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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale for the Plan

The primary purpose of this community plan is to establish objectives and policies for the long-term development of the District of Wells. The plan consists of a set of broad social, economic and environmental objectives, with each objective being accompanied by a series of specific policies. Policies outline actions that, if taken, will contribute to the achievement of the overall objectives of the plan. This framework of objectives and policies will be used as a guide by District Council when considering land use bylaws in the community plan area.

A second purpose of the plan is to reduce uncertainty about the future form and pattern of land use in the plan area. To this end, lands have been designated for residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and institutional uses as indicated on the plan map. These land use designations are a representation of Council's intentions regarding the desired types and location of future development in Wells. Specific land use designations within individual neighbourhoods have been derived through a process of consultation involving District Council, the Planning and Zoning Committee, members of the public, various provincial government agencies, the District's planning consultants and the Cariboo Regional District.

A third purpose of the plan is to incorporate provincial government objectives and policies into the local planning context. For example, Wells has recently been identified as a "Gateway Community" by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture. Policies and designations within the document support Wells' role as a gateway to tourism, outdoor recreation and historical opportunities. The Wells Official Community Plan is a comprehensive land use plan for Wells, as outlined on Schedule 'B', the Wells, BC, Official Community Plan Map.

The Municipal Act establishes substantive requirements of a community plan. Thus, this community plan includes statements and map designations for the area covered by the plan respecting:

- (a) the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least five years;
- (b) the approximate location, amount and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational and public utility land uses;
- (c) the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits that are suitable for future sand and gravel extraction;

- (d) restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive to development;
- (e) the approximate location and phasing of major highways, and trunk sewer and water services;
- (f) the approximate location and type of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks, waste treatment and disposal sites; and,
- (g) other matters that may, in respect of any plan, be required by the minister.

1.2 Authority

This official community plan has enabling authority under the Municipal Act for the preparation of an official community plan. A plan is an instrument of local government and cannot direct senior government. It can state preferences for actions by provincial agencies but cannot require things be done. The Minister of Municipal Affairs is responsible for the Municipal Act.

2.0 COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The plan is a central goal and several objectives, each of which is intended to help achieve the overall goals defined for the Wells area. The policies listed with each objective provide means for achieving the objectives; adhering to the policies will hasten the achievement of the objectives. The goal and objectives for this plan are:

2.1 Goal

To accommodate, encourage and guide community development in Wells in a manner that will enhance the quality of life and respect the natural environment, give equal consideration to social, aesthetic, cultural and economic impacts, with the overall objective of developing a stable community of between 500 to 1000 year round residents.

2.2 Objectives

- (a) To encourage the preservation and restoration of the distinctive architectural style of Wells and the development of a 1930's mining town theme.
- (b) To ensure that new development is compatible with the heritage environment.
- (c) To promote development within the existing (of the day) infrastructure framework (water, sewer, roads, etc.) of the District of Wells.
- (d) To facilitate development of industrial activities in appropriate locations in Wells.
- (e) To facilitate provision of an adequate supply and range of housing choices in the community.
- (f) To provide parks and facilities to satisfy the recreation needs of the community and visitors.
- (g) To facilitate the provision of adequate lands for institutional use within the plan area.
- (h) To support a transportation network that is primarily pedestrian in orientation, which provides a safe and efficient system for the movement of people and goods, whether on foot, by bicycle or by motorized vehicle.

- (i) To provide safe potable water for domestic use and an adequate quantity of water at sufficient pressure for the fire protection area.
- (j) To provide a dependable, and environmentally acceptable, collection and disposal system for sewage for the Wells Sewer Specified Area.
- (k) To prevent and protect against the loss of life and property, by fire, within the Wells Fire Protection Area.
- (l) To preserve and protect the environmental and aesthetic qualities of the District of Wells and area.
- (m) To protect life and property by taking appropriate precautionary measures prior to allowing development on land that may be subject to natural hazards.

3.0 POLICY GUIDELINES

3.1 Introduction

The policies which follow and the designations presented on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map result from an analysis of land use trends and issues, and a series of discussions with interested groups in the community. The policies were developed from analysis of a range of factors, including existing land use and settlement patterns, demographic trends, economic conditions, servicing requirements and environmental considerations. Consultation with the public was also an integral aspect of the plan preparation process. The final plan document is a culmination of the above-noted research, analysis and consultation.

