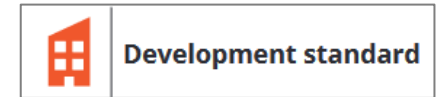


# Courtenay Official Community Plan

## Development Standards Policies Guide



The following table provides a reference guide to the specific policies within the Courtenay OCP Bylaw No. 3070 that relate to development applications, including land use, zoning, building, and development permits. These policies are identified in the OCP with the following icon: 🏠 Not all policies will apply to all developments. Policies are organized by thematic chapter in the OCP.

For more complete information on the OCP vision, goals, objectives, and other policies, visit:

[www.courtenay.ca/OCP](http://www.courtenay.ca/OCP)

ST=Streets and Transportation Chapter  
 BL=Buildings and Landscape Chapter  
 AH=Affordable Housing Chapter  
 NE=Natural Environment Chapter

PR=Parks and Recreation  
 MI=Municipal Infrastructure  
 SI=Social Infrastructure

ACH=Arts, Culture and Heritage  
 FS=Food Systems  
 LE=Local Economy

### Policies

OCP  
reference

Part B – Growth Management	
<p>All Growth Management and Land Use Policies. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time Immemorial</li> <li>- Regional Context Statement</li> <li>- Three Key Land Use Concepts</li> <li>- How Courtenay Will Grow</li> <li>- Land Use Objectives and Policies</li> <li>- Land Use Designations and Policies</li> </ul>	Pg.37-84
Part C - Streets & Transportation	
<p>Require that all internal road and multi-modal networks are identified and provided as part of rezoning, subdivision, and development permit applications.</p>	ST 17 Pg.102

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<p>Ensure transportation network opportunities maximize pedestrian, cycling and transit connections in order to provide shortest active travel and transit routes to key destinations. This includes, but is not limited to, designing for mid block pedestrian and cycling connections in areas with low pedestrian and cycling connectivity, and securing Statutory Rights of Way for pedestrian and cycling use through strata developments, wherever such opportunities are part of the active transportation network.</p>	<p>ST 18 Pg.102</p>
<p>Require all multi-modal transportation networks within developments to be designated as “highway” instead of linear parks and not as part of 5% park dedication (where required), except where the multi-modal network is located within a significant green space that offers park values. Add these multi-use pathways to the Road Network Map APX-3 (Appendix 2 – Maps).</p>	<p>ST 19 Pg.102</p>
<p><b>Part C - Buildings &amp; Landscape</b></p>	
<p>Establish and promote incentive programs such as rebates or financing mechanisms (e.g., property assessed clean energy – PACE) to support decarbonizing and energy efficiency in existing buildings. Do this in partnership with and/or in relation to others offering such programs. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could incentivize renovations).</i></p>	<p>BL 1 Pg. 110</p>
<p>Establish and promote incentive programs such as rebates and information audits to support water efficiency in existing buildings. Do this in partnership with and/or in relation to others offering such programs. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could incentivize renovations).</i></p>	<p>BL 2 Pg. 110</p>
<p>Prioritize building permits for renovations that result in higher energy and emissions performance than minimum standards. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could incentivize high performance construction).</i></p>	<p>BL 3 Pg. 110</p>
<p>Accelerate adoption of the BC Energy Step code in the BC Building Code to always be one Step ahead of provincial minimum Energy Step Code standards. Buildings that include a low-carbon energy system that satisfies a greenhouse gas intensity limit of 3kg/m<sup>2</sup>/year for primary heating and hot water may be constructed to the minimum provincial Step Code requirement.</p>	<p>BL 4 Pg. 110</p>
<p>Require that new buildings subject to or developed as a result of rezoning achieve low-GHG emissions of a condition of rezoning, defined as achieving a greenhouse gas intensity limit of 3kg/m<sup>2</sup>/year for primary heat and hot water.</p>	<p>BL 5 Pg. 111</p>



