



# BYLAW C-8090-2020

## A Bylaw of Rocky View County, in the Province of Alberta, to adopt the Municipal Development Plan, pursuant to Section 632 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

The Council of Rocky View County enacts as follows:

### Title

1 This bylaw may be cited as the *Municipal Development Plan*.

### Definitions

2 Words in this bylaw have the same meaning as those set out in the *Municipal Government Act* except for the definitions provided below:

- (1) **“Council”** means the duly elected Council of Rocky View County;
- (2) **“Municipal Government Act”** means the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, c M-26, as amended or replaced from time to time; and
- (3) **“Rocky View County”** means Rocky View County as a municipal corporation and the geographical area within its jurisdictional boundaries, as the context requires.

### Effect

3 THAT Schedule 'A' to Bylaw C-8090-2020 is adopted as the “Municipal Development Plan” to guide growth and development in Rocky View County.

4 THAT Bylaw C-7280-2013 is repealed upon this bylaw coming into full force and effect.

### Transitional

5 Bylaw C-8090-2020 is passed and comes into full force and effect when it receives third reading and is signed in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*.



READ A FIRST TIME IN COUNCIL this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

PUBLIC HEARING HELD this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

READ A SECOND TIME IN COUNCIL this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

READ A THIRD TIME IN COUNCIL this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

\_\_\_\_\_

Reeve

\_\_\_\_\_

Chief Administrative Officer or Designate

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Bylaw Signed



**SCHEDULE 'A'  
FORMING PART OF BYLAW C-8090-2020**

A Municipal Development Plan to outline the vision for Rocky View County from a planning and development perspective, and to provide direction for how and where the County will grow over the next 20 years.



**DRAFT**

# **MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Summer 2020 | DRAFT 4

**Section 1: Introduction**

1.1	Purpose	2
1.2	Development of the Plan and Engagement Process	2
1.3	Vision and Guiding Principles	4
1.4	Rocky View County Context	5
1.5	Plan Structure	6
1.6	The Planning Framework	7

**Section 2: Land Use Policies**

2.1	Population and Housing Trends	12
2.2	Growth Areas	13
2.3	Residential Development	17
2.4	Employment Area Development	21
2.5	Hamlet Development	24
2.6	Institutional and Community Land Use	26

**Section 3: County-Wide Policies**

3.1	Financial Sustainability	28
3.2	Transportation	29
3.3	Natural Resource Development	31
3.4	Agriculture	32
3.5	Environment	34
3.6	Utility Services	36
3.7	Solid Waste	38
3.8	Public Space	39
3.9	Services and Partnerships	42
3.10	Arts and Culture	44

**Section 4: Implementation and Monitoring**

4.1	Intergovernmental Relationships	46
4.2	Implementing the MDP	47
4.3	Reviewing and Monitoring the MDP	49

**Appendices**

A	Glossary	52
B	Growth Concept Map	56
C	Conceptual Scheme Requirements	58

## Executive Summary

### What is the Municipal Development Plan

Rocky View County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) sets out the guidelines for growth and development in the County over the next 20 years. The MDP provides a comprehensive land use policy framework which outlines where and how development and growth may take place across the County.

The Municipal Development Plan is a statutory document required by the Province of Alberta as specified by the Municipal Government Act.

### Why is the Plan Needed

The County has grown by approximately 15,000 people over the past 20 years and will continue to grow. The MDP sets the vision for how to accommodate this growth in a sustainable manner, and will serve as an important decision-making tool for Council, County Administration, developers, residents, and other stakeholders.

### What Is Included in the Plan

The MDP's vision and guiding principles provide structure to the Plan and will guide future decision making. The vision defines the ideal state for Rocky View County while the six guiding principles, relating to responsible growth, economic diversification, community development, agriculture, the environment, and partnerships add further detail about the elements and actions required to achieve the vision.

The MDP's land use policies will guide development throughout the County and identify growth areas for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional development. These growth areas, presented as the MDP's Growth Concept, provide a planning framework that balances sustainable development with providing a high quality of life and diverse range of residential and economic opportunities.

County-wide policies within the MDP provide high level direction on County services, operations, and infrastructure. They are intended to improve County services, promote economic diversification, enhance quality of life, and strengthen community identity.

### How will the MDP be Implemented

Implementation of the MDP will occur through several mechanisms and processes, including:

- Ongoing administration of the development review process and periodically reviewing and amending area structure plans;
- Carrying out next steps required to implement the vision, guiding principles, and objectives of the MDP; and
- Collaborating with neighbouring municipalities on planning and development matters.

The MDP will be monitored and regularly reviewed based on a series of performance measures to ensure development is being effectively guided.

DRAFT

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION



## 1.1 Purpose

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) outlines a vision for Rocky View Country from a planning and development perspective and provides direction for how and where the County may grow over the next 20 years. The MDP provides policies to guide future growth areas, land uses, infrastructure, community services, and the physical development of the county.

Rocky View County has grown by about 15,000 people in the last 20 years, and will continue to grow. The Municipal Development Plan sets the vision for how to accommodate this growth responsibly, serving as an important decision-making tool for Council, County Administration, and stakeholders. Specifically, the MDP:

- Updates the vision, policies, and actions of the 2013 County Plan;
- Describes the County's preferred direction with respect to growth areas, land use, infrastructure investments, business development, and provision of County services;
- Provides policy direction and planning tools regarding land use, transportation, infrastructure, and recreation and community services;
- Informs County bylaws, policies, programs, and investments;
- Establishes a framework for the County to work with regional partners, stakeholders, and communities to find mutually beneficial solutions to planning and development challenges; and
- Helps residents and landowners understand how their land may be used now and in the future.

## 1.2 Development of the Plan and Engagement Process

The MDP was developed over five stages between 2019 and 2020. Comprehensive public and stakeholder engagement was conducted throughout the development of the MDP. The public and stakeholders were made aware of the MDP project and engagement opportunities through a variety of communication methods including a project webpage, social media posts, resident mail-outs, local media, County newsletters, a project mailing list, and direct contact with stakeholders. Throughout the course of the project 475 people attended project open houses, and 1,250 people participated in online surveys.

### MDP Project Stages

#### 1. Project Kick-Off (Summer 2019)

The MDP project was launched with a pop-up information booth at the County's annual pancake breakfast, and a workshop with Rocky View County Council identified project goals.

#### 2. Vision and Principles (Summer 2019)

A vision and guiding principles were established for the MDP. Residents and stakeholders provided comments and insights through eight open houses and an online survey. Participants identified that protecting Rocky View County's natural landscapes, preserving agricultural lands, focusing new growth in existing and planned areas, and expanding the parks and trails network should be priorities for the MDP. County staff also conducted a technical review of the County Plan to identify what policies were effective, and which ones could be improved or excluded.

### 3. Growth Strategies (Fall-Winter 2019)

Incorporating Stage 2 engagement comments, a development suitability analysis was conducted to determine where additional residential, commercial, and industrial development within the County could be appropriate. The public and stakeholders were able to provide feedback on the findings of the development suitability analysis, as well as to provide feedback on the proposed vision and guiding principles at seven open houses and through an online survey. A workshop with Council confirmed the development suitability analysis and provided next steps on establishing a growth concept for the MDP.

### 4. Draft MDP (Winter-Spring 2020)

Following input from Stage 3 engagement, and with direction from Council and County staff workshops, a draft plan and growth concept were developed. The public and stakeholders were able to review the draft MDP and identify red flags for the project team through an online survey. Additionally, neighbouring municipalities and regional partners had the opportunity to review the draft Plan and provide comments.

### 5. Public Hearing and Project Completion (Fall 2020)

TBD



Stage 2 Open House

## 1.3 Vision and Guiding Principles

The MDP's vision statement and guiding principles are foundational statements that guide the Plan. The vision defines the ideal state for Rocky View County while the guiding principles add further detail about the elements and actions required to achieve the vision. These statements, in turn, inform the Plan's policies, and together provide the framework to guide County development and growth.

### Vision

*Set within a cherished natural landscape, Rocky View County is a flourishing municipality that provides a high quality of life, guided by its rural heritage, a diversity of residential and economic opportunities, and sustainable development.*

### Guiding Principles

The following principles provide a framework to guide decision making when implementing the policies and outcomes of the MDP.

#### 1. Responsible Growth

Rocky View County should concentrate growth within designated development areas, ensuring equitable services are provided to residents in a fiscally sustainable manner.

#### 2. Economic Diversification

Rocky View County should support and promote economic diversification through new business development, existing business expansion, building a sustainable and balanced tax base, and creating a place where residents, businesses and tourists from a global reach find a thriving economy.

#### 3. Community Development

Rocky View County will build resilient communities and welcoming neighbourhoods through greater access to recreation amenities, valued gathering spaces, and creative design.

#### 4. Agriculture

Rocky View County will continue to support agricultural diversification and innovation, recognizing agriculture as an important part of the County's identity and economy. Rocky View County will encourage opportunities for value added agricultural businesses to develop and grow.

#### 5. The Environment

Rocky View County will develop and operate in a manner that protects the ecological integrity of the County and preserves natural landscapes for future generations to enjoy.

#### 6. Partnerships

Rocky View County will work in a spirit of collaboration with regional partners, stakeholders, businesses, and communities to find mutually beneficial solutions to planning and development challenges, making the County focal point for creativity and innovation.

## 1.4 Rocky View County Context

Located within the Calgary Metropolitan Region in southern Alberta, Rocky View County encompasses nearly one million acres of diverse landscapes, communities, and economic opportunities. The County surrounds the City of Calgary on three sides, and shares borders with 14 other municipalities and First Nations. In the County's western reaches, coniferous forests of the Rocky Mountain Foothills transition to rolling hills scattered with ranches. Moving eastward, the foothills give way to prairie grasslands and wetlands. Eastern Rocky View County is dominated with agricultural operations, including the production of hay, cereal and oilseed crops.

Across the County, farms and isolated dwellings are interspersed with hamlets and small towns. Many of these communities originated alongside railways at the beginning of the twentieth century as service centres for surrounding agricultural areas. More recently, country residential acreages have sprung up throughout the County. Forming distinct communities, these acreages have dominated residential development in the County over the last 40 years. More residential communities have also been developed that include a broader range of commercial shops, services, and employment opportunities.

Large scale ranching, logging, and oil and gas extraction are major industries in western Rocky View County while ranching, equestrian operations, and diversified agriculture, including greenhouses and nurseries, are prominent in eastern areas of the County. Commercial activities also occur along major highways that traverse the County, including the Trans-Canada Highway (Highway 1), and Queen Elizabeth II Highway (Highway 2). Large scale commercial and industrial operations are also located in the County adjacent to the City of Calgary, the Calgary International Airport, and the Springbank Airport.

Access to nature and outdoor recreation opportunities are abundant throughout Rocky View County. The region's waterways, including the Bow and Elbow

Rivers, provide fishing, boating, canoeing, and kayaking opportunities. Provincial parks, golf courses, and trail and pathway networks provide additional recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Rocky View County is unique from other municipalities in the region, as it contains large rural, ranching, and agricultural areas as well as growing urban communities. This diversity of lifestyle opportunities along with its natural landscapes and ecological features are why many people are attracted to the County. However, Rocky View, like other municipalities located on the edge of a large urban centre, is facing challenges from development and growth pressures. The County is projected to grow by approximately 5,800 new dwellings by 2038. Directing new growth to appropriate locations will be an important component of creating a fiscally sustainable municipality in the long-term. While dispersed growth offers quality of life benefits, including a low cost of living and access to nature, the provision of services to these areas can become a long-term burden on the County's finances. The Municipal Development Plan is needed to ensure that the County continues to flourish by balancing sustainable development with providing a high quality of life and a diversity of residential and economic opportunities for its residents.

## 1.5 Plan Structure

The Municipal Development Plan is divided into four distinct sections, collectively presenting a roadmap for future growth and development that will help the County follow the guiding principles and realize the vision.

1. **Introduction:** Summarizes the MDP's context, including the legislative framework under which it operates, presents the Plan's vision and guiding principles, and describes how the Plan should be read and interpreted.
2. **Land Use Policies:** Presents a Growth Concept for the County, and outlines how the MDP will facilitate growth and development within the context of fiscal and environmental sustainability.
3. **County-Wide Policies:** Provides guidance on County-wide services, operations, and infrastructure to support growth and development, including policies on financial sustainability, transportation, natural resource development, agriculture, utilities, and public spaces.
4. **Implementation and Monitoring:** Provides a framework for the commitments and actions the County will make to ensure the MDP is implemented, and includes performance measures that will serve as a barometer for measuring the success of the MDP.

## Plan Outcomes and Policies

The MDP's vision and guiding principles will be achieved through the application of the policies and objectives of each policy section. Policies provide guidance to decision makers and the public about how the County should grow and develop, while objectives are the targets for individual policy sections that achieve the County's vision and guiding principles.

## Policy Terms

The following key terms outline how policies should be interpreted and implemented by the County.

- **Shall:** While the MDP is generally intended to guide development with the understanding that flexibility is required, certain policies related to fiscal responsibility, legal obligations, and other factors are mandatory. In these contexts, the term 'shall' is used to indicate that actions must be complied with, without discretion, by administration, developers, Council, Planning Commission, and any other authority involved in land use development approvals.
- **Should:** Where policy is not mandatory but still relates to a strongly preferred course of action, the less restrictive term 'should' is used.
- **May:** Used in policies that are discretionary in nature, the term 'may' means that the policy could be enforced by the County dependent on the circumstances of the proposal in question.

## Definitions

Throughout the MDP's policies defined terms are italicized and their definitions can be found in Appendix A.

## 1.6 The Planning Framework

The planning framework outlines the key planning documents that guide land use and development in Rocky View County, providing context for how each document interacts and informs the others. Plans at the top of the framework such as intermunicipal development plans (IDPs) and the MDP provide broad, high-level policy direction, while lower-level plans are subordinate to the plans above and must be consistent with the policies and direction of the higher-order plans. The level of detail and specificity in policies increases the further down the plan is in the framework diagram (Figure 1).