The community plan map designations outline those locations which are considered suitable for future residential, commercial, institutional and industrial uses. In addition, locations are indicated for proposed parkland, recreational vehicle parks and parking lots. The plan map also identifies the boundaries of the development permit area, the existing sewer specified area, the existing and proposed water specified area, and those areas which have been indicated as environmentally hazardous or sensitive.

The policies and guidelines set forth in the plan will be utilized to guide future development and to assess land use proposals which are submitted to the District for consideration. Each proposal for land development or redevelopment in the form of a rezoning application will be considered in terms of the contribution such development will make toward the fulfilment of the plan's objectives.

3.2 Historical Theme Preservation Policies

3.2 a. Objective

To encourage the preservation and restoration of the distinctive architectural style of Wells and the development of a 1930's mining town theme and to ensure that new development is compatible with the heritage environment.

3.2 b. Policies

(1) General Policy

1930's Mining Town Map Designation

An area of Wells, designated on the Official Community Plan map as 1930's Mining Town Development Permit Area pursuant to Section 879(4)(d) of the Municipal Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 323 for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the 1930's mining town heritage of the community. This area may be referred to as the "1930's Mining Town Development Permit Area".

Justification

The area designated is Wells' original commercial core. It was originally developed during the gold rush years of 1930 to 1935 and still contains a number of original buildings dating from this period. Revitalization and preservation of the 1930's mining town heritage has long been recognized as key to the economic future of the community. A "1930's Mining Town" design theme has been established to guide the reconstruction and renovation of existing buildings and the design and construction of new buildings. The development permit designation is required to ensure that this design theme is carried out consistently and it is a vehicle to protect the investments made in the heritage resources

(2) Guidelines

Within the Development Permit Area, buildings and structures shall not be constructed or altered unless the owner first obtains a development permit. Within the Development Permit Area land shall not be built upon or altered unless the owner first obtains a development permit. Development permits shall be issued in accordance with the following general guidelines:

- (i) The distinctive character of the original commercial buildings on Pooley Street and Sanders Avenue should be preserved and restored.
- (ii) The shape, siting and form of new buildings in the Development Permit Area should correspond with that of existing buildings.
- (iii) Exterior design guidelines shall apply only to the part of a building facing the street(s). False facades, decorative cornices, heritage fascias and other appropriate embellishments will be encouraged.

- (iv) A commercial building may be constructed of any material acceptable under the building code with the front covered by appropriate siding such as horizontal, narrow profile (3"-6" wide) wood siding with vertical corner Districts, wood shingles, asphalt shingles, or logs. Aluminium or vinyl siding, imitation, brick or stone, concrete block, plywood, cardboard sheet and rough cut wood siding will be discouraged. Windows should be wood framed and many paned. Doors should be made of wood and should be framed.
- (v) Signs shall be in keeping with the Wells heritage theme and should be considered part of the overall building design. Lettering, size, support structure and material will contribute to the theme.

(3) Exemptions

A development permit is not required for the following:

- (i) any residential building other than a residential building that contains a non-residential use on the ground floor
- (ii) the following minor alterations:
 - interior renovations
 - exterior maintenance requiring only the repair or replacement of existing surface materials and colours
 - changes to plant material in established landscaped areas
 - an alteration which is limited to the addition, replacement or alteration of doors, windows, building trim or roofs.

3.3 Commercial Development Policies

3.3 a. Objective

- (1) To promote development within the existing (of the day) infrastructure framework of the District of Wells.

3.3 b. Policies

(1) General Policy

A combination of market forces and land use planning have been the primary factors in determining the location, scale and type of businesses that

have developed in Wells. The District is of the belief that the market should continue to be the principal determinant of the type and scale of commercial development that occurs in Wells. Thus, the District will not be overly restrictive in regulating the development of new businesses. The District does recognize the need for a compact, well-designed commercial area in Wells in order to capitalize on tourism development opportunities, to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses, and to preserve the heritage values of the community. Therefore, the District has identified on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map, areas designated for present and future commercial development.

(2) Home Occupations

Small scale, cottage industries will be permitted and encouraged in conjunction with the principal use of properties for residential purposes. These operations, which will be subject to the "home occupation" regulations in the Zoning Bylaw, offer an individual the opportunity to establish a wide variety of enterprises at costs which may be significantly lower than leasing or purchasing commercial/industrial land. Home occupations must also be in accordance with applicable provincial regulations. Cottage industries or home occupations, however, are not intended to replace the established business district. Limitations placed on these uses, especially with respect to the sale of goods, will ensure that they remain small scale and compatible with the primary residential use of properties.

