

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO:	City Planning Committee
FROM:	Administration
DATE:	August 3, 2026
RE:	Mineral Exploration OCP Amendment – Area Adjustment

ISSUE

Revision of the application to amend text and mapping of the Official Community Plan (OCP) to permit limited forms of Mineral Exploration within the Future Planning designation.

REFERENCE

- [Zoning Bylaw 2025-37](#)
- [Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan](#)
- [Quartz Mining Act SY 2003, c. 14](#)
- [Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act S.C 2003, c.7](#)
- [Prohibition of Entry on Certain Lands \(City of Whitehorse\) Order O.I.C 2012/145](#)
- [Draft Mineral Exploration and Development Framework](#)
- [OCP Amendment Bylaw 2026-25](#)
- Aerial image of Revised Greenspace to Future Planning-Gem (Attachment 1)
- Revised OCP Amendment Bylaw 2026-25 (Attachment 2)

HISTORY

An application was received to amend the OCP to allow for Exploratory drilling activities within the Future Planning designation and the redesignation of select Greenspace areas to Future Planning under the City of Whitehorse OCP 2040.

The application was presented to the Planning Committee on June 29th, 2026, and amending bylaw 2026-25 received first reading on July 6th, 2026. A public hearing was initially scheduled for August 10 and then moved to August 24 to promote easier attendance from members of the public.

Following first reading, the proponent requested a revision to the subject area by removing approximately 2 hectares of lands to be redesignated from Greenspace to Future Planning.

Amending the bylaw and associated maps after first reading requires a decision by Council.

The proposed schedule for the OCP amendment, reflecting the revised public hearing date is:

Planning Committee:	June 29, 2026
First Reading:	July 6, 2026
Newspaper Ads:	July 10 and July 17, 2026
Amend Subject Area:	August 10, 2026
Public Hearing:	August 24, 2026
Public Hearing Report:	September 21, 2026
Second Reading:	September 28, 2026
Ministerial Review:	November 21, 2026 (assuming full 45-day review period)
Third Reading:	November 23, 2026

ALTERNATIVES

1. Amend Appendices A and B of Bylaw 2026-25 as shown in Attachment 2, and continue the amended bylaw through the bylaw process; or
2. Do not proceed with the proposed amendment to Bylaw 2026-25.

ANALYSIS

The proposed revision would reduce the area proposed to be redesignated from Greenspace to Future Planning in the Gem work area by approximately 2 hectares and would provide a setback of approximately 80 m from shoreline of Mary Lake. Additionally, the revision would remove two Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) from the potential work area, which were originally included in the area proposed to be redesignated.