Plans higher in the framework will generally determine when a subordinate plan is required. For example, an area structure plan (ASP) provides criteria for master site development plan and conceptual scheme preparation. When there is no ASP or other subordinate plan the MDP will determine whether a subordinate plan is required to provide greater planning detail. The hierarchy of the different plans and legislation is identified in Figure 1.

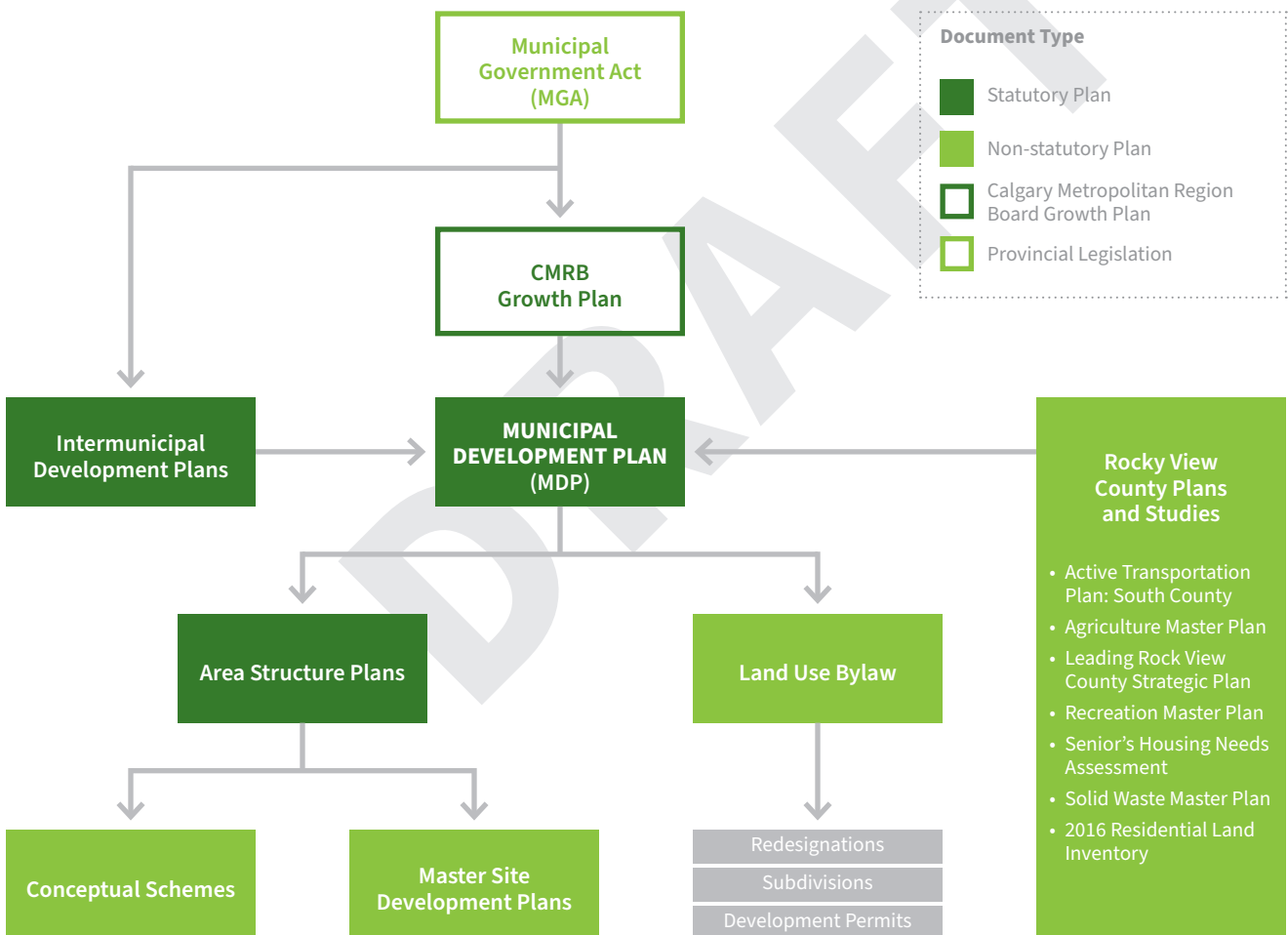


Figure 1: Planning Framework Alignment

### 1.6.1 Legislation

#### Municipal Government Act

The Municipal Government Act provides the legislative framework under which all municipalities must operate, establishing that the purpose of a municipality is:

- To provide good government,
- To foster the well-being of the environment,
- To provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of Council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality,
- To develop and maintain safe and viable communities,
- To work collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities to plan, deliver, and fund intermunicipal services.

Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act regulates planning and development and empowers municipalities to prepare plans:

- To achieve the orderly, economical and beneficial development, use of land and patterns of human settlement, and
- To maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment within which patterns of human settlement are situated in Alberta, without infringing on the rights of individuals for any public interest except to the extent that is necessary for the overall greater public interest.

Municipalities are required under the Act to adopt a municipal development plan, and the plan must be consistent with all intermunicipal development plans (IDPs) the municipality is a part of. The Municipal Government Act also allows for the development of subordinate plans, such as area structure plans, to further direct planning and development.

### 1.6.2 Regional Plans

#### Calgary Metropolitan Region Board Growth Plan

The Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB), of which Rocky View County is a member, was formed in 2018 and is mandated to promote the long-term sustainability of the Calgary Metropolitan Region. This includes ensuring environmentally responsible land-use planning and growth management, coordinating regional infrastructure investments and service delivery, and promoting the economic wellbeing and competitiveness of the Region.

Prior to the development and approval of a long-term Growth Plan and Servicing Plan, the CMRB's Interim Growth Plan provides guidance on land-use, growth, and infrastructure planning for all ten member municipalities and other regional stakeholders. Any statutory plan passed or amended by member municipalities, including the County's Municipal Development Plan, must conform with the Interim Growth Plan, until the Growth Plan and Servicing Plan are adopted and approved.

### 1.6.3 Statutory Plans

#### Intermunicipal Development Plans

IDPs are approved by Council in both partnering municipalities. Planners refer to these documents to make recommendations to Council for managing or changing land use, and to address growth issues in a way that aligns the interests of the County and the municipalities they share a border with. These plans may include how the two municipalities will work together, the development of joint lands, and how to co-ordinate parks, open space, recreation, transportation, water, utilities, and other municipal services across boundaries.

Rocky View County has approved or draft IDPs with the following municipalities:

- City of Calgary
- City of Airdrie
- Kneehill County
- Municipal District of Bighorn
- Town of Cochrane
- Town of Crossfield

The County is pursuing IDPs with the following municipalities:

- Village of Beiseker
- Wheatland County

### **Municipal Development Plan**

The MDP is the County's principal statutory plan, providing strategic growth direction, overall guidance for land use planning, and service delivery policy. The MDP also provides specific policy guidance for areas that do not fall within the boundaries of an area structure plan or other subordinate plan.

### **Area Structure Plans**

ASPs are statutory plans that are subordinate to the MDP, and provide a land use strategy for redesignating and developing a specific area of land in the County. ASPs contain maps, goals, and policies that set out general locations for major land uses, major roadways, utility servicing, recreation areas, and development phases.

## **1.6.4 Non-Statutory Plans**

### **Land Use Bylaw**

The Land Use Bylaw is a regulatory bylaw of the County required by the Municipal Government Act. Every parcel of land in the County has a land use district, and the Land Use Bylaw details the permitted and discretionary land uses in each district and regulates the development of land and buildings within the county.

### **Conceptual Schemes**

Conceptual schemes are non-statutory plans, subordinate to an ASP, and may be adopted by bylaw or resolution. Conceptual schemes provide detailed land use direction, subdivision design, and development guidance to Council, administration, and the public. Conceptual schemes are meant to be developed within the framework of an ASP.

To ensure the opportunity for public input, the County will continue its practice of adopting a conceptual scheme by bylaw with a public hearing. If an ASP is amended to include a conceptual scheme, the conceptual scheme becomes a statutory plan.

### **Master Site Development Plan**

A non-statutory plan that is adopted by Council resolution, a master site development plan accompanies a land use redesignation application and provides design guidance for the development of an area of land with little or no anticipated subdivision. In some cases, a master site development plan may be used following a conceptual scheme when certain site design details have not been finalized.

A master site development plan addresses building placement, landscaping, lighting, parking, and architectural treatment. The plan emphasis is on site design with the intent to provide Council and the public with a clear idea of the final appearance of the development.

## **1.6.5 Implementation of Plans**

Implementation of the statutory and non-statutory plans described above is primarily achieved by:

- Application and amendment of the Land Use Bylaw;
- Evaluation and approval of land use redesignation and subdivision applications;
- Evaluation and approval of development permits; and
- Application of County Policy and County Servicing Standards.



### 1.6.6 Additional Plans and Studies Informing the MDP

Beyond the statutory planning framework outlined above, the development of the MDP has also been informed by the following plans, studies, and strategic documents.

#### Active Transportation Plan: South County

The Plan provides direction on priorities for establishing a connected network of on- and off-street facilities where walking and cycling is a safe and accessible choice for all residents. The Plan includes infrastructure and programming recommendations that can be implemented strategically over time. The MDP provides high-level direction on expanding and improving pedestrian and cyclist networks, and the development of a regional pathway and trail plan.

#### Agriculture Master Plan

The Master Plan identifies a long-term vision for supporting both existing agricultural operations and providing new opportunities for diversification of the County's agriculture sector. The Plan informs future planning decisions and policy development related to the agriculture industry. The MDP provides high-level direction to support and grow the agriculture sector within the County, and minimize adverse impacts on agricultural land.

#### Leading Rocky View County Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan outlines Council's Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Themes, and Strategic Objectives for Rocky View County's municipal government. The Plan identifies strategic objectives that Council Administration should prioritize, including: expand community service delivery, embrace partnerships, strengthen the County's financial resiliency, and guide the County's growth pattern. The MDP's guiding principles have been informed by, and align with the Strategic Plan's strategic objectives.

#### Recreation Master Plan

The Master Plan is a 25-year strategy providing an overarching vision for the County to make future decisions for open space, parks and trails. The MDP provides high-level direction for expanding and improving the County's parks and open space system. This includes improving access through expansion of the County's pathways and trails network, connecting wildlife corridors, and ensuring development does not detract from adjacent parks and open spaces.

#### Senior's Housing Needs Assessment

The Report identifies and quantifies the types and numbers of seniors housing needed in the County over the next 10-15 years, as well as land requirements and locations to meet this need. The MDP provides high-level direction about improving quality of life for all residents in the County, and supports housing diversity.

#### Solid Waste Master Plan

The Master Plan guides County decision-making with respect to solid waste. The Plan provides futures solid waste management considerations that impact land use and growth, including coordinating solid waste disposal systems with other municipalities, siting considerations for new landfill facilities. Servicing, including waste management, is an important consideration of the MDP's Growth Concept.

#### 2016 Residential Land Inventory

The Land Inventory provides an assessment of the current and future availability of residential housing in the County. An analysis of existing dwellings, approved parcels, and approved policy areas provide an indication of the residential development capacity of the County. The Land Inventory informed the MDP's Growth Concept.

# SECTION 2: LAND USE POLICIES

Rocky View County's proximity to Calgary and other urban centres has profoundly shaped its existing land uses and patterns of growth. The County has become a desirable location for both urban and country-residential development, attracting people who want to live in close proximity to Calgary or Airdrie but with a quieter lifestyle, lower cost of living, or access to the County's natural assets. This has resulted in the growth of new communities and expansion of existing hamlets. However, if not managed properly this growth pressure can result in dispersed development that negatively impacts other land uses, including farming, ranching, and existing residential development. Agricultural operations, for example, can become less productive or unviable if fragmented by residential and commercial development. Additional exurban development may also lower the quality of life for existing residents by eroding the rural character of areas or adding greater pressure on existing infrastructure and municipal services.

The land use policies in this section guide development throughout the County, and identify growth areas for new residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial development. The MDP's Growth Concept provides a framework that balances sustainable development with providing a high quality of life and diversity of residential and economic opportunities in the County. The Growth Concept incorporates the County's existing area structure plans and conceptual schemes that have provided development and design guidance, established community boundaries, and identified future growth areas. The Concept also responds to investments the County has made in municipal servicing infrastructure, particularly in the Balzac East and Bragg Creek areas.

As identified in the Growth Concept (*Section 2.2*), new residential, commercial, and industrial growth is primarily directed to existing and planned growth areas. By focusing growth in these areas, Rocky View establishes certainty for residents and the development community as to where growth should be expected. Prioritizing growth in existing and planned areas also allows the County to leverage municipal

investments in servicing and transportation infrastructure, generating growth that is fiscally responsible.

## 2.1 Population and Housing Trends

Rocky View County has experienced sustained growth and development pressure over the past 20 years, despite the economic recession starting in 2008. Since the last MDP (the County Plan) was approved in 2013 the County has added just under 5,000 new residents. Most of these new residents have located in the hamlets of Langdon and Conrich, and the country residential communities of Bears paw and Springbank. The Calgary Metropolitan Region Board projects that Rocky View County will continue to grow, increasing from a population of 42,424 in 2018 to just over 60,000 by 2040. It is important to identify how changing consumer trends and market demand will influence where and how this growth occurs.

Rocky View County has historically experienced population growth through country residential development in communities such as Bears paw and Springbank. However, the past 25 years have seen residential consumer demand expand from predominantly country residential developments to a broader development mix of country residential, hamlet, and more densely planned communities (e.g. Harmony, Cochrane Lake, Elbow Valley). This trend is borne out through the County's 2016 Residential Land Survey. While country residential communities and hamlets have remained mainstays in Rocky View's housing portfolio, the Residential Land Survey highlights that residential development in Rocky View County is becoming more diverse with a range of housing options.