## Policies

## OCP reference

<p>Advocate to and support the Province in amending the BC Building Code and other building related policies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Regulate carbon pollution for new buildings as soon as possible and no later than 2030 in relation to decarbonizing heat and energy sources;</li> <li>b. Regulate embodied energy of building materials and construction practices including demolition; and</li> <li>c. Enhance universal building accessibility requirements.</li> </ul> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but will impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>BL 6 Pg.111</p>
<p>Review and update immediate relevant building, zoning, and development permitting policies upon any new legislative authorities that support policies within BL 6.</p> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but will impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>BL 7 Pg.111</p>
<p>Utilize Development Permit Area guidelines for the purposes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Energy and water conservation by encouraging all new buildings to exceed energy, emissions, and water conservation targets described on page 109.</li> <li>b. Incorporating biodiversity and sensitive rainwater management practices within landscapes; and</li> <li>c. Ensuring that the form and character of new developments complement surrounding neighbourhood and showcase Indigenous designs.</li> </ul> <p><i>(This policy directs the Development Permit Area guidelines that are contained in Zoning Bylaw No. 2500).</i></p>	<p>BL 8 Pg. 111</p>
<p>Explore the establishment of Development Permit Areas for wildfire hazard protection upon review of wildfire risk to Courtenay.</p> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but will impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>BL 9 Pg. 111</p>
<p>Consider establishing pre-approved form and character Development Permit Area designs for smaller lot infill housing in order to expedite the construction of high quality design infill housing.</p> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but would impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>BL 10 Pg. 111</p>
<p>Discourage the use of fossil fuel energy including natural gas in all development applications and prohibit the installation of wood burning devices in new buildings.</p>	<p>BL 11 Pg. 111</p>
<p>Initiate a process to develop Indigenous design guidelines to inform Development Permit Area Form and Character Guidelines for future OCP amendments. Work with K'ómoks First Nation, other Indigenous partners, and in collaboration with other local governments to inform consistent regional design.</p> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but would impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>BL 12 Pg. 111</p>



## Policies

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<p>Encourage the adaptive reuse of buildings and building materials through permitting and planning processes to help reduce construction waste generation.</p>	<p>BL 13 Pg. 112</p>
<p>Support amendments or variances to the Zoning Bylaw, Building Bylaw, or Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw when presented with development applications that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceed minimum universal accessibility requirements;</li> <li>• Include sustainable building practices that use low-carbon, renewable materials, and achieve self-sufficiency in energy, water and wastewater, wherever such opportunities are presented by building design professionals and meet the BC Building Code requirements.</li> </ul> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could incentivize development).</i></p>	<p>BL 14 Pg. 112</p>
<p><b>Part C – Affordable Housing</b></p>	
<p>Support higher housing densities, including amending the Zoning Bylaw to permit two dwelling units per single residential lot, in all residential land use designations, as described in the Managing Growth Policy section of this Plan, and in accordance with protection of Environmentally Sensitive Areas policies.</p>	<p>AH 1 Pg. 117</p>
<p>Amend the Zoning Bylaw to reduce minimum lot size requirements and establish maximum lot size requirements in the Urban Residential designation to support densification of existing and future neighbourhoods. In the establishment of lot sizes, ensure that the ability to accommodate a second dwelling unit is considered, and that wherever Environmentally Sensitive Areas are present, their protection shall take precedence.</p> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but will impact development permissions).</i></p>	<p>AH 2 Pg.117</p>
<p>Consider maximum lot sizes within Neighbourhood and Town Centres to promote intensification of uses.</p> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but would impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>AH 3 Pg. 117</p>
<p>Require that a diversity of housing types and unit sizes be provided in new rezoning applications for subdivisions. Ensure that development of multi-residential units occur in early phases of the subdivision.</p>	<p>AH 4 Pg.117</p>
<p>Require a minimum of 10% of new residential units be universally accessible in multi-residential rezoning applications.</p>	<p>AH 5 Pg.117</p>
<p>Encourage the provision of 3+ bedroom units as part of a mix of unit types in new multi-residential rezoning applications.</p>	<p>AH 6 Pg.117</p>

## Policies

## OCP reference

Support amendments to the National Building Code and BC Building Code to facilitate the development of various sizes and types of housing. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but would impact development standards).</i>	AH 7 Pg. 117
Do not permit the conversion of existing occupied multi-residential rental buildings to strata ownership until, and only when, the vacancy rate as reported by CMHC exceeds 3% for a period of at least 12 months.	AH 9 Pg. 118
Implement Residential Rental Tenure Zoning to protect existing and proposed rental housing stock. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but would impact development permissions).</i>	AH 10 Pg. 118
When properties with existing purpose-built rental, co-op, and mobile home units are redeveloped or renovated, require development applicants to propose a strategy to accommodate displaced tenants, guided by options identified in the Courtenay Affordable Housing Strategy Options Study.	AH 11 Pg. 118
Develop and adopt a tiered below-market incentive program in which more incentives are offered to those projects in which more units are offered at deeper levels of below-market affordability. Incentives may include but not be limited to application processing timeline targets, parking, zoning, and servicing variances, and waiving or reducing fees and charges. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could incentivize development).</i>	AH 15 Pg. 118
Seek below-market rental units as priority amenities when negotiating Community Amenity Contributions in rezoning applications for multi-residential projects. <i>(This policy directs the Community Amenity Contribution policy located in Part D).</i>	AH 15 Pg. 118
Develop a density bonus policy in the Zoning Bylaw to incentivize the creation of affordable housing. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could incentivize development).</i>	AH 16 Pg. 118
Conduct a development process review in order to recommend improvements to the current approval process, including fee structure, customer service, and improve clarity and transparency of OCP requirements and expectations.	AH 22 Pg. 119
<b>Part C – Natural Environment</b>	
Preserve sensitive ecosystem areas and the connections between them in a natural condition to the maximum extent possible.	NE 1 Pg. 123

