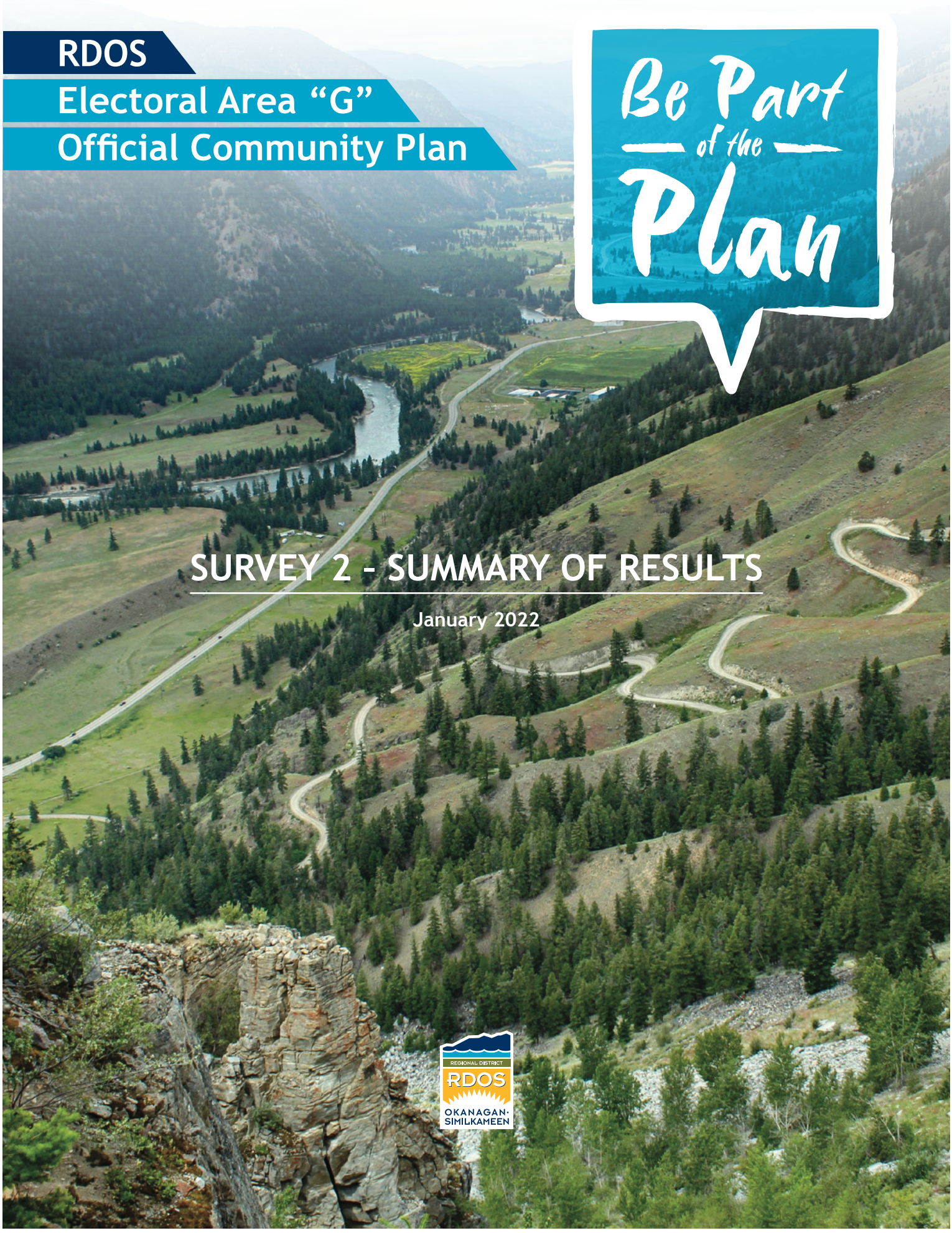
RDOS

Electoral Area "G" Official Community Plan

Be Part of the Plan



SURVEY 2 - SUMMARY OF RESULTS

January 2022

REGIONAL DISTRICT RDOS OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN

Table of Contents

Background ***3***

Survey Outreach and Distribution **3**

Summary of Survey Responses ***4***

Draft Vision Statement and Broad Goals **4**

Draft Land Use Plan & Designations **6**

Local area draft policy statements **8**

Rural Keremeos 8

Hedley 9

Olalla 10

Mobile Home Parks 11

Have we missed anything important to you? **11**

Background

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) has initiated planning and preparation of the first Official Community Plan (OCP) for Electoral Area "G".