The most popular development areas throughout 1996-2016 were the country residential community of Bears paw and the hamlet of Langdon. While these two communities were cornerstones of the County's residential growth over this time period, growth also occurred in the more densely planned communities of

1996-2000	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2016
1. Bearspaw	1. Elbow Valley	1. Langdon	1. Bearspaw
2. Langdon	2. Langdon	2. Cochrane Lake	2. Langdon
3. Central Springbank	3. Bearspaw	3. Bearspaw	3. Conrich

**Table 01:** Population Growth Areas

*The top three growth areas in the County over five-year increments represent a diverse portfolio of housing.*

Elbow Valley and Cochrane Lake, the hamlet of Bragg Creek, and the country residential community of Central Springbank.

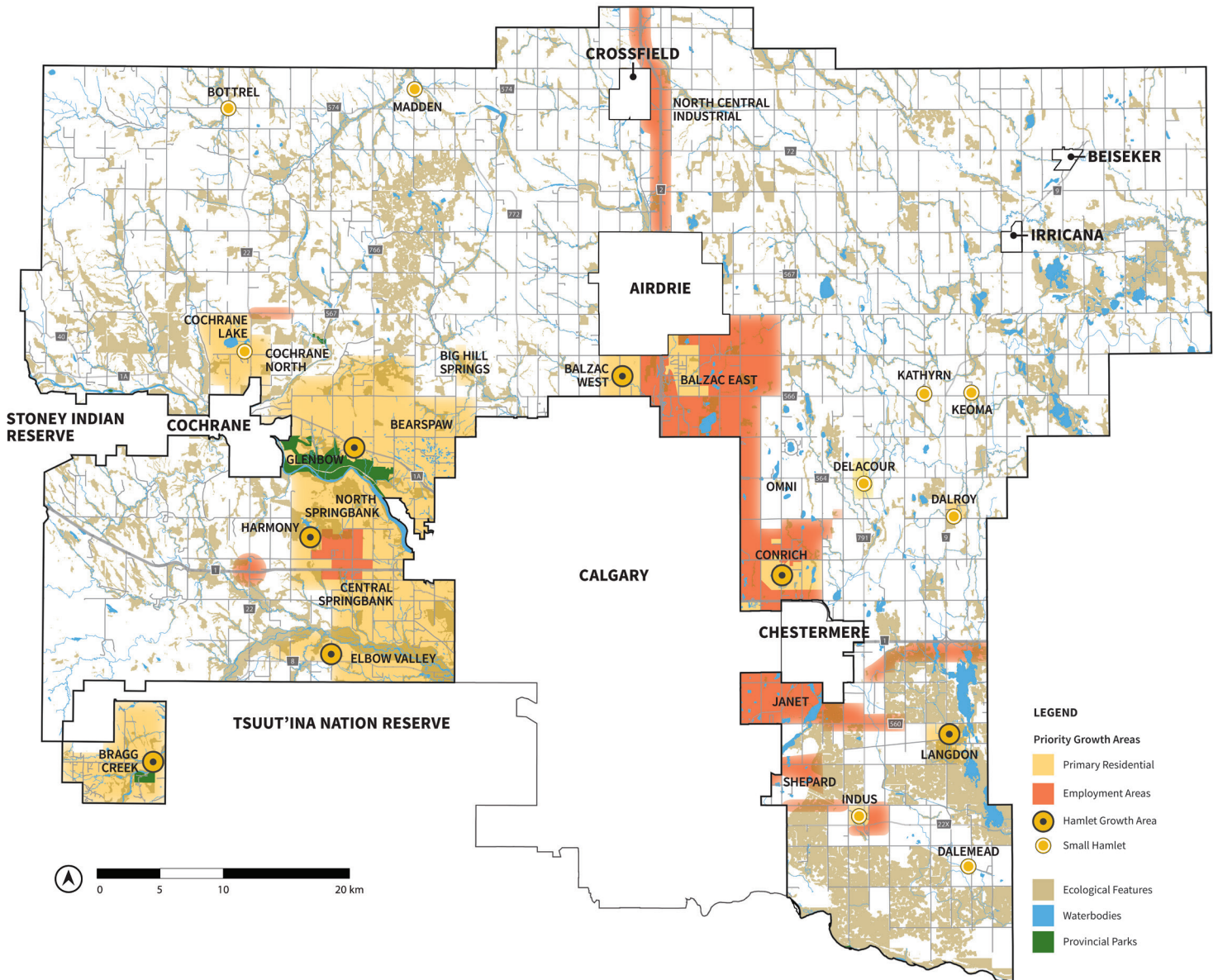
As a result of changing consumer preferences and market demand, key locations within the County are experiencing increased growth. Generally, these areas offer greater access to commercial services and employment opportunities, a diversity of housing options, and recreation opportunities such as parks and pathway systems. The newly developing communities of Glenbow Ranch and Harmony in the County’s western half are examples of these denser and more connected community villages.

When planning for future growth, it is important that Rocky View County retains the ability to offer a broad range of housing options so that the County can respond and adapt quickly as consumer demands change. This will ensure that Rocky View County continues to flourish, providing a high quality of life and a diversity of residential and economic opportunities.

## 2.2 Growth Areas

Development in Rocky View County for the next 20 years is guided by the Growth Concept. The Concept is the result of an approach that considered current plans and policies, market patterns, and a suitability analysis to identify growth priority areas. The suitability analysis used spatial data to identify landscapes that may not be appropriate for growth (e.g. wildlife corridors, wetlands, agricultural lands), and factors that would increase the suitability of an area for additional development (e.g. access to existing transportation infrastructure and servicing).

The Growth Concept Map (*Figure 2*) identifies the priority areas within the County for the continued growth and expansion of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. New development may occur outside of the identified priority growth areas, however, with Council review and approval. The map also highlights the presence of ecological features that warrant further study when development is proposed in these areas.



**Figure 2:** Growth Concept Map Identifying Priority Areas for Growth

*This map is conceptual in nature, and is not intended to be used for measurements.*

The Growth Concept Map identifies four categories of growth areas:

**Primary Residential Areas:** These residential areas are where most of Rocky View County residents currently live. Residential growth in these areas will occur through existing capacity in previously planned areas, and new growth areas that will provide a greater range of housing options to appeal to changing market preferences. Existing and new mixed-use commercial areas will provide compatible retail, employment, and other commercial land uses. *Figure 3* identifies areas that have been planned with existing ASPs and unplanned areas where ASPs will need to be completed.

**Employment Areas:** These areas primarily contain commercial and industrial land uses and serve as major areas of employment in the County. Development will continue in existing growth areas, with new growth added in suitable locations to fulfill market demand. Most large scale industrial and commercial development will be directed to these areas.

**Hamlet Growth Areas:** These hamlets are prioritized by the County for servicing and infrastructure upgrades to enable continued growth and redevelopment in a sustainable manner. In addition to residential land uses, they will include supporting commercial and industrial land uses, often in the form of a main street or central commercial area.

**Small Hamlets:** Unlike Hamlet Growth Areas, these existing hamlets are not prioritized by the County for servicing and infrastructure upgrades. However, additional growth that is in keeping with the character of these hamlets is appropriate. Small hamlets may contain supporting and appropriately scaled commercial and industrial activity.

The Growth Concept Map identifies other areas that need to be considered when planning for additional growth:

**Ecological Features:** These potentially important ecological features include wetlands, riparian areas, valuable agricultural soils, and wildlife corridors. These areas may not be appropriate for additional development, and should be considered when area structure plans and conceptual schemes are created or amended. *Section 3.5* contains policies for development in and near ecological features.

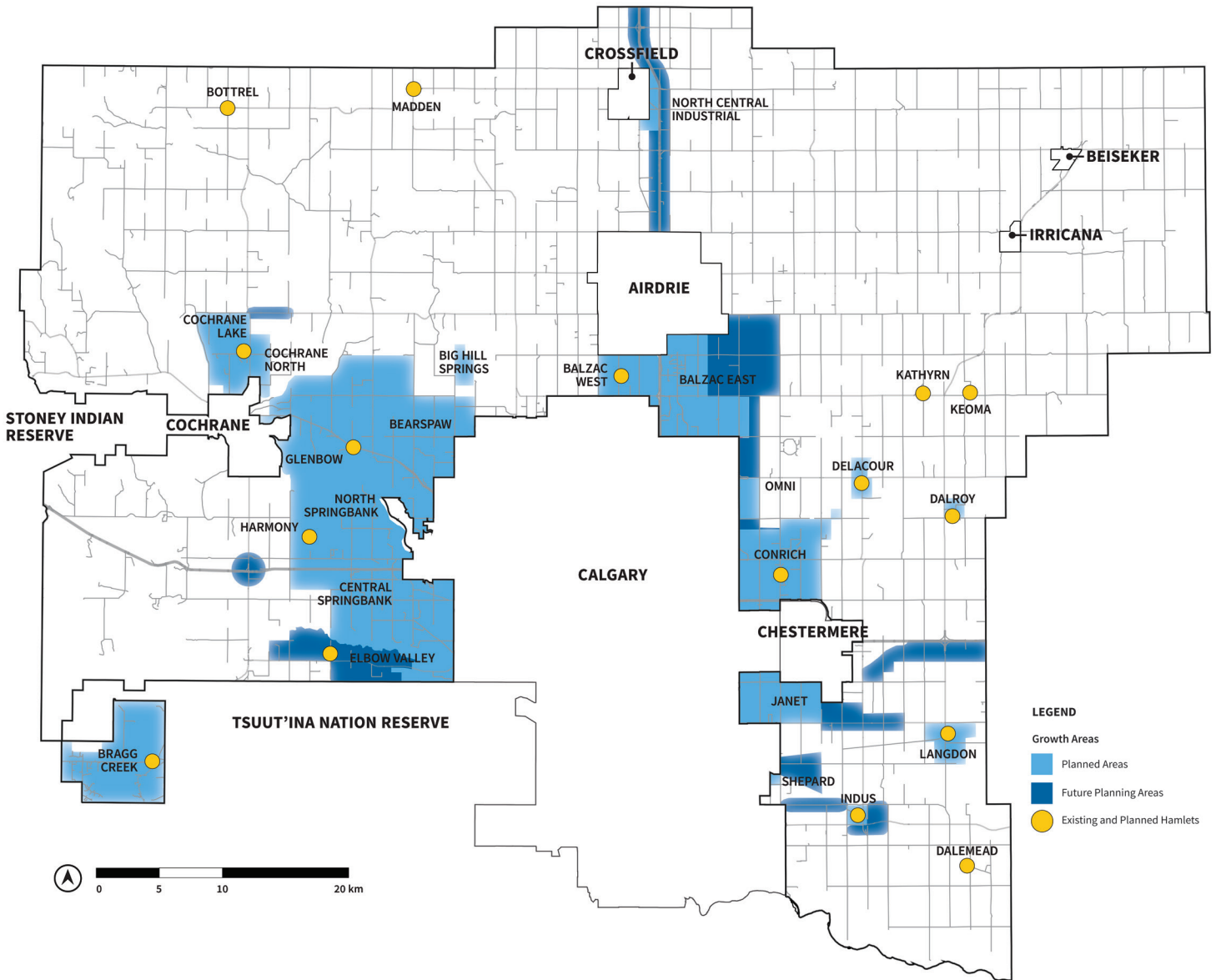
**Waterbodies:** These rivers, streams, and large wetlands provide aesthetic and ecological benefits. Future development should avoid or mitigate impacts to these areas.

**Provincial Parks:** There are two provincial parks in Rocky View County, Glenbow Ranch and Big Hills Spring. Future development adjacent to these parks should mitigate any impacts to their environmental or recreation functions.

### 2.2.1 Planned and Unplanned Growth Areas

Most of the Priority Growth Areas identified on *Figure 2* are previously planned areas with existing ASPs. As these areas have not been fully developed, they are able to accommodate additional growth over the next 20 years. The MDP's policies largely reflect the general intents of these existing plans. The areas are shown as Planned Areas on *Figure 3*. As Country resources allow, existing ASPs that encompass areas that will receive additional growth should be updated based on the direction of the MDP.

New growth areas have been identified to provide residential, commercial, and industrial development that meets the needs and preferences of a growing population. These areas are shown as Future Planning Areas on *Figure 3* and will require ASPs or conceptual schemes to determine how future growth is accommodated in a sustainable manner.



**Figure 3: Planned and Future Planning Growth Priority Areas**

*This map is conceptual in nature, and is not intended to be used for measurements.*

## 2.3 Residential Development

Residential land uses are the primary form of development in Rocky View County. It is important to plan for residential development that respects the values of County residents while balancing the need to grow responsibly. The policies contained in this section reflect this balance and provide a framework that will guide residential development in the County for the next 20 years.

### Objectives

The policies within the Residential Development Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Opportunities for residential growth are provided that enable housing diversity for all ages, abilities, and incomes.
- The majority of residential growth occurs within Primary Residential Areas.
- Support higher density residential development where appropriate.
- Residential development supports with the MDP's vision and guiding principles, and aligns with Leading Rocky View County, Council's Strategic Plan.
- Alternative residential development forms that reduce the overall development footprint are pursued.
- Communities maintain a strong sense of community.
- Planning and development in the County supports safe, healthy, and attractive communities.

### 2.3.1 Primary Residential Areas

Primary Residential Areas comprise lands where residential development and ancillary commercial and industrial development will be the predominant land use. Although all Hamlet Growth Areas are located within Primary Residential Areas, they are addressed by specific policies in *Section 2.5*. When including Hamlet Growth Areas, most of the residential growth within the County over the next 20 years will be directed to Primary Residential Areas.

- a) Support the development of Primary Residential Areas, as identified in *Figure 2*, as designated residential growth areas over the planning horizon of the MDP.
- b) New development may occur outside of identified priority growth areas with Council review and approval.
- c) Development within Primary Residential areas shall be in accordance with applicable area structure plans or conceptual schemes.
- d) The County shall update existing area structure plans and conceptual schemes, as resources allow, to align with direction provided by the MDP.
- e) The County should develop or expand area structure plans or conceptual schemes for Primary Residential Areas not currently covered by these plans.
- f) Primary Residential Areas should receive County services identified in the applicable area structure plans, conceptual schemes, or County bylaws.
- g) Applications to redesignate land for *multi-lot* residential use adjacent to or in the vicinity of Primary Residential Areas should not be supported unless the proposed development area



is approved as an amendment to hamlet boundaries or applicable area structure plans or conceptual schemes.

