

BYLAW 19-03
MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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County of Vermilion River

A Vision for the Future

A Sustainable, Vibrant, and Diversified Community with Opportunities for All

Sustainable. Balance short- and long-term needs and benefits in order to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs as well.

Vibrant. Engaging, creative collaboration between all stakeholders: municipality, community, and businesses.

Diverse. Open to explore new and emerging opportunities and facilitating economic growth and social integration.

Opportunities for all. A place to call home that supports a four-pillar-bottom-line approach to community sustainability:

1. **Socially**, through design guidelines for public spaces and streets that encourage neighbour interactions and serve as catalyst to support a complete community that allows residents the choice to live, work, shop, and recreate in proximity;
2. **Environmentally**, by incorporating planning and development strategies, and forms that contribute to reduce impacts and preserve agricultural lands; apply Low-Impact Development tools that respect natural drainage patterns and wetlands; and enhancement and integration of natural spaces and systems that preserve habitats, corridors, and productive landscapes;
3. **Economically**, through the responsible use of land and leverage of services infrastructure; the concentration of services and roadways for efficient and cost-effective service delivery and management, by providing a robust and dynamic land-use base that can adapt over time to accommodate diverse industry production and employment generating opportunities; and
4. **Culturally**, by strengthening our identity and sense of place, incorporating cultural dynamics (values and aspirations) into the built environment through context sensitive design principles, and participatory processes that promote our communities' well-being by enhancing quality of life and quality of place.

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PART 1.0

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Guiding Principles

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Municipal Development Plan represents the collective effort of the County of Vermilion River community to define a long-term vision for the County of Vermilion River, our communities, our residents, and our region; and identify the actions to be taken to realize that vision. It is both a process and a product. We recognize the need to invest in the improvement of the quality of life of the people who make up the community — newcomers, alongside those who have deep roots. In order to attract families and local businesses who want to stay here and work here, we aim to send a clear message as a County that this is a good place to live and work.

The strategic focus of our Municipal Development Plan provides a clear long-term vision and the priorities for our community as a whole that is supported by the guiding principles that serve as pillars for the sustainable development of the County's land base.

The Municipal Development Plan integrates a land use development framework with strategic municipal objectives that serve as an overarching policy guide that aims to provide context for future decision-making by County government and other implementation partners. The adoption of this document is not the end of the planning process, but the beginning of an on-going implementation effort by the County and community stakeholders.

1.1 Guiding Principles

1.1.1 Community Resiliency

- (a) All actions should support resourcefulness in meeting our challenges and needs in a way that is sustainable through collaboration and mutual aid instead of competition.
- (b) All actions should recognize the diverse needs and aspirations of County residents and stakeholders.

1.1.2 Growth Management

- (a) All actions should respect the integrity of the County's land base and water resources.
- (b) All actions should be proactive in directing non-agricultural development to existing hamlets, planned development areas, and existing multi-lot development areas that have the capacity to support additional development.
- (c) All actions should apply Smart Growth principles to promote sustainable development respectful of the County's rural character.

1.1.3 Sustainable Development

- (a) All actions should establish land use patterns which make efficient use of land, infrastructure, public services and public facilities and which contribute to the development of healthy, safe, and viable

1.2 Goals

communities by encouraging appropriate mixes of all land use types and a wide range of economic opportunities.

- (b) All actions should support proactive, comprehensive planning that is carried out in a fair, open, consistent, and equitable manner.

1.1.4 Responsible Governance

- (a) All actions should ensure that the County operates in a fiscally sound manner now and into the future.
- (b) All actions should promote governmental excellence through consistent and accountable leadership and collaborative and transparent processes.
- (c) All actions should support implementing strategic decision making.

1.2 Goals

The main goal of this Municipal Development Plan is to provide a policy framework indicating the type and density of development for each of the planned land uses, improvements and servicing requirements to ensure orderly planning in the lands in the County.

The goals within this Municipal Development Plan are consistent with the requirements in the Municipal Government Act, the Provincial Land Use Policies, Land Use Framework, and other plans and regulations under the Land Stewardship Act. The following goal statements represent the County of Vermilion River's approach to implementing provincial directives relating to climate adaptation, land use, and land and environmental management as well as the goals identified by the community through the consultation process. These goals are further supported by plan objectives and policy statements that both express and regulate public policies on land use, development, and subdivision of land within the County.

1.2.1 Vibrant Communities

- (a) Facilitate sustainable growth and development in the County by balancing economic growth, environmental protection, and the preservation of the County's rural way of life.
- (b) Encourage the development of a variety of transportation choices including safe infrastructure for walking and cycling and driving in hamlet areas and multi-lot residential areas.
- (c) Facilitate the provision of diverse housing opportunities in order to ensure that people in different family types, life stages and income levels will be able to afford a home in the County.

1.2.2 Innovation

- (a) Encourage economic development and renewal by supporting new and existing economic assets within the community including traditional and emerging regional economic drivers.

1.3 Interpretation

- (b) Encourage the use of green buildings and other innovative infrastructure and building systems to reduce the cumulative effects of new development.
- (c) Enhance existing regional and community partnerships and seek new collaborative opportunities.

1.2.3 Operational Excellence

- (a) Maintain a high quality and cost effective infrastructure within the County.
- (b) Encourage land development that is cost effective, orderly and developed in close proximity to similar developments and in locations in order to efficiently utilize existing infrastructure.
- (c) Establish sustainable and equitable land use planning standards that will minimize adverse impacts on working landscapes and significant natural features for future generations without burdening individual land owners.

1.3 Interpretation

1.3.1 Compliance with the policies in this Plan shall be interpreted and applied as follows:

- (a) “SHALL”, “MUST”, and “IS” are operative words that mean that the action or actions outlined are imperative or mandatory and therefore must be complied with, without discretion, except in cases where a variance has been granted pursuant to the Municipal Government Act; RSA 2000 c. M26, as amended or repealed and replaced from time to time;
- (b) “SHOULD” is a directive term, which means that, in order to achieve the established goals, and objectives, it is strongly advised that the action be taken. Exceptions shall be made only under extenuating circumstances. When the regulation is directed to the Developer, the onus to justify is on the applicant; and
- (c) “MAY” is a discretionary term, meaning a choice is available, with no particular direction or guidance intended, and is usually dependent on the particular circumstances of the specific Parcel of land or Lot and application that are under consideration at any given moment.
- (d) “SUCH AS” indicates an idiomatic preposition meaning “for example” or “of a kind that; like” in reference to the condition or conditions following the statement, but does not implies an exhaustive list.
- (e) “SUCH THAT” indicates an idiomatic preposition meaning “to the extent that”, “as being what is indicated; in that capacity” in reference to the condition or conditions following the statement as a requirement for its fulfilment, but does not implies an exhaustive list.

1.3 Interpretation

- (f) “PROVIDED THAT” indicates a conjunction meaning “if; only if”, in reference to the condition or conditions following the statement as a requirement for its fulfilment, but does not implies an exhaustive list.
- (g) “CONSIDERED” indicates an adjective meaning “to regard as” or “deem to be”, in reference to the condition or conditions following the statement.
- (h) “OR” indicates that the connected items may apply singly or in combination; and
- (i) “EITHER/OR” indicates the items shall apply singly, but not in combination.
- (j) Words used in the present tense include the other tenses and derivative forms.
- (k) Words used in the singular include the plural and vice-versa.
- (l) When a word is used in the masculine, it will refer to either gender.

1.3.2 Illustrations

- (a) Drawings and graphic depictions are provided to assist in interpreting and understanding the provisions of this Plan. Where any conflict or inconsistency arises between a drawing and the text of the Plan, the text shall prevail.

1.3.3 Definitions

- (a) Where a subdivision or development proposal generally conforms to the wording of two (2) or more definitions, the relevant Authority shall determine the use that fits closest to the development’s character and purpose.
 - (i) In instances where a specific proposal:
 - 1. Does not conform to the wording of any definition; or
 - 2. Generally conforms to the wording of two or more definitions;

1.3.4 Policy Statements

- (a) The relevant Authority shall use his/her discretion to consider subdivision or development proposals within the County in accordance to the policies that are most appropriate in character and purpose and align with the intent and purpose of this Plan.



PART 2.0

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

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2.1 Policy Framework

2.0 PLANNING AND POLICY AREAS

The planning area includes all the lands in within the jurisdictional boundary of the County of Vermilion River. These lands shall serve to accommodate the County's short-term and long-term planning and development activity. The planning area is depicted on Map 1.

The following sections constitute the planning framework and contain specific objectives, policies to help the County achieve each objective, and proposed strategies or programs to implement the policies. This framework is set up to support the Plan goals:

- Operational Excellence: Ensure efficient resource management and effective strategies to provide quality services to meet the needs of our community
- Vibrant Communities: Promote communities that are connected, engaged, active, and inclusive that will thrive and prosper.
- Innovation: Manage expectations from a regional perspective by encouraging creative, regional collaboration and diversification based on planned growth, relationship building and engagement.

2.1 Policy Framework

The policies in the following sections guide the implementation of the goals following the Plan's guiding principles that structure the Municipal Development Plan Framework:

- Community Resiliency
- Growth Management
- Sustainable Development
- Responsible Governance

Each section contains value statements and policies that outline the steps needed to move the County towards its Vision:

A Sustainable, Vibrant, and Diversified Community with Opportunities for All

2.2 Statutory Plan Areas

Development and subdivision of land within statutory plan areas (see Map2), such as Intermunicipal Development Plans, Area Structure Plans, or area Redevelopment Plans, are required to conform to all applicable policies within the relevant statutory plan as well as the objectives and policies in the County's Municipal Development Plan.

2.2 Statutory Plan Areas

2.2.1 Ensure that subdivision and development within statutory plan areas is consistent with the intent of the appropriate plan.

- (a) Proposals for subdivision and development within statutory plan areas shall be consistent with the policies within the appropriate plan.
- (b) The relevant Authority may require that any proposal for subdivision or development within a statutory plan area be accompanied by additional supportive information, prepared by a registered or licensed professional, in order to assess the conformity of a proposed subdivision or development with the appropriate plan before consideration of the subdivision or development shall commence. Further, if a subdivision or development is approved after such supportive information is provided, the relevant Authority shall require that any recommendations of the supportive information be implemented by the landowner/developer and registered against the title of the subject lands, in order to warn future landowners of the engineering requirements for development. Such information may include:
 - (i) either, or both, a flood susceptibility analysis or a bank stability analysis prepared by a registered engineer that assess the suitability of the subject site and the proposed development from the points of view of flood susceptibility and/or bank stability.
 - (ii) a Real Property Report, or other documentation indicating the exact location of all structures on the property (prepared within the last five (5) years, in a form that is acceptable to the Development Authority;
 - (iii) a storm water management plan approved by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (or other appropriate provincial authority);
 - (iv) a certified geotechnical report prepared, stamped and signed by a qualified professional registered in the Province of Alberta in potentially hazardous or unstable areas;
 - (v) a certified biophysical assessment prepared, stamped and signed by a professional registered in the Province of Alberta, on the impacts of the proposed development on wildlife habitat or natural environments;
 - (vi) a reclamation plan for aggregate extraction or site grading and excavation;
 - (vii) an environmental assessment to determine potential contamination and mitigation;
 - (viii) in the case of the placement of an already constructed or partially constructed building on a Lot or Parcel of land, information relating to the age and condition of the building and its compatibility with the Land Use District in which it is to be located;

2.2 Statutory Plan Areas

- (ix) for subdivisions adjacent to water bodies and watercourses, an engineering and/or geotechnical study to determine an adequate setbacks based on soil conditions and slope stability prepared, stamped and signed by a registered professional engineer or hydro-geologist, registered in the Province of Alberta.
- (x) an environmental impact assessment describing a development's potential environmental effects;
- (xi) a cumulative effects assessment prepared, stamped and signed by a professional, registered to practice in the Province of Alberta, describing a development's potential cumulative effects;
- (xii) the identification of all rights-of-way and easements within or abutting the subject property; and/or
- (xiii) any additional information as the relevant Authority deems necessary.

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PART 3.0

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

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3.1 Inlusiveness and Diversity

3.0 COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

As a County, we are mindful of our rural culture, respectful of our natural environment and grateful for our people. The heart of our communities are the people who live and work in them — newcomers, alongside those who have deep roots. Working together has built a community that is safe and a lifestyle that is valued. The environment is treasured and resources are shared.

Communities that are connected, engaged, active and inclusive will thrive and prosper.

The following objectives and policies outline the manner and type of subdivision and development for residential and non-residential uses within the County.

3.1 Inlusiveness and Diversity

- 3.1.1 The County will encourage cluster and conservation development and other configurations that respect natural topography.
 - (a) Multi-lot subdivisions shall comply with the provisions for cluster and conservation subdivision and development under the County's Land Use Bylaw.
 - (b) Residential development will be cognizant of the need to preserve resource extraction, recreation, historical, and archaeological features. It is the County's policy that the effect a residential development may have on the environment will be an important consideration in dealing with residential subdivision and development proposals and Land Use Bylaw amendments.
- 3.1.2 Subdivision and development proposals should plan for mixed land-use patterns characterized by compatible residential and non-residential land uses located in close proximity to one another.
 - (a) Mixed land-use patterns should incorporate safe, convenient, accessible, and attractive design features to promote active living and social interaction.
- 3.1.3 Subdivision and development proposals should provide for complete streets serving multiple functions that safely and conveniently accommodate all users and desired functions, though this does not mean that all modes or functions will be equally prioritized on any given street segment.
 - (a) Complete streets should accommodate travel, social interaction, and commerce to provide for more vibrant neighborhoods and more livable communities.