## Policies

## OCP reference

<p>Limit the extent of impervious surfaces on private and public land.  <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>NE 16 Pg. 126</p>
<p>Strive to maintain and/or restore the water balance. Consider options to reduce the volume of stormwater runoff through interflow, infiltration, retention, and/or detention.  <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but directs development standards).</i></p>	<p>NE 17 Pg. 126</p>
<p>Explore the use of enforcement tools to protect water quality related to development practices, such as an erosion and sediment control bylaw.  <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>NE 18 Pg. 126</p>
<p>Update the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw to incorporate the recommendations of the Integrated Rainwater Management Plan.  <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>NE 19 Pg. 126</p>
<p>Continue to regulate tree removal, and ensure replacement, through the use of the Tree Protection and Management Bylaw.  <i>(This policy is not only a development standard).</i></p>	<p>NE 22 Pg. 127</p>
<p>Enact Zoning Bylaw requirements to avoid impact to sensitive ecosystems, including but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cluster housing zones to allow for a tighter grouping of homes on the most buildable portions of the property in exchange for retaining larger portions of the land in a natural state, and allowing the owner(s) of the land containing Environmentally Sensitive Areas to use the original site area in computing density allowances, in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw;</li> <li>b. Density bonusing in exchange for increased nature protection or restoration; and</li> <li>c. Limiting the extent of impervious surfaces.</li> </ol> <p><i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards and permissions).</i></p>	<p>NE 25 Pg. 127</p>
<p>Ensure connectivity of properties and landscapes to support ecosystem processes. This includes incorporating considerations such as wildlife movement and historical hydrological patterns into the development proposal including transportation and utility corridors.</p>	<p>NE 26 Pg. 127</p>



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reference

Require all development proposals on properties equal to or greater than 4,000 metres square in size to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment to determine the presence or absence of Environmentally Sensitive Areas.	NE 27 Pg. 127
Require developments adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas, including ecosystem connectivity opportunity areas, be subject to Environment Development Permit (EDP) area guidelines.	NE 28 Pg. 128
Establish a requirement within the Environmental Development Permit Area guidelines for a 30-metre setback from the stream boundary when conducting development on properties subject to the Riparian Areas Protection Regulations (RAPR), whenever opportunities for a 30-metre setback are possible.	NE 29 Pg. 128
Require as part of the development permit process the submission of securities to ensure the completion of landscaping and environmental rehabilitation, or to address damage to the environment caused by development activity.	NE 31 Pg. 128
Require that Environmentally Sensitive Areas be retained under single ownership or dedicated to the City at time of subdivision. Such lands shall not be considered as part of the required 5% dedication for parkland, where applicable as a condition of subdivision approval.	NE 32 Pg. 128
Do not permit development within Environmentally Sensitive Areas. New trails or facilities in Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be discouraged and installed only where they provide net gain for habitat values.	NE 33 Pg. 128
Continue to encourage participation of environmental stewardship organizations early in the design stages of a development project within or near sensitive ecosystems.	NE 34 Pg. 128
Explore development incentives and negotiation tools to encourage protection of the natural environment beyond minimum standards. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development).</i>	NE 35 Pg. 128