- h)** Where a new area structure plan is needed the plan should incorporate the following:
- i)** Establishes population projections and the maximum number of dwelling units on the basis of *developable land*;
  - ii)** Provides for the distribution and varied densities of dwelling units within portions of the development area;
  - iii)** Identifies mechanisms to effectively manage the *open lands*;
  - iv)** Development conforms to current technical servicing requirements and master servicing plans and policies;
  - v)** Provides patterns of development and transportation networks that create regional linkages between subordinate plans; and
  - vi)** Should address the following:
    - Future land use concept;
    - Population estimations and impact on existing services, infrastructures, and amenities;
    - Form, quality, design, and compatibility of proposed development;
    - Design of public realm elements, including main streets, and community gathering spaces;
    - Provision of parks, open space, recreation amenities, and active transportation connections;
    - Mitigations for impacts on the environment;
    - Interface design with adjacent agriculture, natural areas, or adjacent municipalities;
    - Utility connections; and
    - Regional transit connections.
- i)** New or amended area structure plans that include *compact residential development* should also incorporate the following:
- i)** Permanent retention of a significant amount of the developable area as *open land*. The minimum desired percentage of *open land* will be determined by the area structure plan;
  - ii)** Allows for residential dwelling unit bonusing when dedicated *open land* exceeds the minimum requirement or to achieve other identified benefits; and
  - iii)** Identifies and applies mechanisms that permanently prevent subdivision of *open lands*.

### 2.3.2 Country Residential Development

The County has a number of country residential communities within Primary Residential Areas, some formally defined by area structure plans while others have grown organically over time. Country residential communities provide a unique lifestyle that many people desire, but additional growth in these areas should be considered through the lens of long-term fiscal sustainability for the County.

- a) *Country residential development* shall conform to the relevant area structure plan, and the policies of the MDP.
- b) Where *residential development* with two or more dwelling units and greater than 4 hectares (9.9 acres) is proposed, but there is no existing area structure plan or conceptual scheme that includes the development area, an area structure plan or conceptual scheme should be adopted. When determining whether an area structure plan or conceptual scheme is appropriate, Council should give consideration to:
  - Number of units proposed;
  - Intensity of the proposed development;
  - Relationship of the proposed development to surrounding land uses;
  - How the proposed development may impact future development of the surrounding lands;
  - Impact of the proposed development on County servicing and transportation infrastructure;
  - Impact of the proposed development on stormwater management; and
  - How the proposed development may impact the County's targeted 65:35 ratio of residential to business development.

- c) Multiple unit *country residential developments* less than 4 hectares (9.9 acres), except for fragmented country residential development (refer to *Section 2.3.3*), should not be supported.
- d) *Country residential development*, with two or more dwelling units, is discouraged outside of Primary Residential Areas, including in agriculture areas.
- e) When an existing area structure plan that includes *country residential development* is undergoing a comprehensive review, the following shall be addressed:
  - i) Update all policies in accordance with the MDP, County policies, and other relevant County planning documents;
  - ii) Consider the inclusion alternative development forms, such as *compact residential development* or a *conservation design* community, which reduce the overall development footprint on the landscape; and
  - iii) Where *country residential development* is not being achieved as expected, the County should consider reducing the overall area dedicated to *country residential development*.

### 2.3.3 Fragmented Country Residential Development

Historical subdivision approval in parts of the County has resulted in fragmented and dispersed pockets of country residential lots. Incremental fragmented development can result in dividing viable agricultural land, which impacts agriculture operators, and creates an inefficient and unsustainable settlement pattern. From a fiscal perspective, dispersed country residential development requires increased road maintenance and threatens the fiscal sustainability of service providers such as the County and local school boards. Further fragmented country residential development should be avoided, and a gradual transition should be pursued to a more orderly and efficient development pattern within fragmented country residential areas.

- a) Within a *fragmented quarter section*, the redesignation of residential lots or agricultural parcels less than or equal to 4 hectares (9.9 acres) in size to a new residential land use may be supported if planning, consultation, and technical assessment information is provided to the satisfaction of the County and:
- i) Shows, at a minimum, all residential or small agricultural acreages that are adjacent to the application;
  - ii) Includes design measures to minimize adverse impacts on existing agriculture operations;
  - iii) Demonstrates potential connectivity to residential or small agricultural acreages outside of the plan area;
  - iv) Outlines the connection between internal and external road networks, water supply, sewage treatment, and stormwater management;
  - v) Contemplates the impact on off-site infrastructure, roads, and stormwater systems;
  - vi) Provides any other additional information or assessments as required by the County to support the application; and
  - vii) Documents the consultation process undertaken to involve affected landowners within the fragmented area in the preparation and/or review of the application.
- b) For development within a *fragmented quarter section*, an internal road to service a subdivision as per the plan may be required as a condition of subdivision.
- c) Within a *fragmented quarter section*, the redesignation or subdivision of agriculture parcels greater than 4 hectares (9.9 acres) in size to a residential use should not be supported.



Photo: Elpoca

## 2.4 Employment Area Development

Maintaining and expanding the range of employment opportunities available in Rocky View County while balancing the residential to business tax ratio are priorities of the County. The County has also made significant investments in servicing infrastructure to specific areas designated for industrial and commercial development. The policies contained in this section reflect the County's investments and a logical expansion of existing industrial and commercial areas in Rocky View County to maintain a healthy and diverse inventory of developable lands.

### Objectives

The policies within the Employment Area Development Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- A range of businesses are supported in Rocky View County, creating a strong, diversified, and sustainable economy.
- Large commercial and industrial businesses, including manufacturing and industrial operations, warehousing and logistics, and agricultural processing, should locate in the Employment Areas.
- The growth of innovative and sustainable business sectors are supported, including renewable energy generation and technology sector, value added agricultural services and products.
- Commercial industrial development in appropriate locations contributes to the viability of residential areas by providing community meeting places, enabling employment opportunities, and offering goods and services to the local area.
- Business development aligns with the County's financial, social, and environmental goals.
- An increased business assessment base supports the financial sustainability of the County's operations while reducing reliance on the residential tax base.

### 2.4.1 Employment Areas

A strong local economy provides multiple benefits to the County and its residents, including employment, local services for residents and visitors, vitality to communities, and taxes to support County services.

The MDP provides a number of *business areas* and development forms which will accommodate a variety of businesses wishing to locate in the county. Employment Areas contain regional business centres and highway business areas where the majority of large-scale commercial and industrial development should continue to be located. Their purpose is to provide regional and national business services, and local and regional employment opportunities. By focusing development in these locations, the County provides for orderly growth and economic efficiencies in the development of its transportation and infrastructure systems.

The Employment Areas identified in *Figure 2* benefit from most, if not all of the following characteristics:

- The presence of existing businesses and industries;
- An efficient road connection to the provincial highway network;
- Large parcel sizes are able to accommodate large-scale operations;
- Multiple transportation options are available (e.g. road, rail, air); and
- Regulated by existing statutory policy, and/or identified in annexation agreements.

The MDP supports and encourages a robust market-driven economy by facilitating economic development and providing planning policies that help foster private and public investment across the county. The development of Employment areas will significantly contribute to achieving the County's fiscal goals.

- a) Employment Areas, as identified in *Figure 2*, should have an adopted area structure plan in place prior to development.

- b) Large scale commercial and industrial developments, when feasible, should be directed to locate in identified Employment Areas as identified in *Figure 2*.
- c) Encourage the infilling or intensification of existing Employment Areas in order to complement other businesses, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, minimize land use conflicts with non-commercial and industrial uses, and minimize the amount of traffic being drawn into rural areas.
- d) Development in an Employment Area shall follow the County's Commercial, Office, and Industrial Design Guidelines.
- e) The expansion of Employment Area boundaries should require an area structure plan or an area structure plan amendment.
- f) Development of additional Employment Areas, not identified on *Figure 2* should not be supported unless a need has been demonstrated based on all the following criteria:
  - i) The proposal has regional or national significance;
  - ii) Existing Employment Areas within the trade area of the proposed development are approaching full capacity, and the County has determined expansion of existing Employment Areas is not desirable;
  - iii) Existing Employment Areas within the trade area do not meet market demand;
  - iv) Land uses and target markets are clearly defined;
  - v) The proposed development meets the environmental and infrastructure goals and policies of the MDP;
  - vi) The proposed development has the potential to provide a substantial financial benefit to the County;
  - vii) The proposed development does not adversely impact environmentally significant areas and existing residential communities and agriculture operations;
  - viii) The proposed development is in close proximity to the provincial transportation network; and
  - ix) The proposed commercial or industrial development should adequately demonstrate a direct benefit from the additional employment opportunities for nearby hamlets or communities, and allow for the continued build-out of a full functioning suite of services for those communities.
- g) Applications to redesignate land for commercial or industrial uses outside of Employment Areas shall provide a rationale that justifies why the proposed development cannot be located in Employment areas.
- h) Proposals for business development outside of Employment Areas should:
  - i) Be limited in size, scale, intensity, and scope;
  - ii) Not compromise the viability of existing Employment Areas;
  - iii) Have direct and safe access to paved County roads or Provincial highway;
  - iv) Provide a Traffic Impact Assessment; and
  - v) Minimize adverse impacts on environmentally significant areas, and existing residential, business, or agricultural uses.
- i) Small scale *value-added agriculture* operations, on-farm diversified uses, *agriculture services*, natural resource extraction, and other agricultural businesses, as defined in relevant legislation or *County Policy*, may be supported outside Employment areas.
- j) Where Employment Areas are located along major highways they require additional planning considerations due to their proximity to regional transportation networks, and should be developed in consultation with Alberta Transportation.

## 2.4.2 Neighbourhood Serving Commercial

Commercial and light industrial development in appropriate locations contributes to the viability of Primary Residential Areas by providing social and community meeting places, enabling employment opportunities, and offering goods and services to the local area.

- a) New neighbourhood-serving commercial and light industrial development should:
  - i) Conform to the relevant areas structure plan, and the policies of the MDP; and
  - ii) Have minimal impact on adjacent land uses.
- b) Encourage the infilling or intensification of existing neighbourhood serving commercial areas in order to complement other businesses, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, minimize land use conflicts with agriculture uses, and minimize the amount of traffic being drawn into rural areas.
- c) Home based business shall be supported, as a self-employment opportunity for residents, and when they are in accordance with the applicable area structure plan, subordinate plan, and/or the Land Use Bylaw.



Photo: Colby Stopa

## 2.5 Hamlet Development

Rocky View's hamlets are home to the majority of the County's residents and provide services for the everyday needs. Hamlets should be the priority for residential development over the next 20 years, and their continued attractiveness as a place to live in Rocky View County will be predicated upon continued support for contextually sensitive commercial development, the provision of appropriate open spaces, and a range of housing options to support all types of households. The policies in this section encourage the development of hamlets to improve quality of life for residents and maximize the efficiency and cost effectiveness of municipal service infrastructure.

### Objectives

The policies within the Hamlet Development Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- A strong sense of community identity is maintained for hamlets.
- Diverse housing opportunities are available for all ages, incomes, and abilities.
- Community main streets and commercial areas add to the social fabric of the community, providing services to residents.
- An attractive, high quality built environment is developed and maintained to support connected and complete communities.
- Development over time results in an attractive, high quality built environment.
- County services are available to residents and businesses.

### 2.5.1 Hamlet Growth Areas

Hamlets in Rocky View County vary in size, appearance, and function, with each hamlet having a distinct character that reflects its location, history, and environment. Of these hamlets, Balzac West, Bragg Creek, Conrich, Elbow View, Glenbow, Harmony, and Langdon are recognized as Hamlet Growth Areas (as identified on *Figure 2*). These Hamlet Growth Areas, both existing and planned, will include a mix of land uses to provide housing, employment, community services, and recreation opportunities to local residents and a larger service area. Additional growth in these hamlets may be prioritized by the County due to their proximity to transportation networks, and availability of infrastructure, services, and amenities. Commercial uses will be supported in Hamlet Growth Areas to provide access to services for residents and provide employment opportunities.

While ASPs provide area-specific policy for many hamlets, the MDP provides County-wide policies to ensure development strengthens these communities, is sensitive to the needs of residents, and is orderly and sustainable.

- a) Development in Hamlet Growth Areas should be guided by, and conform to, the adopted area structure plan, area redevelopment plan, or conceptual scheme.
- b) All new *multi-lot* commercial, industrial, or residential subdivisions proposed within a Hamlet Growth Area should require the preparation of a master site development plan or conceptual scheme as per *County Policy*.
- c) An area structure plan or area redevelopment plan for a Hamlet Growth Area should address the following planning and design matters:
  - i) Future land use concept;
  - ii) The amount of remaining undeveloped land within existing boundaries;
  - iii) Population estimates and impact on existing services, infrastructure, and amenities;

- iv) Form, quality, design, and compatibility of proposed development;
  - v) Potential for enhancements to main streets, commercial areas, and community gathering places;
  - vi) Provision of parks, open space, amenities, and pathway connections;
  - vii) Impact on the environment and mitigation measures;
  - viii) Interface design with adjacent land uses; and
  - ix) Provision for future regional transit connections.
- d)** Encourage a variety of housing forms to be developed in Hamlet Growth Areas in order to provide a range of affordability and lifestyle opportunities for residents.
- e)** Encourage well-designed public gathering places that:
- i) Are pedestrian and cyclist-friendly, safe, accessible, and attractive;
  - ii) Respect and enhance community identity and character;
  - iii) Address the needs of residents of all ages and abilities; and
  - iv) Enable passive and active recreation and cultural activities.
- f)** The expansion of a Hamlet Growth Area boundary should only be considered when 50% of the gross area has been developed, and shall require an amendment to the local area structure plan.
- g)** The County should develop main street commercial guidelines and future development should comply with these guidelines.
- h)** Hamlet main streets or central business areas are encouraged to develop with a consistent urban design theme that is pedestrian friendly.

