

Table 8. OCP policy provisions, sources, targets, and indicators

Extract from:

Environmental Values Policy Toolkit

A component of the Regional Framework for Nature-based Solutions on BC's South Coast

Written by Marian McCoy
Reviewed by Lyndsey Smith CDFCP and
Dionne Bunsha UBC Botanical Garden
March 2025



The Action for Adaptation website supports policy and land use planning for local governments and First Nations in southwest BC.

The project is a collaborative effort by the Coastal Douglas-fir Conservation Partnership (CDFCP), UBC Botanical Gardens to produce an online biodiversity atlas and climate adaptation tools that will provide First Nations, local governments and land managers with the resources that they have indicated they need to make informed decisions related to biodiversity in a changing climate.



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& ASSOCIATED ECOSYSTEMS
CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

Table 1. OCP policy provisions, sources, targets, and indicators

Table 1 provides examples of OCP policy text drawn either from existing OCPs or from legally vetted publications (e.g., Green Bylaws Toolkit).

Theme	Policy statement	Adapted from	Target / Indicator
Leadership / Multi-theme	Integrate public trees, forests, and green infrastructure into asset management planning, including budgeting, policy development, and staff resourcing.	City of Courtenay OCP NE23 pg 127	
	When conducting comprehensive OCP reviews, ensure that the most currently available information regarding canopy cover, sensitive ecosystem inventories, connectivity analysis and invasive species inventories are included to inform long range land use decisions and Development Permit guidelines.	City of Courtenay Urban Forest Strategy 2019 – 2050 pg 83.	
First Nations	Commit to incorporating Indigenous perspectives into land use decision processes. Seek guidance from Indigenous partners in how to make this commitment a reality.	City of Courtenay OCP pg 20	
	Work with local First Nations to consider protections for culturally important features and identify current habitat linkages and how to re-establish missing linkages.		
	Work with local First Nations to develop effective conservation strategies .		
	Explore Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, Land Codes, and other land stewardship approaches as opportunities to collaborate with First Nations.		

Theme	Policy statement	Adapted from	Target / Indicator
	Work with First Nations to consider culturally important features and identify current habitat linkages and how to re-establish missing linkages.		
Land cover and land use	Use land cover monitoring to identify different ecosystem types (e.g., forest, riparian) and aim for no net loss of native vegetation post-development.	After Curran et al, s. 4.6.6, pg. 39	Track area impacted by development and logging. (Cowichan Valley RD pg 13)
	Use land cover change monitoring to identify retention or connectivity targets , e.g., no net loss or net gain of certain land cover types (ESA, riparian, forest, etc.).		Track type and proportion of natural areas (City of Surrey pg 93)
Environmentally sensitive areas	An ecosystem-based approach to planning and management will be used to preserve ecological health and the ongoing function of ecological processes.	City of Courtenay OCP NE2 pg. 123.	Target goal of 40% canopy coverage for the entire city (Surrey OCP pg 149)
	Preserve sensitive ecosystem areas , their living resources, and connections between them in a natural condition and maintain these areas free of development and human activity to the maximum extent possible.	Curran et al 18(3)(b)(1) pg 194.	or Achieve 40% tree canopy cover within the Urban Containment Boundary (Metro Vancouver pg 35)
	Protect and expand the existing urban forest / tree canopy through implementation of an Urban Forest Strategy , ensuring that planted tree species are appropriate for forecast climate conditions and that large native trees are preserved.	City of Courtenay OCP NE24 pg 127.	or Every neighbourhood has at least a 30% canopy coverage (City of Nanaimo pg 19)
	Sensitive ecosystems and the connections between them will be preserved in a natural condition	City of Courtenay OCP NE1 pg 123	Protect 50% of the region for nature (Metro Vancouver pg 35)
	Collaborate with landowners, other levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and neighbouring jurisdictions in developing regionally	City of Courtenay OCP NE 4 pg 123.	

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	<p>consistent approaches to conserving, and restoring environmentally sensitive areas, watershed health and species at risk, using the principles of precaution, connectivity, and restoration.</p>		<p>Track the type of ESAs in each electoral area (Cowichan Valley Regional District pg 14)</p>	
	<p>Develop management plans for all natural area parks that focus on protecting or enhancing ecological integrity of ecosystems, ESAs, and connectivity corridors.</p>	<p>District of Saanich OCP pg 40.</p>	<p>Area of CVRD protected as park (Cowichan Valley Regional District pg 15)</p>	
	<p>Adopt Park Plans that include strategies and policies to protect and conserve the natural environment.</p>	<p>City of Nanaimo Shaping Our Future 2040 (2024), policy 2.14, pg 29</p>	<p>Track the change in area or % cover of each Environmentally Sensitive Area type across the region (Cowichan Valley Regional District pg 18)</p>	
	<p>Work in collaboration with property owners, developers, businesses, and appropriate provincial and federal agencies to restore damaged ecosystems and utilize mapping to identify highest priority areas.</p>	<p>City of Nanaimo Shaping Our Future 2040 (2024), policy 2.1, pg 29</p>		
	<p>While the municipality supports creation of new housing supply as detailed in the OCP, it also values its natural assets and aims to ensure the long-term protection of environmentally sensitive areas [e.g., through zoning and EDPAs].</p>	<p>City of Colwood, Bylaw 1700-10 OCP Amendment (Env. DPA)- Engagement Update and Response, Appendix 7, pg 16.</p>		
	ESA data and mapping			
	<p>Regularly update ecosystem data (e.g., terrestrial, aquatic, marine, invasive species, and species at risk) as new information becomes available and make it available on a public GIS portal. Continue to refine the precision of</p>	<p>District of Saanich Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, pg. 8.</p>		