3.2 Rural Livability

- 3.2.1 Subdivision and development proposals should apply design standards appropriate to the community context.

3.3 Multi-Lot Residential Development

- (a) Spatial buffers or setbacks may be required between land uses which may, in the opinion of the relevant Authority, be incompatible, in accordance with the provisions of the County's Land Use Bylaw.
- 3.2.2 Subdivision and development proposals shall accommodate additional population by supporting development that is economically responsible to the County and the community.
 - (a) New growth shall be focused in and around existing developed areas to discourage rural sprawl.
 - (b) Residential subdivisions shall be located in proximity to gas, electrical, and telephone lines that have existing spare capacity to sustain the additional usage.
 - (c) Subdivisions shall have direct access to existing maintained roads.
 - (d) Where a subdivision for residential purposes is proposed, the developer shall be required to enter into a development agreement with the County wherein the developer agrees to be responsible for all the costs associated with the subdivision and development.
- 3.2.3 Subdivision and development proposals shall support compact development density that respects local landscapes and the environment.
 - (a) Development density shall be directly related to the development capability of the land resources, such as potable water supply, topography, vegetation, soil, and drainage.
 - (b) Proponents for multi-lot development shall be required to provide the County with an assessment of environmental constraints on the site and the means whereby negative impacts on the natural environment may be mitigated.

3.3 Multi-Lot Residential Development

- 3.3.1 Multi-lot residential developments shall be consistent with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw for conservation or cluster subdivision and development to reduce potential land use conflicts and minimize servicing costs.
 - (a) The County will require the proponent of a multi-lot residential development to identify all municipal servicing costs associated with the development. The assignment of these costs between the County and the developer will be the basis of a development agreement to be entered into prior to a subdivision approval or upon the issuance of a development permit. However, all development servicing costs associated with the development, including the provision of internal roadway systems to meet the County's Municipal Servicing Standards and the upgrading of other County roads leading to the site in order to provide good access to the residential site will be the responsibility of the developer.

3.4 Industrial Development

- 3.3.2 Multi-lot country residential developments will adhere to the following conservation design-based principles in order to mitigate potential negative impacts:
- (a) The ecology of the subject site must be considered. Environmentally sensitive lands and working landscapes should be left undisturbed wherever possible, but incorporated into the overall development. Wildlife corridors or connections between habitat areas should be maintained wherever possible.
 - (b) Development will be directed to lands within the subject site that are deemed by the County to be of lesser environmental and/or agricultural significance.
 - (c) The natural landscape and topography should be considered and incorporated into the overall design of the development.
- 3.3.3 Multi-lot residential subdivisions and developments shall meet the applicable policies under **Section 5.0** of this Plan.
- 3.3.4 Multi-lot residential developments will be discouraged, but not prohibited, from locating on good quality agricultural land, and shall be encouraged, but not required, to locate on poorer quality agricultural land.

3.4 Industrial Development

The County recognizes that industrial developments can be of benefit to the County by providing employment, tax dollars and services to County residents. The Plan encourages the clustering together of compatible industrial uses in rural industrial parks.

This Plan encourages the diversification of the County's economic base by identifying land and policies to support the development of a diverse range of industrial developments within the County.

- 3.4.1 Subdivision and development proposals shall encourage industrial development in appropriate locations.
- (a) Industries shall be encouraged to locate in designated industrial areas that are designed and serviced to accommodate industrial development.
 - (b) Industries shall be allowed to locate in intermunicipal areas in the manner provided for in an approved Intermunicipal Development Plan or Area Structure Plan and consistent with the County's Land Use Bylaw.
 - (c) Before approving any development proposal for an industrial use, the County may require the provision of a Cumulative Effects Assessment including environmental impact information and a risk assessment (such as that provided for by the Major Industrial Accidents Council of Canada (MIACC)) to assist the County in assessing the impact of the proposed development in relation to the natural and human

3.4 Industrial Development

environments, and indicate both if and how any negative matters can be mitigated. The County may require the implementation of any mitigating actions indicated in the information and assessment as a condition of any development approval.

- (d) Multi-lot industrial developments shall be consistent with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw for conservation or cluster subdivision and development to reduce potential land use conflicts and minimize servicing costs.

3.4.2 All proposals for industrial subdivision and development (including multi-lot industrial developments) shall:

- (a) In the opinion of the relevant Authority, NOT conflict or jeopardize with surrounding land uses;
- (b) Be considered only in accordance with a Site Development Plan, unless the County requires an Area Structure Plan, which has been prepared by a Registered Professional Planner pursuant to County Policy and approved in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.
 - (i) in preparing a Site Development Plan or Area Structure Plan, the proponent shall consider:
 1. the impact on adjacent land uses;
 2. transportation and access;
 3. provision of water and sewer services;
 4. storm drainage;
 5. the provision for municipal reserve;
 6. the impact on community services, such as safety & fire protection;
 7. the municipal servicing costs associated with the development;
 8. landscaping and buffering;;
 9. risk assessment; and
 - 10.any other matters identified by County Policy.
 - (ii) a Site Development Plan or, when required, an Area Structure Plan shall:
 1. be accompanied by an identification of all municipal costs associated with the proposal;
 2. meet all provincial requirements and obtain a development permit from the County prior to construction; and
 3. be encouraged to locate near or adjacent to provincial highways.

3.4 Industrial Development

- (c) Industrial development shall not result in any additional costs to the County, unless the County agrees to share costs.
 - (d) All industrial developments shall obtain the approvals and permits required by provincial legislation and a development permit from the County.
 - (e) Industrial development shall be encouraged to locate on land that is physically suited for industrial use, considering factors such as soil, drainage, slopes and the availability of necessary services.
 - (f) Industrial development shall not be located in areas where the use is likely to subject residences, hospitals, schools, or other sensitive land uses, as defined in the County's Land Use Bylaw, to high levels of noise.
- 3.4.3 The County will require the proponent of an industrial development to identify all municipal servicing costs associated with the development. The assignment of these costs between the County and the developer will be the basis of a development agreement to be entered into prior to a subdivision approval or upon the issuance of a development permit. However, all development servicing costs associated with the development, including the provision of internal roadway systems to meet the County's Municipal Servicing Standards and the upgrading of other County roads leading to the site in order to provide good access to the industrial site will be the responsibility of the developer.
- (a) Multi-lot industrial developments shall be consistent with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw for conservation or cluster subdivision and development to reduce potential land use conflicts and minimize servicing costs.
- 3.4.4 Industrial subdivisions and developments shall meet the applicable policies under **Section 5.0** of this Plan.
- 3.4.5 Industrial development requiring municipal services will be encouraged to locate in areas with access to municipal servicing.
- (a) The County shall encourage industrial development that requires access to municipal services to locate where services are available.
 - (b) Council shall only consider proposals for the development of lands for industrial uses in a hamlet, if the proposal is for a Light Industrial Use, as defined and subject to the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw.
 - (c) Industries that require urban services shall be considered where such services are available from the County or a joint development/servicing agreement between the County and an adjacent urban municipality has been finalized.
 - (d) Industrial subdivision and development which, in the opinion of the relevant Authority, could have a significant impact on the community and environment, shall be controlled through the process of Land Use Bylaw amendment to an appropriate Industrial District in the Land Use

3.5 Commercial Development

Bylaw and, in areas where there is an Intermunicipal Development Plan or an Area Structure Plan, by amendment to the appropriate Plan.

- (e) The proponent of any new industrial development or expansion of such development shall identify any costs associated with providing new services and upgrading existing services made necessary by the proposed development. The apportionment of costs shall be negotiated by the County and be settled within a development agreement which shall be a condition of subdivision or development approval.
- (f) In order to encourage the establishment of industry in the County, the County may establish an area within which only heavy industry, that is, industry which may negatively impact neighbouring lands, may be located. If the County does this, the area affected shall be designated through an Area Structure Plan, and appropriate Land Use Bylaw regulations shall be applied to substantially regulate both the industry and any residential development in the area affected.

3.5 Commercial Development

The intent of this Plan is to accommodate commercial facilities in appropriate locations throughout the County, as provided for in the County's Land Use Bylaw. Commercial developments provide a service to the agricultural community, local residents, traveling public, and tourists to the region.

The County will not support commercial developments that adversely affect the standard of safety or convenience, or the functional integrity of any highway or road. The Plan also recognizes that specific commercial uses may require unique site locations in order to serve our communities.

3.5.1 Subdivision and development proposals shall minimize the impacts of commercial activities on working landscapes and cultural landscapes.

- (a) The County shall consider proposals for commercial development:
 - (i) that will not unnecessarily fragment the working landscape; and
 - (ii) that do not conflict with adjacent land uses.

3.5.2 Commercial development shall be allowed to locate in intermunicipal areas in the manner provided for in an approved Intermunicipal Development Plan or Area Structure Plan and consistent with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw.

3.5.3 Commercial development with servicing requirements that do not exceed the servicing capabilities of the hamlet or negatively impact the character of the hamlet shall be encouraged.

3.5.4 Commercial subdivisions and developments shall meet the applicable policies under **Section 5.0** of this Plan.

3.5.5 Multi-lot commercial developments shall be consistent with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw for conservation or cluster subdivision and

3.5 Commercial Development

development to reduce potential land use conflicts and minimize servicing costs.

3.5.6 All proposals for commercial development (including multi-lot commercial or business developments) shall:

- (a) in the opinion of the Development Authority, NOT conflict or jeopardize with surrounding land uses;
- (b) be considered only in accordance with a Site Development Plan, unless the County requires an Area Structure Plan, which has been prepared by a Registered Professional Planner pursuant to County Policy and approved in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.
- (c) In preparing a Site Development Plan or Area Structure Plan, the proponent shall consider:
 - (i) the impact on adjacent land uses;
 - (ii) transportation and access;
 - (iii) provision of water and sewer services;
 - (iv) storm drainage;
 - (v) the provision for municipal reserve;
 - (vi) the impact on community services, such as safety & fire protection;
 - (vii) the municipal servicing costs associated with the development;
 - (viii) landscaping and buffering;;
 - (ix) risk assessment; and
 - (x) any other matters identified by County Policy.

(d) a Site Development Plan or, when required, an Area Structure Plan shall:

1. be accompanied by an identification of all municipal costs associated with the proposal;
2. meet all provincial requirements and obtain a development permit from the County prior to construction; and
3. be encouraged to locate near or adjacent to provincial highways.

3.5.7 Commercial development shall not result in any additional costs to the County, unless the County agrees to share costs.

3.5.8 All commercial developments shall obtain the approvals and permits required by provincial legislation and a development permit from the County.

3.5.9 The County will require the proponent of a commercial development to identify all municipal servicing costs associated with the development. The assignment of these costs between the County and the developer will be the basis of a development agreement to be entered into prior to a

3.6 Emergency Preparedness

subdivision approval or upon the issuance of a development permit. However, all development servicing costs associated with the development, including the provision of internal roadway systems to meet the County's Municipal Servicing Standards and the upgrading of other County roads leading to the site in order to provide good access to the development site will be the responsibility of the developer.

3.5.10 In consideration of a proposal for a commercial development, an assessment of the proposed development may be required, which:

- (a) precisely defines the boundaries of the proposal;
- (b) designates suitable building sites;
- (c) ensures the functional integrity of the adjacent roads is maintained through the use of service roads and limited access points;
- (d) defines standards of development consistent with the County's Land Use Bylaw, including architectural, landscaping, and sign controls;
- (e) identifies methods and facilities for servicing;
- (f) includes groundwater and soil permeability tests; and
- (g) any other matters identified by County Policy.

3.5.11 Commercial subdivision and development that, in the opinion of the relevant Authority, could have a significant impact on the community and environment, shall be controlled through the process of Land Use Bylaw amendment to an appropriate Industrial District in the Land Use Bylaw and, in areas where there is an Intermunicipal Development Plan or an Area Structure Plan, by amendment to the appropriate Plan.

3.6 Emergency Preparedness

The County requires that emergency preparedness be a consideration in the approval of new developments throughout the County. Requiring emergency preparedness measures to be a consideration in the design and approval of new developments will best ensure the safety of all County residents.

3.6.1 New developments shall be designed to ensure high levels of emergency preparedness within a rural context.

- (a) The County shall encourage the use of effective wildfire prevention techniques and the development of on-site firefighting measures to reduce the risk of wildfires resulting from development.
- (b) The County may refer applications for subdivision and development to the province's Land and Forest Service or the local fire department for comment in evaluating the suitability of a site in forested land for development.
- (c) The County shall consider the following as conditions for approval for development which is too remote to be adequately serviced by existing firefighting services:

3.6 Emergency Preparedness

- (i) the provision of a suitable on-site water supply for firefighting purposes;
 - (ii) the use of fire resistant building methods;
 - (iii) the installation of spark arrestors on chimneys; and/ or
 - (iv) the removal of trees, shrubs, and fuels in proximity to certain developments.
 - (d) The County shall discourage the development of forested lands in significant wildfire hazard areas.
 - (e) The County may ask developers to provide for appropriate fire protection measures in an application for development, subdivision, a Site Development Plan, or an Area Structure Plan.
 - (f) The County may require the provision of an emergency access to multi-parcel developments in forested areas.
 - (g) Residential development will be prohibited in those areas which are too close to sour gas facilities, in accordance with Provincial legislation and regulations.
- 3.6.2 Multi-lot subdivision and development proposals shall ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.
- (a) Buffering measures, to the satisfaction of the Subdivision Authority may be required at time of subdivision between residential uses and other, adjacent land uses.