(3) Temporary Commercial Permits

- (i) Temporary commercial uses will be permitted within the entire area covered by this plan.
- (ii) Upon application by the owner of land to the District, the District may issue a permit allowing any commercial use, as specified in the permit, to be carried on for a maximum period of two years (renewable once).
- (iii) In its consideration of an application for a temporary commercial permit, the District will treat the application as if it will involve the proposed use becoming permanent.

(4) Residential-Commercial Areas

The District will consider areas that may be suitable for both residential and low intensity commercial uses. In these areas, Council will allow small-scale

commercial uses that are compatible in a residential setting. An example is the Bowman Crescent Area. The intention is to maintain the residential character of the neighbourhood by allowing only commercial uses that are compatible such as artisan studios, coffee houses and professional offices.

(5) Commercial Service/Light Industrial Areas

The District will consider areas that may be suitable for both commercial service and light industrial uses. Commercial service/light industrial uses are uses that are oriented towards motor vehicle needs, manufacturing, warehousing, and construction industries. Council will direct these uses to the respective areas shown on Schedule B, the Land Use Map. Council will also consider other areas for such uses on a site-by-site basis provided such areas are generally located away from the Barkerville Highway and are compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood.

3.4 Industrial Development Policies

3.4 a. Objective

- (1) To facilitate development of industrial activities in appropriate locations in Wells.

3.4 b. Policies

(1) General Policy

The District will accommodate industry in Wells by ensuring sufficient land be made available for future industrial development.

(2) Industrial Map Designation

Existing industrial land is designated on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map. Future rezoning applications for industrial uses in Wells will be considered on a site-specific basis.

The Industrial designation is intended to accommodate existing and future industrial operations on sites where industrial uses will be compatible with adjacent land uses. The zoning bylaw will be used to determine the specific types of industry that will be permitted on an industrial site.

(3) Home Occupations

Small scale, cottage industries will be permitted and encouraged in conjunction with the principal use of properties for residential purposes. These operations, which will be subject to the 'Home Occupation' regulations in the Zoning Bylaw, offer an individual the opportunity to establish a wide variety of enterprises at costs which may be significantly lower than leasing or purchasing commercial/industrial land. Cottage industry of home occupations, however, are not intended to replace the established business district; limitations placed on these uses, especially with respect to the sale of goods, will ensure that they remain small scale and compatible with the primary residential use of properties.

(4) Temporary Industrial Permits

- (i) Temporary industrial uses will be permitted within the entire plan area covered by this plan.
- (ii) Upon application by the owner of land to the District, the District may issue a permit allowing any industrial use, as specified in the permit, to be carried on for a maximum period of two years (renewable once).
- (iii) In its consideration of an application for a temporary industrial permit, the District will treat the application as if it will involve the proposed use becoming permanent.

3.5 Residential Development Policies

3.5 a. Objective

To facilitate provision of an adequate supply and range of housing choices in the community.

3.5 b. Policies

(1) General Policies

- (i) The District will ensure, through land use designations in this plan and subsequent zoning decisions, that an ample supply of residential land exists in Wells.
- (ii) The District will promote orderly growth by encouraging residential development in areas within or adjacent to the existing community. Future development will occur at densities that, in the opinion of the District, are consistent with established residential densities in Wells.

(2) Single Family Residential

The Single Family Residential designation is intended to accommodate conventional, low density single family dwellings.

(3) Multi-Family Residential

Existing multi-family development is designated Multi-Family Residential on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map. Future rezoning applications for additional multi-family residential uses in Wells will be considered on a site-specific basis. Compatibility with adjacent uses, the desires of neighbouring residents as expressed at the public hearing for the application and infrastructure capacity will be central concerns in the District's evaluation of the proposal's merits.

(4) Rural Residential

The rural residential designation is intended to accommodate low density, conventional and manufactured single family dwellings on acreage lots. Acreage lots will be encouraged for rural-oriented activities that cannot be accommodated on lots currently serviced.