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	terrestrial ecosystem polygon boundaries through ground-truthing and high-resolution ortho-imagery.		
	Collaborate with landowners, other levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and neighbouring jurisdictions to develop regionally consistent approaches to inventorying and mapping ESAs and species at risk.	City of Courtenay OCP NE 4 pg 123; Curran et al, 2021, s.18.3, pg. 195.	
	Maps that show ESAs, land cover including different ecosystem types, connectivity corridors, EDPAs, and species at risk critical habitat are integral to the OCP.		
	Current and (where possible) dynamic mapped data will be used to inform land use planning and land use decisions to augment the static maps within the OCP.		
	Map and inventory baseline ecological conditions before deciding what to change, to inform long-term planning, establish and fund a land cover and land cover change monitoring program that targets natural areas and features.		
Hydrologically sensitive (including marine)	Conserve wetlands to sustain their water storage, ecological, carbon and socioeconomic functions.		100% of water samples at selected monitoring sites within the city meet BC Water Quality Guidelines. (City of Nanaimo , pg 20).
	Establish a requirement within the EDPA 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.	City of Courtenay OCP NE29 pg. 128.	

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	Conduct analyses to predetermine setbacks on streams subject to the RAPR for areas where a 30-metre setback cannot be achieved.	City of Courtenay OCP NE30 pg. 128.	Length of stream with canopy cover or naturalized embankments.
	Ensure that development does not negatively impact watercourse or wetland environments or, where such impacts are unavoidable due to the existing configuration of parcels of land in relation to watercourses or wetlands , to ensure that development does not result in a net loss of productive fish habitat.	District of West Vancouver policy NE13, OCP Schedule ii, pg 104	Length of stream that is compliant with provincial legislation setbacks.
	Favour nature-based solutions & green infrastructure options (e.g., rain gardens, vegetated swales) when planning for grey infrastructure replacement, such as dams and other water management features.		
	No loss of quantity, quality, and function of wetlands. Monitor water quality and prevent pollution.	After Curran et al , s. 20.6 pg. 236 and others.	
	Identify, map, and classify all the wetlands and wet forest.		
	Marine		
	Develop a shoreline policy to conserve remaining natural shorelines , and restore armored shorelines with green shores approaches to the maximum extent possible.	City of Courtenay OCP NE10 pg. 125.	Increase the length / area of naturalised shoreline (District of Sechelt S 3.0) – Pacific Salmon Foundation Shore line mapping project .

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Ecosystem Connectivity	Cross-jurisdictional ecosystem connectivity corridors will be established to preserve and restore long-term connectivity between sensitive ecosystems.	City of Courtenay OCP NE3 pg. 123.	Percentage of green infrastructure network in public ownership (City of Surrey , pg. 304)
	ESAs , riparian areas, and natural areas will be linked, using green corridors where appropriate, and designed to maintain biodiversity.	Saanich OCP 6.1.5 pg. 40.	
	Ecosystem connectivity will be protected through EDPAs and conservation covenants , and by coordination and collaboration among jurisdictions.	Cocha, A. 2024. S. 1.	
	Where appropriate, install wildlife over- or under-passes to maintain connectivity corridors and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions.	City of Surrey – Biodiversity Design Guidelines – Road Ecology	
	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.	(City of Courtenay OCP NE26 pg 127):	
	Evaluate and bring together existing policies, plans, and programs , and conduct additional research as necessary, to inform a Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Network Strategy.	City of Courtenay OCP NE9 pg 124	
Species at Risk	Where possible, preserve areas (including buffers) that contain plants and animal habitat that are designated under SARA Schedule 1 and are red listed (endangered)	District of Saanich Development Permit Area Guidelines 3.6.1(c)	

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	or blue listed (vulnerable) by the BC Conservation Data Centre.		
	Establish a schedule for monitoring and updating the OCP maps when new ESA or SAR information becomes available.		
	Control of Invasive Species		
	Develop an invasive species management bylaw that requires immediate removal of listed invasive species that have been newly introduced, imminently threaten critical habitat for species at risk, or threaten human health.	GOERT Model Bylaws s. 15.2 pg. 138	
	Work in partnership to minimize the further introduction and spread of invasive species, and develop an invasive species management plan to prevent, eradicate, contain, and control the spread of invasive species in [community] and the wider region.	City of Courtenay OCP NE8 pg 124)	
	Fund and commit to a volunteer-based invasive species management program that has professional oversight.		
	Establish an invasive species bylaw that identifies priority species and requires removal of those species from private properties.	District of Saanich Development Permit Area Guidelines 3.6.1(d))	
	Double the rate of tree planting to enhance urban forest for increased carbon sequestration and other ecosystem	District of Saanich Climate Plan pg 3	45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and