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PART 4.0

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

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4.1 Responsible Regionalism

4.0 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

“The only constant is change, continuing change, inevitable change; that is the dominant factor in society today. No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account, not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be.” — Isaac Asimov.

Growth can be an exciting but tumultuous experience for predominantly rural municipalities such as the County of Vermilion River. On one hand, the County benefits from an expanding economy, an increasing tax base, and more vibrant communities. On the other hand, the County must contend with a series of challenges including meeting future demands for services and environmental protection.

In 2013 the County completed a Regional Growth Management Strategy that outlined how the County can support a projected population of up to 14,500 residents by 2052, in keeping with the County’s goals of fiscal, environmental, and social sustainability.

The following objectives and policies support and expand the goals and objectives of the Regional Growth Management Strategy.

4.1 Responsible Regionalism

4.1.1 The County of Vermilion River will guide future development in a manner that reflects the aspirations of residents, landowners, and other stakeholders.

(a) The County will develop and adopt a Regional Growth Management Plan that will identify growth areas and provide a means of monitoring change over time. The Plan should take into consideration the recommendations of the Regional Growth Management Strategy.

4.1.2 The County of Vermilion River will encourage creative, regional collaboration and diversification based on planned growth, relationship building and engagement.

(a) The County will promote regional cooperation and sharing of resources.

(b) The County will include regional development visions and plans in local planning scenarios.

(c) The County will ensure local plans are consistent with regional plans and priorities.

(d) The County will identify and delineate designated growth areas for residential and non-residential uses.

(e) The County will promote intermunicipal dialogue at both the political and administrative levels to facilitate an approved and united vision for the region.

(f) The County will collaborate with industry and municipal partners to develop, update and align risk management initiatives regarding heavy industrial development located within and along County borders.

4.2 Complete Communities

- (g) The County will encourage the coordination of joint municipal processes and Planning Documents that provide agreement for land-use activity along shared municipal boundaries.
- (h) The County will establish infrastructure servicing and joint-use partnership agreements with municipal neighbours and other government agencies that are mutually beneficial and provide for the coordinated distribution of municipal services.
- (i) The County will strive to understand stakeholder perspectives and concerns by promoting consultation and participation in projects of County-wide significance.

4.1.3 The County of Vermilion River will encourage orderly growth and development within the County's unincorporated urban areas.

- (a) The County shall discourage development within 1.6 km (1 mile) of an urban area that would adversely affect the urban centre unless, if in the opinion of the County, appropriate measures are taken to mitigate adverse effects and/or the use is provided for in an approved Intermunicipal Development Plan.
- (b) Development in hamlets which do not have communal water supply and sewage disposal systems should be planned and designed so that the lots are of a size and the subsequent development is of a configuration which would permit re-subdivision to a higher density should communal water supply and sewage disposal systems eventually be available.

4.1.4 The County of Vermilion River will encourage regional cooperation in the provision, operation and maintenance of infrastructure services.

- (a) The County will endeavour to cooperate with other municipalities in the upgrading of intermunicipal roadways.
- (b) The County will endeavour to cooperate wherever possible with other municipalities and/or the provincial government with planning, development and operation of sanitary waste disposal facilities and sewage lagoons.
- (c) New development adjacent to the future Highway #16 Lloydminster bypass must be designed to adhere to provincial requirements regarding siting and access.

4.2 Complete Communities

4.2.1 The County of Vermilion River will provide land-use policies that encourage a variety of residential types in an effort to achieve complete communities.

- (d) The County shall require proposed residential development to respect the existing scale, type and character of the community. Secondary suites or mixed-use developments may be contemplated, consistent with the provisions within the County's Land Use Bylaw, where the

4.2 Complete Communities

applicant can successfully demonstrate to the relevant Authority that no significant impacts on municipal infrastructure or community amenities will occur.

4.2.2 The County of Vermilion River will encourage orderly growth and urban density development within the County's unincorporated urban areas.

(a) The County will develop and adopt a Hamlet Growth and Expansion Plan for each of the hamlets in the County to establish development patterns for each of the Community Areas, which will maintain their distinctive attributes and provide residential and non-residential development opportunities different from those provided in the urban centers.

4.2.3 The County of Vermilion River will ensure that hamlets have enough land within their respective boundaries to undertake comprehensive land use planning and development of servicing systems.

(a) Development shall be encouraged in those hamlets where municipal piped water supply and sewage collection and disposal services are already available, or can be economically made available.

(i) Development in hamlets that do not have communal water supply and sewage disposal systems shall be planned and designed so that the lots are of a size and the subsequent development is of a configuration that would permit further subdivision to a higher density should communal water supply and sewage disposal systems eventually become available.

(ii) The County shall ensure that new residential development accounts for increased population and subsequent community impacts through the timely delivery of social services and communities amenities.

(b) The County shall undertake an evaluation of municipal servicing needs prior to significant Hamlet development or expansion in order to identify and prioritize improvements for development.

4.2.4 The County of Vermilion River should promote quality public spaces by restricting the dedication of municipal reserve for right-of-ways, public utilities and marginal lands as they are not considered useable parks and open spaces.

(a) The County should ensure that community facilities and support services are suitably located for the identified residential populations that they are intended to serve.

(b) The County should encourage the use of joint partnership agreements with public and separate school boards for delivering community service.

4.3 Urban Growth Areas

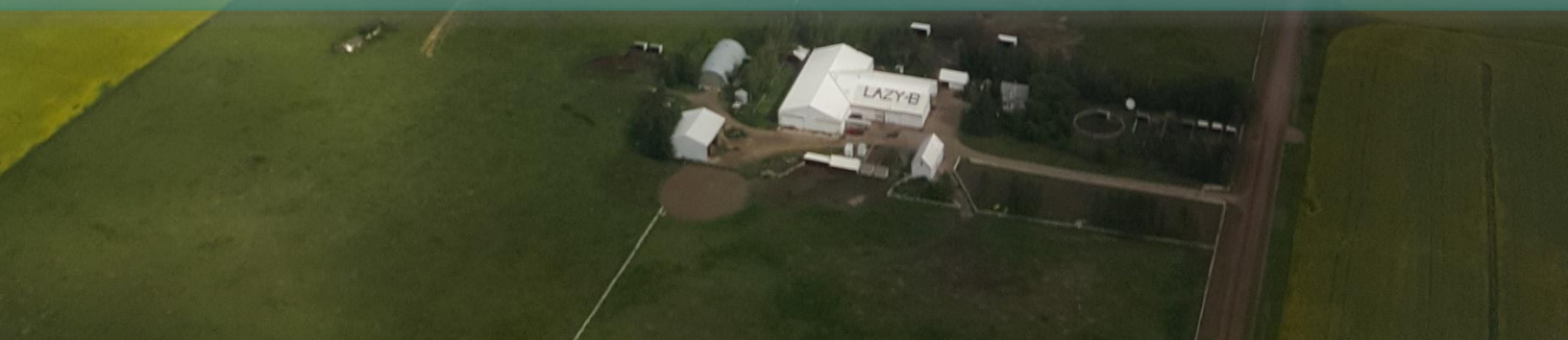
4.3 Urban Growth Areas

- 4.3.1 Ensure incorporated urban centres and hamlet areas are able to expand in an orderly manner and in a manner that encourages the sustainability of the community.
 - (a) Urban centers and hamlet communities should be encouraged to accommodate growth in areas that would minimize the removal of:
 - (i) regionally significant natural resources; and
 - (ii) environmentally sensitive areas.
- 4.3.2 Development on lands near urban centers or hamlet area should be in harmony with future growth requirements and should be able to accommodate urban uses.
 - (a) The policies within approved Intermunicipal Development Plans and any approved Area Structure Plans will apply to the lands located in the areas affected by those plans.
 - (b) The County will continue to work closely with adjacent urban centers in the detailed planning of the lands near them, and by continuing to do detailed planning with the goals being the best utilization of the land and the minimization of long range land use conflicts and servicing costs.



PART 5.0

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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5.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations 1987).” Although, the concept of sustainability may suggest a sense of stability to some, it does not mean that in the future we will, or should, function the way we function today. Communities evolve, and change is the only surety we have of the future (although, some residents will always fight for their community to remain exactly as it was the day that they moved in). Nevertheless, unmanaged change can be detrimental to the social and fiscal wellbeing of a community, which is not sustainable.

The value added of the concept of sustainability, above and beyond the social, economic, and environmental concerns that make it up, is that it forces us to recognize links and trade-offs, rather than dealing with each concern independently. To achieve sustainability, we need to sustain our economy, protect our environment, and achieve our social goals — ideally without trading off one goal for another (Hecht 2007).

The following objectives and policies set the direction for the County’s future growth and development. The policies provide direction on how our County will maintain successful communities, create a stronger sense of place and civic identity. They support planning for a balanced land-use mix for fiscal sustainability characterized by a pattern that includes both residential and non-residential uses, such that the long-term cost of providing a desirable level of services to residents, business owners, and visitors is closely matched to the tax or user-fee revenue generated by those uses. They guide the development of land within the County, and ensure that such development enhances the quality of life in the County.

5.1 Land Use and Built Environment

Land is a limited resource and how we use it reflects our community values and priorities. It is also important that land use and development be appropriately used to strengthen our local economy: providing a diverse range of jobs, goods, services, and the tax revenue necessary to maintain quality services to meet the needs of our communities.

In addition, land uses and the built environment must be addressed in a manner that strengthens the sense of place for the County as a whole, as well as its rural landscape.

5.1.1 The County of Vermilion River will develop Area Structure Plans for identified growth and development areas that provide the framework for logical, efficient land-use patterns that accommodate a mix of uses in accessible and safe configurations that are attractive, efficient, and sustainable.

(a) New growth shall be focused in and around existing developed areas to discourage rural sprawl.

5.1 Land Use and Built Environment

- (b) The County will support development that respects natural topography, such as conservation and cluster development to preserve and protect natural areas and promote the efficient use of existing infrastructure.
 - (c) The County will support innovative practices that promote fiscal sustainability by making more efficient use of existing infrastructure and topographies, such as low-impact development, including green infrastructure.
 - (i) Green building and site design in development and redevelopment projects is encouraged.
 - (ii) appropriate site design standards shall be followed and appropriate buffers shall be located between non-residential developments and other existing and future sensitive land uses and roadway profiles in order to provide adequate visual or acoustic screening.
 - (iii) The County of Vermilion River may require that the applicant of a development apply the principles and guidelines of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design within subdivision and development reviews to guide design and ensure effective use of the built environment.
 - (d) Shared driveway access, parking, and coordinated site plan designs for non-residential uses is encouraged.
 - (e) The County will identify brownfield sites within the County and develop a strategy for mitigation and redevelopment into productive uses.
 - (f) The County will provide sufficient commercial and industrial sites to be competitive in attracting new, high-quality businesses to the County. Sites should be located to avoid adverse impacts to existing and planned residential communities.
- 5.1.2 The County of Vermilion River will encourage development for non-agricultural uses to be located on lower agricultural capability lands, unless Council decides that the benefits to the community justify the use of higher capability agricultural lands.
- (a) Fragmentation of rural land and working landscapes should be discouraged.
 - (b) Development on Hazardous Lands that are deemed undevelopable or may result in life loss or injury, property damage, social, and economic disruption or environmental degradation shall not be permitted.
 - (c) The development of non-agricultural land uses within the County should be considered only in the case where agricultural opportunities are not compromised by conflicting developments.
 - (d) The County shall encourage the development of vacant lots and underdeveloped opportunity sites and the redevelopment of older

5.1 Land Use and Built Environment

buildings within the hamlets, provided that the infill development or redevelopment will not adversely affect the surrounding areas.

- (e) Industries shall be encouraged to locate on lower capability agricultural land, in proximity to paved County roads or provincial highways, and in areas with access to existing water and power services wherever possible.
- (f) Commercial uses shall be encouraged to locate on lower capability agricultural land wherever possible.
- (g) The municipalities of Dewberry, Kitscoty, Marwayne and Paradise Valley, Vermilion, and Lloydminster should be encouraged to expand in areas which would minimize the removal of higher capability agricultural land.
- (h) Expansion of urban centres should be discouraged from occurring on higher capability agricultural land.
- (i) Council shall only support annexation proposals in accordance with the policies in **Sub-section 6.4** of this Plan.

5.1.3 Development should only occur on lands that do not have critical development constraints.

- (a) Groundwater of sufficient quantity and quality should be available to support the proposed development. Development will be discouraged in areas where reserves of potable water are inadequate.
- (b) Development will be discouraged in areas characterized by wetlands, swamps, muskeg, or saturated soils. Development will also be discouraged in valleys, ravines, or seasonal draws. Where development is allowed in areas exhibiting these characteristics the development must adhere to provincial regulations, guidelines and wetland mitigation policies.
- (c) Development shall be prohibited on slopes in excess of 15% or on slopes which are subject to slippage or mass movement.
- (d) Development is discouraged from locating on soils that have extremely fast percolation rates and/or which might result in the possibility of groundwater contamination.
- (e) No permanent structures will be allowed within the 1:100 year flood plain of any river, stream or lake shore, unless proper flood proofing techniques are applied. A certificate from a qualified, registered professional engineer or architect will be required by the County to confirm that the development has been properly flood proofed.
- (f) The County shall encourage flood plain and flood prone areas to be kept in their natural state. However, if provincial requirements are met and engineering studies have been completed by the applicant that supports development within these areas then the development authority may approve within these locations as long as any mitigation

5.2 Subdivision of Land

measures identified by the province and in any supplementary engineering studies are adhered to.