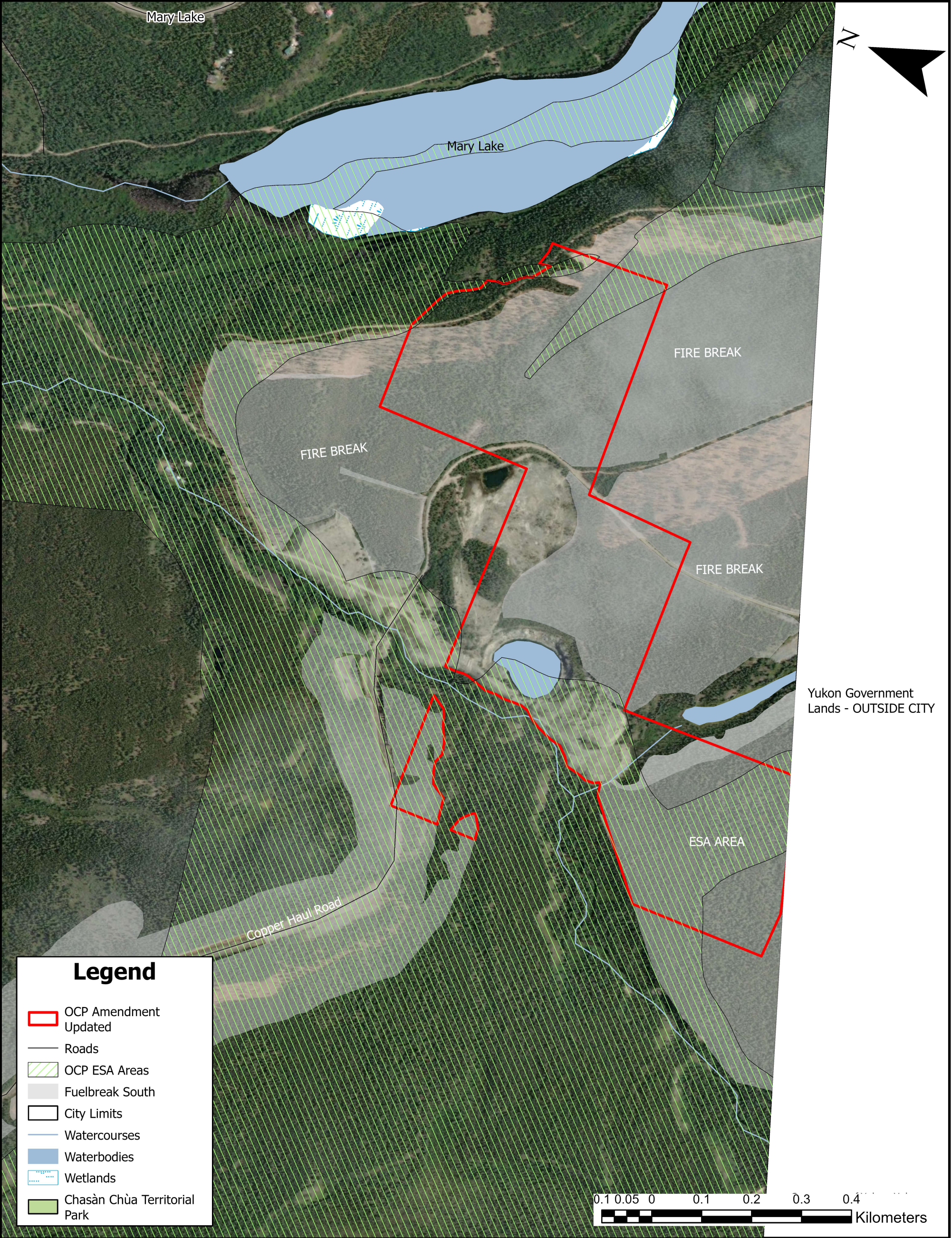
The proponent has indicated that the original proposal reflected the extent of the underlying mineral tenure, rather than any operational intent with respect to working within or near the lake. The proponent has supplied a revised map showing the extent of the potential work area and requested that the subject area be revised to reflect this. No other changes have been made to the overall application.

As this revision only reduces the area proposed for redesignation from Greenspace to Future Planning, and does not introduce any new lands for consideration, Administration is of the opinion that amending the bylaw during the public hearing period will not affect the substance or scope of the proposed amendment, nor require changes to the public hearing timeline.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct that Bylaw 2026-25, a bylaw to amend the text and mapping of the Official Community Plan (OCP) to permit limited forms of mineral exploration within the Future Planning designation, be amended by revising Appendices A and B, which depict the proposed amendments to OCP Maps 1 and 5, as shown in Attachment 2, and that the amended bylaw continue through the bylaw process.

