

1. COMMUNITY BUILDING



GOAL: *Support compact and complete urban communities, maintain rural character and offer choice and affordability in housing.*

The PRRD is composed of diverse and distinct communities that range in size from small, rural settlements to larger urban centres like Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. Over the next 20 years, the PRRD is expected to accommodate an additional 19,000 residents. It is expected that about 90% of this growth will occur within larger communities, with most in Fort St. John and Dawson Creek and smaller amounts in Taylor, Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope and Pouce Coupe. The remaining growth is expected to occur in the PRRD's rural areas and unincorporated communities.

Encouraging the development of compact and complete communities, whether urban or rural, will help reduce our impact on the surrounding natural environment, improve access to economic and social opportunities and enable more efficient distribution of services, such as utilities and water, that benefit residents of all ages.

Like most regions across the province, the PRRD is facing the challenges of rising housing costs, limited rental stocks and increasing homelessness. Larger communities like Fort St. John and Dawson Creek are particularly affected, but in general, affordability issues are a concern for most communities in the region, including rural areas.

Housing is a key determinant for many aspects of health, wellbeing and economic prosperity. As a core land use planning issue, housing is an area where more coordinated planning across the region could have a significant impact.

One important sign of a healthy community is housing diversity that meets the needs of all residents, regardless of their age, income, or ability. Planning for a wide range of housing now will ensure the demand for accessible, affordable and adaptable housing will be met in the future.

1. Encourage and support growth in urban centres.

- a) Recognize the City of Fort St. John and the City of Dawson Creek as the PRRD's main urban centres with their established services and identified growth capacity.
- b) Support growth in smaller urban centres (District of Chetwynd, District of Tumbler Ridge, District of Hudson's Hope, District of Taylor, Village of Pouce Coupe) that is within their Official Community Plans' established development capacities.
- c) Work collaboratively with member municipalities on fringe area planning through PRRD OCP updates.
- d) Encourage appropriately located accessible commercial, institutional, light and heavy industrial development in urban centres.

2. Protect the character of rural areas.

- a) Identify and engage with rural communities throughout the region which could be designated as rural settlement centres and accommodate higher levels of development than other rural communities.
- b) Ensure that potential rural settlement centres consider future servicing needs and associated development costs and financing.
- c) Work with the Prespatou Planning Committee on identifying current and future growth needs for the community.
- d) Discourage rezoning of large rural land parcels to smaller parcel sizes in rural areas outside of designated rural settlement centres.
- e) Identify areas where updating the zoning bylaw to require larger minimum lot sizes is necessary to protect agricultural uses and/or rural character.



3. Collaborate across the PRRD to support affordable and accessible housing.

- a) Work with member municipalities, regional housing providers and residents to implement recommendations from the PPRD Housing Needs Implementation Framework where they are consistent with municipal Housing Needs Reports.
- b) Collaborate with all PRRD member municipalities to jointly undertake provincially required Housing Needs Report updates by 2028 and continue to work together collectively to update the Report on the required five-year report update cycle.
- c) Consider working with PRRD member municipalities, non-profit housing providers, other housing and development partners and residents to develop a Regional Housing Plan.
- d) Consider hosting a forum on actions to address housing issues for PRRD communities and northern communities with neighbouring local governments, including Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Fraser-Fort George Regional District and Saddle Hills County in Alberta, to identify opportunities to share learning.

4. Strengthen senior's housing and supports for others in need of housing.

- a) Work with PRRD member municipalities, community organizations, Northern Health and other provincial agencies to expand existing supports for aging in place and identify new opportunities or programs to keep seniors in their homes and healthy for as long as possible.
- b) Advocate to BC Housing, CMHC and other senior government agencies for additional housing supports, including seniors housing and housing for low-income households.
- c) Encourage supportive housing opportunities that are appropriate for smaller and more rural communities within the PRRD.

5. Address workforce housing.

- a) Work with the natural resource sector to identify opportunities to minimize the impacts of industry on housing issues in the PRRD.
- b) Advocate for senior government (B.C., Canada) resources to pilot and support new initiatives for workforce housing.
- c) Work with PRRD member municipalities and the natural resource sector to quantify the impact of the shadow workforce² and develop solutions in partnership with industry to alleviate housing market pressure build-up.