- (g) On municipal lands within flood areas, new development should be limited to recreational uses.
- (h) Unless unique site requirements determine otherwise, development proposals should conform to the Alberta Environment Land Conservation Guidelines so far as they pertain to setback requirements from valley breaks, ravines and watercourses.
- (i) The County shall continue working in collaboration with non-profit organizations and the Province to manage and conserve wetlands within the County's boundary.

5.1.4 The County of Vermilion River will discourage the fragmentation of working landscapes (see **Sub-section 5.9**).

- (a) The County will encourage new pipelines, electrical and transmission lines, rail lines and road developments to be located adjacent to quarter section or property boundaries and/or within recognized corridor to limit the further fragmentation of lands within the County.
- (b) The County will discourage the premature conversion of productive agricultural land to other uses when equally viable alternatives exist.
- (c) Developments for non-agricultural uses will be encouraged to locate on lands of lower agricultural capability and in areas where possible negative impact on agriculture are minimized.

5.1.5 The County of Vermilion River will diversify the economy and strengthen the tax base through land use and development.

- (a) The County will promote community-based economic development that benefits local rural businesses and residents.
- (b) Environmentally sustainable businesses and work will be encouraged to attract and grow green jobs in the County.

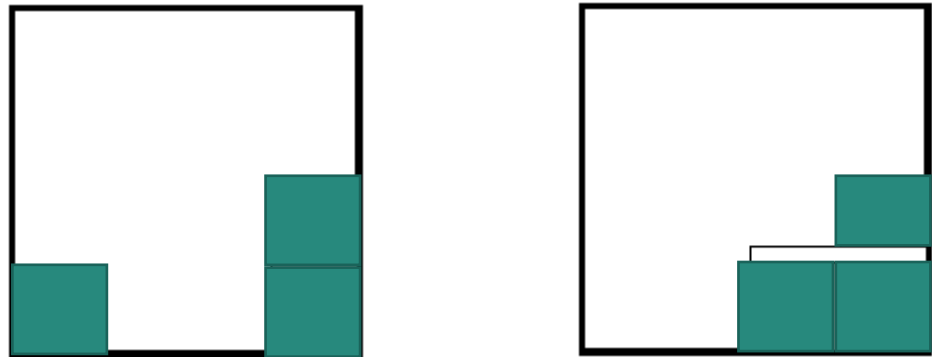
5.2 Subdivision of Land

5.2.1 Subdivisions shall require redesignation to the appropriate Land Use District at the time of subdivision.

5.2.2 The maximum number of parcels out of a quarter section that will be allowed, including fragments, is four (4). Additional parcels will require approval of a Site Development Plan, prepared by a Registered Professional Planner. The County may require an Area Structure Plan prepared by a Registered Professional Planner where it would be in the best interest of the community, unless otherwise indicated within an applicable statutory plan. (See **Figure 1**)

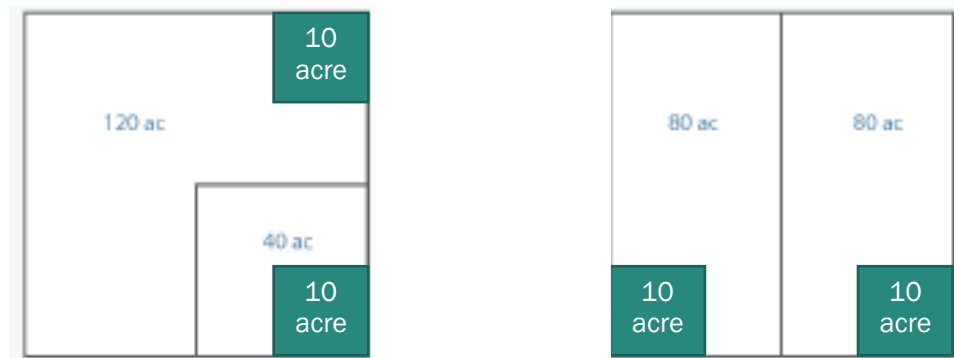
5.2 Subdivision of Land

Figure 1. Subdivision Requiring a Site Development Plan or Area Structure Plan Prior to Additional Subdivision Within the Quarter Section.



- (a) If the quarter section has previously been subdivided into (2) two or more agricultural lots then a maximum of one (1) lot or parcel will be permitted from each agricultural lot to a maximum of 4.04 ha (10.0 ac.) subject to a Real Property Report or Building Site Certificate prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor; which verifies the locations of all improvements, site features, and proposed boundaries; where the has been demonstrated by the applicant, to the satisfaction of the subdivision authority. (See **Figure 2**)

Figure 2. Maximum Subdivision of Agricultural Lots.



- 5.2.3 A Site Development Plan prepared by a Registered Professional Planner will be required prior to approval of a subdivision that would create more than four (4) parcels out of a quarter section. The County may require an Area Structure Plan prepared by a Registered Professional Planner where it would be in the best interest of the community, unless otherwise indicated within an applicable statutory plan. (See **Figure 1**)

- (a) A multi-lot subdivision for residential and/or non-residential use shall be considered to be any subdivision that will create more than four (4)

5.2 Subdivision of Land

parcels on a quarter section, including the remainder of the quarter section.

- (b) Multi-lot subdivisions may require a Land Use Bylaw amendment and, where there is an Intermunicipal Development Plan or an Area Structure Plan, an amendment to the appropriate Plan may be required.
- (c) Multi-lot subdivisions shall comply with the provisions for cluster and/or conservation subdivision and development under the County's Land Use Bylaw.

5.2.4 Subdivisions shall be designed to follow the logical extension of existing infrastructure.

- (a) Subdivisions shall not be approved where access to existing graded and graveled or paved roads does not exist, or where construction of roadway and access to County standards to the site is not undertaken primarily by the landowner/developer.
- (b) Access to individual lots within a multi-lot subdivision will be provided by internal roads or service roads developed to meet the County's General Municipal Servicing Standards, and not directly onto Provincial Highways or County grid roads.
- (c) Documentation indicating that arrangements satisfactory to the County have been made regarding the development's water supply, sewage disposal, and storm water management systems, including access to the systems for maintenance and any necessary easements, may be conditions of approval for multi-lot development.
 - (i) Documentation indicating that satisfactory arrangements have been made regarding the development's sewage disposal system may be a condition of approval for residential development and/or subdivisions.
- (d) The assessment of the suitability of a proposed residential subdivision will not take into consideration required setbacks for private sewage disposal systems. Rather, if a subdivision results in the reduction of setbacks between an existing or proposed private sewage disposal system and a property line then the developer will be required to ensure that the existing or proposed private sewage disposal system conforms to all relevant provincial regulations affecting private sewage disposal systems.
- (e) The subdivision of a naturally fragmented parcel shall not be approved for any use, unless the fragmented parcel is fragmented by reason of one or more public roadways, railways, rivers, or creeks.
- (f) In addition to the criteria indicated in **Policy 5.2.1(e) above**, a natural fragmentation may also be considered to be a barrier to the crossing of cultivation equipment created by substantial topography, such as a ravine or gully. The determination that such a topographic barrier is

5.2 Subdivision of Land

a natural fragmentation for the purpose of subdivision shall be at the sole discretion of the Subdivision Authority.

- (g) In the case where another policy of this plan would allow for a subdivision to occur and the subject site also contains a fragmenting feature as described in **Policies 5.2.1(e) and 5.2.1(f) above**, and where the fragmented area contains adequate developable area, the County will encourage the developer to subdivide the fragmented area, as the first subdivision from the subject site.
- (h) The County may refuse to approve an application that proposes to subdivide a fragmented parcel if:
 - (i) in the opinion of the County, the construction and maintenance of the roadway adjacent to the parcel would serve no greater or long-term public interest; and
 - (ii) the municipality is responsible for the maintenance of the roadway upon completion of its construction or upgrading.

5.2.5 Subdivisions lot or parcel size shall be in accordance with the lot or parcel size for the Designated Land Use District within the County's Land Use Bylaw.

- (a) However, lots or parcels and farmstead separations may be larger than allowed in a Land Use District subject to a Real Property Report or Building Site Certificate prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor; which verifies the locations of all improvements, site features, and proposed boundaries; where it has been demonstrated by the applicant, to the satisfaction of the subdivision authority, that the site includes topographical features such as:
 - (i) treed areas,
 - (ii) sloughs, and/or
 - (iii) poor quality farmland with a farmland assessment ratio of 10% or less, which is rocky or sandy land or slough areas.

Only additional lands that the Real Property Report or Building Site Certificate demonstrates are required to accommodate the improvements, farm yard, or topographical features will be permitted.

- (b) At the discretion of the Subdivision Authority, lots may also be larger, where it has been demonstrated by the applicant, to the satisfaction of the subdivision authority that the larger lot or parcel has been requested to include land that otherwise would be a small area of the remaining farm unit less than 60 m (200 ft.) in width, between the lot and a boundary of the quarter section or adjacent to a road.

5.2.6 Normally, a total maximum of 10.1 ha (25.0 ac) will be allowed for separation per quarter section. (See **Figure 3**)

5.2 Subdivision of Land

- (a) However, at the discretion of the subdivision authority, where a quarter section contains two (2) oversized farmsteads, as defined within this Plan, a total of 12.1 ha (30.0 ac) may be permitted to be subdivided from a quarter section to accommodate the two (2) oversized farmsteads. In such cases, a Real Property Report or Building Site Certificate prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor, will be required to verify the locations of all improvements, site features, and proposed boundaries. (See **Figure 4**)
- (i) If the Real Property Report or Building Site Certificate does not demonstrate that the additional land is required to accommodate the topographical features or improvements then the additional lands will not be permitted.

Figure 3. Maximum Separation per Quarter Section.

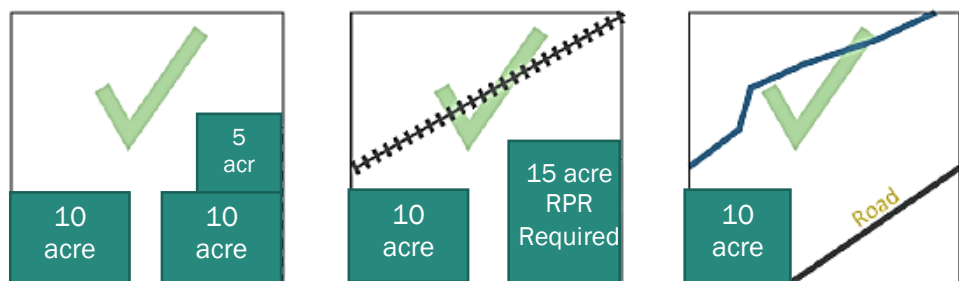


Figure 4. Oversize Farmstead Separations.



- 5.2.7 Lots which include areas described as “pan handles” (lengthy narrow sections leading to a wider development site), shall not be approved by the Subdivision Authority. Exceptions to this policy shall be allowed, if in the opinion of the subdivision authority, the proposed subdivision does not interfere with an existing agricultural operation and:

5.2 Subdivision of Land

- (a) The subdivision is to separate an existing farmstead from the balance of the quarter section; and
- (b) The lengthy narrow section is directly adjacent to the property line or quarter section line, whichever the case may be; or
- (c) The lengthy narrow section is at least 100 m from the property line or quarter section line, whichever the case may be.

5.2.8 County Council's consideration of Land Use Bylaw amendments for multi-lot development will include the following criteria:

- (a) The site should possess features such as trees, ravines, hilly terrain or other topographical features that would provide an attractive residential environment. When the amendment is to allow a currently vacant parcel from a quarter section, the site should not include cultivated land or good quality agricultural land. Where a site is fully or partially treed, all possible means will be undertaken to retain the maximum amount of tree cover.
- (b) The density of development shall be directly related to the development capability of the land resources, such as potable water supply, topography, vegetation, soil, and drainage. In this regard, proponents for multi-lot and residential development may be required to provide the County with an assessment of environmental constraints on the site and the means whereby negative impacts on the natural environment may be mitigated.
- (c) Unless the proposed parcel is for the second or third parcel to be subdivided from a quarter section, access to individual lots will be provided by internal roads or service roads developed to standards acceptable to the County, and not directly onto Provincial Highways or County grid roads.
- (d) There shall be an adequate supply of potable water for the development as proposed. The supply may be provided by wells or by other options, such as by hauling or by communal systems, in accordance with Provincial regulations. If the well option is to be considered, the Council will ask that the report required under the Water Act for multi-lot residential subdivisions be provided at the Land Use Bylaw amendment stage for its consideration. If the communal system is to be considered, Council will require that the creation or expansion of such systems be undertaken at the developer's cost, and not at the County's cost.
- (e) Sanitary sewage shall be treated and/or disposed of in accordance with Provincial requirements. In this regard, the Council will ask that information be provided at the Land Use Bylaw amendment stage for its consideration. If a communal system is to be considered, Council will require that the creation or expansion of such systems be undertaken at the developer's cost, and not at the County's cost.

