



Rocky View County  
**COUNTY PLAN**

**BYLAW C-7280-2013  
AMENDED NOVEMBER 6, 2023**



**ROCKY VIEW COUNTY**  
Cultivating Communities

This document was approved and adopted by Council with the passing of Bylaw C-7280-2013 on October 1, 2013. To view a copy of this bylaw, search County Plan at [www.rockyview.ca](http://www.rockyview.ca).

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# I. Introduction

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## 1.0 CONTEXT

To describe Rocky View County is to paint a picture of regional and community diversity. Agriculture dominates the landscape. To the west, at higher elevations, a moist climate and a shorter growing season result in coniferous forests that quickly change to grassy rolling hills. Larger ranches, haying, and cattle dominate the western landscape. Moving east, the foothills soon give way to prairie grasslands and major wetland complexes. With a dryer climate and longer growing season, eastern Rocky View is heavily cultivated; producing cereal and oilseed crops.

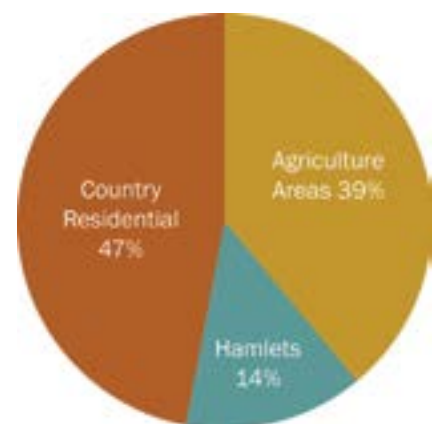
Scattered across the landscape are farm homes and isolated dwellings interspersed with small hamlets and rural towns. Hamlets in the County mostly originated alongside railway stops as places to provide services to the surrounding *agricultural area*. Some hamlets remain small, having experienced very little growth, while others have grown over time. The most recent additions to the rural landscape are country residential acreages. These acreages have grown rapidly in number over the last 40 years and have evolved as distinct communities.

Rocky View County is unique as a rural municipality, but it grapples with a challenge common to all rural municipalities located on the edge of a large urban centre - growth pressure. Over a 20 year time period (1991 to 2011), the County's population grew by 93 per cent as people moved into the Calgary region. Rocky View residents recognize the reality of regional growth and are willing to accept a moderate level of growth if natural landscapes, rural character, agriculture and finances can be sustained. The County Plan lays out a framework for balancing these various and sometimes competing challenges.

### Did you know?

- Rocky View County, with a 2011 Canada Census population of 36,461, is the 11th largest municipality by population in Alberta.
- The County is almost 1 million acres in size (403,428 hectares).
- There are 1,551 farms and ranches in the County, which comprise approximately 92% of the total land base.

### Total County Population: 36,461\*



\*2011 Canada Census

## 2.0 VISION AND PRINCIPLES

The County Plan's vision and principles serve as a guide for county development and the future aspirations of county residents.

### Vision

Rocky View is an inviting, thriving, and sustainable county that balances agriculture with diverse residential, recreational, and business opportunities.

### Principles

The following principles provide a framework to guide decision making when implementing the goals, policies, and actions of the County Plan.

#### 1. Growth and Fiscal Sustainability

*Rocky View County will direct new growth to designated development areas, and in doing so it will remain fiscally responsible.* The County will:

- Encourage a 'moderate' level of residential growth that preserves and retains the County's rural character.
- Attract business development to specified areas, thereby providing jobs and strengthening the County's fiscal situation.

#### 2. The Environment

*Rocky View County will develop and operate in a manner that maintains or improves the quality of the environment.* The County will:

- Manage stormwater and wastewater systems in a manner that does not adversely impact surface or groundwater, while providing for a safe and reliable drinking water supply.
- Undertake a wide range of measures to support the conservation of land, water, watersheds, energy, and other natural resources.
- Maintain the rural landscape and character of dark skies, open vistas, and working agricultural lands.
- Provide a variety of well-designed parks, open spaces, pathways, and trails that connect communities and accommodate residents' recreation and cultural needs.

### 3. Agriculture

*Rocky View County respects, supports, and values agriculture as an important aspect of the County's culture and economy.*

The County will:

- Facilitate diverse and sustainable agriculture operations and agriculture businesses.
- Support partnerships and education to increase operator knowledge and opportunities.
- Help minimize adverse impacts on agriculture operations and support agriculture diversity through land use policy.

### 4. Rural Communities

*Rocky View County will support the development and retention of well-designed rural communities.* The County will:

- Encourage agriculture, hamlets, and country residential communities to retain their rural character and maintain a strong sense of community.
- Support communities in providing attractive, well-designed, and distinct, residential neighbourhoods, gathering places, parks, and open spaces.

### 5. Rural Service

*Rocky View County will strive to provide an equitable level of rural service to its residents.* The County will:

- Provide access to high quality services and facilities for residents of all ages, income levels, skills, and lifestyles while remaining fiscally sustainable.
- Empower and support residents and organizations in improving their community.

### 6. Partnerships

*Rocky View County will maintain a strong web of partnerships to help extend the range of services it provides to its residents.*

The County will:

- Develop and strengthen partnerships with communities, stakeholders, and neighbouring municipalities.
- Support volunteerism, collaboration, and community participation to strengthen and enhance communities.

**Rocky View County provides a wide range of services such as:**

- Fire protection
- Libraries
- Enforcement Service
- Waste transfer and recycling
- Weed Control
- Road Maintenance
- Snow Plowing



## **3.0 PLAN ORGANIZATION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW**

### **Plan Organization**

The County Plan has been organized into four parts.

*PART I INTRODUCTION:* This part of the Plan summarizes the context in which the Plan was written, the vision and guiding principles, a description of how the goals, policies and actions are to be used to achieve the Plan's vision, and the legislative framework under which it operates.

*PART II COUNTY DEVELOPMENT:* This part of the Plan addresses how the County is to develop. Part II is subdivided into three sections. Section A addresses County growth in the context of remaining fiscally and environmentally sustainable. Section B provides guidance on community design and emphasizes the importance of retaining the county's rural character. Section C recognizes the importance of community services to Rocky View residents and the challenge of providing service in a rural setting.

*PART III REGIONS:* This part of the Plan recognizes the wide variety of landscapes, communities, and approaches to rural living within the county. Identifying regions provides additional context by which to interpret the policies of the County Plan when evaluating applications for land use and development.

*PART IV IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING:* This part of the Plan describes the ongoing activities to implement the plan. It summarizes the various Actions that will be conducted over the life of the plan and proposes monitoring tools to measure the success of the Plan.

### **Goals, Policies, and Actions**

The Plan's vision and principles are achieved through its goals, policy, and actions as described below:

*GOALS* are specific objectives and/or targets for individual policy sections that achieve the County's vision and principles.

*POLICY* provides guidance to decision makers and the public throughout the life of the Plan. Policy provides direction and/or evaluation criteria that allow the County to achieve specific goals.

*ACTIONS* are activities that need to be done in the future to achieve a specific goal or policy. Actions include studies, regulation changes, and programs. A study may be necessary as an action before proceeding to a program or regulation.

## Language

The following describes the meaning of some of the key words that are contained in a policy:

*SHALL*: a directive term that indicates that the actions outlined are mandatory and therefore must be complied with, without discretion, by administration, the developer, the Development Authority and the Subdivision Authority.

*SHOULD*: a directive term that indicates or directs a strongly preferred course of action by Council, administration and/or the developer but one that is not mandatory.

*MAY*: a discretionary term, meaning the policy in question can be enforced by the County if it chooses to do so, dependent on the particular circumstances of the site and/or application.

*SUPPORT*: means to provide for, or to aid the cause or interest of something. Generally, when the word support is used, administration is in agreement with the proposal or premise, if other relevant policy is met.

## Definitions

All definitions are italicized. Where they first occur, definitions are defined on the side bar and are grouped in Appendix B.

## Public Engagement Process

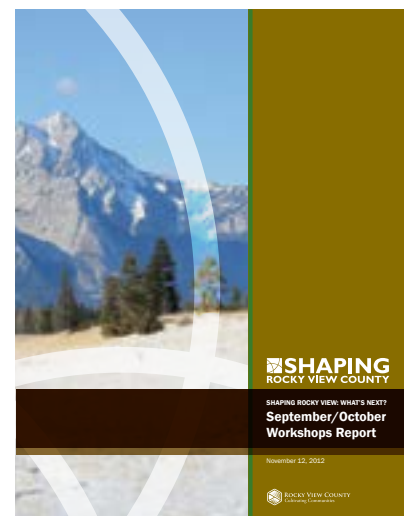
Rocky View residents were made aware of the County Plan project through a variety of media including two direct mail outs, advertising, road signs, radio, media articles, and the County website. A total of 617 participants signed up to receive direct email notification about the County Plan process.

The County engaged participants in five separate sessions and reported back to participants on the results of the first four sessions:

- June to September (2012): 1,276 residents and land owners were surveyed and asked to rank their priorities either in-person or online<sup>1</sup>.
- September/October (2012): in-person and online workshops were conducted to seek participants' input on growth, economic, social, and environmental issues. The workshops were held at seven locations around the county. A total of 204 participants attended the workshops with an additional 194 participants<sup>2</sup> providing input online.

<sup>1</sup> County Plan Engagement Priority Report, 2012, Rocky View County

<sup>2</sup> September/October Workshops Report, 2012, Rocky View County

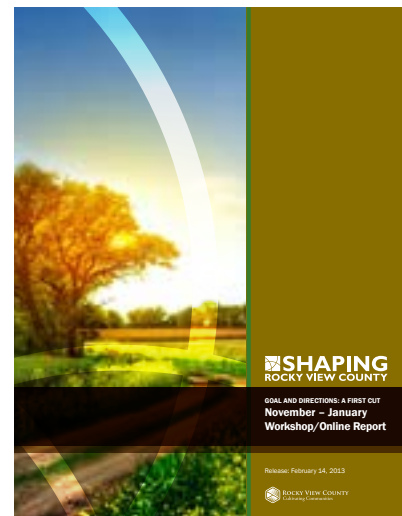


- November/January (2012-13): a ‘first cut’ of goals and directions were presented for public comment at seven workshops and online. A total of 172 participants attended the workshops with an additional 215 online participants<sup>3</sup>.
- March (2013): A total of 143 participants attended the presentation of the first draft of the County Plan at seven open houses held throughout the County. In total, 183 open house comments, online comments, or email/letter submissions on the first draft were received by the County.
- May 29/June (2013): The final draft of the County Plan was presented at an open house held at the County office. Finally, written public comments were submitted to Council as part of the statutory Public Hearing process to approve the Plan.

### Plans, Studies, and Legislation Informing the County Plan

The development of the County Plan has been guided and informed by the following plans, studies, strategy documents, and legislation:

1. Non-statutory plans and reports developed by, or in consultation with, Rocky View residents. Key documents guiding the County Plan include:
  - Agriculture Master Plan
  - Council’s Response to the Reeve’s Task Force
  - Growth Management Strategy
  - Parks and Open Space Master Plan
  - Report of the Reeve’s Task Force on Growth Planning
  - Solid Waste Master Plan
2. Existing statutory plans (e.g. area structure plans and intermunicipal development plans).
3. *County Policy*, 2011-13 Corporate Strategy, Land Inventory and Residential Capacity (2012) and the Rural Growth Management Discussion Paper.
4. Provincial legislation (Municipal Government Act) and direction including the Land Use Framework Strategy and Water for Life Strategy.



*County Policy* is adopted by resolution of Council and addresses the following areas:

- i. Administration
- ii. Finance & Systems
- iii. Planning & Development
- iv. Infrastructure & Operations
- v. Agricultural Service Board
- vi. Utility Services

Key policy documents contributing to the County Plan are identified in Appendix D.

<sup>3</sup> November/January Workshops Report, 2013, Rocky View County

## 4.0 THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### Municipal Government Act

The Municipal Government Act provides the legislative framework under which all municipalities must operate. The Act states the County's purpose is to:

- a) provide good government,
- b) provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of Council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality, and
- c) develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

In order to achieve this direction, the Act requires and allows the preparation of plans to:

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

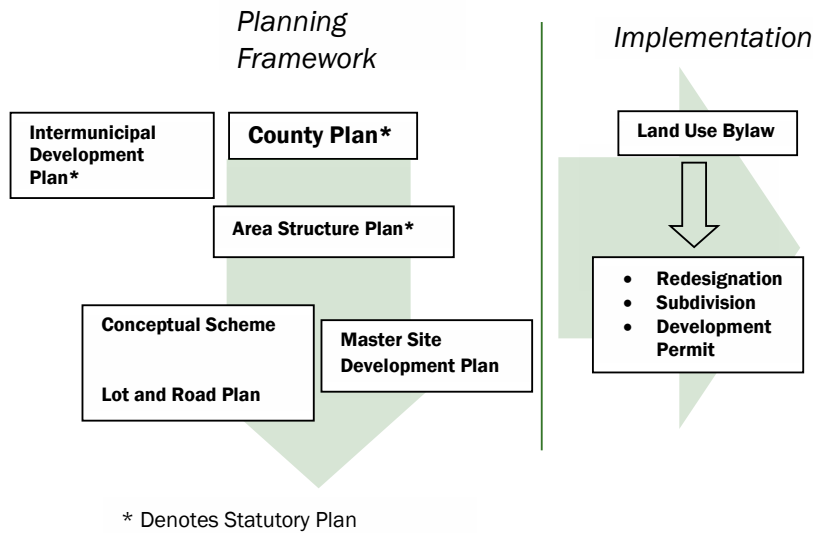
Specifically, the Act directs the preparation of the Municipal Development Plan (named the County Plan) and allows for subordinate plans such as an area structure plan.

### Planning and Development Process

The planning framework outlines the key planning documents to be utilized by Council and administration to guide land use decision-making, and to review and evaluate development applications. The planning framework is one of two parts of the overall Planning and Development Process (Figure 1); the other being implementation.

The planning framework outlines the relationship and level of detail of the different plans. The plans at the top of the framework provide broad, high-level policy direction to either the entire county (County Plan) or a specific county border area (Intermunicipal Development Plan). The lower-level plans are subordinate to the plans above and must be consistent with the policies and direction of the higher-order plans. Subordinate plans (area structure plans, conceptual schemes, and master site development plans) increase in detail and encompass smaller land areas than the higher-order plans.

Figure 1: Planning and Development Process



Plans higher in the framework will generally determine when a subordinate plan is required. For example, an area structure plan provides criteria for conceptual scheme preparation. When there is no area structure plan or other subordinate plan, the County Plan will determine whether a subordinate plan is required to provide greater planning detail.

The following are the key *statutory* and *non-statutory* planning documents used by the County.

**COUNTY PLAN:** The County's principal statutory plan. It is the County's Municipal Development Plan prepared in accordance with the Municipal Government Act. The County Plan is adopted by bylaw and provides strategic growth direction, overall guidance for land use planning, and service delivery policy.

The County Plan also provides specific policy guidance for areas that do not fall within the boundaries of an area structure plan or other subordinate plan.

A **statutory plan** is a plan that has legal status and requirements prescribed by the Municipal Government Act. All statutory plans are adopted as a bylaw by Council after a public hearing. Statutory plans include: the County Plan (Municipal Development Plan), intermunicipal development plans, and area structure plans. When an area structure plan is amended to include a conceptual scheme, the conceptual scheme becomes part of the statutory area structure plan.

The County's subdivision authority and development authority must follow the direction of a statutory plan. The Subdivision and Development Appeal Board and Municipal Government Board must comply with statutory plans in a development appeal and must have regard to statutory plans in a subdivision appeal.

A **non-statutory plan** may or may not be adopted by Council Bylaw. The plan provides guidance and more detailed direction for development. It is non-binding on Subdivision and Development Authorities, Subdivision and Development Appeal Boards and the Municipal Government Board. Examples of non-statutory plans include conceptual schemes, master site development plans, and lot and road plans.

**INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN:** A statutory plan developed and adopted in partnership with an adjoining municipality and prepared in accordance with the Municipal Government Act. An intermunicipal development plan is adopted by bylaw, and contains policies which co-ordinate land use and development for boundary lands between adjacent municipalities. This plan addresses matters of mutual interest and is used to evaluate development applications, set up communication protocols, and provide a mechanism for resolving intermunicipal disputes.

**AREA STRUCTURE PLAN:** A statutory plan, prepared in accordance with the Municipal Government Act. The area structure plan is subordinate to the County Plan and provides a land use strategy for redesignating (rezoning) and developing a specific area of land in the County. It contains maps, goals, and policies, which set out general locations for major land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, institutional, schools, and parks), major roadways, utility servicing, and recreation.

Area structure plans guide development in country residential communities, hamlets, regional business centres, and highway business areas.

**CONCEPTUAL SCHEME:** A non-statutory plan, subordinate to an area structure plan, and may be adopted by bylaw or resolution. To ensure the opportunity for public input, the County will continue its practice of adopting a conceptual scheme by bylaw with a public hearing. If an area structure plan is amended to include a conceptual scheme, the conceptual scheme becomes a statutory plan.

Conceptual schemes provide detailed land use direction, subdivision design, and development guidance to Council, administration, and the public. Conceptual schemes are meant to be developed within the framework of an area structure plan.

If a conceptual scheme is of sufficient size that further detail is required for specific areas and phases, the subsequent document will be referred to as a 'development cell'. Upon approval, the 'development cell' document will be amended into the conceptual scheme as an appendix.

**LOT AND ROAD PLAN:** A non-statutory plan that is not adopted by bylaw or resolution. A lot and road plan accompanies a land use redesignation application and is used to address a limited set of specific planning issues to demonstrate an area is capable of supporting increased residential development – issues such as lot and road layout, stormwater management, water supply, and sewage treatment. A lot and road plan is for existing fragmented quarter sections as identified in section 10. The lot and road plan addresses the practical difficulty of multiple parcel ownership and the burden of plan preparation falling on a single owner of a limited amount of land. The lot and road plan requires consultation with owners within the plan area and will be retained by the County to guide future subdivision approval.

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

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

### **Supporting Documents**

The County Plan provides overall direction for growth in the county. To determine the need for a new area structure plan, or amendments to an existing area structure plan, the County may prepare a context study for a specific area of interest.

**CONTEXT STUDY:** A background technical assessment prepared by the County to determine the need for an area structure plan or an area structure plan amendment. The exact content of a context study will vary depending on the specific area in which it is prepared. Components may include: population growth and demographics; economic and fiscal feasibility; existing land supply and building rate; potential and/or feasibility of servicing solutions; transportation infrastructure; environmental considerations; development constraints; and other items determined appropriate by the County. All context studies should provide a clear assessment of existing conditions, development pressures, policy gaps, and changing needs. Context studies do not provide policy direction for land use and development.

The word *development* is used throughout the County Plan in its broadest context. In cases dealing with the development of land, it includes the processes of redesignation, subdivision, and development permitting.

## Implementation

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

- a) the application and amendment of the Land Use Bylaw;
- b) the evaluation and approval of applications for land use *redesignation* and *subdivision*;
- c) the evaluation and approval of *development permits*; and
- d) the application of *County Policy* and *Servicing Standards*.

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

## POLICY

- 4.1 Where an area structure plan or subordinate plan is silent on a policy matter contained in this Plan, the policies of the County Plan shall apply.

**Redesignation** (zoning) is a public process that changes the uses allowed on a parcel of land.

**Subdivision** is a legal process to obtain title to a new parcel of land by dividing larger parcels of land into smaller lots.

**Development Permit** approval is required to allow many of the land uses allowed in the Land Use Bylaw to proceed.



## **II.** County Development

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# A. Growing Communities

## 1991-2011: 20 Years of Residential Growth

Rocky View County's proximity to its large urban neighbours has profoundly shaped its pattern of growth. The desire to live in a rural area, while remaining close to an urban centre, has resulted in the growth of new communities and existing hamlets. Growth has impacted the agriculture sector: land prices have risen and ranching and farming is more difficult in areas where residential lifestyles are not dependent upon agriculture.

Between the years 1991 and 2011, the County's population almost doubled, growing from 18,939 to 36,461 residents<sup>4</sup> (Figure 2). To house new residents, 7,230 homes were constructed. Country residential development accounted for much of the growth, with 48 per cent of the new homes located in the communities of Bearspaw, Bragg Creek, East Balzac, Elbow Valley, and Springbank (Figure 3). The other centre of growth occurred in the Hamlet of Langdon with the building of 1,306 homes (18% of total)<sup>5</sup>.

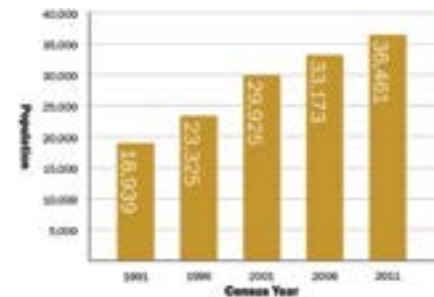
To provide development guidance to these areas of growth, a number of area structure plans and conceptual schemes were approved over this 20 year period. At the time of plan development, the majority of these planning areas had existing residential populations.

The boundaries of the Hamlets of Balzac West, Bragg Creek, Cochrane Lake, Dalroy, Delacour, Langdon, Indus, and Kathryn were formalized and expanded by their area structure plan or conceptual scheme during this time frame. Finally, the Hamlet of Harmony was approved as a new development area.

Country residential area structure plans for the communities of Bearspaw, Bragg Creek, Cochrane North, East Balzac, Elbow Valley, and Springbank were also approved. These plans provided development design guidance, established boundaries, and identified future growth areas.

Some communities in the County, notably the Hamlet of Langdon and Elbow Valley, are reaching the limit of their residential capacity. Aside from those two areas, there is significant existing potential for hamlet and traditional country residential development in the County<sup>6</sup>, assuming the appropriate land use (zoning) is approved and market demand for that type of development exists.

Figure 2: County population change 1991 to 2011 (Canada Census).



<sup>4</sup> Canada Census 1991 – 2011

<sup>5</sup> Land Inventory and Residential Development Capacity, 2012, Rocky View County

<sup>6</sup> Land Inventory and Residential Development Capacity, 2012, Rocky View County

## Population Trends and Housing Requirements

In the last decade, the rate of population growth in the Calgary region has declined. Nevertheless, the region’s population has still increased by 300,000 residents<sup>7</sup>. The County has also seen its residential population increase by 6,536 residents (Figure 2), primarily in country residential communities. However, the rate of dwelling construction has declined from a peak period in the late 1990’s (Figure 4).

Despite the decrease in housing construction, the demand for rural housing is expected to continue, as the overall Calgary regional population is projected to increase from 1.4 million residents (2011) to 1.9 million by 2026<sup>8</sup>.

Historically, the County has accommodated an increasing percentage of the regional population (Table 1), despite losing population to a series of annexations. Based on the projected 2026 regional population of 1.9 million residents and the County absorbing a similar percentage of the regional population (2.71 to 3.11 percent), the County’s population is projected to grow between 51,490 to 59,090 residents by 2026 (Table 2).