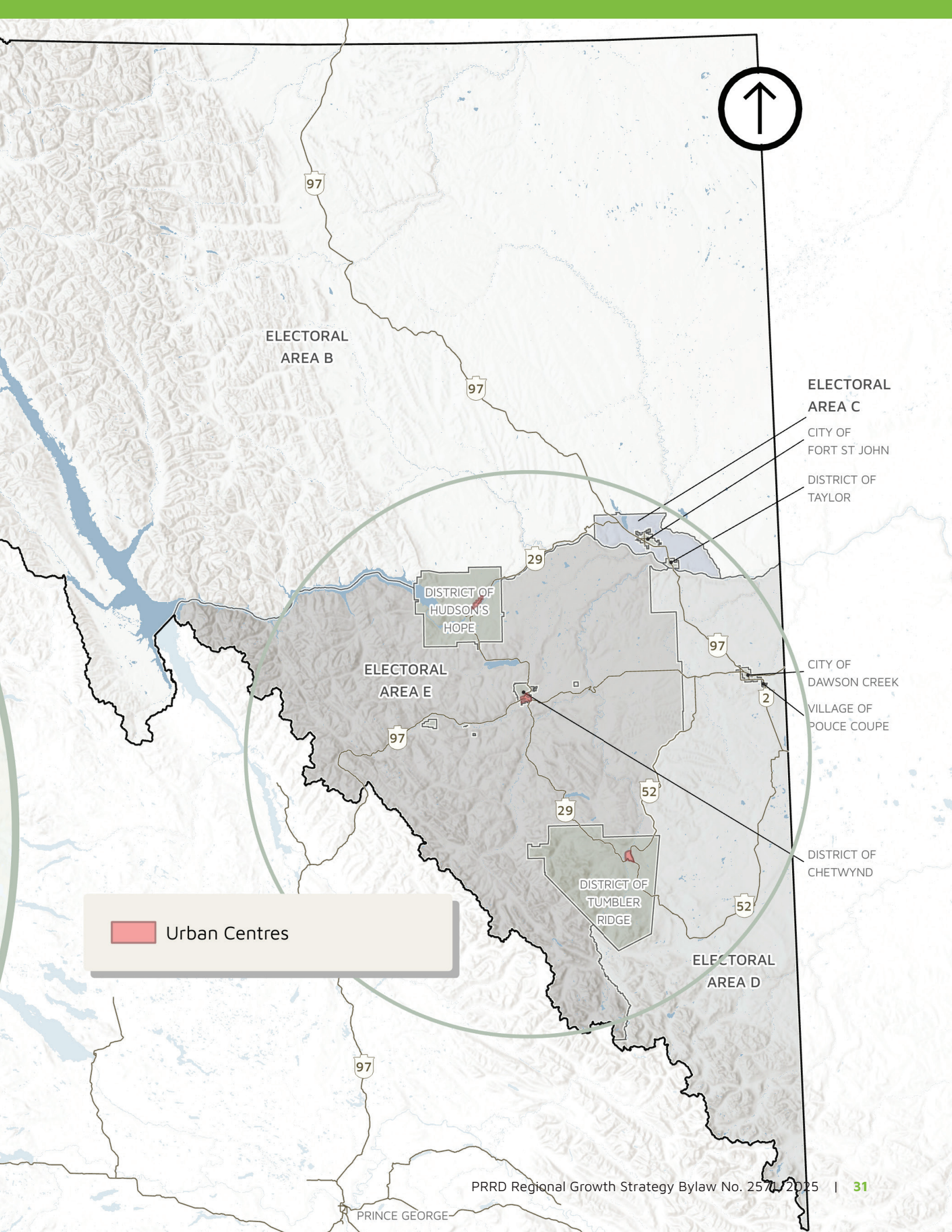
² Industry in the PRRD is largely influenced by the cyclical nature of the natural resource economy which has developed a strong mobile “shadow population” due to seasonal and project-oriented work in the region. A significant shadow population exists of individuals who work in the region but live permanently elsewhere. As a result of the shadow population, there is increased pressure on housing, infrastructure, transportation, and services for health, education and community support.



MAP 3: Peace River Regional District – Urban Centres

- 3 The pink areas in map 3 highlight the approximate boundaries of urban density land use designations (residential, commercial, mixed-use) and future growth areas in larger district municipalities (Hudson's Hope, Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd).





ELECTORAL
AREA B

ELECTORAL
AREA C

CITY OF
FORT ST JOHN

DISTRICT OF
TAYLOR

DISTRICT OF
HUDSON'S
HOPE

ELECTORAL
AREA E

CITY OF
DAWSON CREEK

VILLAGE OF
POUCE COUPE

DISTRICT OF
TUMBLER
RIDGE

DISTRICT OF
CHETWYND

ELECTORAL
AREA D

Urban Centres

MAP 4: Peace River Regional District – Rural Communities