## Policies

## OCP reference

Part C – Parks & Recreation	
<p>Apply planning and design guidelines set out in section 3.2.1 of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2019) respecting parkland location, area and design, and including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Providing adequate, quality, useable and universally accessible open space opportunities for year-round activities related to play, social gatherings, leisure activities, food growing, rest and relaxation.</li> <li>b. Considering local infrastructure needs and amenities as well as safety, accessibility, aesthetics, and recreation.</li> <li>c. Environmentally sensitive design of siting, materials, surfaces and maintenance.</li> <li>d. Securing and locating new neighbourhood parks in prominent, accessible locations that are connected to the City’s trail network and act as focal areas for the neighbourhoods they serve.</li> <li>e. Locating parks and open space, where appropriate, with areas for active and passive recreation use that accommodate institutions and social facilities, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, retail and restaurant areas, and other community amenities.</li> <li>f. Ensuring land dedicated as parkland meets the minimum standards.</li> <li>g. Discouraging creation of small, isolated, single purpose parks.</li> </ul>	<p>PR 7 Pg. 134</p>
<p>Develop specifications and guidelines to guide the timing and construction standards for land dedicated as parkland, new park acquisitions or park asset renewal or redevelopment initiatives. For multi-phase developments, park dedication and development should occur in the first phases of development. <i>(The second portion of this policy is a development standard. The achievement of the first part of the policy would affect development standards).</i></p>	<p>PR 9 Pg. 135</p>
<p>Prioritize parkland dedication over cash-in-lieu contribution, where opportunities exist. Environmentally Sensitive Areas and required setbacks areas are not considered as part of development related parkland dedications.</p>	<p>PR 10 Pg. 135</p>





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<p>Update the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the 2019 Transportation Master Plan, and the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw to include a modified green and active street standard to support multiple goals within the road right of way on select streets. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>PR 21 Pg. 137</p>
<p><b>Part C – Municipal Infrastructure</b></p>	
<p>Support variances to development and servicing specifications to permit green infrastructure, public amenity or active transportation infrastructure on public land where such opportunities are technically feasible, where operations and maintenance considerations have been identified and are supported, and where such infrastructure is in accordance with the vision and goals of the OCP. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>MI 6 Pg. 144</p>
<p>Regularly review the Development Cost Charges Bylaw to reflect the costs of growth-related infrastructure including parks, and determine the appropriate balance of funding new infrastructure between the existing tax base and new developments. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development charges).</i></p>	<p>MI 14 Pg. 144</p>
<p>Evaluate opportunity for green infrastructure specifications and best management practices for incorporation into regulatory tools such as Zoning and Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaws. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>MI 15 Pg. 145</p>
<p>Explore zero-waste approaches in waste management, including prioritizing upstream approaches that avoid, reduce, and reuse waste in all applications of local government jurisdiction. This includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Ensuring sufficient and conveniently located spaces within all developments to support occupant waste diversion behaviours.</li> </ul>	<p>MI 18 Pg. 146</p>

## Policies

## OCP reference

<p>Encourage the generation of more renewable energy within Courtenay subject to form and character and other land use considerations. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but is encouraged).</i></p>	<p>MI 22 Pg. 147</p>
<p><b>Part C – Social Infrastructure</b></p>	
<p>Apply universal design principles in the review of development applications and in the design of new or retrofitted public facilities and infrastructure early in design and evaluation. These principles include complete streets, transit and parking facilities, public buildings, trails, recreation areas, and intuitive and accessible way-finding.</p>	<p>SI 19 Pg. 153</p>
<p>Apply both first- and second-generation Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in supporting community safety. This focus includes physical aspects such as street lighting and building orientation (first generation) and social aspects such as community connections and behaviour (second generation). Ensure consideration is given to unintended consequences associated with discriminatory surveillance practices that can target racialized and equity-priority groups. <i>(This policy directs Development Permit guidelines).</i></p>	<p>SI 20 Pg. 153</p>
<p><b>Part C – Arts, Culture and Heritage</b></p>	
<p>Develop a Public Art Policy or Guideline that supports the growth of public art and artistic expression in buildings, streets, parks and other areas of the public realm, giving preference to local and Indigenous artists. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development standards).</i></p>	<p>ACH 2 Pg. 159</p>
<p>Support cultural amenity contributions as part of the community amenity contribution of new development.</p>	<p>ACH 5 Pg. 159</p>
<p>Ensure enhanced protection of archaeological sites and places of cultural significance. This includes supporting the K’ómoks First Nation in obtaining information requirements to fulfill their Cultural Heritage Policy and Cultural Heritage Investigation Permits when applicable.</p>	<p>ACH 13 Pg. 161</p>