Map 1 - Aerial Image of Greenspace to Future Planning - GEM



DATE:
July 24, 2026

FILE:
OCP-02-2026

SUBJECT SITE: 

CITY OF WHITEHORSE - PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY SERVICES

Attachment 1



CITY OF WHITEHORSE

BYLAW 2026-25

A bylaw to amend the Official Community Plan

WHEREAS Section 278 of the *Municipal Act* provides that a municipality shall by bylaw adopt an Official Community Plan in accordance with Part 7, Division 1 of the Act; and

WHEREAS Section 285 of the *Municipal Act* provides for amendment of an Official Community Plan, in accordance with the same approvals as established in Division 1 for the preparation and adoption of an Official Community Plan; and

WHEREAS it is deemed desirable and expedient to amend the 2040 Official Community Plan;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the municipality of the City of Whitehorse, in open meeting assembled, hereby ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Section 15 of the Official Community Plan Adopting Bylaw 2022-40 is hereby amended by adding a new subsection and new policies 15.4.7 – 15.4.10 immediately after existing policy 15.4.6ii to read as follows:

“Mineral Exploration on Valid Mineral Tenure”

The Whitehorse Copper Belt contains areas of Future Planning designation where valid mineral tenure exists. The following policies apply to Mineral Exploration on valid mineral tenure within the Future Planning designation.

- 15.4.7 Where valid mineral tenure exists in good standing within the Future Planning designation, Mineral Exploration activities including associated drill site preparation, clearings, and access may be considered a permitted temporary use where conducted in accordance with applicable territorial legislation, including the Quartz Mining Act, and City bylaw, and utilizing Disturbed Areas, Established Access, and/or Temporary Equipment Access as defined in this Plan.
- 15.4.8 Mineral Exploration activities authorized under this policy are administered through a Temporary Use Permit, which may be renewed annually, in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw. The development officer may impose conditions addressing land use matters in alignment with City bylaw.
- 15.4.9 Mineral Exploration activities authorized under this policy are temporary in character and reclamation shall be completed in accordance with applicable territorial authorization and City standards.
- 15.4.10 This policy does not authorize mining or permanent development. All Mineral Exploration activities remain subject to applicable territorial legislation, First Nations consultation requirements, territorial environmental assessment processes, and City bylaw.”

-
2. The Glossary of the Official Community Plan Adopting Bylaw 2022-40 is hereby amended by modifying the existing table by adding definitions for “Established Access”, “Disturbed Area”, “Mineral Exploration”, and “Temporary Equipment Access” in alphabetical order to read as follows:

Term	Definition
Established Access	Established access means any road, route, or cleared corridor that was previously constructed or used for any purpose involving ground disturbance or vegetation clearing, and that is identifiable on the ground by one or more of the following: (a) The vegetative mat is absent in the wheel track or travel surface area, consistent with prior sustained vehicle passage, regardless of vegetative regrowth on the corridor margins or centre; (b) An existing roadbed, compacted surface, or corridor width consistent with prior equipment passage remains identifiable; or (c) Cleared corridor margins, stumpage, or cut vegetation consistent with prior clearing activity are present. Restoration of an established access route to passability by selective removal of regrown vegetation with no movement of rock or earth does not constitute construction of a new route. Where regrowth within an established access corridor can be removed by brushing with no movement of rock or earth, selective removal constitutes restoration of established access and does not require Temporary Equipment Access standards.
Disturbed Area	Disturbed Area means land that has been subject to prior ground disturbance or vegetation clearing activity, including but not limited to Mineral Exploration or mining activity, wildland fire management including fuel break and fire smart clearing, quarry or aggregate operations, public utility construction, or any other activity involving ground disturbance or removal of natural vegetation cover, and that has not been formally reclaimed through recontouring, revegetation, or other reclamation measures directed by a regulatory authority. A Disturbed Area is identifiable by one or more of the following: (a) Visible evidence of prior excavation, grading, or earthworks including open pits, waste rock piles, sumps, historical drill collars and associated infrastructure or disturbed ground; (b) Existing roadbed or cleared corridor consistent with prior vehicle use, where the original corridor is identifiable on the