The following community survey was conducted as part of Round 2 engagement for the OCP development. The objective was to offer residents in Electoral Area "G" an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft OCP vision, broad goals, key priorities, and draft land use plan.

Survey Outreach and Distribution

The survey was open from October 26 - December 17, 2021. The survey was advertised through the following means:

- Two rounds of direct-mail post cards (with a link to the survey) sent to all households in Electoral Area "G"
- The Citizens Committee and their online & email networks
- Online through RDOS social media and CivicReady (now called Voyent Alert!)
- RDOS Regional Connections website
- Community posters at key locations in Hedley and Rural Keremeos
- Newspaper ads with links to the survey through Regional Connections in the Similkameen Spotlight and Keremeos Review

Paper surveys were also made available at the following pick up and drop off locations within Electoral Area "G":

- RDOS office
- Town of Keremeos Office
- Hedley General Store

Summary of Survey Responses

The following section outlines a summary of input by question.

In total, there were 112 responses to the survey. Of this, 103 were received online and 9 on paper.

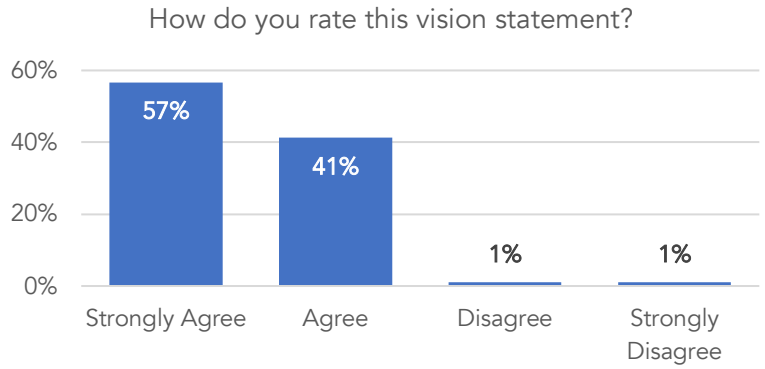
Draft Vision Statement and Broad Goals

Vision Statement

The following is the draft vision statement for Electoral Area "G" that was written based on input from residents and the Citizens Committee:

> *"Electoral Area "G" is a predominantly rural region made up of smaller settlement areas and communities. Residents value the independent spirit and minimal regulations of the area, as well as preserving and stewarding its important agricultural areas, natural habitats, and recreation areas. Residents are also committed to ensuring water resources are well-managed and protected and that community wildfire risks are reduced."*

98% of survey respondents strongly agree or agree with the vision statement. 2% of survey respondents indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed.



In addition, 34 respondents provided comments on the vision statement. Key themes are summarized below in order of most to least frequently mentioned themes:

- **Balanced regulations**: have some regulations, particularly in the Keremeos area, that support community members in maintaining community cleanliness, pollution, resource management, and fire safety.
- **Water**: managing water resources and protecting communities from flooding through diking.
- **Nature**: protect all natural resources, including outdoor recreation, and maintain access to nature (i.e., free for residents to use, build accessible trails, etc.).
- **Strong sense of community**: change the term "residents" and emphasize community responsibilities and neighbourliness.
- **Reconciliation**: acknowledge that our communities are within the ancestral, traditional, territory of the Sylix People.
- **Heritage**: preserve heritage attractions.