## 2.5.2 Small Hamlets

Hamlets across Rocky View County range from those with a wide variety of services and relatively steady growth, like Hamlet Growth Areas, to those with fewer services and lower levels of growth. These Small Hamlets include Bottrel, Cochrane Lake, Dalemead, Dalroy, Delacour, Indus, Kathyrn, Keoma, Indus, and Madden. They form a traditional part of the County's rural landscape, each with their own distinct character. The County will continue to maintain existing levels of service for these rural communities, ensuring sustained quality of life for residents. Due to their more isolated location, and the availability of more sustainable development locations across the county, the County may not prioritize infrastructure and servicing upgrades in Small Hamlets. However, additional growth that is in keeping with the character of these hamlets is appropriate.

- a)** New development should occur within the existing hamlet boundary as opposed to expanding boundaries.
- b)** Commercial development, if appropriately scaled to the surrounding area, should be supported to provide services to meet the day-to-day needs of residents or local businesses.
- c)** Development of Small Hamlets should be guided by, and conform to, existing applicable area structure plan or conceptual scheme.
- d)** Development of Small Hamlets without an existing applicable area structure plan or conceptual scheme should be guided by the policies and direction of the MDP, and other applicable County policies and bylaws.
- e)** Encourage a variety of housing forms to be developed in Small Hamlets in order to provide a range of affordability and lifestyle opportunities for residents.



- f) Encourage well-designed public gathering places in hamlets that:
  - i) Are pedestrian and cyclist-friendly, safe, accessible, and attractive;
  - ii) Respect and enhance community identity and character;
  - iii) Address the needs of residents of all ages and abilities; and
  - iv) Enable passive and active recreation and cultural activities.

## 2.6 Institutional and Community Land Use

Institutional and community land uses contribute to vitality of communities and support quality of life for residents by serving culture, education, health, religious, recreation, and social needs.

### Objectives

The policies within the Institutional and Community Land Use Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Institutional and community land uses support the needs of residents, are appropriately located, are well designed, and contribute to the vitality of communities.
- New institutional and community uses, that are compatible with surrounding land uses, are supported to serve the public's interest.

### 2.6.1 Institutional and Community Policies

- a) Institutional and community land uses should locate in Hamlet Growth Areas, Small Hamlets, Primary Residential Areas, or Employment Areas.
- b) If applicable, institutional and community land uses should be developed in accordance with the appropriate area structure plan or conceptual scheme.
- c) Proposals for institutional and community land uses that are not within the areas identified in Policy 2.6.1 a) will be considered if the following is addressed:
  - i) Justification of the proposed location;
  - ii) Demonstration of the benefit to the broader public;
  - iii) Compatibility and integration with existing land uses or nearby communities; and
  - iv) Infrastructure with the capacity to service the proposed development.
- d) When area structure plans or conceptual schemes are prepared or amended, the planning process shall address the need for institutional and community land uses, and where appropriate, consult with school boards and other relevant partners.
- e) Redesignation and subdivision applications for institutional and community land uses should provide:
  - i) An operational plan outlining details such as facility hours, capacity, staff and public numbers, facility use, and parking requirements; and
  - ii) A master site development plan which addresses servicing and transportation requirements and ensures the site is of sufficient size to accommodate the parking requirements as set out in the Land Use Bylaw.

# SECTION 3: COUNTY-WIDE POLICIES

The County provides infrastructure and community services that contribute to economic development, public safety, and quality of life. Providing these services, however, can be challenging due to the County's vast expanse. Residents and businesses are dispersed across an area of 3,885 km<sup>2</sup> (960,000 acres) at low densities, challenging the County, landowners, and developers to build and grow communities in an orderly, sustainable fashion that coincides with the appropriate provision of municipal infrastructure and community services. Satisfying these aspirations will involve the assessment of community needs across the County, partnerships with community stakeholders and service providers, recruitment of regional institutions, public consultation, and allocation of land and resources.

Collectively, the policies of this section aspire to maintain infrastructure, support a thriving economy, and improve services to strengthen community identity and enhance quality of life.

## 3.1 Financial Sustainability

The cost of building communities, providing services, and operating County facilities is dependent on factors such as location, infrastructure needs, and residents' desire for services. While developers are responsible for the upfront costs of development, long-term operating costs related to providing soft infrastructure, maintaining and replacing infrastructure, and services to residents are typically paid for by the residential and business property tax base, user fees, and provincial grants. For Rocky View County to be financially sustainable, development should pay for itself and be affordable over the long term. This reduces financial risk to County ratepayers and mitigates potential economic risks.

### Objectives

The policies within the Financial Sustainability Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- The financial sustainability of the County is maintained through careful management of growth and development.
- Development costs are primarily the responsibility of the developer.
- Business development is leveraged to reduce reliance on the residential tax base.

### 3.1.1 Financial Sustainability Policies

- a) New development should be directed to areas with existing infrastructure, where feasible.
- b) On-site and off-site *hard infrastructure* costs related to new development shall be the responsibility of developer.
- c) Where deemed appropriate the County may require developers to build or contribute to the building of *soft infrastructure* (e.g. recreation amenities, libraries, schools).

- d) *Soft infrastructure* needs resulting from growth should be identified and methods to finance those needs prepared in advance of new development.
- e) Depending on the scope and scale of a proposed development, a fiscal impact analysis of the proposed development may be required, in accordance with *County policy*. The fiscal impact analysis will:
  - i) Assess development applications;
  - ii) Allow consistent comparison between projects; and
  - iii) Measure the county-wide impact of growth.
- f) An applicant proposing to provide utility infrastructure may be required to provide a cost feasibility and life cycle analysis detailing operating and replacement costs in accordance with *County Policy*.
- g) Prior to approving a development proposal, the County should ensure that full cost recovery methods are in place to capture the capital and interest cost of development.
- h) The County will commit to continued assessment base diversification and should strive to achieve an *Assessment Split Ratio* of 65% residential and 35% business County-wide through careful consideration of development applications.
- i) Facilitate economic development by linking investors and developers to investment opportunities, providing assistance where feasible, and reducing barriers to companies wishing to invest in the County.
- j) Utility operational and life cycle costs may be recovered through user fees from those benefiting from the service.

## 3.2 Transportation

Transportation networks facilitate the movement of people and goods throughout Rocky View County. Vehicular traffic is the primary method of transportation in the County, while airports and railroads also facilitate the movement of goods and people. A pathway system in areas of the County provides active transportation opportunities.

The County will continue to accommodate the movement of people and goods safely and efficiently. As growth in the County increases, however, more pressure will be placed on the transportation system, creating unique challenges to ensure development and transportation infrastructure is compatible and complementary. The policies in this section outline how the County will develop and maintain a transportation network that allows for efficient and safe travel through the County for all modes.

### Objectives

The policies within the Transportation Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Existing development and future growth areas are supported through a transportation system that prioritizes safety and fiscal sustainability.
- The County's transportation infrastructure is developed in a safe, efficient, equitable, and cost-effective manner.
- Communities are served by a well-designed and integrated transportation network that facilitates different modes of travel.
-

### 3.2.1 Transportation Planning and Development

- a) Partner and co-operate with the Province and neighbouring municipalities to maintain and improve, where necessary, regional transportation corridors.
- b) Partner with other municipalities and developers to co-ordinate transportation improvements and the expansion of transportation infrastructure.
- c) Transportation network development shall be based on existing development, future growth areas, area structure plans, and interconnectivity with adjacent municipalities.
- d) Where extensions to the transportation network are required as a result of development, the developer shall fund all required improvements.
- e) Ensure the County's Transportation Model remains current and relevant through regular reviews and updates. The Transportation Model will anticipate, and plan future transportation networks based on:
  - i) Existing development patterns;
  - ii) Identified growth areas;
  - iii) Changing transportation modes, patterns, and volumes; and
  - iv) Provincial and adjacent municipal transportation networks and plans.
- f) New development shall make use of and extend the existing transportation network/ infrastructure, where feasible.
- g) Roads, pathways, and trails should connect adjacent neighbourhoods within developed areas.
- h) Consider connections to existing, planned and future local and regional transit when developing or amending area structure plans and conceptual schemes.

- i) Residential redesignation and subdivision applications should provide for development that:
  - i) Provides direct access to a road, while avoiding the use of panhandles;
  - ii) Minimizes driveway length to highways/ roads;
  - iii) Removes and replaces panhandles with an internal road network when additional residential development is proposed; and
  - iv) Limits the number and type of access onto roads in accordance with *County Policy*.
- j) Road service and maintenance levels will be based on road classification and traffic volume, in accordance with *County Policy*.
- k) Requests for a higher level of maintenance and service beyond the core level shall be based on a user pay principal.
- l) New development shall accommodate the transportation of agriculture equipment or products.

### 3.2.2 Pedestrian and Cycling Networks

- a) Expand and improve cycling and pedestrian networks, including pathways, trails, sidewalks bicycle lanes located within a road right-of-way in developed and developing areas.
- b) Support the long-term development of the conceptual regional pathway and trail plan as identified in applicable recreation, parks, and transportation plans.

### 3.2.3 Airports

- a) Industrial, commercial, or large-scale residential development associated with the operation of an airport shall be comprehensively planned as part of an area structure plan.
- b) The following land uses may develop adjacent to an airport without an area structure plan if the use does not adversely affect the airport operation:
  - i) General agricultural operations;
  - ii) Recreational land uses, or
  - iii) Farmsteads and *first parcels out*.

### 3.2.4 Railways

- a) Area structure plans and conceptual schemes in close proximity to active rail lines should provide the minimum building setback and buffering requirements requested by the rail line owners.
- b) Abandoned railway corridors should be reclaimed and considered for incorporation into the parks and open space system following an environmental impact assessment.

## 3.3 Natural Resource Development

The extraction and use of natural resources in Rocky View County is an important contributor to the local economy. However, resource extraction can also significantly impact adjacent land uses and the natural environment, requiring careful consideration for how extraction is planned and implemented. Aggregate (sand and gravel) extraction, oil and gas extraction, and renewable energy generation can cause community concern and when developed, should minimize impacts on surrounding land uses.

### Objectives

The policies within the Natural Resources Development Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Future natural resource extraction development balances the needs of residents, industry, and the County.
- Negative impacts on the environment from resource extraction are mitigated.

### 3.3.1 Aggregate Extraction

- a) Minimize the adverse impact of aggregate resource extraction on existing residents, adjacent land uses, and the environment.



Photo: Epgui

- b) Encourage collaboration between the County, the aggregate extraction industry, and impacted residents and landowners to develop mutually agreeable solutions that mitigate impacts of extraction activities.
- c) Discourage residential development that may be impacted by future aggregate extraction and related industrial uses.
- d) Direct all aggregate related traffic to identified major haul routes that are monitored and appropriately maintained.
- e) Where aggregate activities are located in proximity to an adjacent municipality, the County should co-operate with that jurisdiction to ensure co-ordination of major haul routes and mitigation of impacts on adjacent land uses.
- f) Applications for aggregate extraction shall prepare a master site development plan.
- g) Consider co-locating other complimentary industrial uses adjacent to aggregate extraction sites.
- h) Consider successional transitions of aggregate extraction sites to other industrial and complementary uses (e.g. waste transfer or processing facilities).

### 3.3.2 Oil and Gas

- a) When considering applications for development, provincial setback regulations and guidelines shall be applied respecting petroleum wells, sour gas facilities, pipelines, and other oil and gas facilities.
- b) Encourage the Province and industry to efficiently and effectively remediate abandoned well sites and pipelines.

### 3.3.3 Renewable Energy

- a) Support the development of *renewable energy* production projects as a means to diversify the County's economy.

## 3.4 Agriculture

Agriculture has been an important component of the County's economy since the early 1900's. Most hamlets in Rocky View County were established as places to trade livestock and grain and provide services to the surrounding area. While the MDP recognizes agriculture as vital to the County's economy and cultural identity, diversification and innovation within the sector will become increasingly important to build a thriving economy and additional employment opportunities.

### Objectives

The policies within the Agriculture Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- The agriculture sector remains an important component of the county's economy.
- Adverse impacts on agriculture from non-agricultural land uses are minimized.
- New forms of agriculture innovation and diversification are encouraged through land use policy.

### 3.4.1 Agriculture Policies

- a) Support land use applications for new, innovative agricultural ventures that may require unique planning solutions when they support the vision and guiding principles of the Plan.
- b) Encourage small scale, *value-added agriculture* and *agriculture services* to locate in proximity to complementary agricultural producers.
- c) Encourage large-scale value-added agricultural industries and related manufacturing to develop in identified Employment Areas.
- d) Support the viability and flexibility of the agriculture sector by allowing a range of parcel sizes, where appropriate.
- e) Discourage intrusive and/or incompatible land uses in *agricultural areas*.

- f) Applicants proposing new residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial land uses shall design and implement measures to minimize their adverse impacts on existing agriculture operations, based on the County's Agriculture Boundary Design Guidelines.

### 3.4.2 Redesignation and Subdivision for Agricultural Purposes

- a) Redesignation and subdivision of agricultural land should be supported if the proposal:
- i) Has direct access to a developed public roadway;
  - ii) Minimizes adverse impacts on agricultural operations by meeting agriculture location and Agriculture Boundary Design Guidelines;
  - iii) Maintains the balance of the land as an agricultural use;
  - iv) Provides a planning rationale justifying why the existing parcel size cannot accommodate the proposed new development;
  - v) Demonstrates that the land can support the proposed development;
  - vi) Demonstrates its benefit to the County and agricultural industry;
  - vii) Assesses the impact of the proposed development on, and potential upgrades to, County infrastructure; and
  - viii) Assesses the impact of the proposed development on the environment including air quality, surface water, and groundwater.
- b) Discretionary agriculture land uses may be supported where there are existing concentrations of agricultural resources, markets, animal types, agriculture related industries, or other discretionary land uses as identified in the Land Use Bylaw.