Figure 3: Residential Dwellings per Section (640 acres)

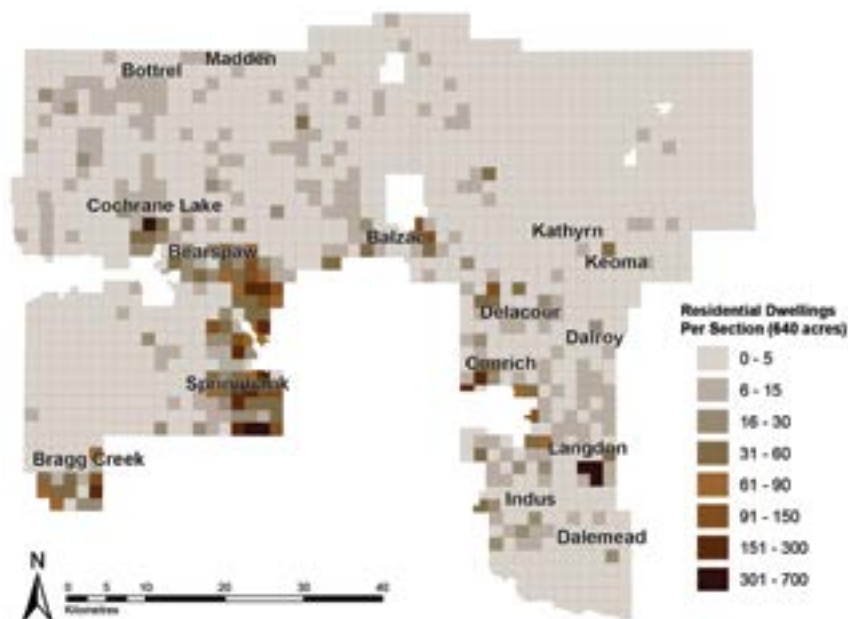


Table 1: Rocky View County: Percent of the Calgary Regional Population.

Year	1971	1996	2006
%	2.41	2.71	3.11

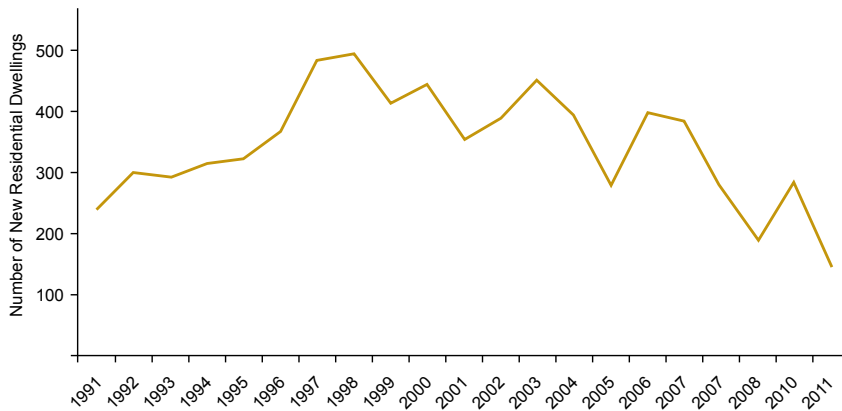
Table 2: Projected 2026 County Population (based on a regional population of 1,900,000).

% of the regional population	2.71 – 3.11 %
Projected 2026 population	51,490 – 59,090
Projected 2011 - 2026 population increase	15,059 – 22,659

<sup>7</sup> A Context for Change Management in the Calgary Regional Partnership Area - Future Population, Housing, Labour Force, and Employment, Urban Futures

<sup>8</sup> A Context for Change Management in the Calgary Regional Partnership Area - Future Population, Housing, Labour Force, and Employment, Urban Futures

Figure 4: Rocky View County Dwelling Construction by Year.



## GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The majority of county residents have indicated they are willing to accept “some”<sup>9</sup> or a “moderate amount of”<sup>10</sup> residential growth provided it is properly implemented, financed, and environmentally sound. The County Plan provides a strategy to achieve this by:

- Setting a moderate population goal that can be responsibly planned for over the life of this Plan (10 to 12 years).
- Identifying the preferred areas for residential growth for the next 10 to 12 years.
- Providing a financial strategy to ensure the costs of growth are addressed. The strategy recognizes growth has two components; short term development costs and long term operating costs.
- Recognizing all forms of growth must occur in an environmentally responsible manner.

### Moderate Residential Growth

What does ‘moderate’ residential growth mean? On the regional scale, population growth will be driven by demographics and economics. Within this larger context, ‘moderate’ residential growth means - an increase of no more than 2.5 to 3 per cent of the region’s population by 2026 (approximately 11,000 to 20,000 net new residents), provided financial and environmental goals can be achieved.

Achieving ‘moderate’ growth does not mean saying ‘no’ but rather ‘not now’. Achieving this goal will be a challenge given the lack of control over external economic factors, existing residential capacity, and no yearly regional population forecasts.

A **Moderate County** population growth would result in a **30 % – 56 % increase in residents** over a 10 – 12 year time span.

This magnitude of growth would require **3,300 to 6,700** new dwellings based on an average occupancy of 3.0 residents per home.

<sup>9</sup> September/October (2012) Workshops Report, 2012, Rocky View County

<sup>10</sup> November/December (2012) Workshops Report, 2013, Rocky View County

## **Preferred Residential Growth Areas**

Within the County there are 18 hamlet and country residential communities whose development boundaries and form have been set by existing plans. As the majority of these areas have not been fully developed, the County Plan identifies these areas (Map 1 and section 5) as the focus of residential growth for the next 10 to 12 years. In addition, the County Plan:

- Allows for increased agriculture land use flexibility (Section 8).
- Encourages residential development to locate in small rural towns and villages that serve as the local community for Rocky View residents (Section 5).
- Directs high density residential development to adjacent urban municipalities (Section 5).
- Provides preferred direction on Country Residential and Hamlet development and form (Sections 9 and 10).
- Recognizes long term growth corridors identified in the Rocky View/City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (Section 5).

## **Financial Sustainability**

Section 6 provides the goals, policy, and actions to address the upfront costs of development and long term operating costs (service to residents and infrastructure replacement costs). Key features of the strategy include:

- Ensure development costs are primarily the responsibility of the developer.
- Increase the County's business assessment base in order to reduce reliance on the residential tax base for long term operating costs.

Section 14 provides the policies and actions necessary to increase the business assessment base and provide employment opportunities in the county. Regional business centres, highway business areas, and hamlet business areas are identified on Map 1 and their characteristics are identified in section 14.

## **Environment**

Section 7 provides the direction whereby residential and business growth can occur in an environmentally responsible manner. The section recognizes provincial direction on the environment, establishes goals, and provides policy and actions to achieve these goals.

## 5.0 MANAGING RESIDENTIAL GROWTH

Section 5 identifies the desired residential growth levels, growth locations, and the criteria under which development will be evaluated.

### GOALS

- Achieve a moderate level of growth, amounting to no more than 2.5 to 3 per cent of the region's population over the 10 to 12 year time frame of this Plan.
- Direct the majority of residential growth to those areas identified on Map 1, over the time frame of this Plan.
- Manage residential growth so that it conforms to the County's environmental, fiscal, and community goals; and so that the rural character of the county is retained.
- Monitor growth to determine if planned development is being implemented and growth goals are being met.

### POLICY

#### Hamlets

- 5.1 Support the development of the *Hamlets* of Conrich, Harmony, Langdon, Balzac, and Glenbow Ranch as full service rural communities providing a range of land uses, housing types, and rural services to their residents and local area; in accordance with their area structure plan or conceptual scheme. These hamlets are identified as "Hamlet – Full Service" on Map 1.
- 5.2 Support the development of the Hamlets of Bragg Creek, Cochrane Lake, Dalroy, Delacour, Indus, and Kathryn, as rural communities with basic services, in accordance with their area structure plan or conceptual scheme. These hamlets are expected to experience moderate growth over the next 10 years and the County will assist in managing development as it occurs. These Hamlets are identified as "Hamlet – growth as per the adopted plan" on Map 1.
- 5.3 The small Hamlets of Bottrel, Dalemead, Keoma, and Madden are not identified as growth locations. It is not anticipated that the preparation of an area structure plan will be necessary within the timeframe of this Plan. These Hamlets are identified as "Small Hamlet" on Map 1.

*Hamlets* are characterized as having primarily residential development with a main street, crossroads, or central gathering area (section 9). There may be an associated business park with commercial/industrial uses.

In Rocky View County, the following hamlets are contained within a larger area structure plan or conceptual scheme that includes country residential uses:

- Bragg Creek
- Dalroy
- Delacour
- Indus
- Kathryn.

Hamlets with a boundary coinciding with an area structure plan or conceptual scheme boundary include:

- Cochrane Lakes
- Harmony
- Langdon.

The final area structure plan boundaries and form of Balzac West and Conrich will be determined by their planning process.

- 5.4 New hamlet development should not be considered unless (i) existing overall hamlet residential potential is not being significantly developed, and (ii) a need and rationale for a new hamlet has been demonstrated based on the following criteria:
- a. consistency with the County's residential population goals;
  - b. is an appropriately located development within the existing settlement pattern;
  - c. opportunity for community input;
  - d. meeting the financial, environmental, community infrastructure goals of this Plan; and
  - e. market demand.
- 5.5 In order to retain rural character and a sense of community, consideration should be given to the ultimate size of a hamlet. To retain these qualities, the County considers the upper population limit of a hamlet community to be in the range of 5,000 - 10,000 residents. Hamlet size shall be determined based on the following criteria:
- a. County residential population goals;
  - b. existing hamlet population goals;
  - c. community input;
  - d. local commercial service requirements;
  - e. fiscal impact;
  - f. infrastructure capacity; and
  - g. retaining rural character.
- 5.6 Applications to redesignate land for *multi-lot* residential use adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, an existing hamlet should not be supported unless the proposed development area is approved as an amendment to the hamlet boundaries.

***Multi-lot*** means development of two or more new residential lots and includes country residential and hamlet development. The definition of *multi-lot* development does not apply to the subdivision and development of lands within a fragmented quarter section (policy 10.10 to 10.14).

- 5.7 Expansion of a hamlet boundary for residential purposes should only be considered when hamlet development is close to meeting residential capacity. Proposals shall be evaluated on the following criteria:
- a. County residential population goals;
  - b. hamlet population goals;
  - c. community input;
  - d. the proposed development represents orderly, appropriately sequenced development;
  - e. benefit to the community;
  - f. compatibility and integration with the existing area structure plan or conceptual scheme;
  - g. fiscal impact and infrastructure capacity;
  - h. local commercial service requirements; and
  - i. market demand.

### **Country Residential**

- 5.8 Support the development of existing country residential communities (identified on Map 1) in accordance with their area structure plan.
- 5.9 New country residential area structure plans or conceptual schemes should not be considered unless (i) existing overall country residential areas are not being significantly developed, and (ii) a need has been demonstrated based on the following criteria:
- a. consistency with the County's population goals;
  - b. opportunity for community input;
  - c. is an orderly, appropriately sequenced development consistent with a desirable pattern of settlement;
  - d. meeting the financial, environmental, community, and infrastructure goals of this Plan; and
  - e. market demand.

### **Agricultural Area**

- 5.10 Residential development in the *agricultural area* shall be guided by the goals and policies of this Plan.
- 5.11 Support *first parcel out* residential and agricultural subdivision in the agricultural area as per the policies of this Plan (section 8).
- 5.12 Where appropriate, direct new multi-lot residential development to the Towns of Crossfield and Irricana, and the Village of Beiseker.

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

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



## **Other**

- 5.13 Direct high density forms of residential development to adjacent urban municipalities.

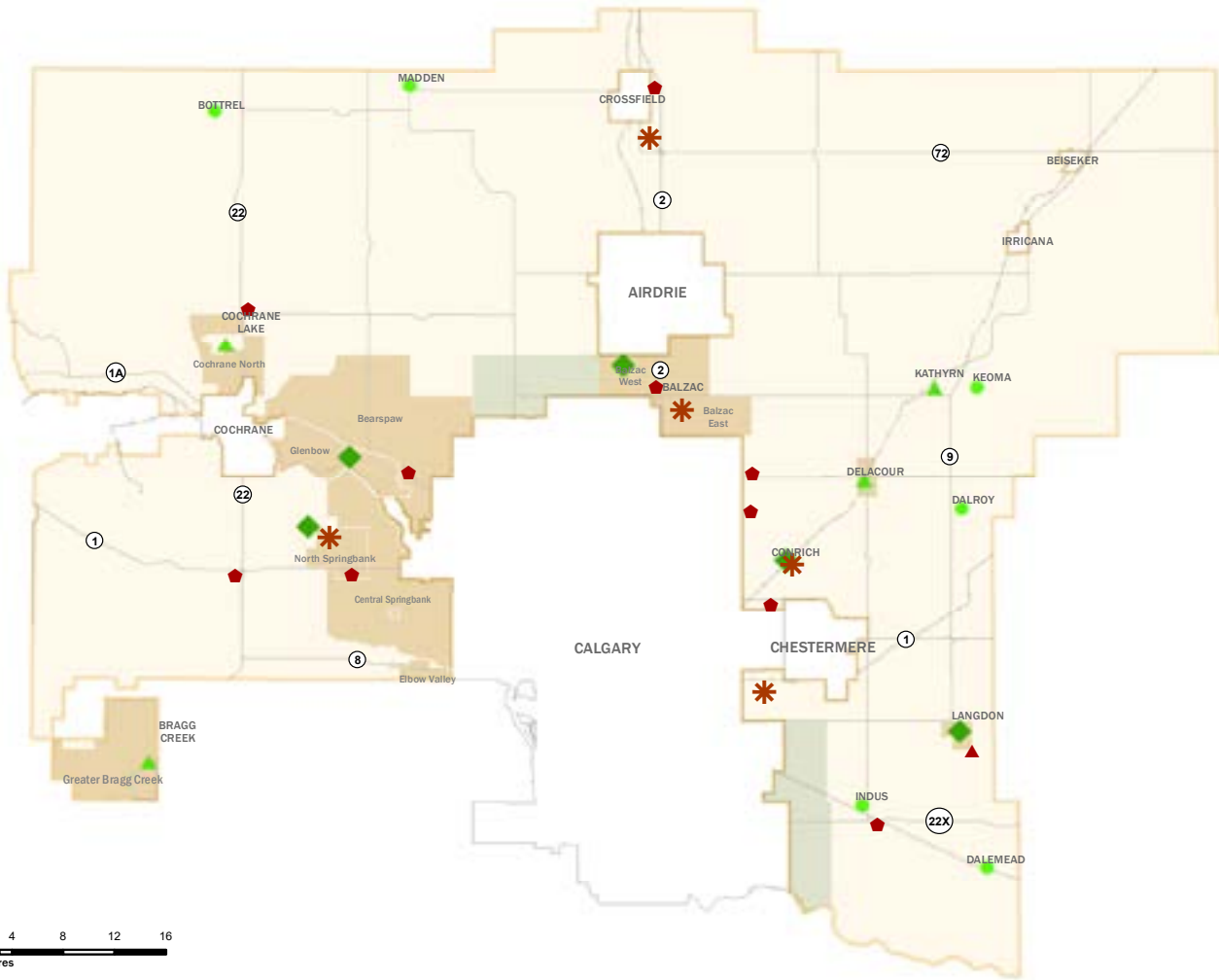
## **Long Term Growth**

- 5.14 The Rocky View County/City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan identifies future growth corridors for the County (Appendix A). The County considers all of these corridors important, however, the timing for development within a growth corridor may vary and some corridors are expected to experience minimal development within the timeframe of this Plan.

## **ACTIONS**

- Monitor and report on county population growth relative to the regional population growth (goal 1).
- Monitor and report on area structure plan build-out for the number of new dwellings and dwelling types (goal 2 and 4).
- Review the population objectives and development form of the Balzac West Area Structure Plan (policy 5.1).

# MAP 1-MANAGING GROWTH



## Residential Communities

- ◆ Hamlet-Full Service
- ▲ Hamlet-Growth as per the adopted plan
- Small Hamlet
- Country Residential (Area Structure Plan)

## Business Areas

- ✳ Regional Business Centers
- ⬠ Highway Business Area
- ▲ Hamlet Business Area

## Future Urban Growth Areas

- Calgary Growth Areas  
(Rocky View County/Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan)

## General Legend

- Rocky View Boundary
- City/Town/Village
- Highway



## 6.0 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

One of the purposes of the County is to develop communities and provide services and facilities that are necessary or desirable (Municipal Government Act). The cost to build communities, provide services, and operate facilities is dependent on many factors such as location, infrastructure needs, and residents' demand for services. The upfront costs of development (primarily *hard infrastructure*) are the responsibility of the developer. Long term operating costs related to providing *soft infrastructure*, infrastructure replacements, and services to residents are paid for by the residential and business property tax base, user fees, and provincial grants. Residents have expressed the view that development must pay for itself and be affordable over the long term.<sup>11</sup>

### GOALS

- Maintain financial sustainability through careful management of growth and development.
- To the extent possible, ensure development costs are primarily the responsibility of the developer.
- Increase the County's business assessment base in order to reduce the reliance on the residential tax base.

### POLICY

#### Development

- 6.1 Direct new development to areas of existing infrastructure.
- 6.2 On-site and off-site hard infrastructure costs related to new development are the developer's responsibility.
- 6.3 Developers are strongly encouraged to build, or contribute to the building of soft infrastructure.
- 6.4 All identified hard infrastructure, or land necessary for infrastructure placement, shall be provided by the developer as part of the subdivision or development permit approval process.
- 6.5 Depending on the scope and scale of a proposed development, a fiscal impact analysis of the proposed development shall be required, in accordance with County Policy.
- 6.6 An applicant proposing to provide utility infrastructure shall be required to provide a cost feasibility and life cycle analysis detailing operating and replacement costs in accordance with County Policy.
- 6.7 Prior to approving a development proposal, the County shall ensure that full cost recovery methods are in place to capture the capital and interest cost of development.

**Financially sustainable** development occurs when the cost to develop and build is not the responsibility of county residents and future County operating costs remain affordable.

The **business assessment base** is the total property value of all business in the County (referred to in the Municipal Government Act as non-residential assessment). Tax collection is based on the assessed value of a property.

**Hard infrastructure** means land and infrastructure related to roads, pathways and trails, and water, stormwater, wastewater, and parking and loading facilities.

The Municipal Government Act allows the County to require developers to be responsible for hard infrastructure costs.

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

The cost of soft infrastructure is not the responsibility of the developer under the Municipal Government Act, although in some cases, developers opt to contribute to these types of services.

<sup>11</sup> September/October Workshops Report, 2012, Rocky View County

<sup>11</sup> November/January Workshops Report, 2013, Rocky View County

## **Operating**

- 6.8 Direct the majority of new commercial and industrial businesses to locate in the business areas identified on Map 1.
- 6.9 Utility operational and life cycle costs shall be recovered, through user fees, from those benefitting from the service.
- 6.10 Future debt financing must be cautiously used by the County, be low risk, and have an identified stable stream of income to pay the debt cost.

## **ACTIONS**

- Develop a business assessment base target and report on the appropriate balance between the business and residential assessment base (goal 3).
- Identify soft infrastructure needs that come with growth and the methods to finance those needs. Negotiate a comprehensive approach to the recovery of soft infrastructure costs with the development industry (policy 6.3).
- Advocate and support changes to provincial legislation to allow the recovery of soft infrastructure cost from developers (policy 6.3).
- Implement the County's fiscal impact model as a tool to:
  - assess development applications;
  - allow consistent comparison between projects; and
  - measure the county wide impact of growth (policy 6.5).
- Develop and adopt County Policy on the requirements and use of a fiscal impact model and a utility infrastructure cost feasibility and life cycle analysis (policy 6.6).

## 7.0 ENVIRONMENT

County residents have a strong connection to the natural environment; valuing water, *watersheds*, working agricultural land, and wildlife. However, by the very nature of building communities, developing business parks, and farming and ranching, the environment is affected.

The County approves where development is located, how it is built, and how it operates. The County Plan supports decisions that minimize the adverse impacts of development on the environment. The Plan's policies in this section are supported and guided by the following provincial direction:

- Municipal Government Act that provides the legislative framework for statutory plans that "...maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment."
- Land Use Framework Strategy, which encourages conservation, land stewardship, healthy ecosystems, and the efficient use of land.
- Water for Life strategy goals of:
  - a safe, secure drinking water supply;
  - healthy aquatic ecosystems; and
  - reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

Achieving a sustainable environment requires integration across the Plan. In addition to the policies and actions listed below, other policies addressing land stewardship, water, wastewater, stormwater, and the efficient use of land are captured in the agriculture, managing growth, building communities, utility, and solid waste sections.

### GOALS

- Manage private development and County operations in a way that maintains and improves the quality of the natural environment.
- Encourage partnerships and public education initiatives that contribute to environmental awareness and management.
- Provide for a safe, secure, and reliable drinking water supply.
- Treat and manage stormwater and wastewater to protect surface water, riparian areas, and wetlands.
- Practice sound land use planning in order to protect agricultural operations, native habitat, environmentally sensitive areas, and wildlife corridors.
- Retain rural landscapes, dark skies, open vistas, and agriculture lands.
- Promote and implement conservation measures to reduce waste, improve water use, reduce land consumption, and increase building energy efficiency.

**Watershed** is the area of land where surface water from rain and melting snow or ice converges to a single point such as a major river.

**Did you know?** Both the Red Deer watershed and the Bow River watershed drain land within the County. The two rivers join together in Saskatchewan.

## POLICY

### Education and Partnering

- 7.1 Educate county residents and developers on:
  - a. water conservation;
  - b. invasive weed control and pest management; and
  - c. small parcel environmental stewardship.
- 7.2 Facilitate education for agricultural producers on Beneficial Land Management Practices to reduce the impact of farm operations on the environment.
- 7.3 Support and participate in environmental management initiatives undertaken by:
  - a. watershed councils and water stewardship groups;
  - b. the regional air shed working group; and
  - c. agricultural and regional invasive weed management groups.

### Water

- 7.4 Protect ground water and ensure use does not exceed *carrying capacity* by:
  - a. supporting long term ground water research and monitoring programs;
  - b. mitigating the potential adverse impacts of development on groundwater recharge areas;
  - c. adhering to provincial ground water testing requirements, as part of the development approval process; and
  - d. encouraging and facilitating the capping of abandoned water wells to protect against ground water leakage and cross contamination.
- 7.5 Use relevant watershed management plans as guiding documents and planning tools.

**Did You Know?** Rocky View County participates and supports five watershed councils and stewardship groups

- Bow River Basin Council
- Red Deer River Watershed Alliance
- Elbow River Watershed Partnership
- Nose Creek Watershed Partnership
- Jumpingpound Creek Watershed Partnership

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

**Riparian land** is the vegetated (green zone) area adjacent to rivers, creeks, lakes, and wetlands.

**Wetlands** are marshes and ponds that vary in terms of water saturation and permanence. Riparian areas and wetlands:

- improve water quality
- contribute to groundwater recharge
- reduce erosion and flooding
- provide recreation
- protect biodiversity

**Low Impact Development (LID)** uses a variety of techniques to treat and manage stormwater runoff close to the areas where rain falls. LID focuses on site design and stormwater control options such as green roofs, stormwater capture and re-use, and landscaping that increases the absorption and filtering of rainwater.

## Stormwater and Wastewater

- 7.6 Require environmentally sustainable wastewater disposal practices to protect watersheds and surface/ground water quality. Wastewater treatment systems should not exceed the land's carrying capacity.
- 7.7 Effectively treat stormwater to protect surface water, *riparian areas*, and *wetlands*.
- 7.8 Encourage and support *Low Impact Development* as an approach to treat and manage stormwater.
- 7.9 Stormwater treatment should avoid the use of natural wetlands.
- 7.10 Support the use of constructed stormwater wetlands for treatment and storage of surface runoff.
- 7.11 Stormwater treatment and storage facilities shall not be located in floodways or riparian areas located along waterways.

## Land and Environmental Stewardship

- 7.12 Encourage the efficient use of rural land and infrastructure by directing residential, commercial, and industrial development to the defined growth areas and by encouraging infill development within those areas.
- 7.13 Support the conservation and effective management of riparian areas and wetlands in accordance with County Policy.
- 7.14 Encourage sustainable agricultural operations through sound land stewardship.
- 7.15 Encourage development to retain and reintroduce natural habitat and native grasslands.
- 7.16 Development shall be planned, designed, and constructed to protect *alluvial aquifers*.
- 7.17 Development applications may require the preparation and implementation of a bio-physical impact assessment to protect environmentally sensitive areas.
- 7.18 Environmental site assessments shall be required when a previous use may have contaminated the proposed development area.
- 7.19 Utility systems shall be designed and constructed to minimize adverse impacts to environmentally sensitive areas, as identified by a Biophysical Impact Assessment.
- 7.20 Require the control and eradication of regulated weeds on private and public land in accordance with the provincial regulations and County Policy.

