong and vibrant downtown core.

APC:

- Think **all** new business fronting on Highway 16 should meet the Alpine Theme requirement, including lighting and sign requirements, not just the downtown core. This would help increase the attractiveness of the highway 16 corridor.

EDC:

- FIFO amenity migration - I don't recall if the term is defined earlier in the document. If not, FIFO is a very common warehousing and accounting term and many readers will think of "First In First Out" before they

think of "Fly In Fly Out".

- Need to have a definition for "FIFO" as this term is widely used in business as well as income tax law.
- We forcefully recommend that the OCP not restrict or limit the size of retail buildings in the downtown core. If there is sufficient land for the construction of retail buildings of any size in the downtown core it should be encouraged. The customer traffic generated by a "large format" retailer would go a long way " To increase commercial activity in the downtown core to support local business" direct quote from the draft OCP.
- Land is already zoned on Tatlow North for big box stores and if and when they are constructed there would be a negative impact to the downtown core unless the population of Smithers had not more than doubled before the said construction. The use of the word "only" should be dropped to the more positive " will be considered"
- We have had difficult with the intention behind the additional lands designation for large scale commercial uses and have assumed it is meant for after Tatlow North properties have been completely sold and occupied?
- One objective is to guide the sensitive integration of small-box format and chain stores... what about large retail? i recognize that chain stores could also include large retail but not necessarily and policy 8:9 of the economic strategy says Smithers will continue to enhance its role as the regional centre for retail and wholesale business. We are no longer recognized for this and have lost a lot of this business to Prince George and Terrace.
- Large format retail and the square footage maximums must be given some thought. If the square footage of a large retail cannot exceed 30,000 ft<sup>2</sup> places such as Extras Foods would not be able to proceed with their expansion. We need to think of other future growth and what do we see long term for Smithers. 40,000 square feet is not unreasonable.
- How will the ocp deal with Easy Foods when in its expansion plans (now on hold) they will be larger than

30,000 sf but in the downtown core.

- Additional lands should be designated for large scale commercial... what is available would be gone quickly in an economic upturn and then where to go? the ocp should set direction for the next decade and this is missing.
- In the charette page 16 large format retail is dealt with but where is there space for large retail for over 30,000 sf? is this still desired to be close to town or away from the downtown core.
- The EDC has concerns over the OCP containing the use of "chain stores" in the third Objective as many if not all stores in the 15, 000 to 30,000 sf range will be a franchise or connect with a "chain". There are fewer and fewer independent retailers able to survive in today's world of mass merchandising.
- 30,000 square foot cap on "small box". I understand that where Safeway is located has the same zoning as Main Street. Safeway is >30,000 square feet, as is the proposed expansion of the Extra Foods Store. While the latter seems to be on hold, I think it would be prudent to plan for an expansion of that store at some time in the future, and one that wouldn't require a zoning amendment.
- Find the language very negative. Rather than development "only" being considered why doesn't the document read "will be considered when" in both cases? Saying council will **only** consider A if B is like saying council really doesn't like something right from the get-go.
- Should there be a review of the 1998 economic development strategy?
- During my research to prepare for the EDCs: presentation to Council, I came across the following comment in the last sentence of the second paragraph of the award letter from the Real Estate Foundation of BC dated January 4, 2007 covering the grant for the Study"--- as an important means to assist land use/conservation decision making for the Town and the surrounding region, and to inform, in later phases of the project, the Town's Official Community Plan." That indicates the REF of BC feel that the Study should have

	<p>substantial worth and value for the OCP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The OCP continuing "to endorse the 1998 Community Economic Development Strategy as a guiding framework to support economic development in Smithers - - -" is great but the current EDC should have been given that Strategy as our marching orders! The only comment we would offer is that the foregoing Strategy in the last sentence of its' Introduction states "The strategy that has been developed has a three-year time frame for implementation."</li> <li>• Community Economic Development Study " From Boom Town to Sustainable Town" March 2008 contains many "RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS". If this "Study" is adopted and endorsed by the current or future Councils, we feel strongly that it should be incorporated into the 2008 OCP.</li> <li>• At our EDC meeting on September 16, it was asked if the Boom Town to Sustainable Town report would be included as an appendix to the OCP. The response was that it wouldn't be, as the OCP is a very specifically a land-use document. My comment is that the OCP is also in reality a social values document and so I ask that the Town reconsider attaching the Boom Town to Sustainable Town as an appendix to the OCP.</li> </ul>
<p>15. Governance</p>	<p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Really glad to see this section and strongly support active public engagement, including with those who might find themselves outside the town's boundaries.</li> <li>• This is a KEY goal - I am very happy to see discussion of governance. I would like to see "transparency" added to the goal and "public" placed before engagement. I am extremely worried that the new council will scrap the parts of this plan that introduce what they see as radical ideas or concepts that don't meet their ideology - despite the great process used to engage the public.</li> <li>• Like the idea of "genuine public involvement" and "effective community engagement." This OCP has been an example of great public involvement.</li> <li>• In the past, public engagement has often been a joke in Smithers. No wonder there is such low voter turn-out.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently I don't believe there is much trust between Town Council and the community - the rezoning of Tatlow Road for big-box stores showed that when the council doesn't win a referendum, that engage the public in a sham of a process where the public is provided a narrow choice of options (all promoting huge parking lots and big box stores) and publicly state that they are listening to the silent majority, not the hundreds of people who are participating. What about listening to those people who care enough about their community to participate in the process?</li> <li>• Decisions made that do not fit into the OCP (i.e. zoning changes) must include open debate by council and the public and CLEAR rationale, including how the goals of the OCP are still met.</li> </ul>
<b>Part III: Development Permit Areas</b>	
<p>16. Development Permit Areas</p>	<p>SSAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is good to see some specifics in the Riparian DPA.</li> </ul> <p>APC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule E - the southwest facing slope complexes should be identified as Parks not rural lands for better protection.</li> <li>• Schedule A - There are several areas where the OCP considers existing zoning that may need a future change in zoning. Those include the areas at the bottom of Rosenthal Road and River Road.</li> </ul>