3.6 Park, Recreation/Open Space Policies

3.6 a. Objectives

- (1) To promote the maintenance of the forested slopes within the visual field of the municipality in a manner that is not detrimental to the visual environment of the District of Wells.
- (2) To provide parks and facilities to satisfy the recreation needs of the community and visitors.

3.6 b. Policies

(1) Open Space

The District will maintain a commitment from the Ministry of Forests to ensure that forested slopes within the visual field of the municipality should, where possible, be managed in a manner that is not detrimental to the visual environment of Wells.

On privately held land that may have an impact on visual quality objectives, the District will adopt provisions under the Municipal Act to protect the removal of trees.

(2) Parks and Recreation

Areas identified as having value for public recreation are designated as Proposed Parkland on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map. Proposed parkland sites have been designated to allow a diversity of facilities and opportunities. Sites have been selected to accommodate a variety of recreational opportunities. The proposed parks range from active recreation sites, such as the ball park site at the west end of Pooley Street, to more passive recreation sites, such as potential playgrounds and tot lots in residential neighbourhoods throughout the community.

(3) Recreation Use of Crown Lands

Low intensity recreation uses such as cross-country skiing, hiking and horseback riding are generally compatible with resource use of Crown land. "The Meadows," for example, is an important natural area enjoyed by many low intensity recreational users. The Ministry of Forests promotes integrated management of Crown forest lands; thus, land within the Provincial Forests and TFL 52 adjacent to the developed areas of Wells, have been designated as Proposed Parkland on Schedule 'B', the Official

Community Plan Map. The intention of this designation is to encourage the development and promotion of low impact recreational activities in the Provincial Forest adjacent to Wells.

(4) Recreational Vehicle Parks

The development of tourist facilities, such as recreational vehicle parks, will be encouraged on sufficiently large parcels of suitably located vacant land. Locations suitable for potential recreational vehicle parks are indicated on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map.

3.7 Institutional Policies

3.7 a. Objective

- (1) To facilitate the provision of adequate lands for institutional use within the plan area.

3.7 b. Policies

- (1) Various existing public and institutional uses including the elementary school, the, the firehall, the church, the community hall, the curling rink and the are designated as Institutional on Schedule 'B', the Wells, BC, Official Community Plan Map. Additional public service facilities may be accommodated in the Institutional designation and the plan will be amended to allow these uses.
- (2) Despite subsection (1), institutional uses will be permitted throughout the plan area. Future rezoning applications for additional institutional uses in Wells will be considered on a site-specific basis.

3.8 Transportation Policies

3.8 a. Objective

- (1) To support a transportation network that is primarily pedestrian in orientation, which provides a safe and efficient system for the movement of people and goods, whether on foot, by bicycle or by motorized vehicle.

3.8 b. Policies

(1) Road Network

The District will request the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to keep Council and the community informed of new development plans for the highway system in Wells. Where changes to the system may impact on the community, the Ministry will be requested to obtain input from local residents regarding such change.

The responsibility for the road network, including maintenance and any upgrades, will be devolved over a 5-year transition period. At the end of the 5 year period, full responsibility for the road network, other than Highway 26, will be transferred from the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to the District of Wells. The District will promote a safe and efficient road network, and work toward good maintenance.

(2) Parking

Existing off-street parking along Pooley Street and Sanders is very limited; in addition, the small size of the lots in the commercial core limits the potential for on-site, off-street parking. Further, it is anticipated that in the future, on-street parking may be insufficient to accommodate the demand.

In the Zoning Bylaw, Council would like to develop a system that considers on-street parking, off-street parking, as well as a fund for communal parking facilities operated by the District. In developing such a system, the following principles will guide Council's decision making:

(i) Provide for Good Mobility and Accessibility

- People want to have good, convenient access to accommodation, shops, services and entertainment- by vehicle and on foot.

(ii) Preserve the Ambience and Pedestrian Environment

- Wells has a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment that is a source of inspiration and pride for both residents and visitors. A parking strategy should not replace this with automobile-oriented development that would put suburban, highway-commercial parking standards in place.

(iii) Do Not Deter Small Business Development

- With Wells' arts community and historical small-lot subdivision pattern, there are opportunities for many different types of small businesses (crafts, galleries, personal services, etc.). Parking requirements should not be so difficult as to deter new small business development from happening.

(iv) Treat Businesses and Property Owners Fairly

- Businesses and property owners want to know that they are being treated fairly. A system should be established where standards are applied consistently and people are dealt with equitably.