### 3.4.3 Confined Feeding Operations

- a) Land uses incompatible with the operation of a *confined feeding operation* shall not be supported when proposed within the *minimum distance of separation* of the *confined feeding operation*.
- b) A *confined feeding operation*, including its *minimum distance of separation*, should not be located within the boundary or *notification zone* of any intermunicipal development plan, statutory planning area, hamlet, residential area, institutional use, or federal, provincial, or municipal park or recreation area.



## 3.5 Environment

County residents have a strong connection to the natural environment and value the County's waterways, natural areas, and parks. However, as residential, commercial, and industrial development continues, the impact on the environment increases.

The MDP's Growth Concept (*Figure 2*) identifies areas with valuable environmental features (e.g. wildlife corridors, environmentally sensitive areas) that should be studied further when development is proposed in these locations, to minimize the adverse impacts of development on the environment. The MDP's policies in this section are guided by the following provincial direction:

- **Municipal Government Act:** Provides the legislative framework for statutory plans that maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment.
- **Land Use Framework Strategy:** Encourages conservation, land stewardship, healthy ecosystems, and the efficient use of land.
- **Water for Life Strategy:** Outlines the Government of Alberta's commitments to manage and safeguard Alberta's water resources, and includes goals of ensuring a safe, secure, drinking water supply; healthy aquatic ecosystems; and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

### Objectives

The policies within the Environment Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Private development and County operations maintain and improve the quality of the natural environment.
- Drinking water sources are protected;
- Stormwater and wastewater are managed to protect surface water, riparian areas, and wetlands.
- Land use planning protects agricultural operations, environmentally sensitive areas, and wildlife corridors.

- Measures to improve water use, reduce land consumption, and increase building energy efficiency are implemented.

### 3.5.1 Growth Management

- a) Where development is proposed near potential *Ecological Features* identified in the Growth Concept (*Figure 2*), development applications may require the preparation and implementation of a bio-physical impact assessment to identify potential negative impacts and mitigation measures.
- b) Support and participate in environmental management initiatives undertaken by:
  - i) Watershed councils and water stewardship groups; and
  - ii) Agricultural and regional invasive weed management groups.

### 3.5.2 Water

- a) Protect ground water and ensure use does not exceed *carrying capacity* by:
  - i) Supporting long term ground water research and monitoring programs;
  - ii) Mitigating the potential adverse impacts of development on groundwater recharge areas;
  - iii) Adhering to provincial ground water testing requirements, as part of the development approval process; and
  - iv) Encouraging and facilitating the capping of abandoned water wells to protect against ground water leakage and cross contamination.
- b) Use relevant watershed management plans as guiding documents and planning tools.

### 3.5.3 Stormwater and Wastewater

- a) Development should incorporate *low-impact development* management practices that effectively treats stormwater to protect watersheds and surface/ground water quality.
- b) Wastewater treatment systems should not exceed the land's *carrying capacity*.
- c) Stormwater treatment and storage facilities should:
  - i) Avoid the use of natural wetlands; and
  - ii) Locate away from existing floodways and riparian areas.
- d) Support the use of constructed stormwater wetlands for treatment and storage of stormwater.

### 3.5.4 Land and Environmental Stewardship

- a) Encourage development to retain and reintroduce natural habitat and native species.
- b) Development shall be planned, designed, and constructed to protect alluvial aquifers.
- c) The use of Transfer Development Credits, if applicable, may be applied as a way to direct development to preferred growth areas in order to sustain environmentally sensitive areas and achieve *compact residential development*.
- d) Environmental site assessments shall be required when a previous use may have contaminated the proposed development area.
- e) Utility systems shall be designed and constructed to minimize adverse impacts to environmentally sensitive areas, as identified by a Biophysical Impact Assessment.

### 3.5.5 Development in Hazard Areas

- a) Development in hazard areas (e.g. flood fringes, escarpments) is strongly discouraged and should only be allowed if an appropriate technical

evaluation demonstrates suitability, to the satisfaction of the County and in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw.

- b) Development within the flood fringe is discouraged and, where allowed, shall comply with the Land Use Bylaw.
- c) Incorporate updated Provincial hazard area mapping into County planning processes as it becomes available.

### 3.5.6 Construction Practices

- a) Development should build with the contours of the land and avoid stripping and grading, where possible.
- b) Construction best practices to reduce wind and water erosion of soils and to suppress dust dispersion shall be required.

### 3.5.7 Conservation

- a) Encourage green building techniques and energy efficiency in building design.
- b) Maintain dark skies by:
  - i) Ensuring dark sky principles are incorporated when developing or amending area structure plans;
  - ii) Requiring public and business lighting in outdoor areas to be downward directed and conform to the Land Use Bylaw; and
  - iii) Encouraging residents to use downward directed lighting.
- c) Provide convenient, cost effective, and environmentally responsible ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle household waste.

## 3.6 Utility Services

Utility services include a range of County infrastructure that provides residents and businesses with key services such as water, sewer, communications, and power. Traditionally, the County has relied on stand-alone utility systems, such as groundwater wells and septic fields. As development intensifies, however, piped methods of servicing will become necessary in certain areas. The need to design stormwater management systems to consider catchment areas beyond a site-specific solution has become increasingly important and should be facilitated by master planning.

Well-designed and effective utility services are key components of well-planned developments. Utility systems must be designed and constructed in a manner that is safe and reliable, while not adversely impact neighbouring lands.

### Objectives

The policies within the Utility Services Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Existing communities and growth areas are connected to effective and fiscally sustainable utility systems.
- Private and public utility systems are developed and operated in a safe and reliable manner.
- Wastewater disposal practices protect watersheds, surface water, and groundwater quality.
- Stormwater management systems do not adversely impact the environment or other adjacent land uses.

### 3.6.1 Utility Systems

- a) New development utility systems shall adhere to provincial regulations, and the relevant *County Servicing Standards* and servicing master plans.
- b) Allow a variety of water, wastewater, and stormwater treatment systems, in accordance with provincial/federal regulations and the *County Servicing Standards*.
- c) Partner and co-operate with other jurisdictions, regional service commissions, and other levels of government to ensure efficient and integrated utility systems are established and maintained.
- d) Partner with other municipalities and developers to co-ordinate enhancements and expansion of existing utility services and infrastructure.
- e) Major utility corridors for pipelines and power lines should avoid residential areas wherever possible and minimize adverse impacts on agriculture operations and the environmentally sensitive areas.

### 3.6.2 Water Supply

- a) Water well performance and deliverability testing shall be required of all development relying on ground water, in accordance with the *County Servicing Standards*.
- b) A new regional or decentralized water system, required as part of a development approval, shall be transferred to County ownership, in accordance with the *County Servicing Standards*.
- c) To achieve consistency in water supply systems, the County shall consider negotiating public ownership of existing private water licenses and infrastructure in cases where it is fiscally prudent to do so, the existing system meets regulatory standards, and the existing system is in good operating order.

### 3.6.3 Wastewater Management

- a) New development shall provide wastewater treatment in accordance with the *County Servicing Standards*.
- b) Wastewater treatment systems shall not exceed the land's *carrying capacity*. When proposing such systems, consideration shall be given to the following requirements:
  - i) Development proponents shall assess the land's *carrying capacity* to determine system requirements in accordance with the *County Servicing Standards*. The type of private on-site wastewater treatment system will be dependent on lot density, lot size, and soil capability; and
  - ii) Construction and connection to a regional or decentralized wastewater treatment system may be required when the density of development exceeds thresholds identified in the *County Servicing Standards*.
- c) The ownership, operation, and maintenance of private on-site wastewater treatment systems, or wastewater holding tanks shall be the responsibility of the landowner.
- d) Ownership of a new regional or decentralized wastewater infrastructure system, required as part of a development approval, shall be transferred to the County in accordance with the *County Servicing Standards*.

### 3.6.4 Stormwater Management

- a) To achieve consistency in wastewater management systems, the County may negotiate public ownership of existing private approvals and infrastructure in cases where it is fiscally prudent to do so, the existing system meets regulatory standards, and the existing system is in good operating order.
- b) Stormwater shall be managed in accordance with provincial regulations. Where required and in accordance with provincial approvals, on-site

stormwater may be effectively released into a downstream receiving water body in accordance with the following requirements:

- i) Stormwater shall be conveyed downstream in a manner that protects downstream habitat and properties; and
  - ii) Where required, proponents of new development shall identify and secure the downstream stormwater conveyance system.
- c) Stripping, grading, or the placement of fill shall not alter the existing pattern of stormwater storage and/or movement across private land unless the activity complies with the Land Use Bylaw and a development permit has been issued for such activity.
  - d) Stormwater ponds required for stormwater storage and treatment shall be provided as per the *County Servicing Standards*.

## 3.7 Solid Waste

The dispersed population of the County, coupled with the unique types of solid waste generated by the agricultural industry, has led to innovative approaches to garbage disposal and recycling in Rocky View. The County's Waste Management Strategy goal is to provide every household with convenient access to easy, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective ways of reducing, reusing, recycling, and disposing of their solid waste. The County is committed to reducing the amount of waste that is disposed in landfills by promoting more sustainable practices.

### Objectives

The policies within the Solid Waste Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Convenient, cost effective, and environmentally responsible ways to reduce and recycle household waste are available within the county.
- Opportunities to recycle results in more material diverted from landfill.

### 3.7.1 Solid Waste Policies

- a) Co-ordinate with neighbouring municipalities in providing solid waste disposal services and recycling opportunities to County residents.
- b) Support and promote markets and industries that consume recyclables and/or actively minimize waste.
- c) Ensure the County's waste collection stations provide a wide variety of waste disposal and recycling options.
- d) Invest in recycling and composting facilities that can process household recyclable products (e.g. biodegradable plastic).
- e) Provide waste collection stations that are accessible, user-friendly, efficient, and cost effective.
- f) Provide for the year-round drop off and disposal of household hazardous wastes.
- g) Provide agriculture operators with waste and recycling services and options specific to the agriculture industry.
- h) Encourage and promote construction practices that are consistent with sound waste management practices.



Photo: Colby Stopa

## 3.8 Public Space

Parks, pathway and trail networks, and recreation facilities enrich Rocky View County by contributing to community building, preserving and protecting natural landscapes, and providing residents with recreation opportunities that contribute to health and wellbeing. The MDP supports the development and protection of these amenities by providing guidance on development along park boundaries, the expansion of the parks and open space system, pathway and trail linkages, and community amenity design and construction.

### Objectives

The policies within the Public Space Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Parks and open spaces, and pathways and trails are well designed, connect communities, and accommodate residents' recreational and cultural needs.
- Land for parks and open spaces, pathways and trails, schools, recreational amenities, and environmental reserves are acquired through purchase, land dedication, and donations.
- A variety of partnerships extend the range of recreation facilities available to County residents.
- Rocky View partners and collaborates with neighbouring municipalities and other organizations in the development, use, and maintenance of recreation facilities, parks, pathways, and trails.
- Transition areas between parks and adjacent uses are well designed and do not detract from park functions.
- Where appropriate, limited development of recreational amenities may occur in hazardous areas, such as ravines and floodways.
- The natural environment is protected through the dedication of environmental reserves.

### 3.8.1 Park Development, Connectivity, and Maintenance

- a) Strategies and priorities to finance parks and open spaces, and pathways and trails through both County and non-County funding measures should be guided by applicable *County Policy* and plans.
- b) Partner and collaborate with adjacent municipalities, the Province, school divisions, conservation agencies, community groups, developers, and other organizations to develop and maintain the parks and open space system, pathways and trails network, and associated amenities.
- c) Encourage multi-functional and joint use parks and recreation facilities projects wherever possible.
- d) Where parks are proposed as part of a development, the developer shall assume all costs associated with developing the park.
- e) At the discretion of the County, ongoing park maintenance shall be provided by the County or local homeowners associations.
- f) A life-cycle fund should be used to assist with capital replacement and repair costs in parks.
- g) Acquire land for parks, open space, pathways, trails, and recreational and cultural amenities through such means as:
  - i) Dedication of reserve;
  - ii) Land purchase;
  - iii) Easements and rights-of-way; and
  - iv) Donations, endowment funds, and land swaps.

### 3.8.2 Park and Open Space Design and Standards

- a) The County should provide and apply design principles and standards for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of parks, open space, pathways, trails, and associated amenities through applicable *County Policy* and plans.
- b) Connect wildlife corridors, waterbodies, environmentally significant areas through protected parks and open spaces.
- c) Improve connectivity to parks and open spaces through expansion of pathway and trail networks.
- d) Connect residential communities, institutional, commercial, and industrial areas by pathways and trails where feasible.
- e) The function and aesthetic value of parks and open spaces, pathways, and trails should be enhanced and not negatively impacted by adjacent development.
- f) Ensure the location, design, and scale of residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial development is sensitively integrated with adjacent parks and open space, trails, and pathways in a comprehensive and supporting manner.
- g) Development proposals adjacent to provincial parks, County parks and open space, pathways, and trails should include:
  - i) Shared and mutually supportive facilities and/or amenities, where appropriate;
  - ii) User and operational access;
  - iii) Stormwater management;
  - iv) Preserving viewsapes into and within the park, where appropriate;
  - v) Vegetation and invasive species management; and
  - vi) Wildlife management.