Broad Goals

On a scale of 1 to 10, (10 being the highest support), survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for the following draft goals for Electoral Area "G":

	Broad goals	*Average level of support*
Highest support	**Natural hazards and climate change.** Manage and reduce risks from natural hazards such as wildfire and flooding, support adaptation and greenhouse gas reduction initiatives, in order to enhance community resilience.	8.7
	Water resources. Protect and manage water resources, including both surface and groundwater, for residential uses, agriculture, and ecosystem health.	8.7
	Agriculture. Protect and support the area's existing agricultural activity and lands that contribute to the area's economic base, character and sense of place.	8.6
	Community health and wellbeing. Promote community health, safety, active living and support the area's aging population and youth.	8.6
	Infrastructure and services. Improve and support the development of new or combined infrastructure, including community water and sanitary sewer systems and improved internet connectivity.	8.3
	Continued engagement and collaboration with Upper Similkameen Indian Band and Lower Similkameen Indian Band.	8.1
	Natural environment. Steward and protect the area's natural features, including sensitive ecosystems and habitat, while balancing these important areas with needed natural resource development.	8.0
	Economic development and tourism. Support and retain existing businesses, while encouraging new businesses, in particular those supporting new sustainable tourism related activities.	7.8
	Transportation. Maintain a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system for all road users working in cooperation with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.	7.7
	Recreation. Work to build and promote the area's trail systems and maintain existing high-quality park and recreational spaces.	7.6
	Heritage. Support and honour the area's history and heritage, Indigenous and settlement.	7.6
Lowest support	**New growth and development.** Manage and accommodate new growth incrementally, in existing residential areas, and with adequate servicing.	7.0

Overall, survey respondents expressed relatively high support for all the draft broad goals. "Natural hazards and climate change" and "Water resources" ranked the highest, followed closely by "Agriculture" and "Community health and wellbeing".

35 respondents provided additional comments on the broad goals. Key themes are summarized below in order of most to least frequently mentioned themes:

- **Intergenerational**: it is important to support community members of all ages, which could include programs that bring seniors and youth together.
- **Water resources**: water should be accessible to the public and affordable for business and agricultural purposes.
- **Housing**: there is a need for more affordable housing and housing for seasonal workers.
- **Cost**: there is some concern about the cost required to achieve the goals.

- **Infrastructure and waste management**: adequate infrastructure and waste management must be in place before new developments are built.
- **Natural resources**: balance the protection and development of natural resources.
- **Reconciliation:** partner with Upper Similkameen Indian Band and Lower Similkameen Indian Band.
- **Recreation:** use the Great Northern Railway (GNR) for recreation (e.g., walking, biking, horse riding, etc.).
- **Traffic:** there is some concern about increased vehicle traffic and managing speeding in communities.
- **Unique character:** it is important to maintain the unique agricultural character of Electoral Area "G".

Draft Land Use Plan & Designations

Land Use

Survey respondents reviewed a draft land use map and designations for Electoral Area "G" (Figure 1) and 36 provided additional comments. In general, respondents were in support of the draft land use map. However, nearly 20% of additional comments noted that it was difficult to interpret the map (e.g., identifying their community, differentiating existing and desired uses, equating land use and zoning, interpreting land use types like Large Holdings).

In order of most to least frequently mentioned, common ideas about the draft land use map include:

- **ALR protection:** strong protection of the ALR, including the financial support of ALR landowners (e.g., allow rentals on ALR).
- **Natural hazards:** identify natural hazard areas (e.g., flooding, rock falls, etc.) and plan accordingly, such as establishing conservation areas and building dikes.
- **Conservation:** expand conservation areas, particularly in the east and in natural hazard areas, and maintain access to park and recreation areas.
- **Medium density residential:** increase to medium density residential in communities and promote mixed use development (e.g., commercial and light industrial) to reduce commuting times.
- **Reconciliation:** work with USIB and LSIB to identify important lands.

"The resource area is a real eye-opener. Can more of this area not be designated for Conservation and Parks Recreation?"