(3) Pedestrian Walkways

In conjunction with the development of parking sites, consideration should be given to developing an identifiable pedestrian route through the municipality. Construction of a Boardwalk along Pooley Street and Sanders Ave connecting the parking lots with the historic shopping area could be an attraction in itself and might be the first phase of a larger pedestrian network that could eventually include the marsh area, Jack of Clubs Lake, the Lowhee Dyke area, and possibly Barkerville. The design and location of a Boardwalk will include consideration of the snow storage and drainage requirements of the route.

Parking areas can be landscaped and used to house interesting outdoor displays.

3.9 Community Services and Infrastructure Policies

3.9 a. Objectives

- (1) To provide safe potable water for domestic use and an adequate quantity of water at sufficient pressure for fire protection for the Wells Water Specified Area.
- (2) To provide a dependable, and environmentally acceptable sewage collection and disposal system for the Wells Sewer Specified Area.
- (3) To prevent and protect against the loss of life and property, by fire, within the Wells Fire Protection Specified Area.

3.9 b. Policies

(1) Community Water System

- (i) Existing and future development in the Wells Water Specified Area will be encouraged to connect to the water system. Where future subdivision occurs that is intended to be serviced by the system, the costs of any required extension or upgrading are to be borne by the developer/subdivider of the land.
- (ii) If and when deficiencies in the distribution system are identified, the system will be upgraded as funds permit so that overall operating costs are reduced. If the public health and safety are factors, the system should be upgraded immediately. The operation and maintenance program will be refined and upgraded so that uninterrupted service will continue to be provided.

(2) Community Sewer System

- (i) Existing and future development in the Wells Sewer Specified Area will be required to connect to the sewer system. Where future development/subdivision occurs that is intended to be serviced by the system, the costs of any required extension or upgrading are to be borne by the developer/subdivider of the land.
- (ii) Should future development be proposed for areas within the plan boundary but not within the sewer specified area, consideration will be given to requiring an extension of the specified area so the development will be required to connect. In particular, the Ministry of Health has indicated that the area south of Highway 26 between Lowhee Creek and Jack of Clubs Lake (high water table) and the areas north of the townsite in District Lot 131 and 289 (low-lying, swampy lands) are areas where proposed developments would need to be serviced by the sewer system.
- (iii) If and when deficiencies with the collection and disposal system are identified, the system will be upgraded as funds permit. If public health and safety are a factor, the system should be upgraded immediately. The operation and maintenance program will be refined and upgraded so that uninterrupted service will continue to be provided.

(3) Fire Protection

The District will assist in coordinating the provision of the best possible fire fighting equipment; the implementation of a volunteer training program; and the carrying out of educational and awareness programs.

3.10 Natural Environmental/Hazard Lands Policies

3.10 a. Objectives

- (1) To preserve and protect the environmental and aesthetic qualities of the Wells area.
- (2) To protect life and property by taking appropriate precautionary measures prior to allowing development on land that may be subject to natural hazards.

3.10 b. Policies

(1) General Policies

- (i) The District will encourage development to be undertaken in a way that minimizes detrimental effects on the environment. Natural vegetation should be retained, where possible, as protection against erosion and to preserve the visual attractiveness of the area. Landscaping initiatives that preserve natural species such as wildflowers and shrubs, and preserves habitat for birds and small animals will be encouraged.
- (ii) The District will encourage development in areas which are not subject to known instability, landslip, inundation or other natural hazards.

(2) Watercourses

- (i) The District will support the Ministry of Environment in ensuring that effluents, whether domestic or industrial, are not permitted to enter any watercourse if they will impair the quality of the water.
- (ii) The District will support the Ministry of Environment in ensuring that waste material is not placed adjacent to a watercourse in such a way as to result in leachate or silt introduction to the watercourse via surface runoff or groundwater contamination.

- (iii) Greenbelts of natural vegetation should be maintained along watercourses for the protection of fish and wildlife values and the maintenance of efficient drainage systems. Upon the recommendation of the Ministry of Environment, the District may require a restrictive covenant over land to be rezoned adjacent to watercourses for the purpose of maintaining an area of land adjacent to the watercourse in its natural state.
- (iv) Roads, culverts and bridges should be built according to strict site specific specifications, as determined by the Ministry of Environment, to avoid damage to watercourses and the fishery resource.