**Alluvium** is loose, unconsolidated clay, silt, or gravel, which has been deposited by a stream or river.

An **aquifer** is an underground layer of consolidated or unconsolidated rock and sediment through which groundwater moves.

When water flows directly from the underground aquifer to a surface, which is under the influence of surface water (river), an **alluvial aquifer** exists.

The **Weed Control Act** requires County staff to inspect private and public land for regulated weed species. Landowners are obligated to control or eradicate weeds on their property.

During the growing season, weed inspectors locate weed infestations and encourage landowner action.

## Development in Hazard Areas

- 7.21 Development in hazard areas, such as *flood fringes* and escarpments, shall be allowed only if an appropriate technical evaluation demonstrates suitability, to the satisfaction of the County and in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw.
- 7.22 Development within the flood fringe is discouraged and, where allowed, shall comply with the Land Use Bylaw.

## Construction Practices

- 7.23 Country residential development should build with the contours of the land and avoid stripping and grading.
- 7.24 Require best management construction practices to reduce wind and water erosion of soils and to suppress dust dispersion.
- 7.25 Encourage and support proper disposal and recycling of solid waste from construction.

## Conservation

- 7.26 Encourage and support conservation design as a form of compact residential development in new or amended area structure plans.
- 7.27 Encourage potable water conservation measures for all users of public and private water systems.
- 7.28 Encourage green building techniques and energy efficiency in subdivision and building design.
- 7.29 Maintain dark skies by:
  - a. ensuring dark sky principles are incorporated when developing or amending area structure plans;
  - b. requiring public and business lighting in outdoor areas to be downward directed and conform to the Land Use Bylaw; and
  - c. encouraging residents to use downward directed lighting.
- 7.30 Support and encourage the use of agricultural land for small scale production of renewable sources of energy.
- 7.31 Provide convenient, cost effective, and environmentally responsible ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle household waste.

**Floodway** typically includes the main channel of a stream and a portion of the adjacent overbank. It is the inner portion of a floodrisk area where the floodwaters are the deepest, fastest, and most destructive.

**Flood Fringe** is the outer portion of the flood risk area. The water in the flood fringe is generally shallower and flows more slowly than in the floodway.

**Floodrisk Area** means the area of land bordering a water course or water body that would be inundated by 1 in 100 year flood as determined by the province in consultation with the County and may include both flood fringe and floodway.



## ACTIONS

- Develop an environmental review checklist to provide for consistent review of development applications (goal 1).
- Undertake an inventory of regionally important environmental areas and develop policies and procedures to address these areas (goal 4).
- Review the Land Use Bylaw to establish criteria with respect to building setbacks from escarpments to preserve *viewscales* and ensure safety (goal 5, policy 7.21).
- Assess the use of *Transfer Development Credits*, in accordance with the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, as a way to direct development to preferred growth areas in order to sustain agriculture, benefit agriculture land owners, and achieve compact development (policy 7.26).
- Develop a water conservation policy for public utility systems and adopt water conservation policies in new or amended area structure plans (policy 7.27).
- Review the dark sky lighting requirements of the Land Use Bylaw (policy 7.29).

**Viewscales** are those features that provide a community asset, such as pleasing vistas and scenes that provide a sense of landscape identification and character. Views within viewscales include open land, vistas, skylines, ridgelines, and peaks.

**Transfer Development Credit (TDC)** programs allow municipalities to direct development away from areas where it is not preferred (sending areas), and toward a preferred development area (receiving area). Owners of the 'sending area' benefit by putting development rights on an open market but in return must permanently give up future development potential. Landowners/developers in a 'receiving area' are able to increase development density beyond the base amount allowed by zoning.

## B. Building Communities

Participants in the County Plan engagement process strongly supported the following statement.

“The rural nature and importance of country residential, hamlet, and agricultural communities must be maintained.”<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, some participants questioned whether parts of the County are truly rural. What does it mean to be rural? Rural is a difficult word to define and it depends on whom you ask and where they live.<sup>13</sup>

Without question, farms and ranches, which produce crops and livestock are considered rural. What about the small hamlets, villages, and towns that started as places to trade commodities and provide services to the surrounding agriculture area? They have some of the physical characteristics of an urban centre, but because of their size and location in the county, have a very different feel and sense of community from their urban counterparts. And what about country residential communities; are they considered to be rural? These communities often arise because of their proximity to large urban centres. Nevertheless, residents of these communities strongly value the features that characterize the rural landscape.

The challenge to county residents, landowners, and developers is to build communities that retain a rural sense and feel. The following table captures some of the characteristics of Rocky View’s three types of rural communities. These characteristics should be considered in planning, design, and development of a rural community.

<sup>12</sup> September/October (2012) Workshops Report, 2012, Rocky View County

<sup>13</sup> Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities International City/County Management Association

Table 3: Characteristics of Rocky View's Rural Communities

	<b>Agriculture Area</b>	<b>Hamlet</b>	<b>Country Residential</b>
The 'sense' of living in the country	self-reliant and independent	connection and participation	self-reliant and independent
	heritage and community	friendly, community spirit	community
	privacy	safety, family, and neighbours	privacy
	quiet	quiet	quiet
	space and distance	space and distance	space and distance
	livestock and wildlife	countryside	nature and wildlife
	associated with a distinct community or area	small and distinct community	part of a distinct community
Physical Characteristics	working land	surrounded by working or conservation land	interconnected with working land
	dark skies	dark countryside and public lighting	dark skies
	barns, corrals, granaries, livestock, fields, grain, pasture, noise, smells, and equipment	main street, central park, and/or commercial crossroad	paved roads connecting dispersed acreage communities
	farm homes with isolated country residential homes and gravel roads	larger residential lots with opportunity for a mix of residential uses and lot sizes	primarily residential development, variety of lot sizes, unique houses, and landscaping
	no local commercial services and amenities, distant community centres, and ball diamonds	some commercial services, amenities, a community hall, and playing fields	limited commercial services and amenities, a community centre, and sports fields in the general area
	wells and septic systems	piped water and wastewater, wells, and septic systems	piped water and wastewater, wells, and septic systems
	distant schools	schools	may be schools in the general area
	limited regional pathways	sidewalks and pathways for recreation and local transportation	recreational trails, opportunities for walking, riding, and cycling

## 8.0 AGRICULTURE

Agriculture has been a mainstay of the County’s economy and has guided its settlement pattern since the early 1900’s. Most of the hamlets in the county started as places to trade livestock and grain and provide service to the surrounding area. Traditional agriculture still dominates the rural landscape, but in recent times new agricultural ventures are emerging.

The County Plan envisions Rocky View as a community where:

- traditional farming and ranching continues to be valued and respected;
- agriculture flourishes through innovation and diversification; and
- agriculture is promoted and recognized as vital to the County’s social, economic, and environmental integrity.

Achieving this vision requires a comprehensive approach to education, the business of agriculture, and land use planning. The County can assist by providing services, encouraging business opportunities, and supporting the diversity and flexibility of agriculture operations.

### GOALS

- Foster an agriculture sector that is diverse, sustainable, and viable.
- Promote partnerships and education initiatives that support the agriculture sector and contribute to increased operator knowledge and opportunities.
- Support individual agriculture producers and related business to help them be successful.
- Support agriculture operators in going about their day-to-day business with minimum adverse impacts from non-agricultural land uses.
- Encourage and support new forms of agriculture innovation and diversification through land use policy.

### POLICY

#### Partnering, Education, and Food Production

Maintaining a viable and sustainable agricultural sector requires practical hands-on support to educate agricultural producers and county residents, and facilitate the broadening of agriculture markets and regional food production.

**In the years ahead** “traditional agriculture uses including large scale crop and cattle production still dominate the landscape. However, the industry has been revitalized through a renewed global emphasis on food production... the next generation of producers and general diversification and innovation.”

*- vision from the Agriculture Master Plan*

- 8.1 Partner and co-operate with other municipalities, levels of government, industry, and non-governmental organizations to:
  - a. develop a regional approach to food production, marketing, and distribution;
  - b. build linkages from producer to consumer that increase local food consumption and crop diversification;
  - c. educate agricultural operators and the public; and
  - d. support initiatives identified in the Agriculture Service Board Strategic Plan.
- 8.2 Support and encourage operators involved in regional and local food production, marketing, distribution, diversification, and food security as per the Agriculture Master Plan.
- 8.3 Facilitate education and provide advice in such areas as:
  - a. beneficial land management practices to address high risk environmental issues and to reduce the impact of farm operations on the environment;
  - b. new agricultural opportunities, technology, and diversification;
  - c. trends and research on crops, livestock, and range and pasture management;
  - d. agricultural business management and farm succession; and
  - e. environmental stewardship.
- 8.4 Facilitate education and provide advice to all county residents and developers regarding:
  - a. weed control and pest management;
  - b. planting and landscaping recommendations and requirements;
  - c. basic agricultural principles, practices, and neighbour relations;
  - d. environmental stewardship on small parcels;
  - e. land management and stewardship; and
  - f. challenges and threats to agriculture.
- 8.5 Increase public awareness and understanding of agriculture by promoting the importance of the agriculture industry for food, jobs, trade, economics, and the environment.
- 8.6 Raise public awareness about the rewards and challenges of living in a rural area.

## Business

Agricultural operators and the entire agricultural sector make an important contribution to the economy and employment levels in the County.

- 8.7 Support and encourage agriculture operations and agricultural related economic activity.
- 8.8 Support and encourage *small scale, value-added agriculture* and *agriculture services* to locate in proximity to complementary agricultural producers.
- 8.9 Direct large scale value-added agriculture and agriculture services to develop in identified and comprehensively planned business centres.
- 8.10 Provide a road network that allows for the safe and timely movement of agricultural equipment and goods.
- 8.11 Provide for increased home based business opportunities.
- 8.12 Support the province in recognizing, preserving, and accounting for the *natural capital* of land.
- 8.13 Support and encourage the use of agricultural land for small scale production of renewable sources of energy.

## Land Use

Agriculture viability and diversity requires the recognition of different types and scales of agriculture operations; and the need to allow operators to go about their day-to-day business without new land uses adversely impacting their operation.

- 8.14 Support traditional agriculture and new, innovative agricultural ventures.
- 8.15 Support and encourage the viability and flexibility of the agriculture sector by allowing a range of parcel sizes, where appropriate.
- 8.16 All redesignation and subdivision approvals shall address the development requirements of section 29.

## First Parcel Out

- 8.17 A subdivision to create a first parcel out that is a minimum of 1.60 hectares (3.95 acres) in area should be supported if the proposed site:
  - a. meets the definition of a first parcel out;
  - b. has direct access to a developed public roadway;
  - c. has no physical constraints to subdivision;
  - d. minimizes adverse impacts on agricultural operations by meeting agriculture location and agriculture boundary design guidelines; and
  - e. the balance of the *un-subdivided quarter section* is maintained as an agricultural land use.

**Did you know?** In 2008, the primary agriculture industry in Alberta accounted for \$4.7 billion in revenues and employed 61,000 Albertans.

### **Value-added agriculture**

involves the processing of primary agricultural products and services into secondary products to increase overall product value.

**Agriculture services** assist the agricultural operator in the production of primary and value-added agriculture products and services.

**Small scale** means activities that are minor in nature, as per the land use bylaw; and limited in scope, extent, traffic, and employees. Small scale, value-added agriculture and agriculture services may not require upgrades to the road network if traffic volumes can be safely accommodated. Examples of small scale, value-added production and agriculture services include:

- berries to jam
- meat to sausage
- agri-tourism
- farrier services
- welding shop

**Natural Capital** is the land resource that supports economic activity (agriculture, forestry, recreation). It includes physical resources (minerals, timber, and petroleum) as well as the ecosystems (grasslands, wetlands, and forests) that produce ecological goods and services (clean water and air).

**Physical Constraint** means a natural feature or human made hazard that impacts or restricts site suitability for development. Constraints include; rivers, water bodies, wetlands, ravines, escarpments, steep slopes, land that is subject to flooding, and land that is, in the opinion of the subdivision authority, unstable.

**Un-subdivided Quarter Section** is a titled area of:

- I. 64.7 hectares (160 acres) more or less; or
- II. a *gore strip* greater than 32.38 hectares (80 acres) in size, if an un-subdivided quarter section is reduced or fragmented by any road widening, boundary adjustment, public use, or right of way for roads, utilities, railroads and canals, it shall be considered un-subdivided when assessing first parcel out proposals. this includes instances where, as a result of a boundary adjustment, public use, or right of way, separate titles have been registered for remaining fragmented portions of the quarter section.

## Redesignation and Subdivision for Agricultural Purposes

The following policies provide for a variety of parcel sizes to accommodate a wide range of agricultural pursuits by acknowledging that emerging trends in agriculture may be successfully developed on smaller parcels of land.

- 8.18 Redesignation and subdivision to smaller agriculture parcels as a new or distinct agricultural operation may be supported. Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:
- A similar pattern of nearby small agricultural operations;
  - A planning rationale justifying why the existing land use and parcel size cannot accommodate the *new or distinct agricultural operation*;
  - A demonstration of the need for the new agriculture operation;
  - An assessment of the proposed parcel size and design, to demonstrate it is capable of supporting the new or distinct agricultural operation. Site assessment criteria include:
    - suitable soil characteristics and topography;
    - suitable on-site infrastructure for the proposed use. Required infrastructure may include access areas, water wells, irrigation and sewage infrastructure, and manure management capability; and
    - compatibility with existing uses on the parent parcel and adjacent lands;
  - An assessment of the impact on, and potential upgrades to, County infrastructure; and
  - An assessment of the impact on the environment including air quality, surface water, and groundwater.
- 8.19 The approval of discretionary agriculture land uses, or land uses related to agriculture, is supported where there are existing or potential concentrations of agricultural resources, markets, animal types, agriculture related industries, or other discretionary land uses, as identified in the Land Use Bylaw.

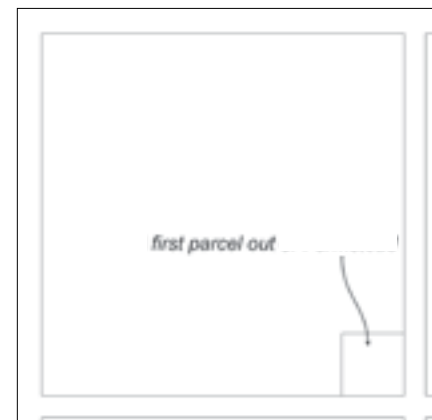
## Confined Feeding Operations

The Province defines, approves, and regulates *confined feeding operations*. Municipalities may make recommendations to the Province regarding location and operation of confined feeding operations.

- 8.20 The County should make site recommendations on all new or expanded confined feeding operations. The recommendation will consider:
- proximity to any County statutory planning area, adjacent municipality, existing residential developments,

**Gore Strip** means a fractional  $\frac{1}{4}$  section of land created to allow for the convergence of meridian lines.

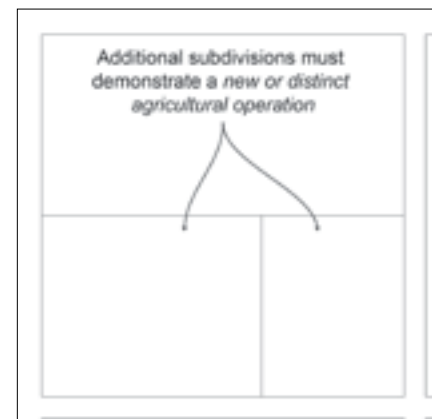
*First parcel out*



## **New or Distinct Agricultural Operation**

- New agricultural operations are distinctly different from the existing use of the land in terms of agricultural products, livestock, and/or facilities.
- Distinct operations are where two or more different agricultural uses are established on a single agriculture parcel for a period of 5 years or more. Such uses may include agricultural products, livestock, and/or facilities.

## **New or distinct agricultural operation example**



**Estate planning or personal financial considerations** do not constitute a planning rationale for changing a parcel's land use.

or residential land use;

- b. impact on adjacent land uses;
- c. proposed minimum distance of separation;
- d. environmental impact;
- e. impact on the County infrastructure; and
- f. any other matter the County considers relevant.

- 8.21 It is recommended a confined feeding operation applicant provide nearby landowners with technical and design information, receive feedback through a public involvement process, and report back to the County on how the proposal addresses public input.
- 8.22 Confined feeding operations should be located in an area where there will be minimal conflict with non-complementary land uses.
- 8.23 Land uses incompatible with the operation of a confined feeding operation shall not be supported when proposed within the *minimum distance of separation* of the confined feeding operation.
- 8.24 A confined feeding operation, including its minimum distance of separation should not be located within the boundary of any intermunicipal development plan or notification zone, statutory planning area, hamlet, residential area, institutional use, or federal, provincial, or municipal park or recreation area.

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

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



## Minimize Land Use Conflict

Non-agricultural development adjacent to, or near, an agricultural operation may adversely impact that operation. One way of addressing land use compatibility is to emphasize the importance of buffering and setbacks.

- 8.25 Discourage intrusive and/or incompatible land use in the agricultural area.
- 8.26 Applicants proposing new residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial land uses shall design and implement measures to minimize their adverse impacts on existing agriculture operations, based on the County's 'agriculture boundary design guidelines.'
- 8.27 Encourage houses in residential areas adjacent to agricultural land to be set back an appropriate distance from the agricultural land so as to minimize the impact on both the agriculture operations and the house owners.
- 8.28 Work with adjacent municipalities to minimize the adverse impact of new land uses within their jurisdiction on existing agriculture operations in Rocky View County. Ensure joint planning with adjacent municipalities respects and addresses the County's 'agriculture boundary design guidelines'.

## ACTIONS

- Review the Land Use Bylaw home based business uses and regulations to provide greater opportunity on larger parcels of land (policy 8.11).
- Explore the use of provincial tools to compensate landowners for the natural capital of agricultural land (policy 8.12).
- Review the Land Use Bylaw to allow for the development of renewable energy sources. (policy 8.13).
- Amend the Land Use Bylaw to allow a first parcel out for an agriculture subdivision, and agriculture subdivision of isolated land without redesignation (policies 8.18 to 8.19).
- Develop a Right to Farm Policy which aligns with provincial legislation and, where feasible, enhances provincial objectives (policies 8.29 to 8.30).
- Develop and apply 'agriculture boundary design guidelines' to minimize negative impacts on agricultural land from new non-agricultural land uses, including a consideration of increased building setbacks (policy 8.31).

## 9.0 HAMLETS

Hamlets form a traditional part of the rural landscape. The County's hamlets vary in size, appearance, and function, with each hamlet having a distinct character that reflects its particular history and environment. Hamlets range from those with a wide variety of services and relatively steady growth, to those with limited services and little or no growth.

Hamlet communities are encouraged to build on their historical character and to evolve over time. This Plan provides policies to ensure development strengthens these communities, is sensitive to the needs of all residents, and is as orderly and efficient as possible. Local community planning processes will determine hamlet form, amenities, and population size.

### GOALS

- Support hamlets in maintaining and developing a strong sense of community identity and in carrying on their role as service hubs to the surrounding agricultural regions.
- Support hamlets in developing and maintaining attractive, high quality built environments and distinct, safe residential neighbourhoods.

### POLICIES

#### Hamlets: Appearance and Function

- 9.1 Encourage and support the development of the Hamlets of Conrich, Harmony, Langdon, Balzac, and Glenbow Ranch as full service rural communities providing a range of land uses, housing types, and rural services to their residents and local area, in accordance with their area structure plan or conceptual scheme.
- 9.2 Support the development of the Hamlets of Bragg Creek, Cochrane Lake, Kathyrn, Delacour, Dalroy, and Indus as small rural communities with basic services, in accordance with their area structure plan or conceptual scheme.
- 9.3 Services in hamlets will be rural in nature and not necessarily equivalent to those in urban municipalities.
- 9.4 Land uses in hamlets may include:
  - a. residential uses, including seniors housing;
  - b. local commercial uses;
  - c. institutional and community uses such as schools, community halls, and religious assemblies;
  - d. recreational and cultural uses; and
  - e. light industrial uses.

- 9.5 In order to retain their rural character, hamlets are not encouraged to grow beyond a population range of 5,000 - 10,000 residents.

### **Hamlets: Planning and Design Considerations**

- 9.6 Development in a hamlet shall be guided by, and conform to, the adopted area structure plan or conceptual scheme.
- 9.7 All new commercial or industrial subdivisions or multi-lot residential subdivisions proposed within a hamlet shall require the preparation of a subordinate plan to the area structure plan or conceptual scheme.
- 9.8 An area structure plan for a hamlet shall address the following planning and design matters:
- a. future land use concept;
  - b. the amount of remaining undeveloped land within existing boundaries;
  - c. population estimates and impact on existing services, infrastructure, and amenities;
  - d. form, quality, design, and compatibility of proposed development;
  - e. potential for enhancements to the main street, crossroads area, and/or community gathering places;
  - f. provision of sufficient parks, open space, amenities, and pedestrian connections;
  - g. impact on the environment;
  - h. interface design with adjacent agriculture land;
  - i. provision for regional transit connections; and
  - j. the proposal addresses the development review criteria identified in section 29.
- 9.9 In order to retain rural character, identify a distinct community, and preserve viewscales, a physical separation between an urban boundary and a hamlet is desirable. Preferred uses of land to achieve this transition are:
- a. agriculture;
  - b. open space and parks;
  - c. conservation lands such as wetland complexes;
  - d. stormwater retention areas; and
  - e. compact country residential development within the transition area.

#### **Balzac**

Balzac is named after a famous French writer, Honore de Balzac (1799 - 1850) who was the favourite author of a CPR executive in the early 20th Century. Balzac was designated as a flag station on the CPR line to Edmonton in 1915.

#### **Bottrel**

Bottrel is named after Edward Botterel (Botterel was originally misspelled.) who came to the area from Montreal in order to start the Dog Pound Ranch in 1892, later named the Bottrel Ranch.

#### **Bragg Creek**

Bragg Creek is named after Albert Warren Bragg and John Thomas Bragg who homesteaded in the area in 1894. Established between the forest reserve, the Tsuu T'ina reserve and a Provincial Park, the community founds its roots in recreation.

#### **Cochrane Lake**

The Hamlet derives its name from Senator Matthew Henry Cochrane, who founded the Cochrane Ranche in 1881. Development began in Cochrane Lake in 1962.

#### **Conrich**

Conrich was named after two real estate developers, Connacher and Richardson. The hamlet was established in 1913.

#### **Dalemead**

Established in 1913, originally named Strathmead but after some confusion with the nearby town of Strathmore, its name was changed to Dalemead.

#### **Dalroy**

Dalroy was established in 1910, just before the rail line was constructed from Langdon to Acme.

#### **Delacour**

Named after Mr. De Lacour, the foreman of the crew building the Grand Trunk railway, a small store was established in the community in 1914.

- 9.10 Support hamlets in providing:
  - a. an attractive community and distinct identity; and
  - b. a high quality built environment.
- 9.11 Encourage a variety of housing forms to be developed in hamlets in order to provide a range of affordability and lifestyle opportunities for county residents.
- 9.12 Support local employment and small business opportunities in hamlets.
- 9.13 Encourage well-designed public gathering places in hamlets that:
  - a. are pedestrian and cyclist-friendly, safe, accessible, and attractive;
  - b. respect and enhance community identity and character;
  - c. encourage social interaction;
  - d. address the needs of residents of all ages and abilities;
  - e. are connected by pathways and sidewalks;
  - f. allow for passive and active recreation and cultural activity.