## Policies

## OCP reference

Preserve, protect, and manage historic sites, structures, and landscapes in the city following the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada or relevant best management practices.	ACH 15 Pg. 161
Through the Heritage Alteration Permit process, ensure that repairs or renovations be carried out without compromising Character Defining Elements, while improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.	ACH 16 Pg. 161
<b>Part C – Food Systems</b>	
Support establishment of small-scale healthy food retail options such as both year-round and seasonal farmers markets, small to mid-size grocery stores, mobile food vendors, bakeries and restaurants within or in proximity to the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors including the Downtown Town Centre. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but is encouraged as a use where applicable).</i>	FS 1 Pg. 167
Encourage large multi-residential mixed-use developments to include retail commercial uses such as small grocery stores or specialized food retails within the site, where appropriate. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but is encouraged as a use where applicable).</i>	FS 2 Pg. 167
Encourage the provision of gardens and other food production spaces for the use of residents in new multi-residential housing, as guided in the Development Permit Area Guidelines.	FS 10 Pg. 167
Develop a program for community gardens and other small scale food production spaces such as orchards or beehives across the City, prioritizing areas of higher residential density and areas home to equity-priority groups. Engage land holders who may have space to provide such uses, including on a short- to mid-term basis before land is developed. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but is encouraged as a use where applicable).</i>	FS 12 Pg. 167
Continue to support protection of lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) for agricultural uses. Applications for exclusion of land from the ALR are not supported.	FS 17 Pg. 170

## Policies

## OCP reference

<p>Amend the Zoning Bylaw to guide the location of buildings and structures, including agricultural structures, to maximize the agricultural potential of prime soil resources. This includes establishing maximum farm residential dwelling and footprint sizes commensurate with urban lot areas and establishing maximum road setbacks. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development permissions on agricultural land).</i></p>	<p>FS 18 Pg. 170</p>
<p>Maximize the potential for agricultural land to be used for agriculture by discouraging subdivision into smaller parcels.</p>	<p>FS 19 Pg. 170</p>
<p>Where property is adjacent to land in the ALR and lands designated as agriculture, ensure that development limits associated negative impacts on and from adjacent agricultural operations by providing appropriate buffers, mitigation measures, careful site planning, and neighbourhood education as per Development Permit Area guidelines for farm protection, and by consulting with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). <i>(This policy directs Development Permit guidelines).</i></p>	<p>FS 20 Pg. 170</p>
<p>Support amendment of the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that small-scale food processing, warehousing, distribution, and other activities required to strengthen a regional food economy are permitted in more land uses including commercial, light industrial, and where live-work uses are permitted. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could impact development permissions).</i></p>	<p>FS 22 Pg. 170</p>
<p><b>Part C – Local Economy</b></p>	
<p>Promote green and low-carbon construction and building retrofit programs as significant local economic development opportunities as per the CleanBC Economic Development Action Strategies. <i>(This policy is not a development standard, but could incentivize development).</i></p>	<p>LE 3 Pg. 175</p>
<p>Continue to support home-based businesses that are compatible with the residential character of neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>LE 9 Pg. 175</p>
<p>Support land uses that provide employment opportunities within or close proximity to the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and Corridors such as intensification of mixed-use office, retail, live-work studios and other commercial uses.</p>	<p>LE 10 Pg. 175</p>



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reference**

Support non-traditional light industrial and service commercial land uses or development proposals that accommodate emerging business trends and neighbourhood needs.	LE 11 Pg. 175
Liaise with senior governments, neighbouring jurisdictions, and the business community to identify barriers, improve business infrastructure, and streamline application processes.	LE 14 Pg. 175
Work with Comox Valley local governments to develop consistent regulatory standards.	LE 15 Pg. 176
<b>Part D – Implementation – Development Approval Information Areas</b>	
See the OCP section for more details on information that may be required in conjunction with a development application.	Pg. 187-190
<b>Part D – Implementation – Community Amenity Contribution (CACs) Policy</b>	
See the OCP section for more details on CAC policy guidance when providing amenities for rezoning applications.	Pg. 191-197

## Policies

## OCP reference

### Part D – Implementation – Development Permit Area Designations

Development Permit Areas (DPAs) have been designated in the OCP for:

- a. DPA-1: Commercial, Industrial, Mixed-use and Multi-Residential Form and Character
- b. DPA-2: Intensive Residential Form and Character for Duplexes, Detached Secondary Residences, Heritage Neighbourhoods, and Bare Land Stratas and Mobile Home Developments
- c. DPA-3: Farm Protection
- d. DPA-4: Environmental Protection
- e. DPA-5: Hazardous Conditions – Steep Slopes

While the DPA designations are included in the OCP, the guidelines that must be followed when preparing an applicable development application are contained within the Zoning Bylaw No. 2500 Division 10 [www.courtenay.ca/zoning](http://www.courtenay.ca/zoning)

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