5.2 Subdivision of Land

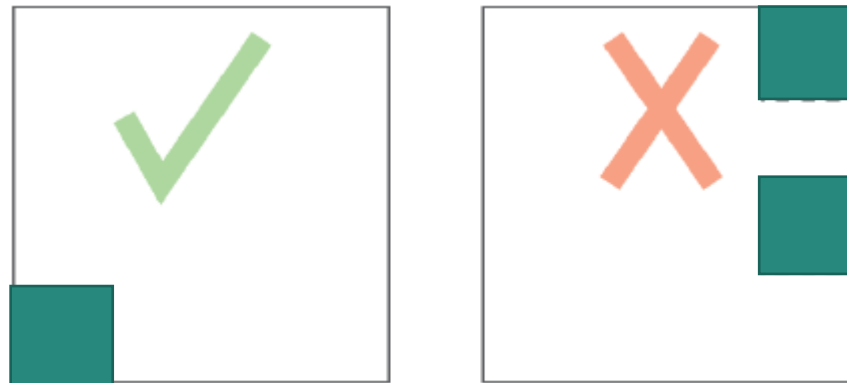
5.2.9 Residential Development

- (a) The County of Vermilion River will provide opportunities for conservation residential development by applying responsible residential subdivision and development practices, consistent with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw.
 - (i) Residential subdivision or development shall not normally be allowed:
 - 1. within an area likely to be subjected to high levels of noise from industry, transportation facilities, or other sources of noise;
 - 2. in close proximity to a resource extraction operation;
 - 3. within a known 1 in 100 year flood plain; or
 - 4. within the minimum distance separation between a single dwelling and a confined feeding operation as determined through the use of Schedule 1 of the Standards and Administration Regulation adopted pursuant to the Agricultural Operation Practices Act; or
 - 5. adjacent to river banks, unless the banks are certified as being stable by an engineer prior to development, or, alternatively, unless the land owner takes all responsibility for the impact of any bank instability currently or in the future.
 - (ii) Residential subdivisions should be located in proximity to gas, electrical, and telephone lines which have existing spare capacity to sustain the additional usage.
 - (iii) Residential subdivisions shall have direct access to existing maintained roads. Multi-lot residential subdivisions shall be encouraged to locate in proximity to paved County roads or provincial highways.
 - (iv) Where a subdivision for residential purposes is proposed, the developer shall be required to enter into a development agreement with the County wherein the developer agrees to be responsible for all the costs associated with the subdivision and development.
- (b) Residential development will be prohibited in those areas which are too close to sour gas facilities, in accordance with Provincial legislation and regulations, in accordance with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw.
- (c) Multi-lot residential subdivisions should be clustered or grouped to reduce potential land use conflicts and minimize service costs.
 - (i) Multi-lot non-residential subdivisions and developments shall meet the applicable policies under **Section 3.0** of this Plan.

5.2.10 Farmsteads

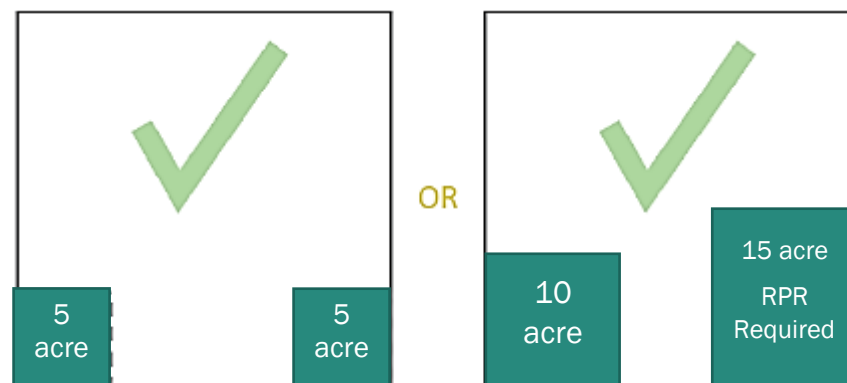
- (a) Once a farmstead has been subdivided from a quarter section, the subdivided farmstead shall be considered a Residential Use for the purposes of this Plan and subject to the regulations of the applicable Land Use District within the County's Land Use Bylaw.
- (i) Only one vacant lot separation or abandoned farmstead separation for Residential Use will be allowed per quarter section without requiring an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5. Vacant Lot Subdivision or Abandoned Farmstead Separation.



- (ii) Vacant subdivisions shall normally be located within those portions of a titled area which consist of the poorest quality agricultural land which is still developable within the quarter section.

Figure 6. Farmstead Separations.



5.2.11 Non-Residential Development

- (a) The County of Vermilion River will provide opportunities for cluster non-residential development by applying responsible residential subdivision and development practices, consistent with the provisions in the County's Land Use Bylaw.

5.3 Cultural Landscapes

- (i) Multi-lot non-residential subdivisions should be clustered or grouped to reduce potential land use conflicts and minimize service costs.
 - 1. Multi-lot non-residential subdivisions and developments shall meet the applicable policies under **Section 3.0** of this Plan.

5.3 Cultural Landscapes

The County of Vermilion River includes unique natural features and rich landscapes. The County of Vermilion River places value on the County's significant cultural landscapes. The County supports the UNESCO World Heritage Committee definition of Cultural Landscapes:

"Cultural Landscapes represent the combined works of nature and man. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces both external and internal." (UNESCO/ICMOS, 1995,np)

5.3.1 The County will encourage the preservation of significant cultural landscapes throughout the County.

- (a) The County will require Heritage Resource Impact Assessments to be included with proposed subdivision and development applications in locations where the proposal may impact significant cultural landscapes.
- (b) The County will encourage the use of historic resources to promote tourism, where appropriate.
- (c) The County will require that proposed subdivisions and developments on main streets of urban areas protect built heritage and enhance the historic significance and character of these areas.

5.4 Environmental Management

The County of Vermilion River includes a range of valuable and unique environmental features. This natural capital supports not only the County's ecosystem but also the economic, social and cultural systems throughout the County. Recognizing that a successful and sustainable future is dependent on the vitality of all of the interconnected systems (built and natural environment, economic, social and cultural) the County has adopted a strong approach, for environmental management.

The County recognizes that the goal of environmental protection cannot mean total ecological integrity. Simply put, a municipality cannot reasonably expect to maintain the full structure of the ecosystem and still have roads and buildings. Rather the goal must be the achievement of an environment which does not show symptoms of stress such as:

5.4 Environmental Management

- Decreased water quality; and/or
- Significantly reduced biodiversity.

The County supports a Low Net Negative Environmental Impact approach to environmental management that will help to ensure that over all, the County's natural and built heritage and the processes that connect them will prosper well into the future. The goal is to ensure that the cumulative impact of development decisions affecting the ecological, social and heritage assets of the County will be mitigated to ensure that any negative environmental impacts are as low as is reasonably possible. Adopting a low net environmental impact approach to environmental management allows the County to encourage sustainable development in all areas without unduly impacting ecosystem health, working landscapes or the County's cultural landscapes.

The following objective and policies have been adopted by the County, relating to environmental management.

- 5.4.1 The County will Identify and provide for the preservation of significant ecological sites throughout the County.
- (a) The County will encourage the protection, of native vegetation and biodiversity in agricultural land management through support of such programs as ALUS, Cow's and Fish, Agricultural Service Board, and similar.
 - (b) Wildlife habitat protection practices are encouraged through identification and conservation of natural areas such as woodlots, wetlands, ravine systems and creeks/rivers.
 - (c) The County will endeavour to establish environmental quality goals to direct future development within the County and to provide specific points of reference for facilitating management decision making.
 - (d) The County shall require an Environmental Impact Assessment or evaluation related to a proposed development that may have an impact on an identified natural or environmentally sensitive feature.
 - (e) The County will endeavour to identify cumulative impact issues and set goals to mitigate and restore identified issues, consistent with a Regional Plan. Once the goals are set, approval for new projects will be approved with reference to these limits.
 - (f) The County will work with provincial and non-government partners to identify and monitor established wetland and upland quality goal to determine if development and County operations are within the established goals. Monitoring is critical for evaluating the suitability of developments in different areas over time and will help to ensure the accuracy of predictions regarding future states and to refine land use and development policies and regulations.

5.5 Servicing Planning and Management

- 5.4.2 Development on sandy or unstable soil may only be allowed if measures to control erosion are implemented, to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.

5.5 Servicing Planning and Management

- 5.5.1 The County of Vermilion River will develop and adopt Management Plans, Master Plans, Area Structure Plans, and Strategies that align with the vision and direction of the County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and the Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS) that can offer developers and prospective homeowners predictability in terms of the areas identified for future growth and extension of infrastructure.

- (a) The County will develop and implement:

- (ii) an Infrastructure Master Plan,
- (iii) a Transportation Master Plan,
- (iv) a Community Services (water/sewer) Master Plan,
- (v) a Community Facilities (cemeteries/libraries/open space/recreation) Master Plan, and
- (vi) a Storm Water Master Plan

to support current infrastructure needs and to address future identified growth and development areas. Until such Master Plans are in place, implement interim Infrastructure Management Strategies that focus on maximizing the existing network performance, minimizing overall County risks and adhering to current County Standards and policies.

- (b) The County will develop and implement an Economic Development Master Plan to encourage, promote, and support a competitive, diverse, and adaptable local economy that creates a hospitable and attractive environment for businesses and encourages growth.
- (c) The County will develop and implement a Cultural Master Plan that provides an understanding and appreciation of the County's history and culture, including features such as historic sites, sites of local significance, and any notable structures. The Plan is to promote and protect heritage places, which provide a strong sense of identity and place.
- (d) The County will develop and implement an Environmental Management Plan supportive of the guiding principles outlined within the MDP. The Plan should identify, prioritize and establish management practices for sites of environmental significance within the County.

- 5.5.2 The County of Vermilion River will enact Responsible Subdivision and Development Practices through the establishment of policies and

5.5 Servicing Planning and Management

procedures that give due regard to federal, provincial, and municipal requirements and that promote community vitality.

- (a) Subdivision and development proposals shall meet the requirements under the Municipal Government Act, the Subdivision and Development Regulation, and the applicable provisions under the County's Land Use Policy at the discretion of the relevant Authority.
- (b) The County shall ensure that the distribution and timing of future development coincides, and is contiguous with, infrastructure improvements.
- (c) The County shall ensure that both subdivision and development meet or exceed the standards outlined within the County's General Municipal Servicing Standards. Standards should be reviewed and updated along with other County regulatory policies to coincide with innovations in the industry.

5.5.3 The County of Vermilion River will support an ecosystem approach that follows Eco-Logical concepts and components consistent with provincial regulation, Land Use Policies, and other applicable statutory plans.

- (a) Developers and service providers are encouraged to incorporate Ecosystem-Based Mitigation in infrastructure projects to capitalize on meaningful conservation priorities and opportunities that may be vanishing or becoming prohibitively expensive over time, increasing the cost-effectiveness of the mitigation.
 - (i) ecosystem-based mitigation is hereby defined as "the process of restoring, creating, enhancing, and preserving habitat and other ecosystem features in conjunction with or in advance of projects in areas where environmental needs and the potential environmental contributions have been determined to be greatest."
- (b) Simultaneously, advanced mitigation should be targeted to fulfill regulatory requirements early on in the development of infrastructure projects, ensuring efficient project delivery by avoiding costly delays that can sometimes occur with permitting processes.
- (c) Eco-Logical ecosystem approach goals to shall be met when developing infrastructure, which are:
 - (i) conservation: Protection of larger scale, multi-resource ecosystems;
 - (ii) connectivity: Reduced habitat fragmentation;
 - (iii) predictability: Knowledge that commitments made by all parties will be honored: that the planning and conservation agreements, results, and outcomes will occur as negotiated; and
 - (iv) transparency: Better public and stakeholder involvement at all key stages in order to establish credibility, build trust, and streamline infrastructure planning and development.

5.6 Transportation and Infrastructure

- (d) Subdivision and development proposals should incorporate Ecological concepts and components promote an ecosystem approach to comprehensively manage land, water, and biotic and abiotic resources to equitably promote conservation and sustainable use in all newly developed and adopted statutory plans.
- (i) changing priorities, opportunities and threats should be accommodated over time and across landscapes through an adaptive feedback loop that includes:
 - 1. Integrated Planning, for determining regional ecosystem conservation priorities.
 - 2. Mitigation Options, these are recommended approaches that may be used to offset adverse impacts.
 - 3. Performance Measurements serve to assess whether the outcomes met the goals of conservation, connectivity, predictability and transparency as infrastructure projects addressed in the ecosystem approach are completed.

5.6 Transportation and Infrastructure

The development of transportation and utility systems can have a significant impact on land use within the County of Vermilion River. Although the County does not have the authority to regulate Provincial Highways, pipelines, transmission lines and similar installations that are under provincial control in many instances, Council is given an opportunity to comment on the proposed locations of these facilities. It is Council's intention to encourage the appropriate authorities to have regard for the policies of this Plan.

As well, the County is participating in the development of The Alberta Central East Water Corporation, a regional water system, tying in water supply services from Vegreville to Vermillion and from Two Hills to Blackfoot. It is the intent of this Plan that development be directed, as much as is reasonable, to the areas serviced by the system, and that new developments near the system be required to connect to the system.

The following objectives and policies have been adopted by the County relating to transportation and municipal servicing infrastructure.