**Indus**

Established in 1911, Indus was named by Dr. J.M. Fulton who submitted a shortened form of the word “industry”. A more romantic version links the name to an Indian name meaning “constellation of the stars.”

**Kathyrn**

Established in 1911, Kathyrn is named after a daughter of a local pioneer, Neil McKay. Neil McKay offered a piece of land to the railway for the town site so the town would be named after his daughter. The unusual spelling is apparently the responsibility of a sign painter whose spelling skills left something to be desired.

**Keoma**

Keoma made its first appearance in 1910, just as the CP rail line was completed through to Irricana and Beiseker. Keoma is an Indian name meaning “far away”.

**Langdon**

Langdon was named after Jim Langdon of Langdon and Shepard railroad contractors and at one time was the end of the railway line.

**Madden**

Madden is named after Bernard “Barney” Madden, an early pioneer who is believed to have homesteaded in the area before 1880. Madden was also known as Sampsonston.

## 10.0 COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Country residential communities are a form of rural living. They play a significant role in shaping the landscape and providing a sense of belonging to their residents. The county has a number of country residential communities, some formally defined by area structure plan policy, while others have grown gradually over time.

### GOALS

- Manage the planning and development of country residential communities so that they provide residents with a safe, healthy, and attractive community.
- Support country residential communities in maintaining a strong sense of community.
- Encourage alternative residential development forms that retain rural character and reduce the overall development footprint on the landscape.
- Provide an effective process to support the orderly, efficient, and cost effective development of fragmented quarter sections in agricultural areas.

### POLICIES

#### Country Residential Communities.

- 10.1 Development within Greater Bragg Creek, Bearspaw, North and Central Springbank, Elbow Valley, Balzac East (Sharp Hills/Butte Hills), Cochrane North, and Glenbow Ranch shall conform to their relevant area structure plan.
- 10.2 Country residential development in the agriculture area shall be guided by the goals and policies of this Plan.
- 10.3 Encourage and support country residential communities in providing a high quality built environment while maintaining rural character.
- 10.4 Country residential development shall address the development review criteria identified in section 29.

#### Amendments to Existing Country Residential Area Structure Plans

- 10.5 When an existing country residential area structure plan is undergoing a comprehensive review, the following policy areas shall be addressed:
  - a. Update all policies in accordance with this Plan, County Policies, and other relevant County planning documents.
  - b. Consider alternative development forms, such as compact residential development or a Conservation Community, which retain rural character and reduce the

overall development footprint on the landscape.

- c. Where an area structure plan is extensive in size and the development potential is not being achieved as expected, communities and the County should consider reducing the overall area dedicated to country residential development.
- d. Where an area structure plan is extensive in size, and has distinct natural planning or physical boundaries, a separate area structure plan may be created to deal with the planning considerations in the identified area.
- e. Consider the planning and design direction for new country residential communities (policy 10.6).

### **New Country Residential Communities: Planning and Design**

The Managing Growth section (5.0) of this Plan does not contemplate the development of new country residential area structure plans or the expansion of existing area structure plans until those plans reach *build-out*. However, if an application complies with the requirements of policy 5.9 and the County determines a new or amended country residential area structure plan is needed, the plan will be evaluated on the basis of its compliance with policy 10.6, as well as other policies of this Plan.

- 10.6 Where a new country residential area structure plan is needed the plan should:
- a. ensure development supports rural character, is well designed, and conforms to current technical servicing requirements and master servicing plans and policies;
  - b. propose alternative residential development forms, such as *compact residential development* or a Conservation Community, to reduce the development footprint on the rural landscape;
  - c. provide for well-designed public gathering places such as parks, open spaces, and community facilities. Gathering places should:
    - i. be safe, accessible, and attractive;
    - ii. be centrally located;
    - iii. respect and enhance community identity and character;
    - iv. encourage social interaction; and
    - v. address the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.

Within the county there is considerable variety in the appearance and character of **country residential** communities. Common characteristics include:

- mainly residential,
- variety of lot sizes,
- primarily dispersed low density development,
- rural character,
- designed with the landscape, and
- passive and active recreational, and cultural opportunities

- d. ensure development retains the area's natural features and that buildings are situated to create minimal visual impact on adjoining properties;
- e. provide patterns of development and transportation networks that create linkages between subordinate plans; and
- f. address the following matters:
  - i. future land use concept, population at build-out, and the phasing of development;
  - ii. form, quality, design, and compatibility with existing development;
  - iii. impact on municipal servicing costs and proximity of development to existing road and servicing infrastructure;
  - iv. fiscal impact analysis;
  - v. efficient internal road network;
  - vi. need for institutional uses, open space, recreational areas, amenities, and pedestrian connections;
  - vii. impact on the environment;
  - viii. designing with the landscape;
  - ix. interface design with adjacent agriculture land; and
  - x. other policies of this Plan.

### Compact Residential Development

Compact residential design sensitively integrates housing with the natural features and topography of a site by grouping homes on smaller lots, while permanently preserving a significant amount of buildable land for conservation, recreation, or agriculture uses. Principles of compact development suggest "half or more of the buildable land area is designated as undivided permanent open space."<sup>14</sup>

- 10.7 Incorporate compact residential development as a development form in new country residential area structure plans and consider it when amending existing country residential area structure plans.
- 10.8 Compact residential development shall be designed to achieve:
  - a. a reduction in the overall development footprint through a permanent retention of a portion of *developable land as open land*;
  - b. a portion of open land that is publicly accessible and used for *greenways*, regional pathways, and/or trails;

**Build-out** is an estimate of the amount and location of potential housing or business development for an area.

**Compact residential development** has the following features:

- permanent retention of a significant amount of open land;
- no reduction in dwelling units within the overall project area;
- may provide for a range of housing types and lot sizes;
- reduced development footprint;
- reduced infrastructure costs by shortening road and utility runs;
- increased opportunities to treat and store stormwater;
- opportunity for onsite waste water treatment systems; and
- retention of rural character.

### Traditional country residential development



### Compact residential development



- c. an efficient, compact, walkable building area;
    - d. servicing and transportation efficiencies, minimizing operational costs, and retention of viewscales;
    - e. minimal impacts on adjacent agricultural operations; and
    - f. environmental best practices, interconnected open land, efficient development, and retention of rural character.
- 10.9 Area structure plans providing for compact residential development shall:
- a. be informed by an analysis of conservation, recreational, and/or agriculture needs;
  - b. permanently retain a significant amount of the developable area as *open land*. The minimum desired percentage of open land will be determined by the area structure plan;
  - c. determine the parameters for establishing the maximum number of dwelling units on the basis of developable land;
  - d. provide for the distribution and varied densities of dwelling units within portions of the development area;
  - e. allow for residential dwelling unit bonusing when dedicated open land exceeds the minimum requirement or to achieve other identified benefits;
  - f. identify and apply mechanisms that permanently prevent subdivision of the open lands; and
  - g. identify mechanisms to effectively manage the open lands.

**Developable Land** includes all land on which building could occur and excludes land identified as environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement.

**Open Land** is developable land and includes:

- i. parks and open space;
- ii. publicly or privately owned land permanently used for conservation, recreation, agriculture, and/or institution uses;
- iii. public utility lots;
- iv. municipal reserve land dedication;
- v. riparian areas, constructed wetlands, stormwater treatment areas, wastewater treatment areas;
- vi. flood fringe areas; and
- vii. Other environmentally important land not qualifying as environmental reserve.

Primary uses of open land are for conservation, recreation, and/or agriculture.

A **greenway** is a linear open space established along a corridor, such as a river, stream, ridgeline, rail-trail, canal, or other route suitable for conservation and recreation purposes.

<sup>14</sup> Conservation Design for Subdivisions: A practical guide to creating open space networks. Randall G. Arendt 1996, pg. 6.



## Conservation Community

A Conservation Community is a form of compact development that incorporates conservation design principles. A Conservation Community is large in scale and may include the characteristics of a hamlet by concentrating allowable country residential development into a mixed-use centre that includes residential, institutional and limited commercial uses.

### 10.10 Conservation Communities:

- a. shall comprise multiple quarter sections of land that are comprehensively planned and developed;
- b. shall follow *conservation design* principles;
- c. shall meet the intent of the Compact Residential Development preamble and the requirements of policies 10.8 and 10.9;
- d. may include a mixed use centre that:
  - i. shall address all relevant parts of Section 9.0 (Hamlets), section 14.0 (Business) and other policies of this Plan; and
  - ii. shall not be required to meet the conditions of policy 5.4 (new hamlet development).

## Fragmented Country Residential Areas

Historical subdivision approval in parts of the County's agricultural area has resulted in fragmented pockets of country residential lots and small agricultural parcels.

Incremental development in these areas divides viable agricultural land, impacts agriculture operators, and creates an inefficient settlement pattern. From a fiscal perspective, dispersed residential development is not cost effective; requiring increased road maintenance and impacting service providers such as the County and local school boards.

In response to this development pattern, this Plan addresses the issues related to fragmented land and provides policies to enable a gradual transition to a more orderly and efficient residential development pattern within *fragmented quarter sections*.

- 10.11 Within a fragmented quarter section, the redesignation of residential lots or agricultural parcels less than or equal to 10 hectares (24.7 acres) in size to a new residential land use may be supported if the following criteria are met:
  - a. A *lot and road plan* is provided that;
    - i. plans for an area determined by the County at the time of redesignation application. The plan shall include, at a minimum, all residential or small

- agricultural acreages that are adjacent to the application;
- ii. includes design measures to minimize adverse impacts on existing agriculture operations; and
  - iii. demonstrates potential connectivity to residential or small agricultural acreages outside of the lot and road plan area.
- b. A technical assessment of the proposed design is provided, to demonstrate that the lot and road plan area is capable of supporting increased residential development. The assessment shall address:
    - i. the internal road network, water supply, sewage treatment, and stormwater management; and
    - ii. any other assessment required by unique area conditions.
  - c. A technical assessment of the impact on off-site infrastructure, roads, and stormwater systems is be provided;
  - d. A report is provided that documents the consultation process undertaken to involve affected landowners within the plan area in the preparation and/or review of the lot and road plan.
- 10.12 Within a fragmented quarter section, the redesignation or subdivision of agriculture parcels greater than 10 hectares (24.7 acres) in size to a residential use shall not be supported. Redesignation or subdivision to a new or distinct agricultural operation may be supported as per policy 8.22.
- 10.13 Subdivision of residential lots or small agricultural parcels within a fragmented quarter section may be supported if:
- a. a lot and road plan acceptable to the County has been provided;
  - b. the application area has the appropriate land use designation; and
  - c. the conditions of subdivision implement the lot and road plan.
- 10.14 For development within a fragmented quarter section, an internal road to service a subdivision as per the lot and road plan may be required as a condition of subdivision.
- 10.15 The County strongly encourages the applicant preparing a lot and road plan in a fragmented quarter section to work co-operatively, collaboratively, and equitably with land owners in the lot and road plan area to:
- a. ensure an effective road network, servicing, and stormwater management system; and
  - b. maximize lot yields which create an efficient

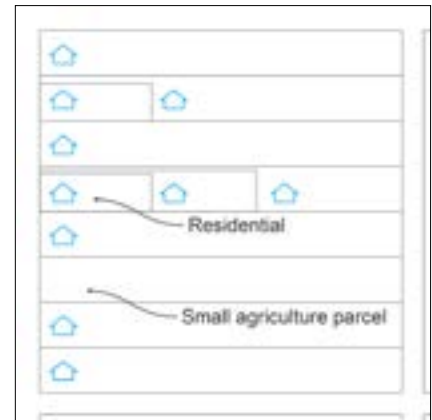
**Conservation design** is a method of site planning that begins with the identification of a land area's features and values that are to be retained and protected. These features may include natural habitat, wildlife corridors, open land, vistas, farm/ranch land and historical areas. Once these areas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

**Fragmented Quarter Section**

is a quarter section of land within the agriculture area divided into six or more:

- i. residential lots; and/or
- ii. small agricultural parcels, each of which is less than 10 hectares (24.7 acres) in size.

**Fragmented quarter section example**



A **lot and road plan** is a non-statutory plan that accompanies a land use redesignation application and is used to comprehensively address a limited set of specific planning issues. It addresses the practical difficulty of multiple parcel ownership and the burden of plan preparation falling on a single owner of a limited amount of land. The lot and road plan requires consultation with owners within the plan area and will be retained by the County to guide future subdivision approval.

development pattern.

## **ACTIONS**

- Develop planning and design standards and guidelines with respect to compact country residential development (policies 10.7 to 10.9).
- Amend the Land Use Bylaw to accommodate compact residential forms of development contemplated in this Plan (policies 10.7 to 10.9).

## **11.0 INSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNITY LAND USE**

Institutional and community land uses benefit residents and contribute to the community by serving culture, education, health, religious, recreation, and social needs.

### **GOALS**

- Ensure institutional and community land uses support local needs, are appropriately located, are well designed, and enhance the local community.
- Provide opportunities for institutional and community uses that serve the broader public interest, while ensuring they are compatible with surrounding land uses.

### **POLICY**

- 11.1 Institutional and community land uses shall be encouraged to locate in hamlets, country residential communities, and business centres and shall be developed in accordance with the policies of the relevant area structure plan or conceptual scheme.
- 11.2 Proposed institutional and community land uses for hamlets or country residential communities shall demonstrate:
  - a. a benefit to the local area or community; and
  - b. compatibility with existing land uses.
- 11.3 Proposals for institutional and community land uses that are not within hamlets, country residential communities, or business centres may be considered if the following is addressed:
  - a. justification of the proposed location;
  - b. demonstration of the benefit to the broader public;
  - c. compatibility and integration with existing land uses or nearby communities;
  - d. infrastructure with the capacity to service the proposed development; and
  - e. the development review criteria identified in section 29.
- 11.4 When area structure plans are prepared or amended, the planning process shall address the need for institutional and community land uses, and where appropriate, consult with school boards, recreation boards, and other relevant partners.

11.5 Redesignation and subdivision applications for institutional and community land uses should provide:

- a. an operational plan outlining details such as facility hours, capacity, staff and public numbers, facility use, and parking requirements; and
- b. a master site development plan, as per section 29. The master site development plan shall address servicing and transportation requirements and ensure the site is of sufficient size to accommodate the parking requirements as set out in the Land Use Bylaw.

**Community uses** include a wide range of activities such as:

- Public and private schools
- Places of worship
- Libraries
- Senior's and youth centres
- Recreational facilities
- Emergency services
- Day cares
- Museums
- Health Care facilities
- Government facilities
- Camps and retreats

## 12.0 PARKS, OPEN SPACE, PATHWAYS, AND TRAILS

*Parks, open space, pathways, and trails* contribute to community building by preserving rural landscapes and providing residents opportunities for passive and active recreation. The County Plan supports the development and protection of these amenities by providing guidance on: development along park boundaries; parks and open space creation; land acquisition; pathway and trail linkages; and amenity design and construction.

### GOALS

- Provide a variety of parks, open space, pathways, and trails that are well designed, connect communities, and accommodate residents' recreational and cultural needs.
- Acquire land for parks, open space, pathways, and trails through such means as purchase, land dedication, and donations.
- Partner and collaborate with neighbouring municipalities and other organizations in the development, use, and maintenance of parks, pathways, and trails.
- Ensure transition areas between parks and adjacent uses are well designed and complement the park's function.

### POLICY

#### **Partnering on Parks Development, Connectivity, and Maintenance**

- 12.1 Partner and collaborate with adjacent municipalities, the province, school divisions, conservation agencies, district and regional recreation boards, community groups, developers, and other organizations to develop and maintain parks, open space, pathways, trails, and associated amenities.
- 12.2 Encourage multi-purpose and joint use parks and recreation facilities projects wherever possible.
- 12.3 Promote and provide for the connectivity of pathways and trails to hamlets, small towns, and adjacent municipalities in a manner consistent with the Parks and Open Space Master Plan and Local Recreation Master Plans.
- 12.4 Collaborate with adjacent municipalities on the development of the Trans-Canada Trail as a multi-use pathway throughout the county.

#### **Park Planning and Land Acquisition**

- 12.5 Engage in comprehensive parks and open space planning using the Parks and Open Space Master Plan as a guiding document.

- 12.6 Acquire land for parks, open space, pathways, trails, and recreational and cultural amenities, through such means as:
- dedication of reserve;
  - land purchase;
  - easements and rights-of-way; and
  - donations, endowment funds, and land swaps.

### Design and Standards

- 12.7 Develop and apply design principles and guidelines to provide for high quality parks, open space, pathways, trails, and associated amenities. The principles and guidelines should address design elements such as:
- maintaining respect for the rural landscape;
  - providing variety in appearance and function to accommodate a diversity of people and interests;
  - minimizing land use conflicts;
  - protecting the privacy of residents;
  - incorporating *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* features; and
  - meeting the environmental goals and policies of this Plan.
- 12.8 Integrate and connect escarpments, creek valleys, river valleys, and water bodies through the development and use of parks, open space, pathways, and trails.
- 12.9 Connect residential communities, institutional, commercial, and industrial areas by pathways and trails where feasible.
- 12.10 Planning and design of pathways and trails in the agricultural area shall address the safety and protection of agricultural operations.
- 12.11 Apply design standards to help ensure consistent development of parks, pathways, and trail systems.

### Financing and Life-Cycle Maintenance

- 12.12 Finance a system of parks, open space, pathways, and trails through both County and non-County funding measures. Use the Parks and Open Space Master Plan as a guiding policy document in determining strategies and priorities.
- 12.13 When approving new and redeveloped parks, open space, pathways, and trails, undertake a cost feasibility and life cycle analysis in accordance with County Policy.
- 12.14 Seek out non-County funding options for parks, open space, pathways, and trail development.

**Parks** are developed public land and may include trails and pathways, sports facilities, play grounds, and recreation facilities.

**Open space** includes land and water areas with minimal development that are either publicly owned or offering public access.

**Pathway** means any recognized route that is formally engineered, constructed, and hard surfaced with asphalt or concrete.

**Trail** is any recognized, non-paved route which is surfaced with natural or aggregate materials.

## Parks and Community Interface

The County is fortunate to have provincial and county parks with regional and national significance. The following policies address the need to guide development at the border of these areas in order to retain their integrity.

- 12.15 The values of parks, open spaces, pathways, and trails should be respected and, where possible, enhanced by adjacent development.
- 12.16 Ensure the location, design, and scale of residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial development is sensitively integrated with adjacent parks, open space, trails, and pathways in a comprehensive and supporting manner.
- 12.17 Development adjacent to, or affecting, parks, open space, pathways, and trails should include a comprehensive approach to:
  - a. shared and mutually supportive facilities and/or amenities;
  - b. access;
  - c. stormwater management;
  - d. preserving viewscales into and within the park, where appropriate;
  - e. vegetation and invasive species management; and
  - f. wildlife management.

## ACTIONS

- Identify key land required for parks acquisition (policy 12.5 and 12.6).
- Develop design principles and standards for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of parks, open space, pathways, trails, and associated amenities (policy 12.7).
- Review and update the County's Parks and Open Space classification system to reflect new design standards when they are developed (policy 12.11).
- Develop a life-cycle fund to assist with capital replacement and repair costs (policy 12.13).

### ***Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)***

is an approach to planning and development that reduces the opportunities for crime. Proper design of a neighbourhood or public space can reduce crime, reduce the fear of crime, and improve residents' quality of life.



## 13.0 RESERVES

*Reserves* and environmental reserves are lands dedicated to the community as public land during the subdivision process. Reserves enhance the community by providing land for parks, schools, and recreational amenities. Environmental Reserves protect the community and natural environment by preventing development in hazardous areas such as ravines and floodways.

### GOALS

- Ensure reserve lands contribute to residents' recreational, educational, social, and environmental needs.
- Acquire reserve lands for parks, open space, pathways, and trail development.
- Prevent development in hazardous areas, provide access to lakes and rivers, and protect the natural environment by the dedication of environmental reserves.

### POLICY

#### **Municipal, School, and Community Reserves**

- 13.1 When acquiring reserves, the County shall require that the owners of land proposed for subdivision provide reserves in the form of:
  - a. land;
  - b. money in place of land; or
  - c. a combination of land and money.
- 13.2 The County may defer all or a portion of the required reserves by registering a deferred reserve caveat when the reserve could be provided through future subdivision.
- 13.3 The acquisition, deferral, and disposition of reserve land, and use of cash-in-lieu shall adhere to County Policy, agreements with local school boards, and the requirements of the Municipal Government Act.
- 13.4 Reserves should be provided to the maximum amount allowed by the Municipal Government Act.
- 13.5 The County may accept a voluntary dedication of reserve land beyond the maximum amount allowed by the Municipal Government Act. Over-dedication of reserve land may be used to support the development of a compact residential community or any other need identified by the County.

- 13.6 When assessing the proposed dedication of reserve land, the dedication should meet the present or future needs of the County by considering the recommendations of this Plan, the Parks and Open Space Master Plan, area structure plans, conceptual schemes, local school boards, local recreation boards, and regional recreation boards.
- 13.7 The amount, type, location, and shape of reserve land shall be suitable for public use and accessible to the public.
- 13.8 When determining the amount, type, location, and shape of the reserve land within an intermunicipal development plan area, the adjacent municipality shall be consulted prior to determining the reserve requirement.
- 13.9 The County shall not dispose of reserve land in an intermunicipal development plan area without prior consultation with the appropriate municipality.

### **Environmental Reserve and Environmental Reserve Easements**

- 13.10 *Environmental reserves or environmental reserve easements* shall be taken at the time of subdivision, in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, on lands designated for:
- a. residential, business, or institutional uses;
  - b. on agricultural parcels less than 12.00 hectares (29.65 acres); or
  - c. as determined by the County.
- 13.11 Where the County determines public use is not desirable or where management of public land by the County is not required, land qualifying as environmental reserve may be designated as an environmental reserve easement in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.
- 13.12 A voluntary *conservation easement*, in accordance with the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, may be used to preserve areas that do not qualify as environmental reserve or environmental reserve easements under the Municipal Government Act. The conservation easement may be executed as a legal agreement between the private landowner and the County or a conservation organization.

**Reserves** are lands dedicated to the community by the developer through the subdivision process as defined in the Municipal Government Act and include:

- Municipal reserves
- community services
- school and municipal reserves
- school reserves

Instead of a land dedication, the County may accept the equivalent value of the land as money. **Cash-in-lieu** money is shared between the school boards and the recreation districts.

## 14.0 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

A strong local economy provides multiple benefits to the social, economic, and environmental fabric of the County. Businesses provide:

- employment and services
- a commercial focus adding to the vitality of a hamlet
- taxes to help provide community services
- local employment to reduce vehicle use

The County Plan provides a number of business areas and development forms which accommodate the wide variety of businesses wishing to locate in the county. This Plan identifies regional business centres, highway business areas, and hamlet business areas as areas where the majority of commercial and industrial development should locate. By focusing development in these locations, the County provides for orderly growth and economic efficiencies in the development of its transportation and infrastructure systems.

The County Plan supports and encourages a robust market-driven economy by facilitating economic development and providing planning policies that help foster private and public investment in the county.

### GOALS

- Provide a range of well-designed *business areas* that serve county residents and the Calgary region.
- Direct the majority of new commercial and industrial businesses to locate in the business areas identified on Map 1.
- Support the growth of a variety of business areas, agriculture businesses, and home based businesses.
- Support hamlets in developing main streets or central commercial areas that add to the social fabric of the hamlet and provide enhanced services to the local area.
- Support business development that meets the County's community and environmental goals.
- Increase the business assessment base to support the financial sustainability of the County's operations, while reducing reliance on the residential tax base.

**Environmental reserves** are defined in the Municipal Government Act as lands dedicated to prevent development in hazard areas (e.g. floodways or escarpments), reduce water pollution, and provide access to lakes and rivers. Environmental reserves are dedicated as public land.