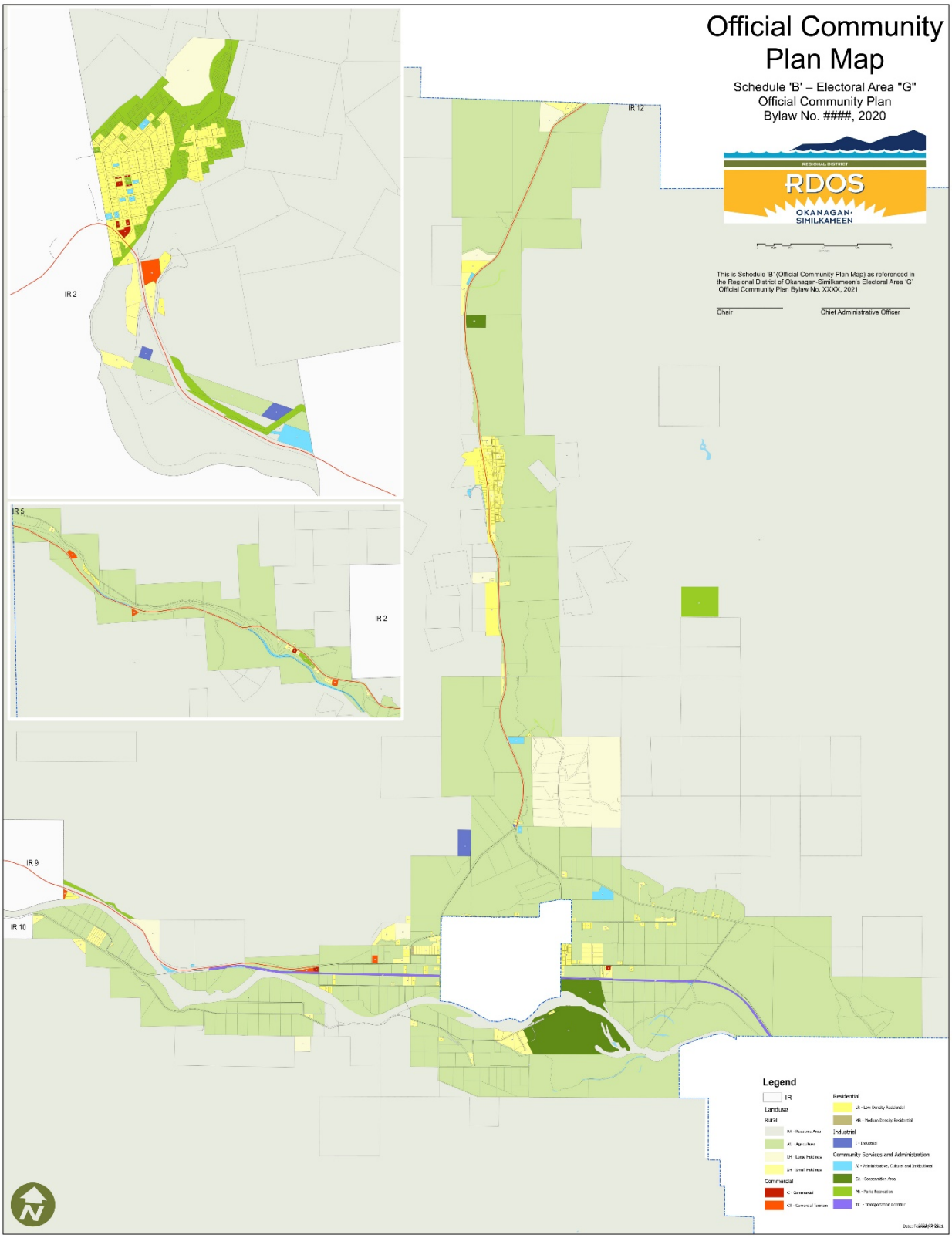
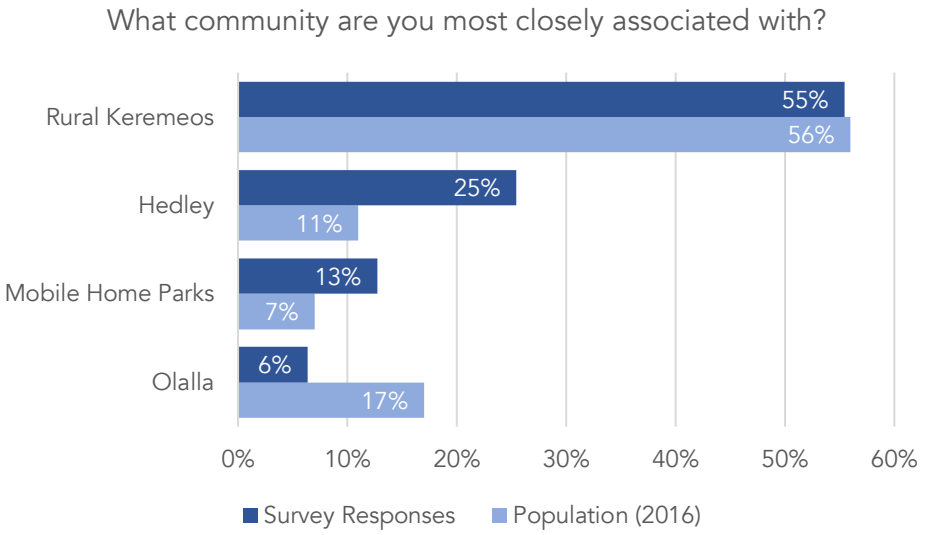