- 5.6.1 The fragmentation of working associated with the development of linear transportation, communication, or utility facilities and services shall be discouraged.
 - (a) County Council shall encourage transportation, communication, or utility facilities and services to locate so that they:
 - (i) minimize impacts on working landscapes;
 - (ii) minimize the fragmentation of land, and/or the creation of fragmented parcels;

5.6 Transportation and Infrastructure

- (iii) follow road allowances wherever feasible;
 - (iv) use corridors to integrate a number of utilities;
 - (v) minimize disruption of recreation, wildlife, and historic resources; and
 - (vi) avoid disruption of existing or future urban centres.
 - (b) Where land is taken for roads, rail lines, pipelines or other transmission lines, the County shall endorse only those proposals which minimize fragmentation.
- 5.6.2 Reduction and mitigation of conflicts between transportation, communications or utility facilities and other land uses is encouraged.
- (a) County Council shall encourage high-voltage power lines and high-pressure pipelines to locate away from residential areas.
 - (b) Council shall consider the establishment of a Dangerous Goods Route when Council feels that dangerous goods are being transported on County roads in sufficient quantity to be a significant hazard to the travelling public.
 - (c) Where proposed transportation and utility lines and facilities may adversely affect adjacent lands or land uses, the County shall recommend or require as a condition of development of the line or facility such buffering as deemed appropriate to minimize any negative impacts.
 - (d) The County may require future subdivision or development proposals adjacent to transportation and utility lines and facilities to provide such buffering as deemed appropriate.
 - (e) The County shall encourage wireless communication facilities to consider good planning and design so as to have the least impact on the natural environment, and the least visual impact on nearby residents. The County shall also encourage the developers of wireless communication facilities to provide an opportunity for public consultation.
 - (f) The co-location of multiple devices on wireless communication facilities is preferred. Where appropriate, new facilities should be built to standards to accommodate multiple devices. Individual facilities are strongly discouraged. Should co-locations not prove feasible, the clustering of wireless communication facilities is desired.
 - (g) The roads shown on Map 1 as Arterial Roads shall be considered as arterial roads and developed to arterial road standards relating to width, grades, site lines and access. The roads shown on Map 1 as Collector Roads shall be considered as collector roads and developed to collector road standards relating to width, grades, site lines and access. Service roads for Arterial and Collector Roads shall be considered to be local internal subdivision roads and developed to

5.6 Transportation and Infrastructure

appropriate standards. All other roads in the County shall be considered either local County Roads, or local internal subdivision roads, and developed to appropriate standards.

- (h) Direct access from private property onto Arterial Roads shall normally not be allowed.
- (i) Direct access from private property onto Collector Roads shall normally be limited.
- (j) In order to minimize safety hazards and land use conflicts around airports, the County shall encourage the regulation of building heights in the areas around all publicly licensed and paved airports in the County.

5.6.3 The County of Vermilion River will ensure that municipal services and utilities are provided in an economical and efficient manner and are reflective of need, environmental constraints, land use considerations and existing infrastructure.

- (a) Subdivision and development proposals shall provide and maintain infrastructure capacity in line with growth or decline demands.
- (b) Service roads adjacent to Provincial Highways in the County shall be considered as local internal subdivision roads and developed to appropriate standards
- (c) The County shall require that land use adjacent to the Provincial Highways and their associated accesses conform to the Access Management Guidelines as outlined by Alberta Transportation. As well, the County's system of collector and arterial roads shall be afforded a similar level of protection from encroachment and proliferation of direct access.
- (d) All municipal infrastructure systems, such as new roads, sewage collection and water distribution systems created as a result of private development, which may include dedication to the County or subdivision, shall only be assumed by the municipality if the system has been constructed or upgraded to a standard which is acceptable to the County and which meets or exceeds all appropriate Provincial and Federal standards.
- (e) Should a regional piped water supply system be developed, the County will include as one of the criteria in making its land use decisions (such as decisions respecting the approval of multi-lot country residential development) based on whether the development is to be provided with water supply services from the regional system. As well, the County will encourage landowners near the regional system to connect to the system.
- (f) The County shall implement a program of maintenance and improvement for local roads designed to enhance traffic flow. Through the subdivision and development processes, the County shall

5.6 Transportation and Infrastructure

endeavour to make the most efficient use of existing roadway facilities. Developments with the potential for substantial road impact (high traffic volumes or heavy trucks) will be directed to those roads that are designed and constructed to accommodate such development.

- (g) Direct access from private property onto Provincial Highways shall be discouraged and limited wherever possible, especially where access onto local roads is available. Application for subdivision in the Agricultural Use Area will be specifically designed to minimize accesses onto Provincial Highways and local arterial roads through the use of service roads or redesigning the subdivision boundaries to redirect accesses onto local roads. The cost of consolidation or service roads and the costs of resolving all of Alberta Transportation's concerns with respect to access to the Provincial Highway will be the responsibility of the developer.
- (h) Development will be encouraged to utilize identified haul roads and enter into haul route agreements with the County.
- (i) The County will encourage rail service to future industrial areas to improve industrial developments' accessibility to markets.

5.6.4 The County of Vermilion River will encourage other levels of government and their agencies to provide safe, reliable transportation routes through the County.

- (a) The County will encourage the Province of Alberta to improve and maintain highways through the County connecting to major industrial and commercial centres in the province.
- (b) The County will encourage the federal government, its agencies, and rail operators to improve and maintain existing rail corridors to ensure safety, and to encourage economic opportunities for rail-dependent industries within the County and in the wider region.
- (c) The County will encourage agencies and rail operators to improve railway crossings within the County.

5.6.5 The County will ensure that all subdivision and development conforms to municipal and provincial infrastructure and servicing standards.

- (a) Subdivision shall not be allowed where access to graded and graveled or paved roads in good condition does not exist, or where construction of a roadway and access to then-current County standards to the site is not undertaken by the landowner/developer.
- (b) The County will ensure that subdivision and development proposals account for the timely provision of public facilities and services relative to the demand for them.
- (c) The County will develop and adopt a concurrency management system and policy to keep track of the impacts of new development on

5.7 Recreation

transportation and community infrastructure in order to ensure there is enough capacity to serve each proposed development.

5.7 Recreation

As the demand for recreational land for both public and private use increases, so does the need for planned recreational facilities and areas. This Plan recognizes and encourages local recreational uses based on the capabilities of an area to sustain intensive or extensive development. Recreation development should be located in areas and under circumstances where it does not adversely affect the agricultural economy and community, or the natural environment.

Recreation can also form an important component of the tourism potential of the region, and is to be encouraged as much as possible within the term of this Plan, provided, of course, that the tourist activities or facilities do not threaten the potential development of additional economic activities, the agricultural economy and community, or the natural environment.

The following objectives and policies have been adopted by the County relating to recreation in the County.

5.7.1 Recreational developments are encouraged to locate in areas which will not impact working landscapes.

(a) Council shall encourage the development of public serving recreational facilities/uses within that are:

- (i) compatible with the capabilities of a site or surrounding areas; and/or
- (ii) the site is located near or adjacent to a lake or river, if the proponent can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Development Authority, that the proposal is compatible with the lake/river environment.

5.7.2 The County will ensure that recreational uses are compatible with the environment and surrounding land uses.

(a) Subdivision and development for recreational purposes shall occur in accordance with the following design principles:

- (i) the density of development shall be directly related to the development capability of the land resource;
- (ii) the design shall be directly related to the site's topography vegetation, soil, and drainage characteristics. In this regard, the development proposal shall include a detailed analysis of the environmental constraints of the site and the means by which the proposal will protect and harmonize with the natural environment;
- (iii) the design shall protect wildlife habitat; and
- (iv) the design shall protect, maintain and re-establish, where necessary, cover, and maximize the quality of the natural features.

5.7 Recreation

- (b) As the Canadian Pacific Lloydminster/Star rail line corridor is abandoned by Canadian Pacific, the County will require that contaminated soils and other materials be removed from the right-of-way. If the County is to acquire the right-of-way, this removal will occur before the County acquires it. The County may retain the corridor for future utility options and may allow for some limited local recreational use of parts of the right-of-way; but limit use so as to not negatively impact agricultural or residential communities along the right-of-way and, further, so that there are no long term financial impacts to the County.
- (c) Parts of the corridor may be incorporated into adjoining agricultural operations, provided that environmental issues related to the historic application of environmentally hazardous materials to the rail right-of-way are addressed satisfactorily.

5.7.3 Recreational developments must minimize associated municipal costs.

- (a) The County shall require the proponent of a recreational activity to identify all municipal costs associated with the development. The assignment of these costs shall be the basis for an agreement to be entered into as a condition of subdivision approval or the issuance of a development permit. Normally, however, all development servicing costs associated with the development will be carried by the proponent.
- (b) Subdivision and development proposals for recreational uses shall occur in accordance with the following design principles:
 - (i) the density of development shall be directly related to the development capability of the land resource;
 - (ii) the design shall be directly related to the site's topography vegetation, soil, and drainage characteristics. In this regard, the development proposal shall include a detailed analysis of the environmental constraints of the site and the means by which the proposal will protect and harmonize with the natural environment; and
 - (iii) the design shall protect, maintain and re-establish, where necessary, cover, and maximize the quality of the natural features.
- (i) In all instances, any financial involvement in recreational trails by the County will be considered by Council of the County on a project by project basis.

5.7.4 The County will protect and encourage trail development while also protecting adjacent land owners from potential negative impacts through the careful regulation of the recreational use of rights-of-way.

- (a) Multi-lot residential developments will be required to provide multi-modal trail networks to the satisfaction of the Subdivision Authority at time of subdivision.

5.8 Tourism

- (b) Where trails are provided as part of a multi-lot development, buffering measures within the trail right of way will also be provided to reduce noise, dust and the potential for trespassing on private property as a result of trail use.

5.8 Tourism

The County of Vermilion River supports tourism initiatives and encourages the development of local hospitality operations, museums, churches, cultural centers, golf courses, and other special events including special event facilities.

Bed and breakfast establishments and guest ranches are becoming a more significant component of the provincial tourism industry. The Land Use Bylaw should recognize that such establishments are not typical home-based businesses but should be recognized as a separate use category.

The following objectives and policies have been adopted by the County relating to tourism in the County.

- 5.8.1 The County of Vermilion River will support and promote cultural tourism initiatives within the County.
 - (a) The County will encourage the utilization and/or development of cultural, historic and recreational resources to promote tourism, where appropriate.
- 5.8.2 The County of Vermilion River will support and promote existing tourism destinations within the County
 - (a) The County will endeavour to promote existing tourism destinations within the County and nearby recreational tourism opportunities.
- 5.8.3 The County of Vermilion River will cooperate with regional partners to encourage local and regional tourism.
 - (a) The County will co-operate with area tourism groups, municipal neighbours, and tourism zones in promoting local tourism linkages with neighbouring communities.
 - (b) The County shall encourage private sector developers to facilitate tourism development, and may assist in accessing government funding programs to develop new, or upgrade existing tourism attractions.
 - (c) The County shall continue to collaborate with adjacent and neighbouring municipalities to fulfill the Municipal Government Act requirements for Intermunicipal Development Plans and Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks while proactively building collaborative relationships.
- 5.8.4 The County of Vermilion River will support and encourage new tourism developments within the region.

5.9 Agriculture

- (a) The County will promote public awareness of significant historic and cultural sites in the region will be promoted as part of heritage tourism efforts.
- (b) The County will support tourism and recreation opportunities within the County and the region such as ecotourism, enhancements to existing trails, new trail development, historic and cultural areas, and parks and campgrounds that respect agricultural land uses and environmentally sensitive lands.

5.9 Agriculture

Agricultural, forestry, and resource lands make up the working landscape of the County of Vermilion River and generate significant employment, and are central to the collective history, culture, and sense of place of the County's residents.

These working landscapes within the County must be carefully and equitably managed in order to retain the integrity and value of these areas for the benefit of future generations while supporting economic growth within the agricultural community.

In order to encourage the future viability of a diverse range of agricultural operations within the County, the Municipal Development Plan includes objectives and policies to not only protect, where appropriate, but also enhance the agri-based economy and rural lifestyle.

5.9.1 The County of Vermilion River will ensure that working landscapes remain an integral and viable component of the regional economy and rural social structure.

- (a) The minimum parcel size for Extensive Agricultural Use, as defined in the County's Land Use Bylaw, shall normally be a quarter section or remainder no less than 32.3 hectares (80 acres), but this minimum size may be adjusted, at the discretion of the relevant Authority, in order to:
 - (i) allow a parcel to follow natural boundaries; or
 - (ii) allow for existing or proposed subdivisions for public or quasi-public uses; or
 - (iii) adjust proportionally where the original quarter section title was less than 64.7 hectares (160 acres).
- (b) Good quality agricultural lands shall be mostly conserved for working landscapes, including agriculture, forestry and resource extraction.
- (c) Rural industrial uses will be allowed in the manner provided for in the County's Land Use Bylaw.
- (d) Uses other than Agricultural Uses, may be considered on agricultural lands in accordance with the County's Land Use Bylaw.

5.9 Agriculture

- (e) The County will give due consideration to the protection of good quality agricultural land and the location of existing agricultural operations when applications for Land Use Bylaw amendments or subdivision are being determined.
- (f) The County should develop and adopt a Transfer Development Credits scheme consistent with the provisions under the Alberta Land Stewardship Act.

5.9.2 Good stewardship of the land through the provision of information and the use of beneficial management practices will be encouraged to minimize negative impacts of agricultural operations on the quality of the environment and adjacent land uses.