	ground regardless of current vegetative cover; or (c) Removal or absence of natural vegetative mat over a continuous area consistent with prior clearing activity.
Mineral Exploration	Mineral Exploration means activities undertaken for the sole or principal purpose of assessing land for its suitability for the production of minerals, including but not limited to drilling and associated drill site preparation, conducted in accordance with a valid authorization issued under the Quartz Mining Act or applicable territorial legislation and City bylaws.
Temporary Equipment Access	Temporary equipment access means access to a Mineral Exploration work area on valid mineral tenure in good standing, achieved by rubber-tracked equipment, or by metal-tracked equipment during winter conditions where required for safe operation, where the following standards are met: (a) No movement of rock or earth occurs, except for the removal of individual obstructions necessary for safe equipment operation, with prior notification to the development officer; (b) The vegetative mat remains intact — incidental compression by approved equipment passage does not constitute removal of the vegetative mat; (c) No trees with a stem diameter exceeding 15 centimetres at 1.5 m above ground are felled, except where removal of an individual tree is necessary for safe equipment operation, with prior notification to the development officer; (d) No equipment blade is used to grade the surface or remove the vegetative mat; and (e) Temporary equipment access shall not exceed a maximum width of 5 metres, with the cumulative area of disturbance under a single Temporary Use Permit not exceeding 0.5 hectares, calculated using actual route length and actual disturbed width, to a maximum width of 5 metres. Cutting shall be limited to necessary, selective cutting to achieve temporary access only. Where temporary equipment access does not involve removal of the vegetative mat or alteration of ground slope or grade, deactivation consists of removal of any felled material and restoration of natural drainage where affected, and confirmation that the vegetative mat remains in place and in good condition. Full recontouring and revegetation are not required where grade and slope are unchanged.

-
3. The Map 1 – Greenspace Network Plans and Parks forming part of the Official Community Plan Adopting Bylaw 2022-40 is hereby amended by removing an area known as Gem-Keewenaw, and portions of areas known as Chiefs Trend and Arctic Chief-Grafter from the Greenspace or Environmentally Sensitive Areas as indicated on Appendix A and forming part of this bylaw.
 4. The Map 5 – Land Use Designation forming part of the Official Community Plan Adopting Bylaw 2022-40 is hereby amended by changing the designation of an area known as Gem-Keewenaw from Greenspace to Future Planning as indicated on Appendix B and forming part of this bylaw.
 5. The Map 5 – Land Use Designation forming part of the Official Community Plan Adopting Bylaw 2022-40 is hereby amended by changing the designation of portions of an area known as Chiefs Trend from Greenspace to Future Planning as indicated on Appendix B and forming part of this bylaw.
 6. The Map 5 – Land Use Designation forming part of the Official Community Plan Adopting Bylaw 2022-40 is hereby amended by changing the designation of portions of an area known as Arctic Chief-Grafter from Greenspace to Future Planning as indicated on Appendix B and forming part of this bylaw.
 7. This bylaw shall come into force and effect upon the final passing thereof.

FIRST READING:

July 7, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE:

PUBLIC HEARING:

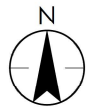
SECOND READING:

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBER APPROVAL:

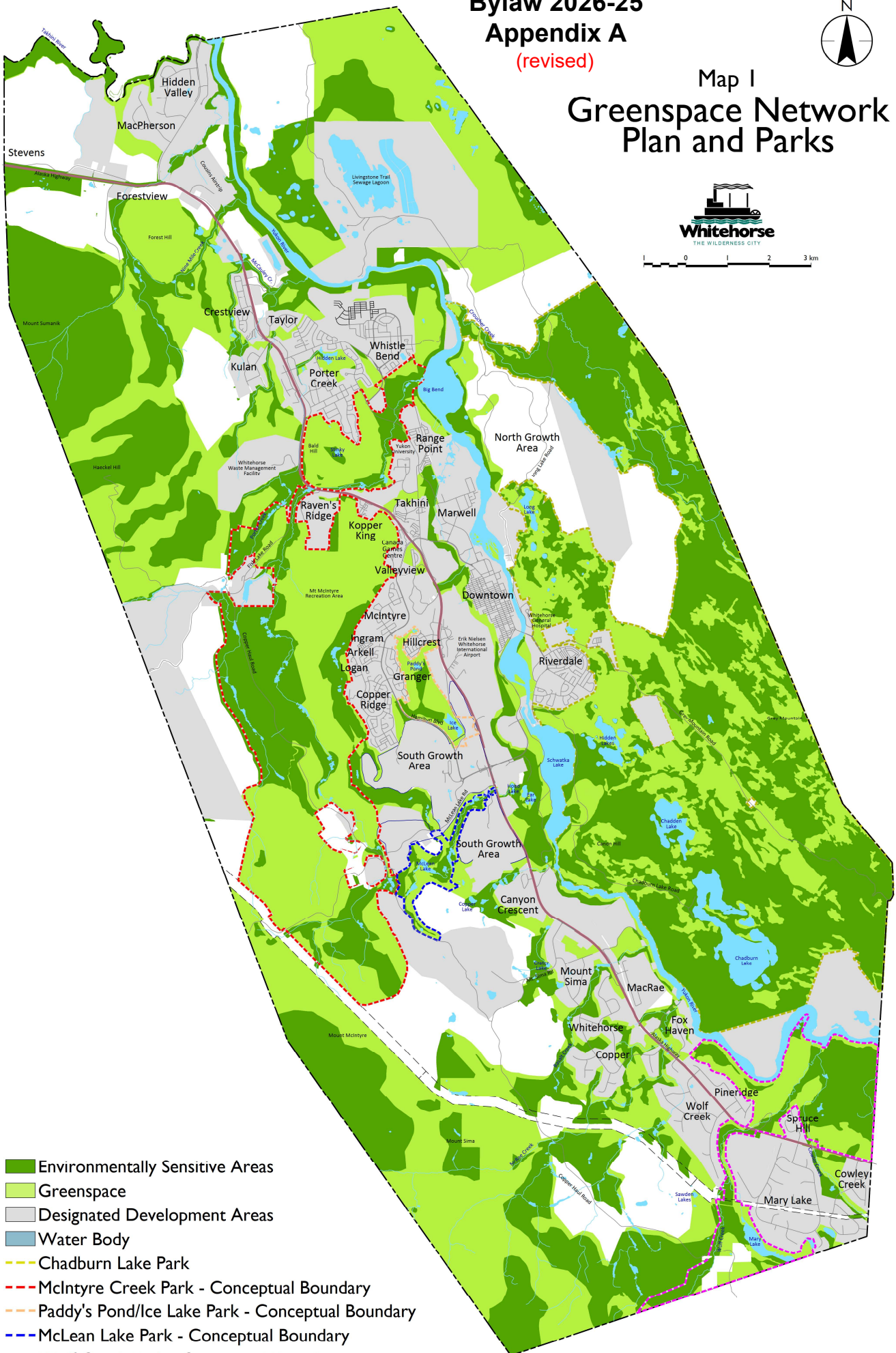
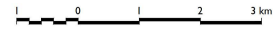
THIRD READING and ADOPTION:

Kirk Cameron, Mayor

Corporate Services



Greenspace Network Plan and Parks



- Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Greenspace
- Designated Development Areas
- Water Body
- Chadburn Lake Park
- McIntyre Creek Park - Conceptual Boundary
- Paddy's Pond/Ice Lake Park - Conceptual Boundary
- McLean Lake Park - Conceptual Boundary
- Wolf Creek Park - Conceptual Boundary