**Environmental reserve easements** have the same goals and obligations as environmental reserves under the Municipal Government Act, but are allowed to remain privately owned.

A **conservation easement** is a method to protect significant natural landscape features or agriculture land whereby a landowner voluntarily gives up all or some of the rights to develop the land.

## POLICY

### General Business

- 14.1 Provide a range of locations and development forms in the county to accommodate the growth and diversification of the county's business sectors.
- 14.2 Direct business development to locate in identified business areas as identified on Map 1.
- 14.3 Encourage the infilling or intensification of existing business areas and hamlet main streets in order to complement other businesses, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, minimize land use conflicts with agriculture uses, and minimize the amount of traffic being drawn into rural areas.
- 14.4 A business area shall have an adopted area structure plan in place prior to development, with the exception of lands in business areas that already have the appropriate land use designation allowing business development.
- 14.5 Boundary expansion of a business area shall require an area structure plan or an area structure plan amendment.
- 14.6 Business development shall address the:
  - a. County's Commercial, Office, and Industrial Design Guidelines; and
  - b. development review criteria identified in section 29.

### Regional Business Centres

Regional business centres are large areas of commercial and industrial development within the County. The purpose of a regional business centre is to provide regional and national business services, and local and regional employment opportunities. Regional business centres make a significant contribution in achieving the County's fiscal goals.

Substantive planning, time, and public and private investment have resulted in identifying and developing regional business centres. This Plan does not contemplate developing other regional business centres until the identified centres are approaching full build-out.

Identified regional business centres, shown on Map 1, have the following characteristics:

- existing businesses
- an efficient road connection to the provincial highway network;
- significant scale and scope of operations;
- infrastructure with the potential to service the proposed development;

The term **business** is used in its broadest meaning to encompass commercial, industrial, agriculture, and home based activities.

**Business areas** are defined as regional business centres, highway business areas, hamlet business areas, or areas for business identified in an area structure plan or conceptual scheme.

The general location of existing or proposed regional business centres, highway business areas, and hamlet business areas is shown on Map 1.

- potential of multiple transportation options (road, rail, or air); and
  - regulated by existing statutory policy, and/or identified in annexation agreements.
- 14.7 Development of a new regional business centre should not be supported unless a need has been demonstrated, based on the following criteria:
- a. the proposal has regional or national significance;
  - b. existing regional business centres within the *trade area* of the proposed development are approaching full build-out, and the County has determined the expansion of the existing regional business centres is not desirable;
  - c. existing regional business centres within the trade area do not meet market demand;
  - d. land uses and target markets are clearly defined;
  - e. the proposed development meets the environmental and infrastructure goals and policies of this Plan;
  - f. the proposed development has the potential to provide a substantial financial benefit to the County;
  - g. adverse impacts on existing residential communities and agriculture operations will be minimized; and
  - h. the proposed development is in close proximity to the provincial transportation network.
- 14.8 Direct new commercial and industrial development to existing, identified regional business centres and ensure development complies with existing area structure plans.

### **Highway Business Areas**

Highway business areas are intended to take advantage of the provincial highway system. They are of limited size and should be located in proximity to highway intersections and interchanges. The purpose of a highway business area is to contribute to the County's fiscal goals, provide destination commercial and business services, provide services to the traveling public, and offer local employment opportunities.

- 14.9 Area structure plans shall be adopted to provide the framework for highway business area development.

- 14.10 Highway business areas are identified on Map 1 and should have the following characteristics:
- a. located along intersections or interchanges with the provincial highway network;
  - b. land uses consistent with the purpose of a highway business area;
  - c. limited development area close to one or all of the quadrants of the intersection or interchange;
  - d. planned in a comprehensive manner and not subject to incremental expansion;
  - e. meet the environmental, infrastructure, and financial goals and policies of this Plan;
  - f. minimize adverse impacts on existing agriculture or residential development;
  - g. developed in consultation with Alberta Transportation; and
  - h. consistent with the provincial freeway and access location plans.
- 14.11 Proposed highway business areas not identified on Map 1 shall:
- a. meet the characteristics identified in policy 14.10; and
  - b. demonstrate the proposed location would not adversely impact the build-out of land within nearby business areas.
- 14.12 In the Conrich area, the relationship of business to the TransCanada Highway shall be determined by the applicable area structure plan.

*Trade area* is the geographic area from which a business generates the majority of its customers.

### **Hamlet Business Areas**

Hamlet business areas contribute to local employment opportunities and provide services to the local area. Hamlet business areas accommodate a wide variety of retail commercial, office commercial, and light industrial uses. There are a number of different forms of commercial or industrial business parks within the County's hamlets.

- 14.13 Planning and design of a hamlet business area shall be guided by the hamlet area structure plan, conceptual scheme, the Land Use Bylaw, and any other relevant statutory plan.
- 14.14 Hamlet business areas or regional business centres are supported in, or near, the Hamlets of Conrich, Harmony, Balzac, and Langdon.

## **Hamlet Main Street**

Commercial and institutional development on a main street, crossroads, or central area contributes to the fabric of a hamlet by providing a community meeting place, adding visual interest to the hamlet, and offering services to the local area. The ability of the hamlet to support commercial development and institutional development is related to the size of the local population and the location of other commercial areas.

- 14.15 Support and encourage existing hamlets in developing and improving their main street, crossroads, or central area.
- 14.16 Hamlet main streets or central areas are encouraged to develop with a consistent design theme.
- 14.17 Hamlet area structure plans and/or subordinate plans shall address the design and function of the hamlet's main street, crossroads, or central area.

## **Agriculture**

Agricultural operators and the entire agricultural sector make an important contribution to the County's economy and employment levels. The agricultural service goals, strategies, and policies that support the business of agriculture are found in policies 8.7 to 8.13.

## **Home Based Business**

Home based business is encouraged as a self-employment opportunity for residents as long as the business has minimal impact on adjacent home owners and County infrastructure.

- 14.18 Home based business is encouraged and supported when it is in accordance with any applicable area structure plan, subordinate plan, and the Land Use Bylaw.

## **Other Business Development**

Substantive planning, time, and public and private investment have resulted in identifying and developing business areas. This Plan encourages new businesses to locate within the existing business areas as identified on Map 1 and does not support business development on business area boundaries. Proposals for small scale business development away from identified business areas must justify their need and location.

- 14.19 Applications to redesignate land for business uses adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, the boundaries of an identified business area shall not be supported.
- 14.20 Small scale value-added agriculture and agriculture services, natural resource extraction, and business as defined in relevant Federal or Provincial legislation may be

supported adjacent to, or near, a business area.

14.21 Applications to redesignate land for business uses outside of a business area shall provide a rationale that justifies why the proposed development cannot be located in a business area (e.g. requirement for unique infrastructure at the proposed location).

14.22 Proposals for business development outside of a business area should:

- a. be limited in size, scale, intensity, and scope;
- b. have direct and safe access to a paved County road or Provincial highway;
- c. provide a traffic impact and intersection assessment; and
- d. minimize adverse impacts on existing residential, business, or agricultural uses.

### **Industrial Storage**

Location and design are important factors when considering redesignation and subdivision applications for industrial storage. Unless they are properly sited and designed, industrial storage facilities may adversely impact land values and agricultural operations. They may also create traffic problems in an area by increasing traffic volume and dust.

14.23 Applications to redesignate land for industrial storage shall:

- a. Adhere to policies 14.19 to 14.22;
- b. Locate in a manner that minimizes traffic and dust on nearby lands;
- c. Provide a landscape and site development plan to reduce visual impact through the use of existing landscaping or topographical elements and visually attractive perimeter screening that incorporates vegetation, fencing, and/or berms; and
- d. Provide a management plan for the handling and storage of waste materials, including leakage from vehicles or other sources.

### **Economic Development**

14.24 Support business development, in accordance with the policies of the County Plan.

14.25 Facilitate economic development by providing assistance and reducing barriers to companies wishing to invest in the County.

14.26 Facilitate investment opportunities for a variety of investor groups.

14.27 Link investors and developers to investment opportunities.

14.28 Work with producers and commodity specialists to add



value and expand the agriculture industry.

## **ACTIONS**

- Undertake a commercial/industrial land inventory to assist in determining the future potential for the growth and diversification of the County's business sectors (policy 14.1).
- Develop Main Street commercial guidelines for the Hamlet of Langdon (policies 14.15 to 14.17).

## 15.0 NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resource extraction is an important land use in the County that satisfies local, regional, and provincial resource needs. However, these activities may have significant impact on adjacent land uses and the environment. Aggregate (sand and gravel) and oil and gas extraction often cause community concern.

Aggregate resources are important for the construction of roads, buildings, and other infrastructure. A number of significant gravel resources are located in the county. Potential natural resource extraction impacts include: noise, air quality, truck traffic, aesthetics, and reclamation.

The County is responsible for approving land use and issuing development permits for all *aggregate extractions*. Additionally, aggregate pits of all sizes are subject to provincial legislation, with pits greater than five hectares on private land being further regulated by the Province through the Code of Practice for Pits. The Code of Practice addresses a number of items including pit operations, reclamation, and environmental monitoring.

In Alberta, the task of regulating energy development and related activities belongs to the Province. The County only has control over the design and appearance of permanent facilities such as gas processing plants.

### GOAL

- Support the extraction of natural resources in a manner that balances the needs of residents, industry, and society.
- Support the environmentally responsible management and extraction of natural resources.

### POLICY

#### Aggregate Extraction

- 15.1 Minimize the adverse impact of aggregate resource extraction on existing residents, adjacent land uses, and the environment.
- 15.2 Encourage collaboration between the County, the aggregate extraction industry, and affected residents to develop mutually agreeable solutions to mitigate impacts of extraction activities.
- 15.3 Discourage residential development that may limit future aggregate extraction when proposed outside of an adopted area structure plan.
- 15.4 Direct all aggregate related traffic to identified major haul routes that are monitored and appropriately maintained.

- 15.5 Where aggregate activities are located in proximity to an adjacent municipality, the County should co-operate with that jurisdiction to ensure co-ordination of major haul routes and mitigation of impacts on adjacent land uses.
- 15.6 Until such time as a County aggregate extraction policy is prepared, applications for aggregate extraction shall prepare a master site development plan that addresses the development review criteria identified in section 29.

### **Oil and Gas**

- 15.7 Require appropriate design and appearance of permanent energy facilities in accordance with the Rocky View Commercial, Office, and Industrial Design Guidelines.
- 15.8 When considering applications for development, provincial setback regulations and guidelines shall be applied respecting petroleum wells, sour gas facilities, pipelines, and other oil and gas facilities.
- 15.9 Encourage the Province to minimize the impacts of oil and gas extraction on agriculture lands and to provide fair market value remuneration for the industrial use undertaken on those lands.
- 15.10 Encourage the Province and industry to efficiently and effectively remediate petroleum well sites and abandoned pipelines.

*Aggregate extraction* is considered a temporary land use, as the land will eventually be reclaimed and used for other purposes.

### **ACTIONS**

- Prepare an aggregate extraction policy that addresses site design, location criteria, visual impact, mitigation of extraction impacts, and appropriate setbacks between extraction activities and other land uses (policies 15.1 to 15.6).
- Develop an aggregate management plan to identify resource areas and address land use management issues; prepare the plan in consultation with residents, industry, and stakeholder groups (policies 15.1 to 15.6).

## 16.0 TRANSPORTATION

Vehicular traffic is the primary method of transportation in the county and many residents have identified *highways* and *roads* as their highest County priority.<sup>15</sup> Concerns include road maintenance, the interaction of vehicles, and alternative methods of transportation such as cycling and walking. The presence of airports and railroads creates a unique challenge to ensure surrounding development is compatible and complementary.

### GOALS

- Support existing development and future growth areas by providing an effective and fiscally sustainable transportation system.
- Develop and maintain the County's transportation infrastructure in a safe, efficient, fair, and cost effective manner.
- Ensure communities are served by a well-designed and integrated transportation network.

### POLICY

- 16.1 Partner and co-operate with the provincial government and neighbouring municipalities to protect and improve, where necessary, regional transportation corridors.
- 16.2 Partner and liaise with other municipalities and developers to co-ordinate transportation improvements and the expansion of transportation infrastructure.
- 16.3 New development shall make use of, extend, and enhance existing transportation infrastructure where feasible.

#### Road Planning and Development

- 16.4 Road network development shall be based on existing development, future growth areas, area structure plans, and interconnectivity with adjacent municipalities.
- 16.5 Ensure the *Transportation Model* remains current and relevant through regular reviews and updates. The Transportation Model will anticipate and plan future road networks based on:
  - a. Existing development patterns;
  - b. Identified growth areas;
  - c. Changing traffic types, patterns, and volumes; and
  - d. Provincial and adjacent municipal transportation networks and plans.

- 16.6 The County's long-term (10 year) and current capital plan for road construction, and medium term (5 year) and current operational plan for road maintenance shall guide road development and maintenance.
- 16.7 New development shall make use of and extend the existing transportation network/infrastructure.

### Supporting Communities

- 16.8 Roads, pathways, and trails shall connect adjacent neighbourhoods within hamlets and country residential development areas.
- 16.9 Country residential and hamlet area structure plans and subordinate plans should include comprehensive and integrated road network design at a local and regional level.
- 16.10 Support and encourage alternative forms of transportation in hamlets and regional business centres. Opportunities should provide for:
- Pathways, trails, and sidewalk connections;
  - Cyclists; and
  - Public/private transportation.
- 16.11 Support and encourage the development of pathways and trails for recreational use in country residential areas.
- 16.12 Support the long-term development of the conceptual regional pathway and trail plan as identified in the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

### Road Access

- 16.13 Residential redesignation and subdivision applications should provide for development that:
- provides direct access to a road, while avoiding the use of *panhandles*;
  - minimizes driveway length to highways/roads;
  - removes and replaces panhandles with an internal road network when additional residential development is proposed; and
  - limits the number and type of access onto roads in accordance with County Policy.

### Supporting Agriculture

- 16.14 The County's road network should provide for the safe and timely movement of agricultural equipment and goods.

**Highways** are under the jurisdiction of Alberta Transportation and are maintained by private contractors. A highway is typically asphalt surfaced although there are two gravel-surfaced highways within Rocky View. All development within 800 metres of a highway requires a roadside development permit issued by the province.

**Roads** are under the control and jurisdiction of the County, are built within public rights-of-way, and have been developed primarily for public vehicular traffic.

The **Transportation Model** is a forecasting tool to project future traffic volume based on existing and future growth areas, an interconnected road network, and the existence of provincial highways. The model identifies necessary improvements to accommodate growth and development.

The **Long Range Transportation Network** (Map 2) is based on the transportation model and plans out the skeletal road network necessary to efficiently move traffic.

The Transportation Network establishes two levels of road systems that are designed to accommodate traffic volumes greater than 2500 vehicles per day (Network A roads) and up to 2500 vehicles per day (Network B roads).

<sup>15</sup> County Plan Engagement Priority Report, 2012, Rocky View County

## Service Levels

- 16.15 Rocky View County shall provide a core level of road maintenance service levels to all areas based on the principles of equity and public safety, in accordance with County Policy.
- 16.16 Road service and maintenance levels will be based on road classification and traffic volume, in accordance with County Policy.
- 16.17 Requests for a higher level of maintenance and service beyond the core level shall be based on a user pay principal.

## Airports

- 16.18 Business or large scale residential development associated with the operation of an airport shall be comprehensively planned as part of an area structure plan.
- 16.19 The following land uses may develop adjacent to an airport without an area structure plan if the use does not adversely affect the airport operation:
  - a. general agricultural operations;
  - b. recreational land uses, or
  - c. Farmsteads and first parcels out.

## Railways

- 16.20 Area structure plans and conceptual schemes in close proximity to active rail lines should provide the minimum building setback and/or buffering requirements requested by the rail line owners.
- 16.21 Abandoned railway corridors should be considered for incorporation, following an environmental impact assessment, into an open space system or consolidation with adjacent lands.

## ACTIONS

- Develop a comprehensive maintenance and operation policy for parks, open space, pathways, trails, and sidewalk maintenance (policies 16.8 to 16.12).
- Explore the definition, identification, and standards for agricultural priority roads (policy 16.14).
- Define and adopt road service standards in terms of performance, quality, road classification, traffic volume, and development type (residential, agriculture, and business) (policies 16.15 to 16.17).

**Did you know?** Rocky View has a total of 29 highways which connect with the County's 2,342 kilometres of road network.

In 2012, the average cost to maintain 1 kilometre of County road was \$4,140.

**Panhandles** are long strips of land used to provide direct lot access to a roadway.

## 17.0 UTILITY SERVICES

Well-designed and effective *utility systems* are the foundation of a well planned development. Utility systems must be designed and constructed in a manner that is safe and reliable and does not adversely impact neighbouring lands.

Traditionally, the County has relied on stand-alone utility systems, such as groundwater wells and septic fields. As development intensifies, piped methods of servicing will become necessary in certain areas. The need to design stormwater management systems to consider catchment areas beyond a site-specific solution has become increasingly apparent and will be facilitated by master planning.

### GOALS

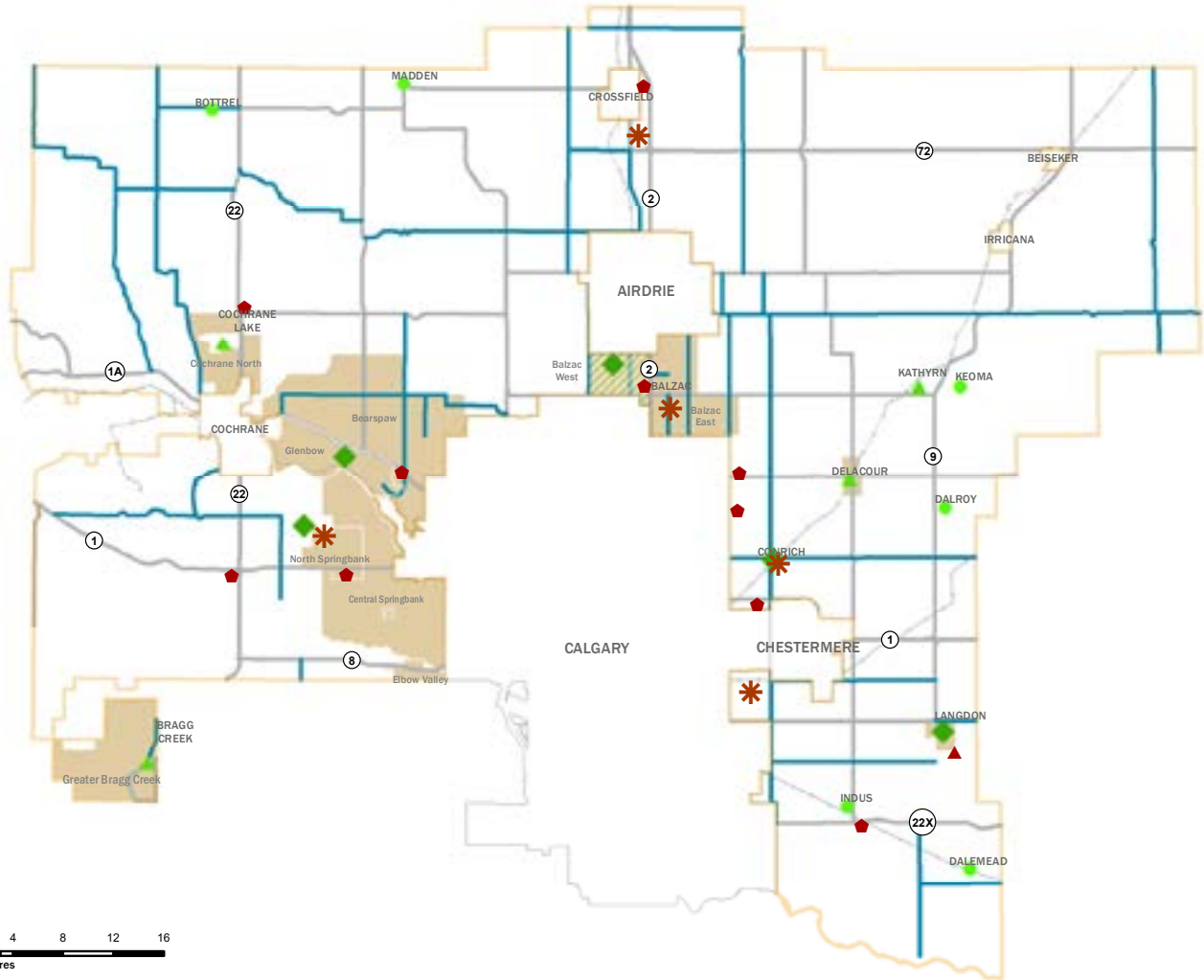
- Support existing communities and growth areas by providing for effective and fiscally sustainable utility systems.
- Ensure private and public utility systems are developed and operated in a safe and reliable manner.
- Provide for a long-term, safe, and reliable potable water supply.
- Ensure wastewater disposal practices protect watersheds, surface water, and groundwater quality.
- Provide for stormwater management systems that are safe, effective, and do not adversely impact other lands.

### POLICY

#### General

- 17.1 New development shall, in accordance with master plans:
  - a. make use of, extend, and enhance existing utility infrastructure where feasible;
  - b. provide water, wastewater, and shallow utility services; and
  - c. provide stormwater systems where necessary.
- 17.2 Allow a variety of water, wastewater, and stormwater treatment systems, in accordance with provincial/federal regulations and County Policy.
- 17.3 Where required, prepare master plans for existing and future water servicing, wastewater collection and treatment, and stormwater management systems, in existing and proposed growth areas.
  - a. Water, wastewater, and stormwater development shall adhere to the relevant master plan.

# MAP 2-LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION MAP



## Residential Communities

- ◆ Hamlet-Full Service
- ▲ Hamlet-Growth as per the adopted plan
- Small Hamlet
- West Balzac (Review size and form)
- Country Residential (Area Structure Plan)

## Business Areas

- ✱ Regional Business Centers
- ⬠ Highway Business Area
- ▲ Hamlet Business Area

## Transportation Network

- Highway
- County Long-range Transportation Network

## General Legend

- Rocky View Boundary





- 17.4 Partner and co-operate with other jurisdictions, regional service commissions, and other levels of government to ensure efficient and integrated utility systems are established and maintained.
- 17.5 Partner and liaise with other municipalities and developers to co-ordinate enhancements and expansion of existing utility services and infrastructure.

### **Water Supply**

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

### **Wastewater Management**

- 17.9 New residential development shall provide wastewater treatment, in accordance with County Policy, by:
- a. connecting to, or constructing, regional or decentralized wastewater services; or
  - b. confirming the lot(s) is capable of private wastewater treatment.
- 17.10 New business development shall provide wastewater treatment, in accordance with County Policy, by:
- a. connecting to, or constructing, regional or decentralized wastewater services; or
  - b. using pump out tanks in non-serviced areas.
- 17.11 Wastewater treatment systems shall not exceed the land's carrying capacity; in developing such systems, consideration shall be given to the following requirements:
- a. Development proponents shall assess the land's carrying capacity to determine system requirements in accordance with County Policy. The type of private on-site wastewater treatment system will be dependent on lot density, lot size, and soil capability.
  - b. Construction and connection to a regional or decentralized wastewater treatment system shall be required when the density of development exceeds thresholds identified in County Policy.

#### **Utility systems** include:

- Water
- Wastewater
- Stormwater
- Shallow utilities (Electricity, Gas, and Telecommunications)

17.12 The ownership, operation, and maintenance of private on-site wastewater treatment systems, or wastewater holding tanks shall be the responsibility of the landowner.

17.13 Ownership of a new regional or decentralized wastewater infrastructure system, required as part of a development approval, shall be transferred to the County in accordance with County Policy.