- (a) The County will provide information to the agricultural community regarding beneficial management practices (BMPs) ¹ and other conservation practices that conserve or enhance the health of soil resources.
- (b) Input shall be provided to the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) in responding to application for new or expanded Confined Feeding Operations (CFOs) based on the technical and locational merits of each application. The County's policy is that all such confined feeding operations and manure storage facilities must fully satisfy all the requirements and regulations adopted under that Act, specifically the minimum distance separation requirements and the land base requirements.
- (c) Minimum distance separations for CFOs shall conform to standards set out in the Agricultural Operations Practices Act.
- (d) In addition to the minimum distance separation requirements provided through regulations adopted under the Agricultural Operation Practices Act, the County's policy is that confined feeding operations requiring registration or approval and manure storage facilities requiring authorization under that Act will be discouraged within 2.4 km (1.5 miles) of the corporate boundaries of any urban municipality within the County of Vermilion River or within 0.8 km (0.5 miles) of the Community Areas designated on Map 1, which areas shall be considered an urban fringe when calculating the regulations approved under the Agricultural Operation Practices Act.
- (e) CFO's will be discouraged from locating in environmentally sensitive areas where slope instability and or groundwater contamination may be of concern.

¹ Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) are a practice, or system of practices, designed to minimize the impact of agricultural activities on natural resource while at the same time maintain economic viability of the agricultural industry. The Province of Alberta defines a BMP as "any management practice that reduces or eliminates an environmental risk."

5.10 Resource Extraction

- (f) In addition, for the purposes of implementing the regulations adopted under the Agricultural Operation Practices Act, the policies of Area Structure Plans within the County of Vermilion River respecting confined feeding operations shall apply in addition to the Municipal Development Plan policies.

5.10 Resource Extraction

Sand, gravel, coal, oil and gas are important non-renewable resources in the County of Vermilion River. In order to benefit the County's and the region's economy, these resources must be protected and extracted efficiently, but not at the risk of irreparably damaging working or cultural landscapes within the County. Therefore, it is the intent of this Plan to encourage the utilization of extractive resources in areas of least detrimental impact and to reclaim the land for other productive uses.

The County recognizes the significant benefits resource extraction provides locally and regionally. Resource extraction activities can result in increased noise, traffic, dust, and other nuisance issues. Certain developments may not be suitable in proximity to resource extraction uses. For the life of this Plan, the County wishes to prioritize resource extraction, and may limit certain other developments or land uses which may be incompatible.

The following objectives and policies have been adopted by the County relating resource extraction in the County.

5.10.1 The County of Vermilion River may encourage appropriate resource extraction industries, where appropriate.

- (a) The developer of a resource extraction industry or activity shall be required at the time of application for a development permit, to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County, that any necessary provincial permits and approvals pertinent to the development have been obtained.
- (b) Any resource extraction industry that requires a development permit, unless exempted by Provincial legislation, shall enter into and abide by a development agreement with the County, to deal, among other matters, with road use and their maintenance.
- (c) Development permits for sand, gravel, clay or marl extraction shall not be issued until any necessary approvals are obtained in accordance with Provincial legislation.
- (d) Development permits for gravel extraction should be issued on the basis of whether the proposed use will fully and efficiently utilize the capability of the deposit. Deposits suitable for construction aggregates should be reserved for that use.

5.10.2 The County of Vermilion River will ensure that land disturbed by resource extraction activity is reclaimed to an acceptable standard.

5.10 Resource Extraction

- (a) The County should may require development agreements in connection with sand, gravel and other mineral extraction operations and should make provisions for the:
 - (i) reclamation of the land that was disturbed to its former agricultural capability or to a post-extractive use whichever Council feels is more beneficial;
 - (ii) control of on-site noise, dust and weeds;
 - (iii) storage of topsoil;
 - (iv) separation of the resource extractive operation from any multi-lot residential subdivision, hamlet, or urban municipality with a suitable open space buffer;
 - (v) designation of all aggregate haul roads to reduce noise, excessive maintenance costs, and dust problems; and
 - (vi) if required by the County, the provision of security such as an irrevocable letter of credit to ensure reclamation will be completed.

5.10.3 Resource extraction development must minimize associated municipal costs.

- (a) The County will not approve a development permit application or approach permit for resource extraction until the developer enters into a haul road agreement with The County of Vermilion River.
- (b) The developer of a natural gas or oil well site shall be required to obtain approval from the County regarding the construction, upgrading and maintenance of access roads.
- (c) Resource industries that utilize County infrastructure shall be required to participate in the maintenance and upgrading of that infrastructure if the need arises, as determined by the County.

5.10.4 Resource extraction and resource processing developments should generate a low net negative impact on working landscapes and cultural landscapes.

- (a) Developers may be required to contact the Heritage Branch of the Alberta Government in order to determine if a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required.
- (b) If an Impact Assessment (HIA) is required and the HIA identifies the presence of heritage resources then the developer will be required to take appropriate mitigating measures, to the satisfaction of the appropriate provincial agency, prior to development approval.

5.10.5 Resource extraction developments and uses must manage and mitigate conflicts with incompatible or sensitive land uses.

- (a) The County will identify areas that may have high potential for resource extraction development, specifically areas of sand, gravel, and aggregate deposits.

5.11 Land Dedications

- (b) The County shall discourage development on land which has a high potential for resource extraction development, where the development would prevent subsequent extraction until the deposit has been removed and the land has been reclaimed.
- (c) The County shall encourage haul routes for resource extraction developments to be located in such a way as to minimize the impact on agricultural uses and existing residential developments.

5.11 Land Dedications

Subject to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, the Subdivision Authority may require the owner that a portion of the land subject to subdivision to be dedicated as reserve land.

Reserve land is dedicated at time of subdivision to serve different purposes, including the provision of public amenities and services, protection of land with development constraints, and the preservation of environmentally significant features. The Municipal Government Act also establishes the means for the acquisition, use, and disposal of Reserve Land.

Types of reserve land are:

- environmental reserve;
- municipal reserve;
- school reserve;
- municipal and school reserve;
- community services reserve; and
- conservation reserve.

Environment Reserves preserve those environmentally sensitive ecological features that require special attention when being considered for development. Such areas include lands subject to a flooding hazard, ravines, steep slopes, and areas subject to erosion. Council intends to have regard for these sensitive areas when making development decisions.

Municipal Reserves can be used by a municipality as public parks, public recreation areas, for school authority purposes, or as buffers between parcels of land that are used for different purposes. Depending on the circumstances, money may be taken by the County in lieu of Municipal Reserve dedication.

Another means of providing reserve land is the dedication of easements. Although, conservation easements cannot be taken by a municipality at time of subdivision, but can be utilized by a private land owner or a Municipality to protect significant environmental areas.

Environmental Reserves, Environmental Reserve Easements, and conservation Easements are three tools municipalities can use to ensure that:

- development does not occur on hazard lands;

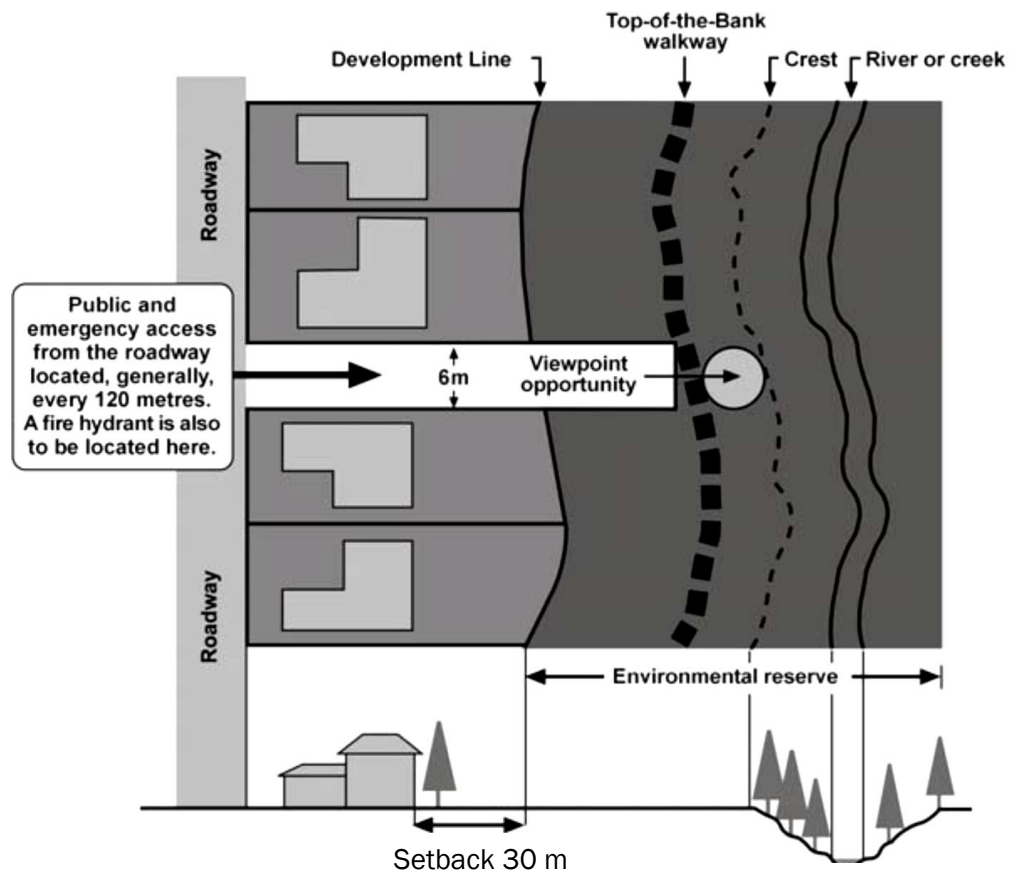
5.11 Land Dedications

- significant environmental areas are protected; and
- the public can access Significant Cultural Landscapes.

5.11.1 The County of Vermilion River will ensure the provision of adequate provision of reserve land consistent with provincial and municipal requirements to accommodate community facilities and services.

- (a) The County shall generally take the full amount of Reserves owing of environmental, municipal and school reserve dedication during the subdivision process, in accordance with the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and County Policy.
- (b) Where it is deemed that Municipal Reserve land is not necessary for the residents of the area, money-in-lieu shall be taken. The money-in-lieu shall be shared with school authorities in accordance with any agreements which may exist between the County and the school authorities, and the rest shall be utilized to acquire and develop tracts of desirable recreation areas in the County.
- (c) The County may require subdivision and development applications adjacent to water bodies and watercourses to prepare an engineering and/or geotechnical study to determine an adequate setback based on soil conditions and slope stability.
- (d) Municipal Reserves
 - (i) Municipal Reserve parcels in the County shall be:
 1. concentrated in a few large parcels on suitable sites rather than scattered through subdivisions; and
 2. evaluated and inventoried with the aim of making more efficient use of the Reserves through consolidation and/or sales.
 - (ii) Prior to disposing of any Municipal Reserve, Council shall review the applicability and effect of such disposition on surrounding land uses and the area's recreational potential.
 - (iii) Municipal Reserves may be required as an open space buffer of sufficient size and composition to act as a noise and visual barrier where required between disparate land uses.
- (e) Environmental Reserves and Setbacks
 - (i) An environmental reserve of not less than 30 m (98 ft.) in width from the high water mark of water bodies and/or the top of bank of lakes and rivers shall be required as a condition of subdivision approval. As a condition of development approval where there is no subdivision, a comparable setback of 30 m (98 ft.) shall be required from the high water mark of waterbodies and/or the top of bank of lakes and rivers to the wall of the nearest building. (See **Figure 7**)

Figure 7. Recommended Environmental Reserve Setback.



- (ii) Additional Reserve and/or setback may be required by the County based on the recommendations of any engineering and/or geotechnical study requested by the County. In these cases, the amount of reserves required will be determined using the guidelines for Environmental Reserve width developed by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development.
- (iii) Where Environmental Reserve Lands are not necessary to provide public access to the feature, the County shall, at the time of subdivision, consider the option of an Environmental Reserve Easement as provided for in the Municipal Government Act.
- (f) School Reserves
 - (i) School Reserves shall be provided at the time of subdivision in accordance with agreements between the County and the relevant School Divisions.
- (g) Conservation Reserves and Easements
 - (i) The County may consider proposals to designate future Conservation Areas.

5.11 Land Dedications

(ii) At the discretion of the subdivision approving authority, the use of Conservation Easements may be considered as an alternative to traditional environmental reserve during the subdivision process. The use and control of these features and areas shall be clearly stated in the easement agreement. Conservation easements are provided for under the Alberta Land Stewardship Act and the Land Stewardship Act.

(iii) A Conservation Easement may be considered to preserve significant natural features and areas that do not qualify as Environmental Reserve under the Municipal Government Act. The use and control of these features and areas shall be clearly stated in the easement agreement.

5.11.2 The County of Vermilion River will conserve and protect significant cultural landscapes and environmentally sensitive ecological features for future generations.

(a) Spatial buffers or setbacks shall be maintained between uses that may be incompatible for any reason.



PART 6.0

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE

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6.1 Operational Excellence

6.0 RESPONSIBLE GOVERNANCE

The County of Vermilion River is a high-performing local government organization. We know what the community expects, we deliver services as defined, and we deliver outstanding customer satisfaction.

6.1 Operational Excellence

- 6.1.1 County Council will ensure that the County operates in a fiscally sound manner now and into the future by promoting positive change, transparency, and a best-practices, collaborative approach that allows the County to be accountable to its residents.
- (a) Council will implement strategic decision making through clear land-use planning directives that enable growth that supports the future needs and vision of the County.
 - (b) Council will ensure the necessary resources and timeframes are in place to undertake land-use planning projects in a responsible, thorough and transparent manner.
 - (c) County Council should identify and apply a Land Use Assessment Ratio that facilitates service delivery, promotes investment, ensures competitive advantage, and meets the County's long-term financial expectations.