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Nature-based Solutions to climate change	services while ensuring climate-appropriate tree species are selected.		establish the foundation for the 30-year goal of a carbon neutral region by 2050 (Metro Vancouver pg 16) Track changes to forest carbon stores as a result of harvesting and development (Action for Adaptation Forest Carbon and Land Cover Mapping)
	Continue annual planting targets of ### new trees on public land and work towards ### new trees on private land until [year]	(City of Courtenay OCP NE21 pg 127)	
	Protect and enhance the carbon sequestration value of natural systems by enhancing the urban forest and protecting local soil.	Township of Esquimalt OCP	
	Consider levying a land acquisition tax specially targeted at sequestering carbon , particularly wetlands and forests. This also serves to protect sensitive ecosystems, habitat for species at risk and of cultural value, and connectivity.		
General	Protect natural areas by maintaining the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) and encouraging compact urban development inside the UCB.	Saanich OCP 6.1.3 pg. 40.	Percentage of residential growth occurring within the Urban Containment Boundary (Metro Vancouver, Regional Planning pg. 390).
	Environmental Development Permit (EDPA)		
	Protect areas of high environmental sensitivity by not permitting development on these sites, or through development control and the securing of these areas in public ownership where appropriate.	Port Coquitlam OCP s. 7.4, pg. 37.	
	Any property within 50 m of a stream or that contains an ESA may require an EDP. No site clearing, regrading or other land disturbance is permitted until an EDP is	City of Abbotsford Natural Environment	

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	issued. Several different types of reports and plans may be required as part of the <u>EDP application</u> . Information on each of these reports/plans can be found at [insert links as appropriate].	Development Permit policy	
	Require developments adjacent to ESAs, including ecosystem connectivity opportunity areas, be subject to EDPA guidelines	City of Courtenay OCP NE28 pg 128	
	Utilize Streamside Development Permit Areas for ecosystem corridor connection opportunities.	City of Courtenay OCP	
	Prior to any development work on lands that contain an EDPA, including site preparation, an EIA shall be prepared by a QEP and have input from other professionals of specific expertise where required.	City of Courtenay Terms of Reference for EIAs	
	Dedicating very small parcels as park to satisfy DPA requirements will be avoided unless contiguous with or within 50 m of existing natural area parks and unless they will be maintained free from invasive species.		
	Develop detailed terms of reference with standards to direct consistent performance by QEPs to safeguard sensitive ecosystems from adverse effects.		
EDPA - Environmental Impact Assessment			
	Require all development proposals on properties equal to or greater than 4,000 metres square in size to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to determine the presence or absence of Environmentally Sensitive Areas	City of Courtenay OCP NE27 pg. 127.	

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	Site assessments or EIAs will be assessed by staff having appropriate ecological expertise (e.g., environmental planner).		
	Where it is determined that an EIA is required, establish clear terms of reference to direct how the EIA is to be carried out.	City of Courtenay Terms of Reference for EIAs	
	Consider requiring an EIA for all properties showing an ESA or any property >1 ha, even if previously disturbed.		
	All development proposals that involve a change in zoning, subdivision, or amendment to a plan must undergo an environmental impact assessment process before development approvals are granted. Development design must reflect the objectives and guidelines of best management practices.	Curran et al 18(3)(b)(1) pg. 194.	
	Site assessments shall require consideration of cumulative effects , such as habitat fragmentation, as well as off-site impacts, such as increased risk of flooding or sedimentation downstream.	ACT , s. 2.1.1 pg. 9.	
Bylaws			

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	Adopt or update a Tree Protection Bylaw to strengthen tree cover protection.	District of Sechelt Tree Protection Bylaw Township of Esquimalt Tree Protection Bylaw	Target goal of 40% canopy coverage for the entire city (Surrey pg 149) or Achieve 40% tree canopy cover within the Urban Containment Boundary (Metro Vancouver pg 35) or Every neighbourhood has at least a 30% canopy coverage (City of Nanaimo pg 19)
	Enact Zoning Bylaw requirements to avoid impact to ESAs, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 land containing ESAs to use the original site area in computing density allowances, in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw; b. Density bonusing in exchange for increased nature protection or restoration; and c. Limiting the extent of impervious surfaces. 	City of Courtenay OCP NE25 pg 127	
	Monitoring, compliance and enforcement		
	Monitor compliance and other legal requirements such as covenants related to protecting sensitive ecosystems.	City of Courtenay OCP NE7 pg. 124.	Produce a State of the Environment report every five years.
Commit resources for effectiveness monitoring of replacement lands or restoration of lands.			