Figure 1: a draft land use map and designations for Electoral Area "G". *Note: Land use is not zoning. Land use designations outline what the land is used for, it doesn't regulate what to build and how (that's a zoning bylaw).*

Local area draft policy statements

Electoral Area "G" contains several unique communities including, Rural Keremeos, Olalla, Hedley, and mobile home parks. More than half of survey respondents closely associate with Rural Keremeos, followed by 25% in Hedley, 13% in Mobile Home Parks, and 6% in Olalla. Compared to the Electoral Area "G"'s 2016 population, there is an overrepresentation of respondents from Hedley and Mobile Home Parks and an underrepresentation of respondents from Olalla.



The Electoral Area "G" OCP Citizen's Committee advocated for the new OCP to contain specific local area policies, which address the unique issues and interests of each community. Respondents' ranking and comments on local area policies specific to the community they associate most closely with are summarized below.

Rural Keremeos

Respondents from Rural Keremeos generally supported the local area policy statements. Discouraging commercial signage had the highest support while the proposed re-alignment of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Highway 3 had the least support.

	Policy statements for Rural Keremeos	*Average level of support*
Highest support	Discourage the amount of commercial signage and promotion of third party uses along the main Highway thoroughfare.	**8.3**
	Does not support the exclusion, subdivision or non-farm use of parcels designated as Agriculture under this Bylaw and / or Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) lands under the Agricultural Land Commission Act.	**7.1**
	Encourage signage within the provincial highway road dedications to comply with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Policy Manual for Supplemental Signs (2005).	**7.1**
	Support the Keremeos Irrigation District to provide community water connections to existing parcels but does not support increasing density on parcels designated as Agriculture (AG).	**6.9**

	May consider greater residential densities along the perimeter of the Village of Keremeos, provided that those parcels are serviced with community water and sewer.	6.9
Lowest support	Support the proposed re-alignment of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Highway 3.	5.7

Reasons for low support:

- Needing more information about the proposed highway realignment, which may overlap other uses including biking, horse riding, hiking and agriculture and negatively impacts adjacent properties. (*Note: several respondents mentioned that they could not see the map.)*
- Protection of agricultural land is not strong enough
- Infrastructure needs to be established before new developments
- Threatens the unique character of the community
- Concern that new buildings will not be aesthetically pleasing and that the perimeter of the Village of Keremeos does not look nice
- Concern that an OCP will limit residents' use of their properties, such as building multiple family homes on a property
- Concern about increased traffic and overuse of resources
- Signage is important for promoting local businesses
- Desiring more information about a new sewer plant and it's impacts