### **Stormwater**

17.14 Stormwater shall be managed in accordance with provincial regulations. Where required and in accordance with provincial approvals, on-site stormwater may be effectively released into a downstream receiving water body in accordance with the following requirements:

- a. Stormwater shall be conveyed downstream in a manner that protects downstream properties; and
- b. Where required, proponents of new development shall identify and secure the downstream stormwater conveyance system.

17.15 Stripping, grading, or the placement of fill shall not alter the existing pattern of stormwater storage and/or movement across private land unless the activity complies with the Land Use Bylaw and a development permit has been issued for such activity.

17.16 Stormwater ponds required for stormwater storage and treatment shall be provided as per the Servicing Standards.

### **Pipeline/Utility Corridors**

17.17 Major utility corridors for pipelines and power lines should avoid residential areas, wherever possible, and minimize adverse impacts on agriculture and the environment.

## **ACTIONS**

- Encourage the development of provincial regulation that allows the reuse of stormwater (policy 17.14).
- Develop a stormwater offsite bylaw levy for the construction of regional stormwater infrastructure in required areas (policy 17.14).
- Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure the regulations regarding the stripping, grading, and/or the placement of fill meet the stormwater goals (goal 5 and policy 17.15).

**A regional wastewater system** consists of a communal system that collects wastewater from multiple developments or developing areas and conveys the wastewater to a regional facility.

**A decentralized wastewater system** consists of a communal system that collects wastewater from multiple lots, usually in a single development, and conveys it to a local wastewater treatment facility associated with the development.

## C. Strengthening Communities

One of the purposes of the County is to provide “necessary or desirable” community services and to “develop and maintain safe and viable communities” (Municipal Government Act). By providing community service, the County hopes to strengthen community identity and enhance the quality of life for individuals within those communities.

The level and variety of services provided to residents is influenced by the county’s rural nature and resident expectations. Living in a rural area means self-reliance and working with your neighbours. Some residents expressed the view that “We should have fewer services ... this is why we chose to live in a rural area.”<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, as the population increases, residents and communities request additional community support.

A challenge to providing a variety and high level of service are the fiscal constraints inherent to a population greater than 36,000 residents<sup>17</sup>, spread across an area 3,885 km<sup>2</sup> (960,000 acres) in size.

## 18.0 RURAL SERVICE AND PARTNERSHIPS

The service the County is able to provide to its residents is limited by fiscal constraints, a large service area, and a dispersed population. The County's response to this challenge has been to develop strong partnerships with senior levels of government, adjacent municipalities, local communities, and grass roots organizations.

The benefits of partnering include both the anticipated and the unexpected. Partnering:

- enhances and leverages service dollars;
- broadens the range of services;
- helps to provide County wide services;
- provides new service ideas;
- contributes to community building;
- removes barriers to communications; and
- allows adjacent municipalities to increase their level of service.

### GOALS

- Provide County residents with an equitable level of rural service.
- Provide for high quality services using available resources.
- Seek a variety of partnerships to extend the range of County facilities and services.
- Maintain strong, healthy partnerships with adjacent municipalities, other levels of government, school boards, communities, and stakeholders.
- Strengthen and enhance communities by supporting volunteerism, collaboration, social networks, and community participation.

### POLICY

#### Rural Service

- 18.1 Provide an *equitable* level of core rural service to County residents.
- 18.2 Service levels beyond the core level should be financed in accordance with a user pay model.

#### Partnerships

- 18.3 Maintain and grow existing partnerships as a way to extend County financial resources, provide a greater variety of services, and extend service coverage.
- 18.4 Actively seek out new partnerships to address ongoing and emerging needs.

<sup>16</sup> November/December (2012) Workshops Report, 2013, Rocky View County

<sup>17</sup> Canada Census 1991 – 2011

- 18.5 Coordinate, co-operate, and collaborate with adjacent municipalities and senior levels of government to address service needs and other matters of mutual interest.
- 18.6 Support and encourage volunteerism, social networks, and community based initiatives in order to build connections between individuals and maintain and manage community amenities, programs, and services.
- 18.7 Encourage private sector donations, private-public sector partnerships, developer contributions, endowment funds, and other sponsorships as a way to develop and sustain facilities, services, and amenities.

## **ACTIONS**

- Identify core County services (policy 18.1).

### **A Selection of County Services**

- Fire protection
- Libraries
- Recreation
- Culture
- Enforcement Service
- Waste transfer and recycling
- Weed Control
- Agriculture education
- Pathways and trails
- Specialized transportation
- Cemetery services
- Social support
- Community support
- Road Maintenance
- Snow Plowing

### **Partnering in action initiatives include:**

- Regional recreation centres
- Integrated pathways
- Waste collection sites
- Community support services
- Regional food initiatives
- Agriculture education
- Fire services
- Joint park and school sites
- Mentoring programs

**Equitable** means dealing fairly and impartially with all concerned.

**Core Services** are services provided by the County on a regular basis that are considered essential or important to a modern rural community. Core services may vary over time as priorities and expectations change.

## 19.0 AGRICULTURE SERVICES

The County will continue to provide support and education through its Agriculture Service staff. The agricultural service goals, strategies, and policies are found in the agriculture section (8.0).

## 20.0 EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency Services encompass all aspects of Fire Prevention, Suppression, and Rescue, Disaster Services, Bylaw Enforcement, Development Compliance, Traffic Enforcement, and Municipal Enforcement. Safety and ability to access an emergency response, when needed, are critical components for building communities and contributing to residents' sense of well-being.

### GOALS

- Deliver efficient fire and protective services in order to provide for safe and livable communities.
- Optimize fire prevention and control by implementing the Plan's growth management strategy and efficient development patterns.
- Ensure community design contributes to fire prevention and safe, livable communities.
- Optimize fire and protective service by collaborating and partnering with neighbouring municipalities and other organizations.

### POLICY

#### Collaboration, Co-operation, and Partnership

- 20.1 Co-operate and partner with neighbouring municipalities to develop integrated plans and agreements regarding fire prevention and firefighting services.
- 20.2 Maintain strong collaborative relationships with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Alberta Sheriffs, and the Calgary and Cochrane Humane Societies.
- 20.3 Explore new partnerships to address on-going and emerging protective service issues.

#### Land Use Planning and Community Design

- 20.4 Land use planning, subdivision design, and lot development shall address fire prevention and *fire control factors*.
- 20.5 Encourage compact development and *efficient road design* to optimize firefighting efficiency.
- 20.6 Ensure subdivision and development plans provide safe and efficient access for emergency service vehicles.

- 20.7 Identify and address protective and bylaw service requirements for new communities.
- 20.8 New community design should address Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles (policy 12.7).

### **Master Fire Plan**

- 20.9 Prepare and update, every five years if required, a Master Fire Plan.

### **Water Supply and Distribution**

- 20.10 Prepare and implement a strategic long-term program to improve the County's supply and distribution of firefighting water.
- 20.11 Encourage private water suppliers to construct distribution systems designed for the suppression of fire.

### **Wildland Fire Protection**

- 20.12 Develop and maintain measures to prevent and control wildland fires, including public education, design of efficient emergency access, and measures to effectively slow fire growth.

### **Service**

- 20.13 Ensure public concerns and complaints are handled in a prompt and expedient manner.
- 20.14 Educate and promote traffic safety on County roads.
- 20.15 Ensure compliance with regard to emergency service matters with all County bylaw requirements.

## **ACTIONS**

- Prepare a Master Fire Plan to provide comprehensive, long-term direction for fire services (goal 1).
- Assess the County's firefighting water supply and distribution system to identify cost effective mechanisms to improve pressurized and non-pressurized water sources (policy 20.10).
- Develop a Wildland Fire Protection strategy encompassing public education, improved access and egress in high hazard areas, and preventative measures to slow fire growth and enable rapid protective fire mobilization services (policy 20.12).

***Fire control factors*** are those things that affect the ability to fight a fire once started. They include such things as safe emergency access and sufficient water supply.

***Efficient road design*** minimizes driveway and cul-de-sac road length, connects neighbourhoods, and links country residential developments.

## 21.0 RECREATION, SOCIAL, AND CULTURE

Residents' quality of life is enhanced when they are able to access a variety of recreational, *social*, and *cultural* opportunities. Strong social networks and positive relationships reinforce the ability of individuals and communities to meet needs, support one another, and adapt to change.

The County, as the most visible and accessible level of government, has a role to advocate, empower, and support residents and organizations in improving their community. This requires partnerships, co-operation, and support from all levels of government, neighbouring municipalities, community groups, non-governmental organizations, and individual residents.

### GOALS

- Ensure recreational, social, and cultural services and facilities are available for residents of all ages, income levels, skills, and lifestyles.
- Cultivate social connections between residents by supporting volunteerism, social networks, and local leadership.
- Develop, enhance, and manage recreation, social, and cultural services and facilities through a wide variety of partnerships.

### POLICY

#### Community Needs

- 21.1 Identify and support the different recreational, leisure, and cultural characteristics of the County's communities.
- 21.2 Provide a fair and equitable distribution of facilities, services, and programs across the County, while recognizing the unique needs of communities and regions.

#### Community Recreation and Management

- 21.3 Support recreation and cultural facility development and programs through the Community Recreation Funding program.
- 21.4 Support *volunteer Regional and District Recreation Boards* to achieve their mandate.
- 21.5 Encourage local community groups to assist with the management of local park and community facilities and enter into maintenance and operation agreements with a community group when this occurs.



## Partnerships, Cost Sharing, and Co-ordination

- 21.6 Co-operate with neighbouring municipalities through recreation, social, and cultural cost sharing agreements to improve affordability and access, create user fee equity, and avoid duplication of services.
- 21.7 Liaise with school boards, regional library service providers, and social service providers to help co-ordinate activities with local groups and agencies.

## Connect and Empower Residents and Community

- 21.8 Foster social development by supporting connections between residents.
- 21.9 Support projects and programs that develop a sense of community, empower residents, and encourage social inclusion.
- 21.10 Recognize, support, and encourage the important role community leaders play in providing service to their community.

## Responsible Design

- 21.11 Promote community design that assists residents to be safe, healthy, and form positive relationships.

## Culture

- 21.12 Recognize the value of culture as an economic contributor to the county and the role it plays in enhancing residents' quality of life, health, and sense of well-being.
- 21.13 Support and promote cultural programs, activities, and facilities that generate a sense of community pride and local identity.
- 21.14 Recognize and enhance the cultural heritage of the county by:
  - a. celebrating the county's rural and western roots;
  - b. identifying and conserving significant historic resources; and
  - c. promoting and fostering culture by marketing local assets to the general population.

## Library Services

- 21.15 Continue to provide residents with library services through participation in the regional library system.

**Did you know?** Rocky View contributed \$2.5 million to 80 community groups in 2012.

**Social** means the connections individuals have to each other and to the wider community.

**Culture** means a shared community identity as expressed by beliefs, values, traditions, and aspirations found in local events, arts, and heritage.

The **County's volunteer recreation boards** are appointed by Council. Their task is to identify, recommend, and support recreational, cultural, and open space needs.

## ACTIONS

- Develop a comprehensive strategy to guide the provision of cost effective, financed, and appropriate recreational, social, and cultural services (goal 1, policy 21.6).
- Develop a comprehensive master plan to guide the sustainable development of recreation and cultural amenities, in collaboration with district and regional recreation boards, residents, community groups, and neighbouring municipalities (goal 1).

**Fostering** connections is the support given to community centres or groups to provide programs such as youth mentoring, seniors clubs, and drop-in classes for residents of a variety of ages and interests.

## 22.0 SOLID WASTE

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

### GOAL

- Provide convenient, cost effective, and environmentally responsible ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle household waste.
- Increase the opportunities and range of material diverted from landfill sites.

### POLICY

#### Partnering

- 22.1 Co-ordinate with neighbouring municipalities in providing solid waste disposal services to County residents.
- 22.2 Collaborate with neighbouring municipalities on regional solid waste recycling initiatives.
- 22.3 Support and promote markets and industries that consume recyclables and/or actively minimize waste.

#### Service

- 22.4 Ensure the County's waste collection stations provide a wide variety of waste disposal and recycling options.
- 22.5 Provide waste collection stations that are accessible, user-friendly, efficient, and cost effective.
- 22.6 Provide for the year-round drop off and disposal of household hazardous wastes.
- 22.7 Provide agriculture operators with waste and recycling services and options specific to the agriculture industry.

## Education

- 22.8 Promote the County's solid waste services and recycling opportunities.
- 22.9 Encourage more sustainable solid waste practices by providing education and information to agriculture operators, residents, and business owners.

## Waste Reduction

- 22.10 Identify and implement opportunities to expand the variety of recycled materials accepted at collection stations.
- 22.11 Encourage and promote construction practices that are consistent with sound waste management practices.

**Did you know?** The 2012 County recycling data shows:

- 145 bathtubs of paint were collected at roundups (16,435 litres).
- 1752 m<sup>3</sup> of landfill space was saved from the recycling of paper, newsprint, and cardboard.
- there was a 54% increase in E-Waste recycled from 2011 to 2012.

A 2012 waste composition study conducted on residents' garbage discovered:

- 1,302 refundable beverage containers were found in one week's worth of garbage. If this rate continued for a year it would have amounted to \$8,000 in refunds.
- organics, wood, and plastic form the majority of residents' garbage.

## **III.** Regions

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## Regions

Rocky View County encompasses a wide variety of landscapes, communities, and approaches to rural living. Identifying regions within the County Plan is intended to recognize and respond to the diversity within the County. This part provides additional context by which to interpret the policies of the County Plan when evaluating applications for land use and development.

The four *regions* of the County Plan (Map 3) are defined by common characteristics including; watersheds, natural landscapes, human settlement patterns, agricultural types, environmental concerns, and growth pressures. For each region, this section describes common characteristics, vision of the future, and regional direction. All regions have internal variations, but the intent of the County Plan is to identify shared features to better address area-specific preferences and conditions. The boundaries of the regions on Map 3 are gradational as many characteristics overlap in border areas.

## 23.0 WEST ROCKY VIEW

### Characteristics

Spanning the western-most portion of the County (Map 3), the West Rocky View region is linked by the foothills and eastern slopes natural zones. The region is an important area for groundwater recharge and includes the Bow River, Elbow River, and Red Deer River watersheds. With the Rocky Mountains as a backdrop, numerous forests, rivers, streams, and wetlands create a beautiful and unique landscape.

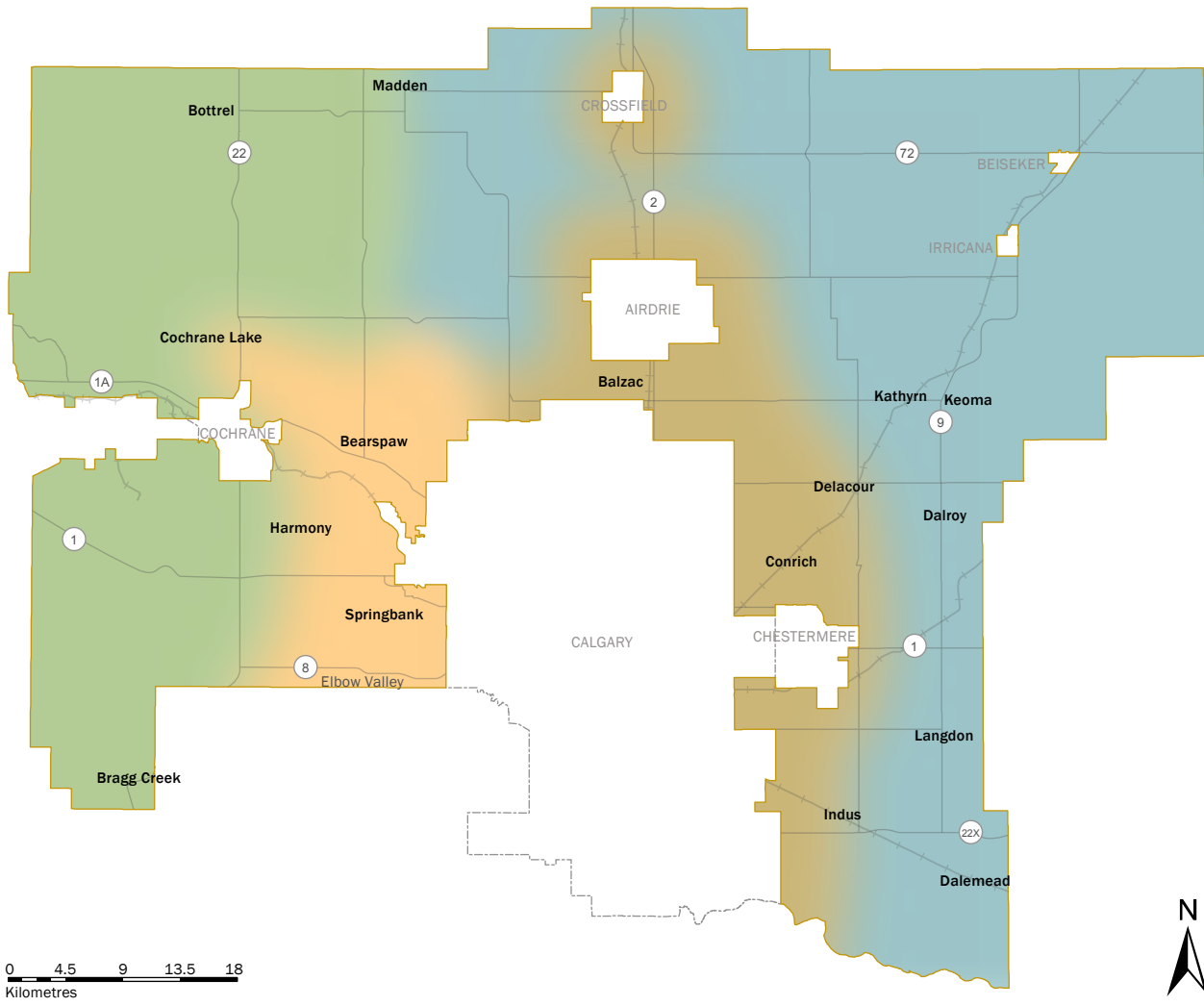
Higher elevation contributes to increased precipitation and a shorter growing season. As a result, West Rocky View contains extensive grazing lands for cattle. Large scale ranching and woodlots are two of the primary agricultural activities in this region. Residents live primarily on large agricultural parcels, small farmsteads, and large acreages. Bragg Creek, a historical hamlet in the very south of the region, contains a concentration of people living on small hamlet lots and surrounding acreages. Commercial activity in West Rocky View is situated primarily along major highways and in Bragg Creek. Oil and gas exploration and production, logging, and a number of pipelines and gas processing plants are the primary industrial activities in this area.

Residents of this region indicated their top priorities were road maintenance, continued viability of agricultural land, watershed management, and environmental protection. Residents of Bragg Creek were particularly concerned with fire protection and also identified the provision of parks, trails, and pathways as important.<sup>18</sup>

Growth pressure in this region has been relatively low over the past twenty years, with slow but steady development of acreages in Bragg Creek and the north Grand Valley areas. Large scale ranching continues to thrive in West Rocky View.

*Region* in this Plan are land areas of significant size united by similarities of human settlement patterns, geography, agriculture, and environmental characteristics.

# MAP 3 - REGIONS



## Regions

- West Rocky View
- Central West Rocky View
- East Rocky View
- Central East Rocky View

## General Legend

- Highway
- Rocky View Boundary
- City/Town/Village





## **Vision of the Future**

In the future, West Rocky View continues to be a beautiful area in which to live, work, visit, and recreate. Planning and service directions for the Region include; the retention of large ranches and farms, protection of native rangeland, preservation of viewscapes, well maintained roads, and protection and enhancement of significant heritage and archaeological sites. FireSmart practices are encouraged throughout the region but are particularly important where population is higher and chances of an incident are greater. Recycling programs, transfer sites, and opportunities to dispose of agricultural waste are continued and advanced.

Protection of watersheds is extremely important and is accomplished by adhering to watershed plans such as Jumpingpound Creek, Elbow River, and Bow Basin. Development has avoided, rather than mitigated its impact on, wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.

Development in the community of Bragg Creek helps the local commercial area to remain viable and flourish. In the north Grand Valley area, residential development is consistent with the policies of the County Plan. However, larger residential parcels that blend into the existing settlement pattern and landscape have been created.

## **Key Directions**

- Encourage the retention of large agriculture parcels.
- Encourage and support the FireSmart program in areas of high wildfire risk.
- Encourage new development to build with the land and avoid stripping and grading.
- Encourage watershed protection by implementing and following adopted watershed management plans.
- Avoid development on wetlands and riparian areas.
- Support the viability of the Hamlet of Bragg Creek commercial area through development of the Hamlet and surrounding area.
- In the north Grand Valley area, consider residential acreages at the maximum size allowed within the policies of this Plan.

<sup>18</sup> County Plan Engagement Priority Report, 2012, Rocky View County

## 24.0 CENTRAL WEST ROCKY VIEW

### Characteristics

The hills and valleys of the foothills transition into the prairie grasslands in the Central West Region (Map 3). These natural landscapes, combined with significant glacial river valleys and pot and kettle topography, result in dramatic landscapes and views. As a consequence, this region contains a significant portion of the County's residential population, primarily in traditional country residential acreages. There are six adopted area structure plans that encompass a considerable amount of undeveloped land, the majority of which is identified for future homes. Compact residential communities, such as Elbow Valley and the Hamlet of Cochrane Lake, exist in this region. The presence of two provincial parks (Big Hill Springs and Glenbow Ranch), numerous golf courses and some trails provide residents with a number of amenities.

The area receives moderate amounts of precipitation and has a moderate growing season. The resulting agricultural pattern is a combination of ranching, equestrian operations, and diversified agriculture such as greenhouses and nurseries. Commercial activity is situated adjacent to the provincial highways, primarily at Range Road 33 and Springbank Airport. Natural gas exploration and development has recently increased and gravel extraction occurs in some areas.

The top priorities identified by residents of Central West Rocky View included road maintenance, fire protection, watershed management, and stormwater management. In the Cochrane Lake area, agricultural viability and protective services were important, while residents in the Springbank area identified parks, pathways, and trails as a key priority.<sup>19</sup>

Growth pressures in the area include gravel extraction, gas exploration, demand for non-traditional country residential development within area structure plans, commercial growth along the highways, and additional residential growth pressure outside of existing planned areas.

### Vision of the Future

The vision for the future of the Central West region is that it continues to be a desirable place for country residential areas and the agriculture sector to co-exist. Compact residential communities, which preserve open space and conserve natural landscapes, have developed adjacent to traditional acreages. Residential development is occurring within the areas identified by the County Plan. The region contains parks and pathways in new developments that are sensitive to private property and provide recreation opportunities for residents.

**Key Direction** is an idea or preference that is desired in a particular region that may not be as important in other regions. Key directions may be used to provide context when making land use decisions, determining future planning needs, and identifying service delivery requirements.

Commercial development is limited to business areas as described in the County Plan. The Hamlet of Harmony is developing as an attractive community and provides services for area residents and the region. The Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park is enjoyed by area residents and attracts large numbers of visitors each year. Adjacent residential development conserves landscapes and enhances the unique features of the park.

Ranching and farming continues in the area while new development adjacent to agricultural lands is designed to minimize adverse impacts on agriculture operators. Equestrian and small scale agricultural operations continue to thrive and contribute to the community. Comprehensive solutions to stormwater management are established prior to development and protection of watersheds is implemented. All development is sensitive to the landscape and viewscales are preserved.