6.2 Environmental Leadership

- 6.2.1 The County of Vermilion River will encourage climate change adaptation strategies to reduce community vulnerability and minimize adverse effects on the environment, economy, and public health.
- (a) The County shall support and encourage the diversification of the energy supply for County residents and businesses through the use of Alternative Energy Systems, in accordance with the provisions under the County's Land Use Bylaw and federal and provincial regulations.
 - (b) The County will develop and adopt Climate Adaptation Policies for water & energy resources, ecosystems, and agriculture.

6.3 Partnerships

- 6.3.1 The County of Vermilion River will engage in cooperative and collaborative communication with municipal, regional and provincial partners.
- (a) The County's planning process must include and involve neighbouring municipalities. To that end the County of Vermilion River:
 - (i) will actively consult with any adjacent or nearby municipality during the consideration of amendments to this Plan, amendments to the Land Use Bylaw.

6.4 Annexations

- (ii) shall request comments from the adjacent municipality and shall give due consideration to such comments when evaluating a proposal for subdivisions, or when, in the opinion of the County of Vermilion River, a significantly discretionary development proposal for lands within 1.6 km (1 mile) of an incorporated urban centre or an adjacent rural municipality, in accordance with the provisions of the County's Land Use Bylaw.
 - 1. The approving authority will give careful consideration to any matters raised during this consultation; however, the County of Vermilion River will not be bound by the recommendations of the adjacent municipality, unless the County has agreed to do so as part of an approved Inter-Municipal Development Plan.
- (b) The County will collaborate with the urban municipalities within the County in the development and adoption of Intermunicipal Development Plans and Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks.
- (c) The County shall encourage partnerships between local businesses to support the sharing of information, infrastructure, logistics and by-products.
- (d) The County shall support appropriately located and sized home-based businesses, as they are a vital economic contributor and provide residents with a variety of lifestyle opportunities.
- (e) The County should collaborate with regional partners to identify opportunities to attract, expand or improve economic activity that supports the growth and expansion of value-added agriculture, manufacturing, advanced energy, transportation and logistics, where the associated development is strategically located, and emerging sectors.

6.4 Annexations

- 6.4.1 The County of Vermilion River recognizes the periodic need for urban expansion of urban centres and will support annexation negotiation process that are undertaken in a positive, orderly, timely, and agreed upon manner, once a clear and present need is established through a Joint Growth Study.
- 6.4.2 The County shall engage in a Joint Growth Study prior to entering an annexation negotiation process with urban centres or adjacent municipalities.
- 6.4.3 County Council shall support only those annexation proposals that they feel are required and justified.
 - (a) In determining the timing, size, and location of an annexation area, the outcomes identified through a Joint Growth Study will be considered.

6.5 Interwoven Equity

6.4.4 A Joint Growth Study will serve to inform the annexation negotiation process regarding the following:

- (a) Justifiable and mutually agreeable current and future growth rates. Growth rates are defined at the rate at which land is consumed for residential, commercial, and industrial purposes normally expressed in acres per year over a 30-year horizon.
- (b) Availability and cost of servicing. The physical and economic feasibility of extending services to specific areas within the County in a logical, reasonable, and cost effective manner.
- (c) Adequacy of transportation systems to accommodate new development. Proposed annexation areas should be either serviced with road network or be able to be serviced with a logical extension of existing road networks.
- (d) Landownership patterns. Proposed annexations should follow legal boundaries or natural features where possible to avoid creating a fragmented pattern of landownership.
- (e) Local support. Proposed annexations should, as much as possible, have the concurrence of the landowners involved.
- (f) Consistent with local plans. Proposed annexations should be consistent with the policies of this IDP, the respective Municipal Development Plans, and any area structure plan or other study. Planning for annexations should consider a 30-year horizon for land needs.
- (g) Logical extension. Proposed annexations should be a logical extension of infrastructure networks and development patterns and may include developed areas.
- (h) Agricultural mill rates. Proposed annexations should not dramatically alter the taxes collected from agricultural lands within the annexation area simply because of annexation. The two municipalities may look at harmonizing their agricultural mill rates.
- (i) Any other matter that both municipal Councils consider necessary.

6.5 Interwoven Equity

6.5.1 The County of Vermilion River will plan for jobs/housing balance that provides a roughly equal number of jobs and housing units (households) within the County's commuter areas to improve access to employment opportunities for County residents.

- (a) The County will develop and adopt an Inclusionary Growth Strategy for the County.
- (b) The County should remove barriers in regulations to support innovative, sustainable, and responsible development practices.

6.5 Interwoven Equity

- (c) The County will ensure affordability by facilitating the production of housing at all price points.
 - (d) The County will promote diversity by providing for the development of a wide variety of housing types and formats.
 - (e) The County will ensure equity in the balance of market and affordable units in Plans and proposals.
- 6.5.2 The County of Vermilion River will promote environmental justice meaning the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
 - (a) The County will provide all communities and persons across the County with the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to decision making processes.
 - (b) The County will ensure healthy environments for all in which to live, learn, play, and work.
- 6.5.3 The County of Vermilion River will promote workforce diversity through the employment of a wide variety of people in terms of age, cultural background, physical ability, race and ethnicity, religion, and gender identity as an economic development strategy.
 - (a) The County shall plan for workforce diversity and development through the development and adoption of a Workforce Diversity Strategy that focuses on people rather than businesses; it attempts to enhance a region's economic stability and prosperity by providing opportunities for job creation that match existing skills within the local workforce or for training workers to meet the labor needs of local industries.
- 6.5.4 The County of Vermilion River will provide accessible and quality public services, infrastructure, and facilities in all communities within the County.
 - (a) The County will support an acceptable standard for infrastructure and facilities as necessary to maintain existing service levels.
 - (b) The County will identify capital improvement needs in community infrastructure and facilities in an effort to determine, prioritize and fund infrastructure upgrades and/or repair/replace obsolete or worn out facilities or infrastructure as required to obtain the strategic goals of the County's Strategic Plan and the Municipal Development Plan.
 - (c) The County will pursue coordinated investments through the development of a ten-year Capital Improvements Plan that is meant to guide a five-year Capital Improvements Program and annual budgeting processes for the County, which shall connect the capital improvement needs identified to forecasted revenues for the next ten years.

6.6 Accountability, Transparency and Public Engagement

- (i) The County should identify and prioritize municipal servicing investment based on the findings of infrastructure Life Cycle Costing.
- (d) The County should investigate and implement private/public funding mechanisms for significant public infrastructure investment.
- (a) The County will connect Plan implementation activities to the annual budgeting process.

6.6 Accountability, Transparency and Public Engagement

- 6.6.1 The County of Vermilion River is accountable to residents, businesses, stakeholders and visitors, and will conduct all matters related to County business in a transparent manner.
 - (b) The County will regularly evaluate and report on Plan implementation progress.
 - (c) The County will ensure adequate funding from both public and private sources for Plan implementation activities.
 - (d) The County may adjust the plan as necessary based on evaluation.
 - (e) The County should provide for improved levels of organizational communication and coordination through inter-departmental collaboration mechanisms.
- 6.6.2 The County of Vermilion River supports the solicitation, consideration, and utilization of public input and suggestions when making public decisions. The County of Vermilion River will ensure public engagement meets County Policy.
 - (a) The County will continue to provide public engagement opportunities after the Municipal Development Plan and associated Plans are adopted.
 - (b) The County will use a variety of communications channels to inform and involve the community.
 - (c) The County will improve access to information for all stakeholders.

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PART 7.0

DEFINITIONS

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7.0 DEFINITIONS

7.1 Interpretation

7.1.1 The following words, terms, and phrases, wherever they occur in this Plan have the meaning assigned to them as follows:

AGRICULTURAL LAND: Means Higher Capability Agricultural Land, as defined in the County's Land Use Bylaw.

AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS: Means an Agricultural Operation, as defined in the County's Land Use Bylaw.

AREA STRUCTURE PLAN: Means an Area Structure Plan, as defined in the County's Land Use Bylaw.

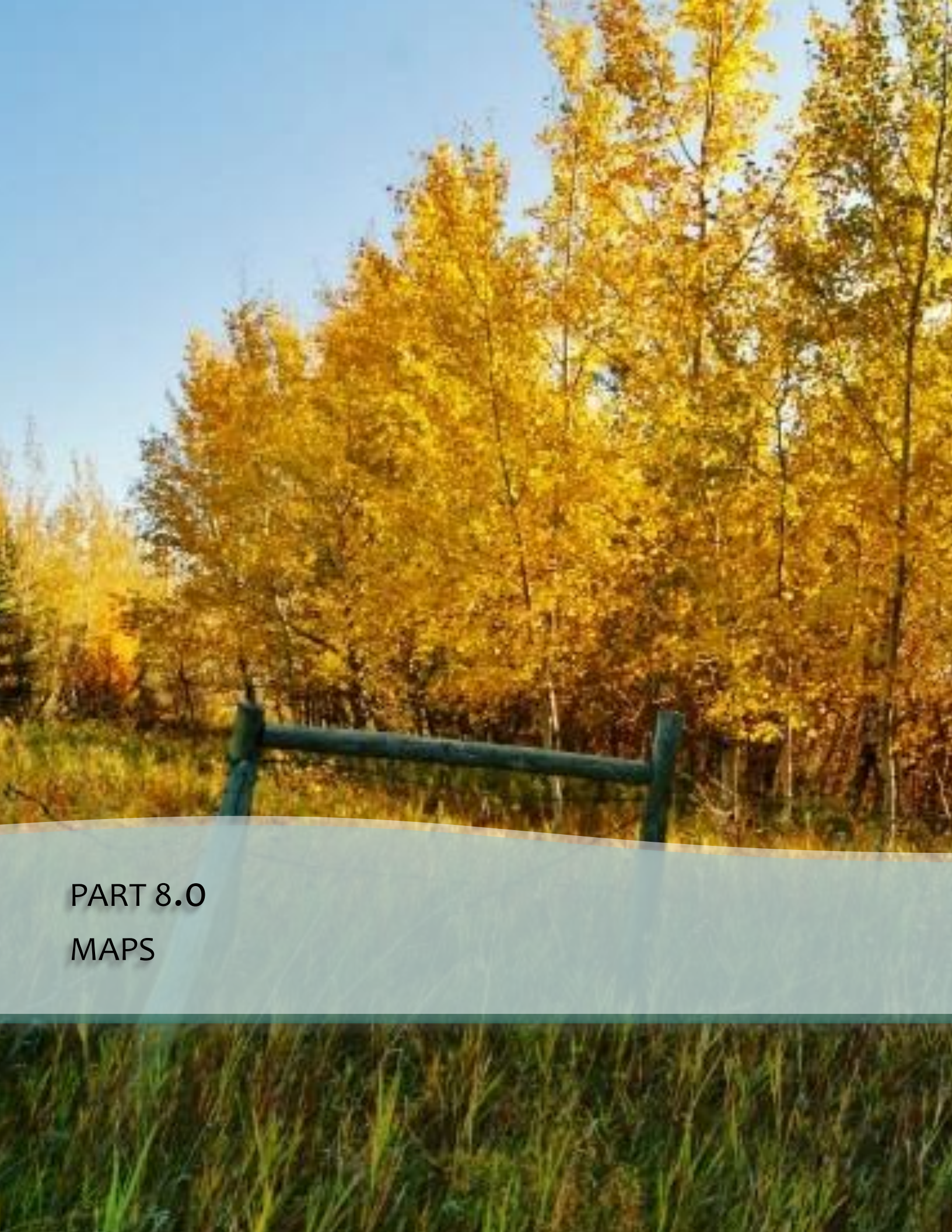
CONSERVATION EASEMENT: Means an agreement registered against title whereby a landowner grants to the County (or other government, government agency, or non-profit society with conservation objectives satisfactory to the County) provisions for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the environment including the protection, conservation and enhancement of biological diversity, and natural scenic or aesthetic values, as provided for in the Section 22 of the Environmental Enhancement and Protection Act. A conservation agreement may provide for recreational use; open space use, environmental education use, and research and scientific studies of natural ecosystems.

COMPLETE COMMUNITY: Means a community that is planned and developed to use less land and reduce the separation of land uses in order to achieve a variety of values including open space protection, community vitality, affordable housing, air quality, transit use, and more walkable places. Complete communities provide housing types and uses in compact form suitable for all ages and income levels, provides non-residential development in proximity that results in easy access to jobs, local amenities, services, community facilities, and access to multi-modal trail and mobility networks.

CONFINED FEEDING OPERATION: Means a Confined Feeding Operation, as defined in the County's Land Use Bylaw.

OVERSIZED FARMSTEAD means a farmstead larger than 2.02 ha (5.0 ac.), up to a maximum of 6.06 ha (15.0 ac.). Where the additional area is required to include the farm yard up to a maximum of 6.06 ha (15.0 ac.). The farm yard shall normally include a house, garage, access, power pole, well, sub-surface sewage disposal system, and established shelter belts. The farm yard may also include barns, sheds, substantial fences and corrals, dugouts if required by the dwelling to provide non-drinking water, and other similar farm buildings and facilities ancillary to the farmstead. In such cases, a Real Property Report or Building Site Certificate prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor, will be required to verify the locations of all improvements, site features, and proposed boundaries.

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PART 8.0

MAPS

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8.0 MAPS

8.1 Map 1 – Planning Area

8.2 Map 2 – Statutory Plan Areas