Additional suggested policies:

- Develop a rural tourism policy
- Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) to provide safe access to residential/commercial business along the highway.
- Encourage senior levels of government to maintain Provincial Parks and Forest
- Recognize the importance of heritage and culture within the plan area and support obtaining funding to protect and enhance buildings and sites of historical significance.
- Recognize and encourage publicly accessible recreational, institutional, and cultural opportunities within the Plan area.
- Collaborate with the Village of Keremeos to provide public transit
- Protect orchards and agricultural land
- Allow second homes and rentals on farms
- Connect housing and developments to the Village of Keremeos sewerage system
- Ban all cannabis/cannabis product production, distribution, retails sales
- Protect riparian areas
- Support property clean up and maintenance
- Encourage new businesses in the downtown core
- Acknowledge the unceded territory of the Sylix People

Hedley

Respondents from Hedley expressed moderate to high support for all local area policy statements. Communication and collaboration with the USIB ranked highest, but also received the most comments about reasons for low support.

	Policy statements for Hedley	*Average level of support*
Highest support	Encourage communication and collaboration with the USIB that support community wide issues and solutions.	7.9
	Support new heritage initiatives.	7.8
Lowest support	Encourage retail commercial enterprises to locate within the downtown core of Hedley.	7.8

Reasons for low support:

- Unfamiliarity with the term USIB (Upper Similkameen Indian Band)
- Perceptions that the USIB does not desire collaboration
- A lack of interest in collaborating with the USIB

Additional suggested policies:

- Better manage traffic in the village with speed limits and traffic calming measures
- Support local charitable individuals and groups who provide services for vulnerable residents
- Prevent illegal garbage dumping
- Discourage wasteful water use
- Have minimal regulations on new home construction to support more "experimental architecture"

Olalla

Most local area policy statements received moderate to high support from survey respondents. Discouraging commercial signage had the highest support while requiring new development to be within the RDOS Olalla Community Water Service Area received the lowest level of support.

	Policy statements for Olalla	*Average level of support*
Highest support	Discourage the amount of commercial signage and promotion of third party uses along the main Highway thoroughfare.	8.5
	Discourage any new development within the floodplain of the creek.	8.3
	Encourage signage within the provincial highway road dedications to comply with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Policy Manual for Supplemental Signs (2005).	6.5
Lowest support	Require new development to be within the RDOS Olalla Community Water Service Area (within existing boundaries or an expansion of the water service area).	5

Reasons for low support:

- Concern that new homes could not use a well as their water supply
- Concern that action will not be taken to address fire hazards, unsightly premises, and other potential dangers

Additional policies:

- Support property clean up and maintenance
- Remove the junk yard on Olalla Creek FSR
- Improve snow removal services

Mobile Home Parks

Mobile home parks create their own unique communities. Key issues which may require special consideration in the OCP related to mobile home parks include:

- Supporting aging in place, including building accessible pathways in parks
- Having finished sewage systems
- Including Riverside RV Park in the Keremeos Fire Dept area of operation

Have we missed anything important to you?

27 survey respondents shared other thoughts and ideas that are important to be considered in the OCP process, including:

- Explore more renewable energy, particularly solar
- Build a public swimming pool and fitness centre
- Upgrade the diking system
- Start developing public transit
- Ensure all parks have fire protection services
- Some regulation is supported to protect public health and safety – parking in fire lanes, derelict and unkept properties
- Keep all but local traffic from going through downtown cores and implement speed limits
- Connect more properties to municipal sewer systems
- Pursue infill development in communities
- Concern that closing the Rural Keremeos landfill may increase garbage dumping in ditches
- Improve internet service across the electoral area
- Improve Hedley water quality
- Concerns about increased taxes and other costs associated with an OCP and planning in Electoral Area "G"