### **Key Directions**

- Respect and follow area structure plans. Public consultation forms an important part of the amendment process.
- Conserve open land by considering compact country residential development when area structure plans are amended or created.
- Direct new multi-lot residential development to existing area structure plan areas, as described in the County Plan.
- Locate new highway commercial development as per the requirements of the County Plan, in consultation with area residents.
- Encourage new development to build with the land and avoid stripping and grading.
- Encourage watershed protection by implementing and following adopted watershed management plans.
- Provide comprehensive stormwater management plans and solutions as part of a development proposal.
- Encourage new developments to integrate parks and pathways that connect the region, while being sensitive to private property.
- Encourage development adjacent to parks to sensitively integrate with the natural features of the park.

<sup>19</sup> County Plan Engagement Priority Report, 2012, Rocky View County

## 25.0 EAST ROCKY VIEW

### Characteristics

Covering the eastern extent of the County and extending in the north across Highway 2, the East Rocky View region (Map 3) is characterized by prairie grasslands, major wetland complexes, water fowl migration areas, a high water table, and groundwater discharge. Relative to the western parts of the County, this region has decreased precipitation and a longer growing season; a change that results in fertile growing conditions for cereal crops, oil seeds, and hay production. Intensive farming operations such as dairy and feedlots are found in this region. The presence of irrigation canals allows for agricultural pursuits on smaller parcels of land.

The landscape is dotted by small, unplanned country residential developments, farmsteads, and isolated residential parcels. Several hamlets, small towns, and villages, such as the Hamlets of Langdon, Dalroy, and Kathryn, the Town of Irricana, and the Village of Beiseker, provide focal points and local services to residents. Commercial development occurs primarily in the towns and hamlets. A number of small scale oil and gas exploration and industrial activities are scattered throughout this region, with some aggregate extraction occurring in the north-east.

Key priorities for residents in East Rocky View are: road maintenance, support for agriculture and related businesses, fire protection, and stormwater management. In the southeast, particularly in the Hamlets of Langdon and Indus, recreation and culture issues were identified as important to residents.<sup>20</sup>

East Rocky View has a relatively low rate of residential growth as compared to the County as a whole, with of the Hamlet of Langdon being the exception.

### Vision of the Future

A successful agriculture sector continues to characterize the East Rocky View Region. Support for regional food-based agricultural partnerships, small-scale agricultural operations tied to irrigation, and a variety of innovative agricultural business ventures are allowing the region to flourish. Previously fragmented quarter sections have been consolidated and extensive tracts of unfragmented agricultural parcels are prospering. Agricultural priority roads are identified and protected to facilitate the movement of equipment and materials. Significant wetland complexes and natural areas such as the Shepard Slough, Weed Lake, and McKinnon Flats are retained as healthy aquatic systems.

The existing hamlets and small towns in this region provide a focal point and services to surrounding residents. The Hamlet of Langdon has a population that supports a redesigned and active

main street. Isolated acreages and farmsteads continue to develop but impacts on agricultural operations are minimized through appropriate location and design.

### **Key Directions**

- Support the agricultural industry by identifying and maintaining agricultural priority roads.
- Support smaller agricultural parcels in areas where similar parcel sizes are the predominant pattern.
- Recognize and value the importance of agriculture as the primary business in this region.
- Continue to support residential development, businesses, and services in existing hamlets, particularly Langdon.
- Support Langdon in improving its main street through developing and implementing design guidelines that will help create a desirable and functional gathering area.
- Direct new multi-lot residential development to existing hamlets and small towns.
- Continue to protect significant wetlands and natural areas.

<sup>20</sup> County Plan Engagement Priority Report, 2012, Rocky View County

## 26.0 CENTRAL EAST ROCKY VIEW

### Characteristics

Stretching along the east boundary of Calgary and northward to Airdrie and Crossfield, the Central East region (Map 3) is dominated by its interaction with Rocky View's urban neighbours. Geographically, the region is similar to the East Rocky View region with prairie grasslands and major wetland complexes. Agriculture is characterized by large and small scale operations interspersed with a number of informal residential and small agricultural subdivisions. More formal, planned country residential communities have been built in the Butte/Sharp Hills and Conrich areas. This region contains the County's key commercial areas of Balzac, Conrich, and Janet. Defining characteristics are the Queen Elizabeth 2 Highway corridor and the adjacent cities and towns (Calgary, Airdrie, Chestermere, and Crossfield), all of which place significant growth pressure on the County.

Residents of this region indicated that their top priorities included road maintenance, agricultural viability, fire protection, protective services, and watershed management.<sup>21</sup>

The boundary between urban and rural land is an important consideration in this area as is the future growth of the urban municipalities. Continued growth pressure for non-residential development is expected in this region, with residential and business pressure currently focused on the Conrich area.

### Vision of the Future

Development in the Central East region is characterized by business development that supports the County's financial goals, while successfully integrating with adjoining residential communities. Regional business centres in East Balzac, Conrich, and Janet are vital centres of commercial and industrial activity that provide employment to the local community and region. The Hamlet of Conrich, with its redesigned central gathering place and integration with the CN rail yard, is a thriving rural community. A number of small scale agriculture operations are successfully developed. Overall, agriculture continues to be challenged by the residential and commercial activity in this region, but adverse impacts are reduced by a focus on buffering of the non-agricultural uses.

Stormwater management and conveyance is a key infrastructure consideration for successful development in this area, with adjoining municipalities and agencies working together to successfully resolve this challenge. The growth patterns and future needs of adjacent municipalities in this region, including Chestermere, Calgary, Airdrie, and Crossfield, are recognized and respected. Good communication, partnerships, and well-designed transitions between adjoining municipalities characterize the County's relationship with its urban neighbours.

### **Key Directions**

- Encourage new development to focus on high quality boundary design between agriculture, commercial/industrial, and residential uses.
- New development proposals are to respect and carefully consider boundary planning with adjacent municipalities as well as the future growth needs of those municipalities.
- Support new residential, business, and commercial development described in the County Plan.
- Comprehensive stormwater management plans and solutions are needed to guide and allow for development.
- Encourage fragmented quarter sections to develop in a manner that increases land use efficiency and provides attractive development for acreage owners.

<sup>21</sup> County Plan Engagement Priority Report, 2012, Rocky View County

# IV. Implementation and Monitoring

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Part IV provides direction on the implementation of the County Plan and describes the proposed monitoring process to measure the success of the plan.

Implementation will occur through a number of mechanisms and processes including:

- ongoing administration of the development review process and periodically reviewing and amending area structure plans;
- carrying out actions (studies, programs, and changes to regulations) required to implement the goals of the County Plan; and
- collaborating with neighbouring municipalities on day-to-day planning matters, as well as activities related to major processes and plans.



## **27.0 INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Rocky View County shares boundaries with the following fifteen jurisdictions (Map 4):

*CITIES:* Airdrie, Calgary

*TOWNS/VILLAGES:* Beiseker, Chestermere, Cochrane, Crossfield, Irricana

*RURAL:* Kananaskis Improvement District, Kneehill County, Mountain View County, Municipal District of Bighorn, Municipal District of Foothills, Wheatland County

*FIRST NATIONS:* Stoney Indian Reserve, Tsuu T'ina Nation

The County values its neighbours and is committed to building positive relations that:

- create opportunities for collaboration;
- ensure effective communication;
- result in mutually beneficial solutions to growth and development; and
- provide opportunities for partnering to deliver services.

### **GOALS**

- Positive and open relationships with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations.
- Effective communications between adjacent municipal councils and administrations.
- Extend the range of facilities and services available to residents through partnerships with adjacent neighbours and other levels of government.

## **POLICY**

### **Working Together**

The manner in which Rocky View County works with neighbours varies depending on the specific context and degree of activity on its boundaries. There are multiple mechanisms used to achieve co-ordination and ensure positive relationships. These include: intermunicipal committees, administrative co-operation, and intermunicipal development plans. In addition to these specific mechanisms, the County may engage in collaborative opportunities as they arise.

### **Intermunicipal Committees**

Intermunicipal committees consist of elected officials from each municipality who are assisted by members of their respective administrations. The purpose of an intermunicipal committee is to exchange information, discuss matters of mutual interest and concern, and build positive working relationships.

- 27.1 Intermunicipal committees may be mutually established with adjacent municipalities and First Nations to facilitate effective communication, co-operation, and co-ordination.

### **Administrative Co-ordination**

County administration routinely works with administrations from neighbouring municipalities to create opportunities, resolve issues, and address the needs of residents. Examples include: development of transportation networks, co-development of regional drainage solutions, arrangements to connect pathways, and agreements to develop regional recreation facilities.

- 27.2 County administration shall communicate and co-ordinate on a regular basis with adjacent administrations to recognize and address matters of mutual interest.

### **Intermunicipal Development Plans**

Intermunicipal development plans are statutory plans that provide an opportunity for understanding approaches to growth and development at the boundaries between jurisdictions. An intermunicipal development plan outlines methods for communicating and co-operating at a strategic level. It also addresses matters of mutual interest, is used to evaluate development applications in boundary areas, and assists with co-ordination of infrastructure linkages with an adjacent municipality. Intermunicipal development plans are particularly helpful in areas with significant development pressure. The County has a number of adopted intermunicipal development plans and will continue to support the preparation and use of these plans as an essential collaboration tool.

**The Ranchehouse Accord** is a collaborative agreement between the Town of Cochrane and Rocky View County. The Accord provides a commitment and a framework with guidelines, processes, and strategies to assist the County and Town to sustain a cooperative, open, and communicative relationship with each other.

- 27.3 Where appropriate, intermunicipal development plans shall be prepared and adopted in collaboration with an adjacent municipality to enhance co-operative working relationships and to address issues of mutual interest.
- 27.4 Intermunicipal development plans shall be prepared in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.
- 27.5 An adopted intermunicipal development plan shall provide guidance for referral requirements and communication, with regard to matters within the plan area.
- 27.6 The County will continue to communicate and consult with First Nations neighbours on mutual planning matters.

### **Co-ordination Without an Intermunicipal Development Plan**

When there is no intermunicipal development plan with an adjacent municipality, the Municipal Government Act requires the County Plan to address the co-ordination of land uses, growth patterns, and infrastructure in the area adjacent to that municipality. The following policies guide communication, co-ordination, and application referral between adjacent jurisdictions in situations where an intermunicipal development plan is not in place.

- 27.7 The County commits to ongoing communication and co-operation with adjacent jurisdictions on all matters of interest to both parties.
- 27.8 When appropriate, the County shall co-operate and communicate with adjacent jurisdictions through regular meetings of an intermunicipal committee or other agreed upon means.
- 27.9 Where appropriate, the County should work co-operatively with adjacent jurisdictions to pursue opportunities for the joint provision or improvement of utility services, transportation infrastructure, and/or community services.
- 27.10 For planning related matters that are proposed within 1.6 kilometres of an adjacent jurisdictional boundary, or as otherwise agreed to by the County and adjacent municipality, the County shall refer the matter to the adjacent jurisdiction for comment. This area is referred to as the *notification zone*. Referral items may include:
- a. statutory plan creation or amendment;
  - b. land use bylaw preparation or amendment;
  - c. subdivision;
  - d. development permit;
  - e. improvements or changes to municipal transportation infrastructure;
  - f. local or regional community or recreation facilities; and
  - g. any other item deemed appropriate by both jurisdictions.

**Rocky View County** participates in intermunicipal committees with

- Airdrie
- Beiseker
- Calgary
- Chestermere
- Cochrane
- Crossfield
- Irricana
- Foothills
- Wheatland

- 27.11 For planning related matters in adjacent jurisdictions within 1.6 kilometres of the boundary with the County or as otherwise agreed to by the County and adjacent municipality, the County shall request that the adjacent jurisdiction refer the matter to the County for review and comment. Referral items may include:
- a. statutory plan creation or amendment;
  - b. land use bylaw preparation or amendment;
  - c. subdivision;
  - d. development permit;
  - e. improvements or changes to municipal transportation infrastructure;
  - f. local or regional community or recreation facilities; and
  - g. any other item deemed appropriate by both jurisdictions.
- 27.12 Where appropriate, the County shall mitigate any intermunicipal dispute by engaging in alternative dispute resolution processes such as facilitated negotiation, mediation, or arbitration.
- 27.13 In the event an intermunicipal development plan is adopted, the policies of that plan shall be used to guide intermunicipal co-operation with the participating municipality.

## **Annexation**

Annexation is the process by which the jurisdiction of land is transferred from one municipality to another; typically to allow for growth of the receiving municipality. The County has been involved in a number of annexations, usually involving the transfer of land to an urban municipality. Annexation may also occur with rural neighbours where it is generally used to address roads, utilities, or lands difficult to access.

The County recognizes the growth pressures facing the region and the need for additional land for urban centers. The County will continue to enter into annexation negotiations, when requested, to develop mutually beneficial solutions to growth needs. The County Plan defines the key growth areas (Map 1 and Appendix A) for Rocky View County which should be considered in a negotiation process.

- 27.14 The County shall consider the negotiation of annexation areas with adjacent municipalities in accordance with the Municipal Government Act or adopted intermunicipal development plan.

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

- 27.15 Annexation negotiations should take into consideration detailed growth studies that include such matters as: analysis of population trends and projections, land absorption rates, community development, infrastructure analysis, and financial considerations.
- 27.16 The County shall use the growth policies of the County Plan, adopted intermunicipal development plans, other statutory plans, and growth strategies as the basis for determining county needs and interests with regard to annexation negotiations.

### **Urban Growth Corridors**

The Rocky View County/City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan defines future growth areas for the City of Calgary and Rocky View County. The identified growth areas will form the basis for future annexation requests by the City of Calgary. These growth areas are identified on Map 1 and Appendix A.

- 27.17 The County shall evaluate redesignation, subdivision, and development permit applications within the City of Calgary's identified growth areas, as shown on Map 1 and Appendix A, in consultation with the City of Calgary and in accordance with the Rocky View County/City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan.

## **28.0 AREA STRUCTURE PLAN PREPARATION AND AMENDMENT**

Periodic review of an area structure plan is necessary to ensure the policies and strategies reflect the current community and County vision. New area structure plans may also be prepared to provide a framework to guide future growth and change in specific areas of the County.

### **POLICY**

- 28.1 The decision to prepare a new area structure plan, or to amend an existing area structure plan, shall be directed by the policies of this Plan. The terms of reference for the work shall be approved by Council.
- 28.2 A new area structure plan, or an amendment to an area structure plan, shall be prepared by, or directed by, the County.
- 28.3 Area structure plans should be assessed every 10 years to determine whether a review is required.
- 28.4 A review of an area structure plan may be initiated by Council prior to 10 years if:
  - a. available residential capacity is reaching full build-out;
  - b. there are multiple applications for alternative development forms inconsistent with the area structure plan;
  - c. changes in major servicing policies or conditions occur;
  - d. external planning changes (regional plans, County Plan, intermunicipal development plans, adjacent area structure plans, etc.) affect the area structure plan;
  - e. there is a change in County boundaries; or
  - f. Council otherwise determines that a review is required.

### **Development Initiated Area Structure Plan Amendment**

- 28.5 *A major amendment* to an area structure plan shall be led or directed by the County in consultation with the local community.
- 28.6 *A minor amendment* to an area structure plan may be prepared by the development proponent in consultation with the local community, at the direction of the County.

## Interim Land Uses

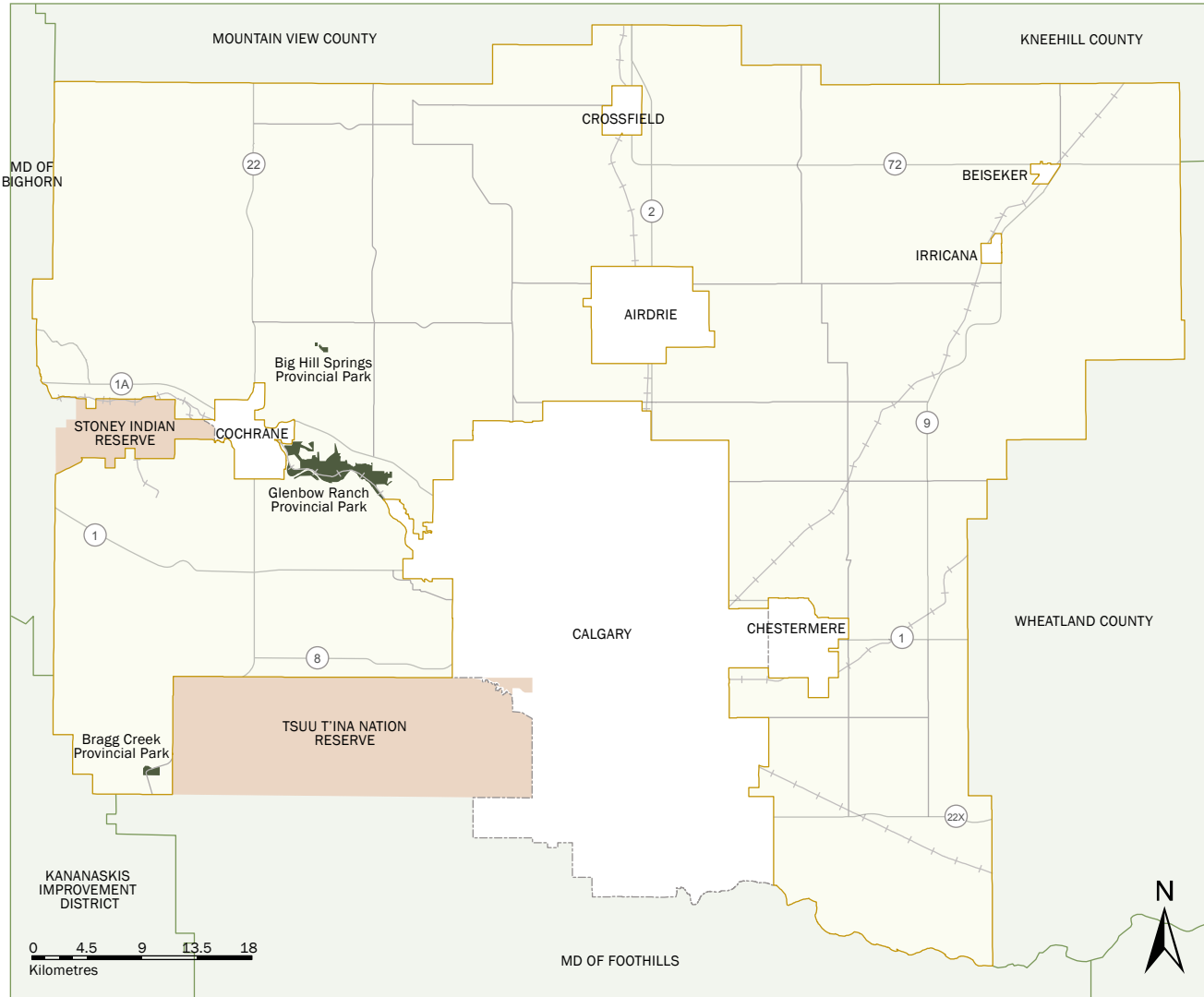
Area structure plans commonly have policies to phase development areas according to factors such as servicing and transportation infrastructure capacity and improvements. Therefore, some lands within approved area structure plans can take many years to build out completely in accordance with their intended land use. In some area structure plans, it may be appropriate to allow for low impact temporary uses on lands prior to their development as comprehensively planned residential, business, or institutional areas. These interim land uses usually have no permanent structures associated with them and have limited servicing requirements. Consequently, they can be easily removed from the land at the time of the planned final use of the site being implemented.

- 28.7 Upon preparation, review, or amendment of an area structure plan, the provision of interim land uses within the area structure plan shall be encouraged, subject to the following considerations:
- a. the compatibility of the interim land use with existing and future uses within the surrounding area;
  - b. alignment with relevant statutory and non-statutory plans, policies and standards;
  - c. potential impacts upon the infrastructure of the County, Province, and other agencies and municipalities;
  - d. the ability of the use to be removed from the lands when required, without significant remediation efforts; and
  - e. limitations on subdivision for interim land use areas during the period prior to implementation of comprehensive development as supported by the area structure plan.
- 28.8 Redesignation applications proposing interim residential and/or business land uses outside of an adopted area structure plan or local plan shall not be supported. The uses shall instead be considered to be permanent and assessed as such against the policies of this Plan.





## ACTIONS

- Review area structure plans for alignment with the County Plan. Prioritize and recommend area structure plan reviews based on the criteria identified in policy 28.4.



# MAP 4 - MUNICIPAL PARTNERS



## Neighbouring Jurisdictions

-  City/Town/Village
-  First Nation Reserve
-  Rural Municipality
-  Provincial Parks

## General Legend

-  Highway
-  Rocky View Boundary





## 29.0 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMISSIONS

Implementing the County Plan involves a variety of ongoing planning processes. The following policies provide guidance as to the information needed to properly evaluate an application. A detailed listing of required information is provided in Appendix C.

### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS/ SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 29.1 All planning or development applications, and any associated infrastructure construction should meet the technical requirements of the County Plan, Land Use Bylaw, area structure plans, subordinate plans, Servicing Standards, County Policy, and provincial and federal requirements.

Request for variations from County requirements must include technical justification with all relevant studies, reports, and tests.

The County will make a decision to approve, approve with conditions, or deny a request to vary from County requirements as the County deems appropriate after reviewing all supporting information.

- 29.2 The County may require studies, reports, and tests to be submitted in support of any planning or development application.
- 29.3 All planning or development applications may be required to provide information on, and evaluation of, the matters identified in Appendix C.

### SUBMISSIONS

#### Conceptual Schemes

- 29.4 When required by the relevant area structure plan and/or the County, conceptual schemes shall be created to guide subdivision development. The County will determine when a proposed subdivision variance from an adopted conceptual scheme requires conceptual scheme amendment.
- 29.5 The content of a conceptual scheme shall be determined by the relevant area structure plan and/or by the County. Conceptual schemes should address the requirements identified in Appendix C, sections 1 and 2.

A **major amendment** to an area structure plan may be initiated by a development application. In determining whether the application requires a major amendment, the County will consider the following:

- existing area structure plan policies including land use, density, and/or form;
- a proposed scale and scope change resulting in significant impact beyond the subject land;
- potential to result in similar applications on surrounding lands; and
- potential need for new or expanded major infrastructure.

A **minor amendment** to an area structure plan is initiated by a development application and in the opinion of the County is:

- consistent with the overall intent of the area structure plan and the policies of this Plan; and
- is minor in nature.

Minor amendments may include specific policy or map amendments.

## **Master Site Development Plans**

- 29.6 Where applicable, master site development plans shall guide the implementation and sequencing of development permit applications, as determined by the County.
- 29.7 A master site development plan should address all matters identified in Appendix C, sections 1 and 3.
- 29.8 A master site development plan for aggregate development shall address all matters identified in Appendix C, sections 1 and 4.

## **ACTIONS**

- Amend the Land Use Bylaw to recognize master site development plans (policy 29.6).

## 30.0 IMPLEMENTATION: ACTION SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the recommended actions to implement the Plan. Council plays a key role in implementing the Plan by setting priorities, providing work direction to administration, and approving actions. Based on the actions summarized below, administration will prepare annual work programs, proposed budgets, progress reports, and other materials for Council review and approval.

The actions include studies, programs, and regulations.

**STUDIES:** are undertaken when future needs are identified but no solution is known. They may involve research and analysis. A study may be necessary as an initial action before proceeding to a program or regulation.

**PROGRAMS:** focus on the needs of a community. Programs often do not end, but achieve a goal.

**REGULATIONS:** deal with land use, development review, and other policies or procedures that may require modification, implementation, or monitoring. Implementing this type of action will occur through changes to the Land Use Bylaw, area structure plans, and subdivision and development review.