### 3.8.3 Municipal Reserves

- a) The County shall follow the Municipal Government Act's policies regulating the dedication of municipal reserves.
- b) The County may defer all or a portion of the required reserves by registering a deferred reserve caveat when the reserve could be provided through future subdivision.
- c) The acquisition, deferral, and disposition of reserve land, and use of cash-in-lieu shall adhere to *County Policy*, agreements with local school boards, and the requirements of the Municipal Government Act.
- d) Reserves should be provided to the maximum amount allowed by the Municipal Government Act.
- e) The County may accept a voluntary dedication of reserve land beyond the maximum amount allowed by the Municipal Government Act. Over-dedication of reserve land may be used to support the development of a compact residential community or another need identified by the County.
- f) When assessing the proposed dedication of reserve land, the dedication should meet the present or future needs of the County by considering the recommendations of the MDP, applicable recreation and park master plans, area structure plans, conceptual schemes, and local school boards.
- g) The size, type, location, and shape of reserve land shall be suitable for public use and accessible to the public, and align with County needs or policies, where appropriate.
- h) When determining the amount, type, location, and shape of the reserve land within an intermunicipal development plan area, the adjacent municipality shall be consulted prior to determining the reserve requirement.

- i) The County shall not dispose of reserve land in an intermunicipal development plan area without prior consultation with the appropriate municipality.

### 3.8.4 Environmental and Conservation Reserves and Easements

- a) Environmental reserves or environmental reserve easements shall be taken at the time of subdivision, in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, on lands designated for:
  - i) Residential, business, or institutional uses;
  - ii) On agricultural parcels less than 12 hectares (29.65 acres); or
  - iii) As determined by the County.
- b) Where the County determines public use is not desirable or where management of public land by the County is not required, land qualifying as environmental reserve may be designated as an environmental reserve easement in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.
- c) A voluntary conservation easement, in accordance with the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, may be used to preserve areas that do not qualify as environmental reserve or environmental reserve easements under the Municipal Government Act. The conservation easement may be executed as a legal agreement between the private landowner and the County or a conservation organization.
- d) The County shall follow the Municipal Government Act's policies regulating the dedication of conservation reserves.

### 3.8.5 Recreation

- a) Support recreation facilities and facility development as guided by applicable recreation master plans.
- b) Prioritize recreational needs based on the findings of the County-wide Recreational Needs Assessment.
- c) Prioritize investment in recreational infrastructure based on population density and identified resident needs.
- d) Encourage local community groups to assist with the management of local park and recreation facilities and enter into maintenance and operation agreements with community groups when this occurs.
- e) Collaborate with neighbouring municipalities for regional recreation decision-making.



## 3.9 Services and Partnerships

The County's ability to provide services for its residents is limited by fiscal constraints, a dispersed population, and a large service area. In response to this challenge, the County has developed strong partnerships with senior levels of government, adjacent municipalities, local communities, water/utility commissions, and grass roots organizations. The benefits of the County building partnerships are numerous, including:

- Enhancing and leveraging service dollars.
- Broadening the range of services available to residents.
- Providing new service ideas and best practices.
- Contributing to community building and resilient communities.
- Enabling partnering municipalities to increase their overall level of service.

Strengthening and developing new partnerships will help to increase the capacity of the County to provide important services, while building more resilient communities and greater access to recreation and cultural amenities.

## Objectives

The policies within the Services and Partnerships Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Services provided are of high quality.
- Through partnerships, residents are able to access a broad range of recreation and community programs and services.
- Strong partnerships are maintained with adjacent municipalities, other levels of government, school boards, communities, and stakeholders.
- Communities are strengthened and enhanced by supporting volunteerism, collaboration, social networks, and community participation.
- Efficient fire and protective services support safe communities.
- Fire and protective services are optimized by collaborating and partnering with neighbouring municipalities and other organizations.



### 3.9.1 County Services and Partnerships

- a) The County should develop and identify core services.
- b) Service levels beyond the established core level should be financed in accordance with a user pay model.
- c) Maintain and grow existing partnerships to extend County financial resources, provide a greater variety of services, and extend service coverage.
- d) Actively seek out new partnerships to address ongoing and emerging needs.
- e) Support and encourage volunteerism, social networks, and community-based initiatives in order to build connections between individuals and maintain and manage community amenities, programs, and services.
- f) Encourage private sector donations, private-public sector partnerships, developer contributions, endowment funds, and other sponsorships to develop and sustain community facilities, services, and amenities.
- g) Continue the County's Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program to provide funding to non-profit organization that enhance the social well-being of individuals and families.

### 3.9.2 Emergency Services

- a) Co-operate and partner with neighbouring municipalities to develop integrated plans and agreements regarding fire prevention measures and firefighting services.
- b) Maintain strong collaborative relationships with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Alberta Sheriffs, and the Calgary and Cochrane Humane Societies.
- c) Explore new partnerships to address on-going and emerging protective service issues.
- d) Land use planning, subdivision design, and lot development shall address fire prevention and fire control factors.
- e) Ensure subdivision and development plans provide safe and efficient access for emergency service vehicles.
- f) Prepare and update, as required, a Master Fire Plan.
- g) Encourage private water suppliers to construct distribution systems designed for the suppression of fire.
- h) Develop and maintain measures to prevent and control wildland fires, including public education, design of efficient emergency access, and measures to effectively slow fire growth.

## 3.10 Arts and Culture

Quality of life is enhanced when Rocky Viewers are able to access a variety of social and cultural opportunities. Strong social connections and networks can support personal health and wellbeing and the County is committed to facilitating and promoting social infrastructure for community cohesion and inclusion. Social infrastructure includes the activities, organizations, facilities, services, and amenities that develop and maintain a sense of community identity and community belonging and support quality of life.

For Rocky View County to build healthy, sustainable communities that continue to attract people who expect a high quality of life, the responsibility for building and maintaining a strong social infrastructure needs to be shared across organizations and stakeholders. This requires partnerships, co-operation, and support from all levels of government, neighbouring municipalities, community groups, non-governmental organizations, and individual residents.

### Objectives

The policies within the Arts and Culture Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Social and cultural services are available for residents of all ages, regardless of their socio-economic or cultural backgrounds.
- Social connections are cultivated between residents through the County's support of volunteers, social networks, and local leadership.
- Social and cultural services are developed, enhanced, and managed through a wide variety of partnerships.

### 3.10.1 Arts and Culture Policies

- a) Support projects and programs that develop a sense of community, empower residents, and encourage social inclusion.
- b) Recognize and support the important role community leaders play in providing services to their community.
- c) Promote accessible community and public building design that assists residents to be safe, healthy, and form positive relationships.
- d) Recognize the value of culture as an economic contributor to the county and the role it plays in enhancing residents' quality of life, health, and sense of well-being.
- e) Support and promote cultural programs, activities, and facilities that generate a sense of community pride and local identity.
- f) Recognize and enhance the cultural heritage of the county by:
  - i) Celebrating the county's rural, Indigenous, and Western heritage;
  - ii) Identifying and conserving significant historic resources; and
  - iii) Promoting and fostering the County's diverse cultures by marketing local assets to the general population.
- g) Continue to provide residents with library services through participation in the regional library system, development of satellite libraries and partnerships with neighbouring municipalities through cost sharing agreements.

# SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The MDP will be monitored and regularly reviewed based on a series of performance measures to ensure that development is being effectively guided. Implementation and monitoring of the MDP will occur through a number of mechanisms and processes, including:

- Ongoing administration of the development review process and periodically reviewing and amending area structure plans and conceptual schemes;
- Carrying out next steps required to implement the vision, guiding principles, and objectives of the MDP; and
- Collaborating with neighbouring municipalities on planning and development matters, as well as activities related to major processes and plans.

The MDP may be amended or updated to reflect changing circumstances and to ensure it remains an effective tool for achieving the goals and objectives of Council and aspirations of the County. The following section outlines how the MDP's policies will be effectively implemented.

## 4.1 Intergovernmental Relationships

Rocky View County shares boundaries with several municipalities, First Nations, and other partner groups. The County values its neighbours and is committed to building positive relations that create opportunities for collaboration, ensure effective communication, result in mutually beneficial solutions to growth and development, and provide opportunities for partnering in the delivery of services.

### Objectives

The policies within the Intergovernmental Relationships Policy Area are to ensure the following objectives:

- Relationships with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations are positive and open.
- Administration and Council actively work to build and strengthen relationships with the Provincial government and agencies.
- The County and adjacent municipal councils and administrations communicate effectively.
- The range of facilities and services available to residents through partnerships with adjacent neighbours and other levels of government is expanded.

#### 4.1.1 Administrative Coordination

- a) County administration shall communicate and co-ordinate on a regular basis with adjacent administrations to recognize and address matters of mutual interest.
- b) In order to foster and strengthen relationships with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations, Council will participate in Intermunicipal Committee meetings and Council-to-Council meetings when required.

### 4.1.2 Intermunicipal Development Plans

- a) Where appropriate, intermunicipal development plans shall be prepared and adopted in collaboration with an adjacent municipality to enhance co-operative working relationships and to address issues of mutual interest.
- b) Intermunicipal development plans shall be prepared in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.
- c) An adopted intermunicipal development plan shall provide guidance for referral requirements and communication, with regard to matters within the plan area.
- d) The County will continue to communicate and consult with First Nations neighbours on mutual planning matters.
- e) New or amended Intermunicipal development plans should reflect the goals and policies of the MDP.

### 4.1.3 Annexation

- a) The County shall consider the negotiation of annexation areas with adjacent municipalities in accordance with the Municipal Government Act or adopted intermunicipal development plan.
- b) Annexation negotiations should take into consideration detailed growth studies that include such matters as: analysis of population trends and projections, land absorption rates, community development, infrastructure analysis, and financial considerations.
- c) The County shall use the growth policies of the MDP, adopted intermunicipal development plans, other *statutory plans*, and growth strategies as the basis for determining county needs and interests with regard to annexation negotiations.

## 4.2 Implementing the MDP

Several actions are necessary to effectively implement the MDP, guarantee its ongoing success, and fulfill the Plan's vision and guiding principles. The following policies and *Table 02* outlines these actions.

- a) County administration will report to Council on implementation of the MDP and the performance indicators on an annual basis.
- b) Administration will develop performance measures as needed to monitor the implementation of the MDP.
- c) Changes and additions to the implementation program and performance measures shall occur as required and directed by Council and are not to be considered as amendments to the MDP.
- d) A comprehensive review of the MDP shall be undertaken every five years in order to consider administrative updates, emerging trends, implementation progress, and policy gaps.
- e) At the discretion of Council, the County shall permit developer-funded area structure plans and conceptual schemes that incorporate public and stakeholder engagement and require Administration and Council approval.
- f) The County will monitor and report to Council annually on the rate of development within area structure plans and conceptual plans, including the number of new dwellings, and dwelling types.
- g) When creating or amending area structure plans and area redevelopment plans, the County shall include a condition requiring municipal review of the plans after 10 years, and a review after 5 years if sufficient development has not been undertaken after 5 years of the plan's approval.

Table 02: Implementation Actions

POLICY AREA	ACTION
<b>2.3 Residential Development</b>	Update existing area structure plans and conceptual schemes to align with the MDP. Develop or expand area structure plans or conceptual schemes for Primary Residential Areas not currently covered by these plans.
<b>2.4 Commercial and Industrial Development</b>	Complete or amend area structure plans for Employment Areas not covered by existing plans.
<b>2.5 Hamlet Development</b>	Complete area structure plans, area redevelopment plans, or conceptual schemes (as appropriate) for Hamlet Growth Areas. Develop hamlet main street commercial guidelines
<b>3.1 Financial Sustainability</b>	Develop an economic development program to link investors and developers to investment opportunities
<b>3.2 Transportation</b>	Review and update the County's Transportation Model Develop County-wide regional pathway and trail plan
<b>3.5 Solid Waste</b>	Invest in recycling and composting facilities
<b>3.6 Public Space</b>	Identify and acquire additional land for parks, open space and wildlife corridors, pathways, trails, and recreational and cultural amenities
<b>3.7 Services and Partnerships</b>	Identify County core services Prepare a Master Fire Plan



### 4.3 Reviewing and Monitoring the MDP

Implementing the MDP will require commitment to developing plans, strategies, and regulations that are consistently monitored to ensure they are effective as well as fiscally responsible. Council and County Administration will play a key role in implementing the Plan by setting priorities, providing work direction, and approving actions. The following performance measures will be used to track the effectiveness of the MDP annually.

**Table 03:** Performance Measures

GUIDING PRINCIPLE	TOPIC AREA	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TARGET
<b>Responsible Growth</b>	Population Growth	Population	90% of new residential units are located in Growth Concept growth areas
		People per hectare in new developments	As identified in ASPs and Conceptual Schemes
	Land Use	Remaining residential development capacity (number of units) as a percent of total development potential in existing ASPs and Conceptual Schemes	Continued decrease
		Ha of available/vacant commercial/industrial land (overall, and by ASPs and Conceptual Schemes)	Stable 10 year supply based on projected demand
<b>The Environment</b>	Conservation	Residential diversity index	As identified in ASPs and Conceptual Schemes
		Ha of natural areas and environmental reserves (including conservation easements)	Increase
	Ha of protected wetlands	Increase	



GUIDING PRINCIPLE	TOPIC AREA	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TARGET
<b>The Environment</b>	Water Quality	Percent of impervious surfaces within development areas	20% or Less
	Water Quality	Percent of development and subdivision permits that include low-impact development features	100%
<b>Agriculture</b>	Agriculture Lands	Ha of agriculture lands converted to non-agriculture development	Decrease
<b>Partnerships</b>	Intergovernmental	Number of intermunicipal agreements	Increase
		Number of agreements with the Province.	Increase
	Agriculture	Number of formal partners Agriculture Services maintains.	Increase
	Recreation	Number of facility operations cost sharing agreements	Increase
Number of operational and capital grants to non-profits		Increase	
<b>Economic Diversification</b>	Employment	Population/jobs ratio	1:1
	Financial Sustainability	Tax assessment base diversification	65% residential and 35% business County-wide
<b>Community Development</b>	Recreation Amenities	Ha of neighbourhood, community and regional parks	Increase
		Annual number of unique users for directly provided registered programs as a percent of population	Increase
		Km of trails and pathways	Increase

# APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

## Glossary

**Agricultural Area:** Areas of Rocky View County where redesignation, subdivision, and lot development are not guided by an area structure plan, conceptual scheme, or master site development plan.