(3) Construction Setback

No construction is to be allowed within 7.5 metres of the natural boundary of a lake, within 30 metres of the natural boundary of any other watercourse or less than 0.6 metre above the two hundred year flood level, where it has been determined, or 1.5 metres above the natural boundary of a lake or any other watercourse where the two hundred year flood level has not been determined.

(4) Lakes and Wetlands

Development proposals that may affect lakes and sensitive wetland areas will be reviewed in consultation with the Ministry of Environment.

(5) Hazard Lands

Where the District has been advised by an appropriate authority that a proposed land development requiring District approval is in an area subject to or likely subject to flooding, erosion, landslip, subsidence or other natural hazard, the District may request the owner of land to provide it with a report certified by a professional geotechnical engineer that the land may be used safely for the proposed use. Certain areas within the District of Wells may also be subject to arsenic tailings as the result of mine development. In these instances, Site Profiles may need to be completed, as required by the Ministry of Environment, before development proceeds.

Where mobile homes or buildings to be used for habitation, business, or the storage of goods damageable by floodwaters are to be located or constructed in any area liable to flooding, such buildings or mobile homes shall be adequately floodproofed in accordance with the floodproofing requirements of the Ministry of Environment.

In the flood plain areas, low density and open space uses that are least subject to loss of life or property damage such as open storage, agriculture, and recreation will be preferred over uses that will require floodproofing protection.

4.0 PLAN MAP DESIGNATIONS

The following is a brief summary of the land use designation categories on Schedule 'B', the Official Community Plan Map. It should be noted that this summary is very general in nature and that the plan text should be referred to for a more complete definition of the uses permitted in and the intent of each category.

(a) 1930's Mining Town Development Permit Area

The 1930's Mining Town Development Permit Area is designated to facilitate the preservation and restoration of the distinctive architectural style of Wells.

(b) Single Family Residential

The Single Family Residential designation is for the accommodation of single family dwellings on individual lots with community water and/or sewer systems.

(c) Multi-Family Residential

The Multi-Family Residential designation contains existing multi-family accommodation and an area which has been indicated as suitable for development as multi-family accommodation.

(d) Rural Residential

The Rural Residential designation signifies areas for larger acreage residential development.

(e) Wells Commercial District

The Wells Commercial District designation contains the historic commercial core of Wells and the location of recent tourist-oriented commercial development.

(f) Residential-Commercial

This designation accommodates single family residential and low impact commercial uses in areas such as Bowman Crescent that are close to the commercial core

(g) Industrial

The Industrial designation contains all lands on which there are existing industrial uses.

(h) Institutional

The Institutional designation is intended to accommodate schools and other public service facilities such as hospitals, community halls, churches, and

public utility buildings and structures.

(i) Parkland/Recreational Area

The Parkland/Recreational Area designation is intended to identify those lands which are suited for recreational use.

(j) Recreational Vehicle Park Development

The Recreational Vehicle Park Development designation is intended to identify locations suited for development as recreational vehicle parks.

(k) Parking Lot

The Parking Lot designation is intended to identify centrally located sites owned by the Crown which could provide parking to meet the demand associated with anticipated growth.

(l) Sensitive/Hazardous Areas

The Sensitive/Hazardous Areas designation is intended to identify those lands which may be subject to natural hazards and which merit special consideration prior to development.

(m) Water Specified Area

The Water Specified Area designation identifies those lands which are presently serviced by the community water system.

(n) Water Specified Boundary Extension Area

The Water Specified Boundary Extension Area designation identifies those lands which it is anticipated will receive community water in the future.

(o) Sewer Specified Area

The Sewer Specified Area designation identifies those lands which are presently serviced by the community sewer system.

APPENDIX 1

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

In the fall of 1986, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs was informed that the Cariboo Regional District may soon commence preparation of an official community plan for the Wells/Barkerville area. At the same time, a series of meetings, coordinated by the Advisory Planning Commission, and the Cariboo Regional District Planning Department, proposed policy initiatives for Wells concerning recreational lands, industrial development, commercial, and residential zoning.

Following direction from the District, making the Wells plan a priority project for 1987, a "community plan area designation request", including a map of the plan area boundaries and Terms of Reference for the plan, was prepared and submitted to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The Terms of Reference and the map of the plan area boundaries were sent to the Advisory Planning Commission and the government agencies in April, 1987. A meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission was held shortly after to explain the Terms of Reference and the official community plan process.