Table 4: Action Summary

SUBJECT	ACTION/GOAL OR POLICY REFERENCE	ACTION TYPE	PLAN PRINCIPLE
<b>5.0 Managing Growth</b>			
Overall growth management	Monitor and report on county population growth relative to the regional population growth (goal 1).	Program	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
Monitoring development	Monitor and report on area structure plan build-out for number of new dwellings and dwelling types (goals 2 and 4).	Program	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
Growth in Balzac West	Review the population objectives and development form of the Balzac West Area Structure Plan (policy 5.1).	Study	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
<b>6.0 Finance</b>			
Business growth	Develop a business assessment base target and report on the appropriate balance between the business and residential assessment base (goal 3).	Study	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
Identifying infrastructure needs	Identify soft infrastructure needs that come with growth and the methods to finance those needs. Negotiate a comprehensive approach to the recovery of soft infrastructure costs with the development industry (policy 6.3).	Study	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability

SUBJECT	ACTION/GOAL OR POLICY REFERENCE	ACTION TYPE	PLAN PRINCIPLE
Financing soft infrastructure	Advocate and support changes to provincial legislation to allow the recovery of soft infrastructure cost from developers (policy 6.3).	Study	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
Assessing fiscal impact of development	Implement the County's fiscal impact model as a tool to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess development applications;</li> <li>• allow consistent comparison between projects; and</li> <li>• measure the county wide impact of growth (policy 6.5).</li> </ul>	Regulation	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
Assessing fiscal impact of operations	Develop and adopt County Policy on the requirements and use of a fiscal impact model and a utility infrastructure cost feasibility and life cycle analysis (policy 6.6).	Regulation	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
<b>7.0 Environment</b>			
Environmental checklist	Develop an environmental review checklist to provide for consistent review of development applications (goal 1).	Regulation	Environment
Important environmental areas	Undertake an inventory of regionally important environmental areas and develop policies and procedures to address these areas (goal 4).	Study	Environment
Viewscapes and safety	Review the Land Use Bylaw to establish criteria with respect to building setbacks from escarpments to preserve viewscapes and ensure safety (goal 5, policy 7.21).	Regulation	Rural Communities
Transfer of Development Credits	Assess the use of Transfer Development Credits, in accordance with the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, as a way to direct development to preferred growth areas in order to sustain agriculture, benefit agriculture land owners, and achieve compact development (policy 7.26).	Study	Environment
Water conservation	Develop a water conservation policy for public utility systems and adopt water conservation policies in new or amended area structure plans (policy 7.27).	Regulation	Environment
Dark skies	Review the dark sky lighting requirements of the Land Use Bylaw (policy 7.29).	Regulation	Rural Communities

<b>8.0 Agriculture</b>			
Home based businesses	Review the Land Use Bylaw home based business uses and regulations to provide greater opportunity on larger parcels of land (policy 8.11).	Regulation	Agriculture
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION/GOAL OR POLICY REFERENCE</b>	<b>ACTION TYPE</b>	<b>PLAN PRINCIPLE</b>
Compensation for landowners	Explore the use of provincial tools to compensate landowners for the natural capital of agricultural land (policy 8.12).	Study	Agriculture
Renewable energy development	Review the Land Use Bylaw to allow for the development of renewable energy sources. (policy 8.13).	Regulation	Agriculture
First parcel out subdivision	Amend the Land Use Bylaw to allow a first parcel out for an agriculture subdivision, and agriculture subdivision of isolated land without redesignation (policies 8.18 to 8.19).	Regulation	Agriculture
Minimize land use conflict	Develop a Right to Farm Policy which aligns with provincial legislation and, where feasible, enhances provincial objectives (policies 8.29 to 8.30).	Regulation	Agriculture
Minimize land use conflict	Develop and apply 'agriculture boundary design guidelines' to minimize negative impacts on agricultural land from new non-agricultural land uses, including a consideration of increased building setbacks (policy 8.31)	Regulation	Agriculture
<b>10.0 Country Residential Development</b>			
Compact residential design	Develop planning and design standards and guidelines with respect to compact country residential development (policies 10.7 to 10.9).	Study	Rural Communities
Compact residential regulations	Amend the Land Use Bylaw to accommodate compact residential forms of development contemplated in this Plan (policies 10.7 to 10.9).	Regulation	Rural Communities
<b>12.0 Parks, Open Space, Pathways and Trails</b>			
Land acquisition for parks	Identify key land required for parks acquisition (policies 12.5 and 12.6).	Study	Rural Communities
Design standards for parks, open space, & trails	Develop design principles and standards for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of parks, open space, pathways, trails, and associated amenities (policy 12.7).	Regulation	Rural Communities
Update County Policy re: design standards	Review and update the County's Parks and Open Space classification system to reflect new design standards when they are developed (policy 12.11).	Regulation	Rural Communities

County Policy re: life cycle analysis	Develop a life-cycle fund to assist with capital replacement and repair costs (policy 12.13).	Regulation	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION/GOAL OR POLICY REFERENCE</b>	<b>ACTION TYPE</b>	<b>PLAN PRINCIPLE</b>
<b>14.0 Business Development</b>			
Land inventory	Undertake a commercial/industrial land inventory to assist in determining the future potential for the growth and diversification of the County's business sectors. (policy 14.1).	Study	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
Main Street guidelines	Develop Main Street commercial guidelines for the Hamlet of Langdon (policies 14.15 to 14.17).	Regulation	Rural Communities
<b>15.0 Natural Resources</b>			
Aggregate extraction policy	Prepare an aggregate extraction policy that addresses site design, location criteria, visual impact, mitigation of extraction impacts, and appropriate setbacks between extraction activities and other land uses (policies 15.1 to 15.6).	Regulation	Environment
Aggregate management plan	Develop an aggregate management plan to identify resource areas and address land use management issues; prepare the plan in consultation with residents, industry, and stakeholder groups (policies 15.2 to 15.6).	Study	Environment
<b>16.0 Transportation</b>			
Maintenance of trails & sidewalks	Develop a comprehensive maintenance and operation policy for parks, open space, pathways, trails, and sidewalk maintenance (policies 16.8 to 16.12).	Regulation	Rural Service
Agriculture priority roads	Explore the definition, identification, and standards for agricultural priority roads (policy 16.14).	Study	Agriculture
Road maintenance standards	Define and adopt road service standards in terms of performance, quality, road classification, traffic volume, and development type (residential, agriculture, and business) (policies 16.15 to 16.17).	Regulation	Rural Service
<b>17.0 Utility Services</b>			
Stormwater use	Encourage the development of provincial regulation that allows the reuse of stormwater (policy 17.14).	Study	Environment
Financing stormwater infrastructure	Develop a stormwater offsite bylaw levy for the construction of regional stormwater infrastructure in required areas (policy 17.14).	Regulation	Environment

Stripping & grading	Review the Land Use Bylaw to ensure the regulations regarding the stripping, grading, and/or the placement of fill meet the stormwater goals (goal 5 and policy 17.15).	Regulation	Environment
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION/GOAL OR POLICY REFERENCE</b>	<b>ACTION TYPE</b>	<b>PLAN PRINCIPLE</b>
<b>18.0 Rural Service and Partnerships</b>			
Core services	Identify core County services (policy 18.1).	Study	Rural Service
<b>20.0 Emergency Services</b>			
Master fire plan	Prepare a Master Fire Plan to provide comprehensive, long-term direction for fire services (goal 1).	Study	Rural Service
Water supply & distribution	Assess the County's firefighting water supply and distribution system to identify cost effective mechanisms to improve pressurized and non-pressurized water sources (policy 20.10).	Study	Rural Service
Wildland fire protection	Develop a Wildland Fire Protection strategy encompassing public education, improved access and egress in high hazard areas, and preventative measures to slow fire growth and enable rapid protective fire mobilization services (policy 20.12).	Program	Rural Service
<b>21.0 Recreation, Social and Culture</b>			
Planning for services	Develop a comprehensive strategy to guide the provision of cost effective, financed, and appropriate recreational, social, and cultural services (goal 1, policy 21.6).	Study	Rural Service
Comprehensive recreation & cultural plan	Develop a comprehensive master plan to guide the sustainable development of recreation and cultural amenities in collaboration with district and regional recreation boards, residents, community groups, and neighbouring municipalities (goal 1).	Study	Rural Service
<b>28.0 Area Structure Plan Preparation and Amendment</b>			
Review of Area Structure Plans	Review area structure plans for alignment with the County Plan. Prioritize and recommend area structure plan reviews based on the criteria identified in policy 28.4.	Study	Growth & Fiscal Sustainability
<b>29.0 Technical Requirements and Submissions</b>			
Master site development plans	Amend the Land Use Bylaw to recognize master site development plans (policy 29.6).	Regulation	Rural Communities

## 31.0 MONITORING

The County Plan is a living document, to be amended from time to time to reflect changing conditions; monitoring, evaluating, and progress reporting is required.

Where necessary and possible, the results of the goals, policies, and actions should be measured. Monitoring occurs through the use of performance measurement tools such as indicators, benchmarks, and targets.

**INDICATOR:** a measurement that assists in tracking the Plan's goals and policies.

**BENCHMARK:** a "starting point" from which to measure progress. It represents the state of a measurement or indicator at a particular time.

**TARGET:** a quantifiable outcome that represents a level of performance the County would like to achieve with respect to a particular goal or policy.

## POLICY

- 31.1 County administration will report to Council on implementation of the County Plan on an annual basis.
- 31.2 Administration will develop and update performance measures (indicators, benchmarks, and targets) to monitor the implementation of the County Plan.
- 31.3 Changes and additions to the implementation program and performance measures (indicators, benchmarks, and targets) shall occur as required and are not to be considered as amendments to the County Plan.

Table 5 provides examples of indicators, benchmarks, and targets. These monitoring tools will be periodically reviewed and updated as part of the implementation report.

**Table 5: Indicators, Benchmarks, and Targets**

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	BENCHMARK	TARGET
Managing growth	County population growth	Population in 2011	No more than 3 % of the regional population over the life of the Plan
Managing growth	Monitor area structure plan build-out for dwelling numbers and dwelling type	Lot inventory 2011	Dwellings are built in defined growth areas
Financial sustainability	Business assessment base	2013 Assessment base	To be determined (action)
Financial sustainability	Change in business acreage inventory	2013 Business land inventory	To be determined (action)

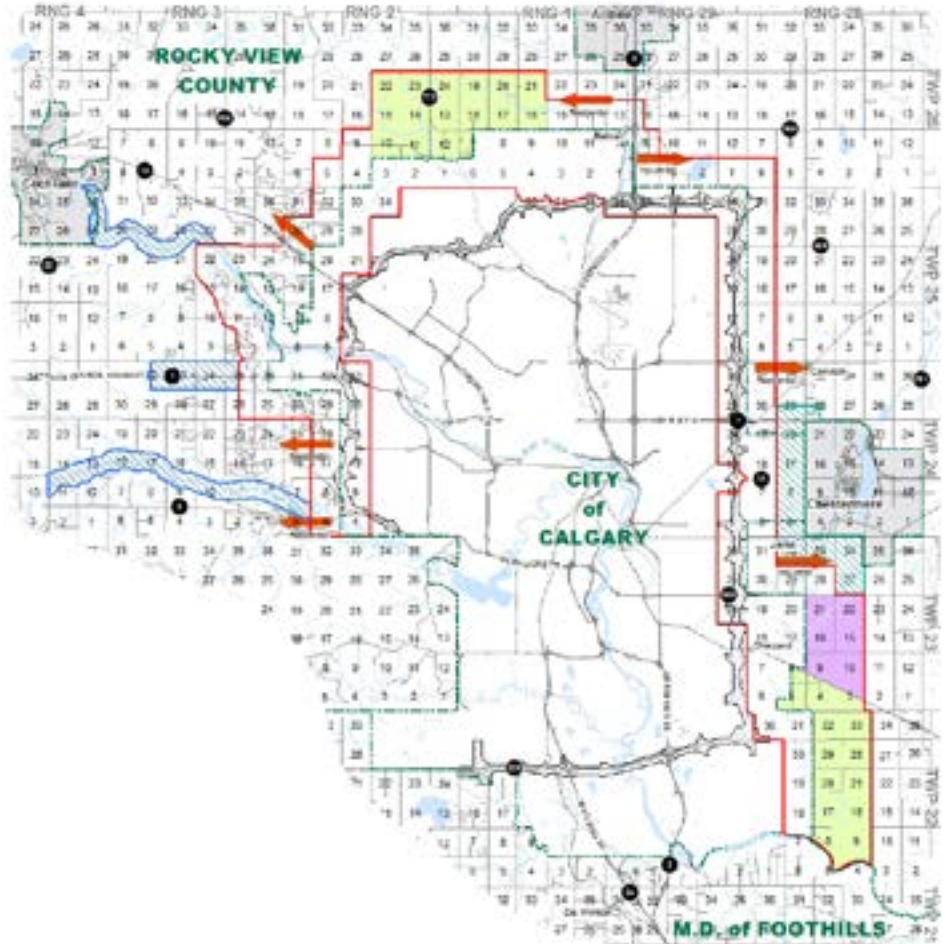


# **V.** Appendices

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# Appendix A

## ROCKY VIEW COUNTY/CITY OF CALGARY: INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



# Appendix B

## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions provide clarity to the terms used throughout this Plan. All definitions within the County Plan are italicized and where the word is first used in the text, the definition is provided in the side bar.

*AGRICULTURAL AREA*: means the area of Rocky View County where redesignation, subdivision, and lot development are not guided by an area structure plan, conceptual scheme, or master site development plan.

*AGRICULTURE SERVICES*: assist the agricultural operator in the production of primary and value-added agriculture products and services.

*BUSINESS AREAS*: are defined as regional business centres, highway business areas, hamlet business areas, or areas for business identified in an area structure plan or conceptual scheme.

*CARRYING CAPACITY*: is the ability of a watershed, air shed, and/or landscape to sustain activities and development before it shows unacceptable signs of stress or degradation.

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

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

*COUNTY POLICY*: is adopted by resolution of Council and addresses the following areas:

1. Administration
2. Finance & Systems
3. Planning & Development
4. Infrastructure & Operations
5. Agricultural Service Board
6. Utility Services

**DEVELOPABLE LAND:** includes all land on which building could occur and excludes land identified as environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement.

**FIRST PARCEL OUT:** means the subdivision of a single residential or agricultural parcel created from a previously un-subdivided quarter section.

**FLOODRISK AREA:** means the area of land bordering a water course or water body that would be inundated by 1 in 100 year flood as determined by the Province, in consultation with the County, and may include both flood fringe and floodway.

**FRAGMENTED QUARTER SECTION:** is a quarter section of land within the agriculture area divided into six or more:

1. residential lots; and/or
2. small agricultural parcels, each of which is less than 10 hectares (24.7 acres) in size.

**HARD INFRASTRUCTURE:** means land and infrastructure related to roads, pathways and trails, and water, stormwater, wastewater, and parking and loading facilities.

**INTERIM LAND USE:** means a use which is transitional in nature, providing the potential to utilize land for commercial gain or community benefit, prior to its planned comprehensive development for residential, business or institutional uses. The land use redesignation approval for an interim land use under the Land Use Bylaw is permanent, but the associated development permits approved are temporary. Typical interim land uses have limited impacts on infrastructure

**AND CAN BE EASILY REMOVED FROM THE LAND UPON COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT TAKING PLACE.**

**LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT:** uses a variety of techniques to treat and manage stormwater runoff close to the areas where rain falls. Low Impact Development focuses on site design and stormwater control options such as green roofs, stormwater capture and re-use, and landscaping that increases the absorption and filtering of rainwater.

**MINIMUM DISTANCE OF SEPARATION:** means a provincially regulated setback established between a confined feeding operation and the neighbouring residence that is in existence at the time the application is submitted. The purpose is to minimize the impact of odour. It is measured from the outside walls of neighbouring residences to the point closest to the confined feeding operation's manure storage facilities or manure collection areas.

**MULTI-LOT:** means development of two or more new residential lots and includes country residential and hamlet development. The definition of multi-lot development does not apply to the subdivision and development of lands within a fragmented quarter section (policy 10.10 to 10.14).

**NEW OR DISTINCT AGRICULTURAL OPERATION:**

1. New agricultural operations are distinctly different from the existing use of the land in terms of agricultural products, livestock, and/or facilities.
2. Distinct operations are where two or more different agricultural uses are established on a single agriculture parcel for a period of 5 years or more. Such uses may include agricultural products, livestock, and/or facilities.

**NOTIFICATION ZONE:** means an area within 1.6 kilometres of an adjacent jurisdictional boundary. The zone is for the purpose of informing an adjacent municipality of a development application within the County.

**OPEN LAND IS DEVELOPABLE LAND AND INCLUDES:**

1. parks and open space;
2. publicly or privately owned land permanently used for conservation, recreation, agriculture, and/or institution uses;
3. public utility lots;
4. municipal reserve land dedication;
5. riparian areas, constructed wetlands, stormwater treatment areas, wastewater treatment areas;
6. flood fringe areas; and
7. Other environmentally important land not qualifying as environmental reserve.

**PHYSICAL CONSTRAINT:** means a natural feature or human made hazard that impacts or restricts site suitability for development. Constraints include rivers, water bodies, wetlands, ravines, escarpments, steep slopes, land that is subject to flooding, and land that is, in the opinion of the subdivision authority, unstable.

**SERVICING STANDARDS:** means the County's technical requirements that govern infrastructure design, construction, testing, inspection, maintenance, and transfer of public works.

**SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE:** includes, but is not limited to, infrastructure relating to recreation, libraries, protective services, fire protection services, and schools.

*UN-SUBDIVIDED QUARTER SECTION:* Is a titled area of:

1. 64.7 hectares (160 acres) more or less; or
2. a gore strip greater than 32.38 hectares (80 acres) in size, if an un-subdivided quarter section is reduced or fragmented by any road widening, boundary adjustment, public use, or right of way for roads, utilities, railroads and canals, it shall be considered un-subdivided when assessing first parcel out proposals. This includes instances where, as a result of a boundary adjustment, public use, or right of way, separate titles have been registered for remaining fragmented portions of the quarter section.

*VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE:* involves the processing of primary agricultural products and services into secondary products to increase overall product value.

# Appendix C

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMISSIONS

### 1. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The County may require studies, reports, and tests to be submitted as per section 29 on the following matters:

#### Compatibility

- a) compatibility of the proposed development with adjacent land uses and the use of design measures to mitigate adverse impacts;
- b) compatibility of the proposed development with existing agricultural, business, or residential uses;
- c) potential off-site impacts such as dust, smell, and odour;

#### Fiscal Impact

- d) fiscal impact to the County;
- e) infrastructure, operational, and life-cycle costs (utilities);
- f) identified commercial/industrial trade area (business);

#### Design

- g) proposed land uses;
- h) development scale, size, and site design;

#### Emergency Services

- i) fire protection requirements;
- j) protective service requirements;
- k) emergency response requirements;

#### Environment

- l) bio-physical impact assessment of potential impacts on the natural environment;
- m) any on-site or off-site physical constraints;
- n) geotechnical assessment (slope stability);

#### Landscaping

- o) landscape requirements for visual appearance and/or mitigating measures;

### Servicing

- p) water and wastewater requirements, and service method;
- q) impact on County services and/or private utility services;
- r) nature of any on-site or off-site engineering works that may be required to support the proposed business;
- s) on-site stormwater management and off-site conveyance;

### Transportation

- t) efficiency of the proposed road network within Rocky View County and, where applicable, other jurisdictions;
- u) impact on the intersections, highways, roads, and road network within Rocky View County and, where applicable, other jurisdictions;
- v) access to a paved County road or provincial highway;
- w) safe access and egress from a road or highway;
- x) pathways, trails, and sidewalks.

### Other

- y) historical and archeological assessment;
- z) potential for the area to support natural resource extraction; and
- aa) any other matters the County deems appropriate.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL SCHEME SUBMISSIONS**

Conceptual schemes should address the following:

1. A description and evaluation of the existing plan area:
  - a) topography, soils, vegetation, geotechnical considerations (constraints);
  - b) environmental sensitivity and significance;
  - c) agricultural capability, natural resources;
  - d) existing land use, ownership, development, and adjacent land uses;
  - e) archaeological and historical considerations; and
  - f) existing utilities and transportation routes.



2. A land use concept which includes;
  - a) a future land use scenario;
  - b) demonstration of consistency with a higher order plan;
  - c) design controls/guidelines, where appropriate;
  - d) reserve area dedication and strategy (municipal/school/environmental);
  - e) transportation network and pedestrian network;
  - f) stormwater management plan;
  - g) servicing strategy;
  - h) anticipated improvements to existing infrastructure;
  - i) population densities, population projection, and an indication of target market to determine impact on the area's School District;
  - j) phasing of development; and
  - k) landscaping and aesthetic details that will enhance the development.
3. A summary of the Applicant's community consultation and results.
4. Any other matter identified by the County.

### **3. MASTER SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUBMISSIONS**

Master site development plans should address the following matters:

1. A general introduction to the proposed development: a discussion of the vision and purpose of the proposal.
2. A master site plan addressing:
  - a) building placement and setbacks;
  - b) building height and general architectural appearance;
  - c) parking and public lighting;
  - d) landscaping for visual appearance and/or mitigating measures;
  - e) agriculture boundary design guidelines; and
  - f) anticipated phasing.
3. A summary of the Applicant's community consultation and results.
4. Technical issues identified by the County that are necessary to determine the project's viability and offsite impacts. These may include any item identified in Appendix C.

#### **4. AGGREGATE MASTER SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUBMISSIONS**

Applications for aggregate extraction shall include a master site development plan that addresses the following:

1. A general introduction to the proposed development: a discussion of the vision and purpose of the proposal, summary of physical attributes of subject lands, site context overview, and guiding principles for development.
2. Development rationale including justification for proposed land use.
3. Summary of proposed operations including: site activities, proposed hours of operation, haul routes, etc.
4. Aggregate extraction guidelines and site development/ aggregate extraction plan.
5. Phasing plan.
6. Development permitting structure which is to include monitoring and reporting requirements.
7. Reclamation plan.
8. Environmental mitigation strategies and initiatives including a summary of the use of sustainable technologies and initiatives during extraction and reclamation stages.
9. Identification of impacts to surrounding lands and mitigation strategies (may require landscaping and buffering strategies for effective screening and visual aesthetics).
10. Assessment of cumulative aspects of extraction activities in the area.
11. Summary of interim and post reclamation land uses – a discussion of land uses that may coincide with aggregate extraction (i.e. agricultural uses).
12. Any special policies that may be required to give guidance to the preparation of development proposals.

13. A technical summary of the proposal with supporting documentation that addresses:
  - a) transportation and access management (submission of a traffic impact assessment);
  - b) stormwater management (submission of a stormwater management plan);
  - c) ground and surface water hydrological analysis;
  - d) environmental overview (submission of a biophysical overview);
  - e) noise and dust mitigation strategies and reports; and
  - f) erosion and weed management control.
14. Supplementary information - any additional information that may help further define the proposal.
15. Summary of required Provincial Approvals. This could include: Alberta Environment Code of Practice, Alberta Environment wetland loss and mitigation approvals, Alberta Community Development historical resource clearance, Alberta Transportation roadside development permits, etc.
16. A summary of the Applicant's community consultation and results.
17. Any other item deemed appropriate by the County.

# Appendix D:

## COUNTY POLICY

Key policy documents contributing to the County Plan are:

- Policy 220: Debt acquisition and management
- Policy 313: Disposal of reserve land
- Policy 317: Community recreation funding
- Policy 318: Pathways and trails
- Policy 411: Residential water and sewer requirements
- Policy 412: Servicing requirements
- Policy 415: Domestic potable water system servicing
- Policy 419: Riparian land conservation and management
- Policy 420: Wetland conservation and management
- Policy 430: Communal wastewater system management
- Policy 431: Stormwater system management
- Policy 449: Performance requirements for wastewater treatment systems
- Policy 600: Water conservation

## COUNTY PLAN

**Rocky View County | 262075 Rocky View Point, Rocky View County, AB T4A 0X2**

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**ROCKY VIEW COUNTY**  
Cultivating Communities