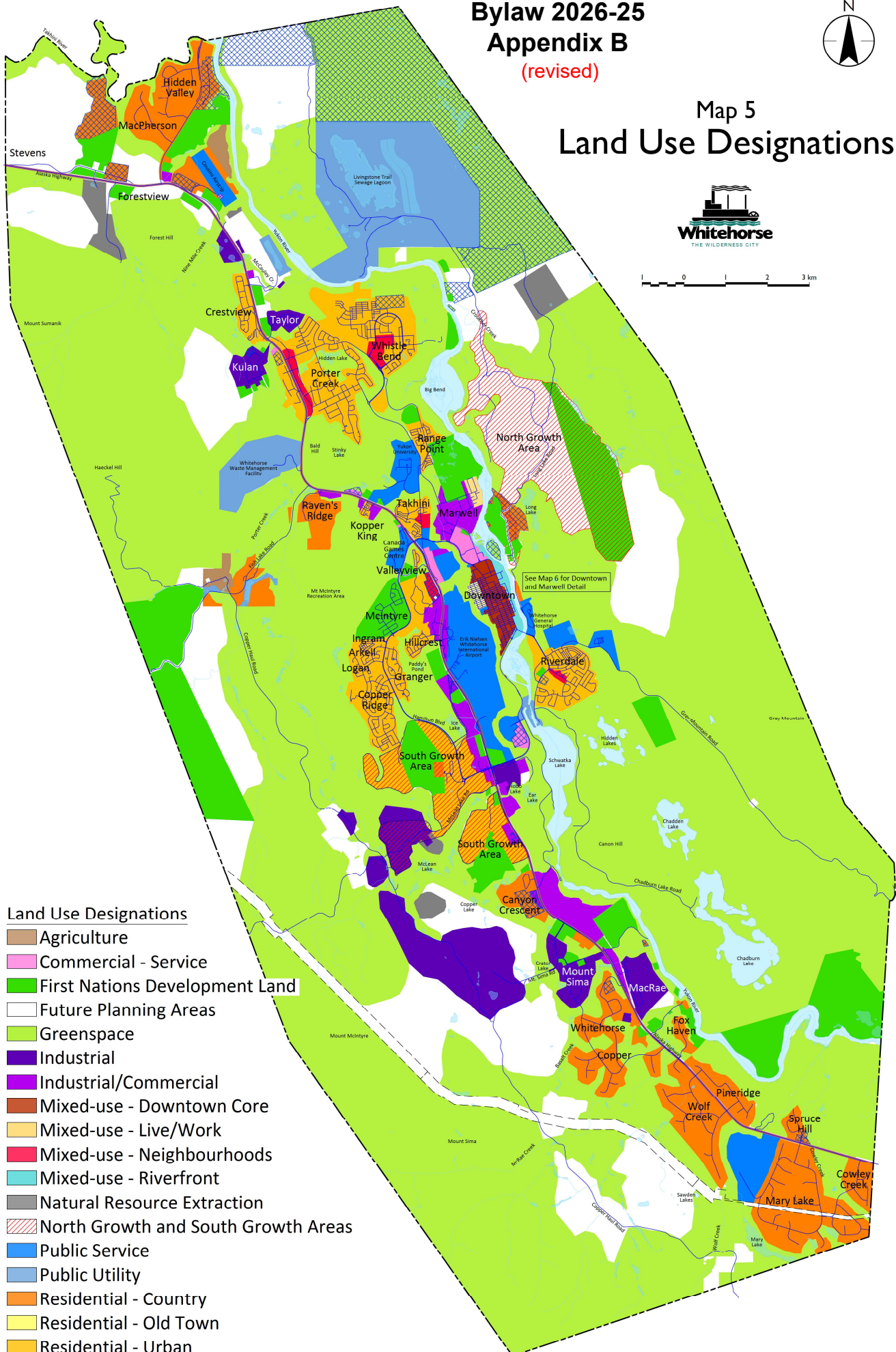
Bylaw 2026-25 Appendix B (revised)



Map 5 Land Use Designations



0 1 2 3 km



Land Use Designations

- Agriculture
- Commercial - Service
- First Nations Development Land
- Future Planning Areas
- Greenspace
- Industrial
- Industrial/Commercial
- Mixed-use - Downtown Core
- Mixed-use - Live/Work
- Mixed-use - Neighbourhoods
- Mixed-use - Riverfront
- Natural Resource Extraction
- North Growth and South Growth Areas
- Public Service
- Public Utility
- Residential - Country
- Residential - Old Town
- Residential - Urban
- TKC Lands

July 24, 2026