A community survey was sent to all property owners in Wells soliciting opinions on issues raised in earlier stages of the planning process and information on any future plans they might have for their property. The survey was undertaken to ensure the community plan reflects the desires of the residents and property owners. The initial results of the survey were presented at a public meeting on June 29, 1987. A summary of the results are included in Appendix 3.

Two further concerns were raised at the June public meeting. The first concern was the importance to the future economic well-being of the community which the preservation of the unique 1930's mining town heritage of Wells represents. The second point brought forth at the meeting was the desire to have the commercial area of Sanders Avenue included as part of the designated Development Permit Area.

In July, 1987, the Wells Community Plan Area was formally designated under Section 944(3) of the Municipal Act by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The Wells Revitalization Area was designated under Section 945(4)(d) by the Minister as a Development Permit Area, October, 1987. A copy of the draft policy statement portion of the Wells Official Community Plan was circulated to the Advisory Planning Commission soliciting comments; early in 1988, the Advisory Planning Commission met and gave their approval to the draft policy document with no comments.

With the incorporation of Wells on June 29, 1998, the new District of Wells undertook to revise the Official Community Plan. The Planning and Zoning Committee reviewed the plan and identified several issues including parking, visual quality management and the potential for a mixed residential commercial zone on Bowman Crescent. A public meeting was held December 2, 1998 to gain input from the public. Questionnaires were also distributed to solicit additional feedback. After the November, 1999 municipal election, the plan was revisited with the intention of proposing solutions to the issues identified in previous meetings. A public open house was held on March 21, 2000 to present these proposed solutions and solicit further feedback.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Wells is located approximately 80 kilometres east of Quesnel, BC, on the Barkerville Highway. Wells is situated in the Cariboo mountains at an elevation of 1,200 metres, at the confluence of the Willow River and Williams Creek. The townsite is centred on a gravel knoll overlooking Jack of Clubs Lake, surrounded by forested hills, a scenic wetland and meadow area, and the tailings piles from earlier gold mines.

The physical plan for Wells was originally prepared by the Wells Townsite Company, a subsidiary of the Cariboo Gold Quartz Mine Company. The majority of the buildings in Wells were constructed between 1934 and 1936 as residences for the miners working in the local mines. On December 14, 1933, the Wells Townsite Company was incorporated under the Companies Act. The initial physical plan for Wells was developed by Eddie Richardson and Ted Baynes under the direction of Major Gook. following town planning practices learned while studying civil engineering at UBC, Richardson located the commercial heart of Wells on the driest, most stable land on the knoll. From this centre, Wells spreads out like spokes on a wheel with businesses and services dispersed along the spokes. The majority of the residential property was situated on the flats north of the main commercial street, Pooley Street.

Following its initial establishment, Wells grew quite rapidly; by 1934, the population had grown to 2,000 people. Wells continued to be a thriving centre of gold quartz mining until the Second World War when the market for gold collapsed. The war brought both financial and social ruin to Wells. During the war years, Wells was on the verge of becoming a ghost town when the supply of available workers was at a minimum. The Cariboo Gold Quartz Company was unable to hire sufficient workers for its mines. By 1946 following the return of the soldiers, the Company was once again able to hire sufficient men to work in the mines. The discovery of rich gold ore veins after the war meant that the Wells area was once again in boom times. In the period following the war, the population peaked at 4,500; but declined again to 300 in 1967 when "Old Number One", the last shaft of the Cariboo Gold Quartz Mine, closed.

The economic well-being of Wells declined following the closing of the Cariboo Gold Quartz Mine in 1967. The local economy is currently based on a mixture of tourism, placer mining, logging, and hard rock mining.

Tourism is seen as the major growth industry with logging and mining as companion industries. Wells has been named a 'Gateway' community which will focus significant resources towards developing links between front country and backcountry tourism enterprises, resource stewardship, marketing and the integration of natural and cultural tourism products.

RESULTS OF WELLS COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Wells Community Survey was distributed to all owners of property in Wells, soliciting opinions on issues raised on earlier stages of the planning process and information on any future plans which they may have for their property. The survey was taken to assure the community plan reflects the desires of the residents and property owners. Initial results of the survey were presented at a public meeting held in Wells on June 29, 1987. A copy of the Questionnaire, including a summary of the results follows.