**Agriculture Services:** Assist agricultural operators in the production of primary and value-added agriculture products and services.

**Area Structure Plan:** An area structure plan (ASP) is a statutory document approved by Council and adopted by Bylaw. The purpose of an ASP is to outline the vision for a development area, and provides a framework that describes:

- The proposed land uses
- Density of population sequence of development
- General location of major roadways
- Public utilities in the area
- Any additional requirements that Council may require

**Assessment Split Ratio:** The ratio of Residential Assessment to Non-Residential Assessment in the County. This ratio is expressed in percentage of the overall taxable Assessment Base.

**Business Areas:** Regional business centres, highway business areas, hamlet business areas, or other business areas identified in an area structure plan or conceptual scheme.

**Carrying Capacity:** The ability of a watershed, air shed, and/or landscape to sustain activities and development before it shows unacceptable signs of stress or degradation.

**Compact Residential Development:** Development that sensitively integrates housing with the natural features and topography of a site by grouping homes on smaller lots, while permanently preserving a significant amount of buildable land for conservation, recreation, or agricultural uses.

**Conceptual Schemes:** Plans that are subordinate to an area structure plan that may be adopted either by bylaw or by a resolution of Council. A conceptual scheme is prepared for a smaller area within an area structure plan boundary and must conform to the policies of the area structure plan. Conceptual schemes provide detailed land use direction, subdivision design, and development guidance to Council, Administration, and the public.

If a conceptual scheme area is of sufficient size that further detail is required for specific areas and phases, the conceptual scheme may identify smaller sub-areas and provide detailed guidance at that level. These smaller sub-areas are referred to as 'development cells'.

**Confined Feeding Operation:** Fenced or enclosed land or buildings where livestock are confined for the purpose of growing, sustaining, finishing, or breeding by means other than grazing and any other building or structure directly related to that purpose but does not include residences, livestock seasonal feeding and bedding sites, equestrian stables, auction markets, race tracks, or exhibition grounds.

**Conservation Design:** A method of site planning that begins with the identification of a land area's features and values that are to be retained and protected. These features may include natural habitat, wildlife corridors, open land, vistas, farm/ranch land, and historical areas. Once these areas are identified for protection, sustainable site planning may occur on the remaining lands.

**County Policy:** Policy that is adopted by resolution of Council.

**County Servicing Standards:** The County's technical requirements that govern infrastructure design, construction, testing, inspection, maintenance, and transfer of public works.

**Country Residential Development:** Residential communities in the County that typically include the following characteristics: primarily dispersed low-density residential development, parcel sizes of 1 acre

or larger, rural character, designed with the landscape, and contain passive and active recreational, and cultural opportunities.

**Developable Land:** All land on which building could occur, excluding land identified as conservation or environmental reserve or reserve easement.

**Ecological Features:** Potentially important ecological features including wetlands, riparian areas, valuable agricultural soils, and wildlife corridors.

**Employment Areas:** These areas primarily contain commercial and industrial land uses and serve as major areas of employment in the County.

**Exurban Development:** Low density, dispersed development that has an economic and commuting connection to a larger metropolitan area.

**First Parcel Out:** The subdivision of a single residential or agricultural parcel created from a previously un-subdivided quarter section.

**Fragmented Residential Area:** Separated and dispersed pockets of country residential lots.

**Fragmented Quarter Section:** A quarter section of land within an agriculture area divided into six or more residential lots, and/or small agricultural parcels, each of which is less than 10 hectares (24.7 acres) in size.

**Hard Infrastructure:** Land and infrastructure related to roads, pathways and trails, water and wastewater, stormwater, and parking and loading facilities.

**Impervious Surface:** Land surfaces that repel rainwater and do not permit it to infiltrate, or soak into the ground. Impervious surfaces can include paved driveways and parking lots, rooftops, and sidewalks.

**Low-Impact Development:** Development that uses a variety of techniques to treat and manage stormwater runoff close to the areas where rain falls. Low-Impact Development focuses on site design and stormwater

control options such as green roofs, stormwater capture and re-use, and landscaping that increases the absorption and filtering of rainwater.

**Minimum Distance of Separation:** The provincially regulated setback established between a confined feeding operation and the neighbouring residence that is in existence at the time the application is submitted, and is intended to minimize the impacts of odour. Minimum distance of separation is measured from the outside walls of neighbouring residences to the point closest to the confined feeding operation's manure storage facilities or manure collection areas.

**Natural Landscapes:** Uninterrupted and undisturbed landscapes that have not been impacted by human development.

**Non-Statutory Plans:** The plans, strategies, and documents that guide and influence Rocky View County's planning and development, and are not regulated by the Municipal Government Act.

**Notification Zone:** An area within 1.6 kilometres of an adjacent jurisdictional boundary. The notification zone exists for the purpose of informing an adjacent municipality of a development application within the County.

**Open Land:** Developable land, including: parks and open space; publicly or privately owned land permanently used for conservation, recreation, agriculture, and/or institution uses; public utility lots; municipal reserve land dedication; riparian areas, constructed wetlands, stormwater treatment areas, wastewater treatment areas; flood fringe areas; and other environmentally important land not qualifying as environmental reserve.

**Renewable Energy:** Energy from a source that is not depleted when used, such as geothermal, solar, water, or wind energy.

**Soft Infrastructure:** Includes, but is not limited to, infrastructure relating to recreation, libraries, protective services, fire protection services, and schools.

**Statutory Plan:** An intermunicipal development plan, a municipal development plan, an area structure plan and an area redevelopment plan adopted by a municipality under Division 4 of the Municipal Government Act.

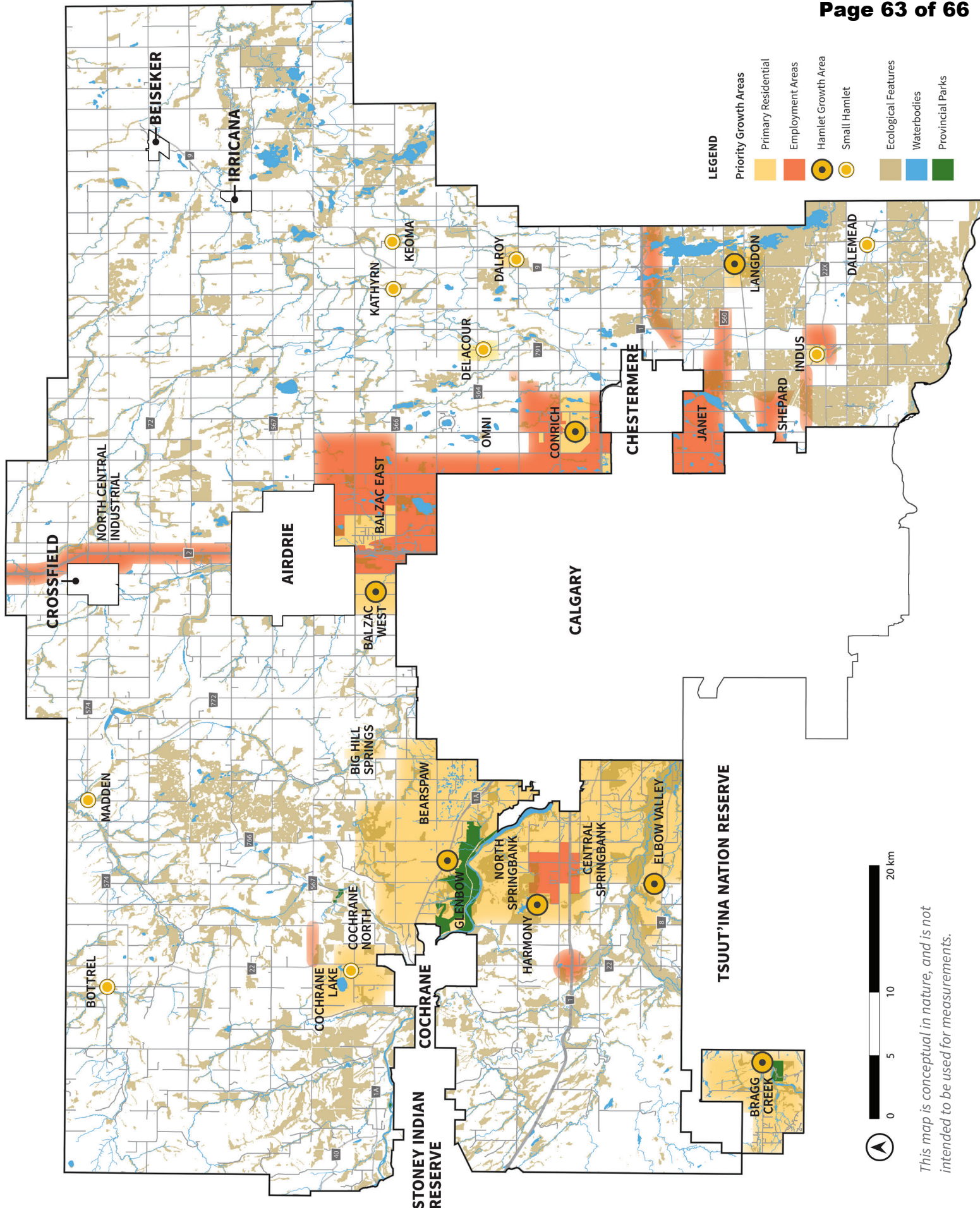
**Sustainable Development:** Development that meets the needs of Rocky View today without compromising the ability for future generations to enjoy the same natural landscapes, quality of life, and diversity of residential and economic opportunities.

**Un-Subdivided Quarter Section:** A titled area of: approximately 64.7 hectares (160 acres) ; or a gore strip greater than 32.38 hectares (80 acres) in size, that has not been subdivided, excluding subdivisions for boundary adjustments, road widening, and public uses such as a school site, community hall, and rights of way of roads, railroads, and canals.

**Value-Added Agriculture:** The processing of primary agricultural products and services into secondary products to increase overall product value.

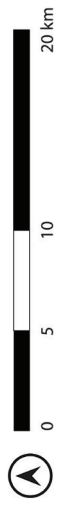
DRAFT

# APPENDIX B: GROWTH CONCEPT MAP



LEGEND

- Priority Growth Areas
  - Primary Residential
  - Employment Areas
  - Hamlet Growth Area
  - Small Hamlet
- Ecological Features
- Waterbodies
- Provincial Parks



This map is conceptual in nature, and is not intended to be used for measurements.

# APPENDIX C: CONCEPTUAL SCHEME REQUIREMENTS



# Conceptual Scheme Requirements

Conceptual scheme plans should address the following items:

**Table 04:** Conceptual Scheme Requirements

ITEM	
1	A description and evaluation of the local plan area including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Topography, soils, vegetation, geotechnical considerations;</li> <li>b. Environmental sensitivity and significance;</li> <li>c. Agricultural capability, natural resources;</li> <li>d. Existing land use, ownership, development, and adjacent land uses;</li> <li>e. Archaeological and historical considerations; and</li> <li>f. Existing utilities and transportation routes.</li> </ul>
2	A land use concept including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A vision for the proposal;</li> <li>b. Lot design and configuration;</li> <li>c. Lot sizes; and</li> <li>d. Phasing of the development.</li> </ul>
3	A rationale for determining the boundary of the proposed conceptual scheme area.
4	Proposed residential densities, including calculations of gross and net densities and minimum, average and maximum lot sizes.
5	An assessment of how the application facilitates active transportation connections and details of any active transportation connections proposed within the conceptual scheme area.
6	Water and waste water servicing strategies, supported by applicable technical information required by the County. Such strategies should also include identification of any required rights-of-way to connect to regional or decentralized networks.
7	Proposals for municipal reserve dedication, where reserves are outstanding.
8	A summary of all community engagement and feedback received prior to submission of the local plan application, together with a description of how feedback has been incorporated into the local plan.
9	Mitigation to minimize impacts on surrounding land uses through appropriate spatial transition and interface measures.

## ITEM

- 
- 10** Proposals for design criteria that reflect Rocky View's unique character and rural setting, including:
- a. Building placement and setbacks;
  - b. Building mass, height, and architectural appearance;
  - c. Location and screening of parking stalls and outside storage;
  - d. Use of appropriate landscaping and screening measures to soften the appearance of a site;
  - e. The design of lighting installations to minimize sky glow, light trespass and impacts on wildlife;
  - f. Ensuring sensitivity to the development form and appearance of adjacent land uses;
  - g. Promoting a consistent development form and theme within the local plan area;
  - h. Maintenance of sight lines and open space, particularly for development adjacent to Highway 1;
  - i. Measures to ensure the unobstructed movement of wildlife across the local plan area; and
  - j. Building design that promotes energy conservation and efficient use of land.
- 
- 11** A storm water strategy supported by applicable technical information required by the County.
- 
- 12** A road plan and design strategy that:
- a. Promotes efficient and safe access and internal road circulation.
  - b. Highlights how the development promotes connectivity with adjoining lands.
  - c. Is supported by applicable technical information required by the County including, where necessary, a Traffic Impact Assessment.
- 
- 13** An environmental strategy noting all environmentally sensitive areas within and adjacent to the local plan area and measures for avoiding or mitigating impact on these areas. The strategy shall be supported by applicable technical information required by the County.
- 
- 14** A description of how the proposal will address potential impacts upon agricultural operations, together with any impacts of agricultural operations on the development itself.
- 
- 15** A solid waste management plan that:
- a. Addresses the responsibility for, and level of service of, solid waste management through all stages of development, including occupancy;
  - b. Provides for innovative solid waste management practices that encourage, promote, and maximize landfill diversion and minimize waste material hauling;
  - c. Includes the infrastructure required to support solid waste and recycling management in public spaces;
  - d. Identifies the appropriate waste transfer stations / sites and recycling depots that serve the local plan area;
  - e. Conforms to the policies of the County's Solid Waste Master Plan; and
  - f. Sets a solid waste diversion target for the construction stage and for the occupancy stage.
- 
- 16** All applicable technical assessments and reports required to support the development proposal as specified by municipal policies, plans and standards.
-