

6 A VISION FOR THE LAKES DISTRICT

While the Plan establishes the guide for growth of the Lakes District through the reconciliation of land use, environmental, servicing, transportation and economic considerations, it does so in a manner that respects and reflects local community values from regional policy directives to neighbourhood input.

Preparation of the Lakes District Neighbourhood Plan carefully considered the consequences of status quo development – as permitted under current zoning – and responded with a new direction. The renewed long-term vision for the Lakes District neighbourhood reflects: in-depth review of existing regulatory policy and Best Management Practices (BMPs); a thorough understanding of physical constraints and opportunities; and, engagement of community stakeholders in a comprehensive public planning process.

Conservation Leadership: Planning with the Land – The physical design of the Lakes District Neighbourhood Plan is organized around the conservation and recreation opportunities provided by the diverse landscape. The resulting parks and trails plan protects valued natural areas and enhances an interconnected trail system, while acknowledging natural features that define smaller neighbourhood clusters and preserve sense-of-place. The Lakes District Neighbourhood Plan also establishes “Commons” – green spaces intended to provide focal points and smaller areas for more public social gatherings. A Lakehouse Centre on Enos Lake accommodates larger events and ongoing amenity programming.

A Better Way to Move: Parkways, Streets for Many Modes and Trails – Designated residential clusters within the Lakes District are linked via a network of parks, trails and streets designed for people. A Community Parkway, which minimizes residential frontage to preserve the scenic experience of the Lakes District, is also designed to provide a new “front door” to the Schooner Cove village while accommodating improved pedestrian connections throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area. Collector and local streets are tailored to the natural contours of the land, designed to be slower and safer, and greatly improve the pedestrian experience by creating a sidewalk/pathway system buffered by boulevard plantings. Green streets, in designated areas, replace public roads for park and, while allowing for emergency vehicle access, prioritize the pedestrian over the automobile and facilitate “parkfront” living for adjacent residential areas.

Housing Choice: Increasing Housing Diversity – Residential areas are designed to accommodate a wide variety of homes – from traditional single family and more compact, cottage-style homes to duplex, rowhome, townhome and condominium residential units – as a means to provide more affordable housing options to accommodate greater social diversity and increased opportunities for ageing-in-place.

Shaping Our Future: Implementing the Regional Growth Strategy – The Lakes District Neighbourhood Plan details a development framework for future growth within the Fairwinds Urban Containment Boundary. Moreover, it represents a significant step towards implementation of the RDN Regional Growth Strategy objectives.

Taken together, these components have informed a comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan: The Lakes District, defined by a network of public parks and scenic trails, accommodates the phased development of a vibrant, master-planned community composed of a diverse range of homes (totalling 1,675 units), a Lakehouse Centre and an area reserved for community mixed use (potential future Neighbourhood Centre with small scale commercial), within convenient access to the neighbourhood’s destination waterfront at Schooner Cove.