

Master Site Development Plan (MSDP)

Rocky View County Campus at Balzac East

Balzac East, Alberta
July 2009

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Rocky View 



Fig. 1: Regional Site Location

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Master Site Development Plan (MSDP) is to establish the planning and design principles for Rocky View County's Municipal Campus at Balzac East. The Campus will house a wide variety of public uses, including the municipal hall and maintenance facility, emergency services centre, recycling facilities, outdoor gathering plaza, fitness trails, athletic fields and a recreation centre.

The Campus will serve all residents of Rocky View. Located in the Balzac East area and in close proximity to Highway 566 and the Queen Elizabeth Highway, the site is easily accessible for all residents (see Figure 1).

The over-riding objective of this MSDP is to develop a Municipal Campus that will be a focal point of the municipality. The site will contain multiple uses, be used seven days a week and into the evening hours, and be developed to the highest environmental standards. The environmental features on the property will be enhanced and integrated into the development, providing significant amenity areas. The site will be walkable.

In the longer term, it is possible that a range of additional compatible uses, both public and private, could locate on the site. Additional public uses could include a library, wellness and medical services, schools, religious assembly, performing arts, research facilities and other government uses. There are, however, no specific plans for these or other non-public uses at this time. However, this MSDP does illustrate a comprehensive design for the quarter section, showing how a wide range of uses could be accommodated.

* This MSDP is prepared in support of an application to redesignate the site from *Farm and Ranch District* to *Public Services District*. If private uses wish to locate on the site, an additional application to redesignate a portion of the site will be necessary at that time. The *Public Services District* designation is only intended to accommodate a range of public institutional, educational and recreational uses.



2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The site will be developed as a campus environment to serve as a focal point for all residents;
- The site design will emphasize innovation, best management practices and environmental stewardship;
- Environmental features on the site will be enhanced and integrated into the site design;
- Pedestrian connections and a walkable campus will be a priority;
- The site will be active seven days a week and into the late evening hours, creating a safe environment;
- A wide range of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities will be developed, helping to create a healthy lifestyle;
- The site will be compatible with adjacent uses and maintain a high visual appearance from the Highway 566 corridor; and
- The site will be green and well landscaped.

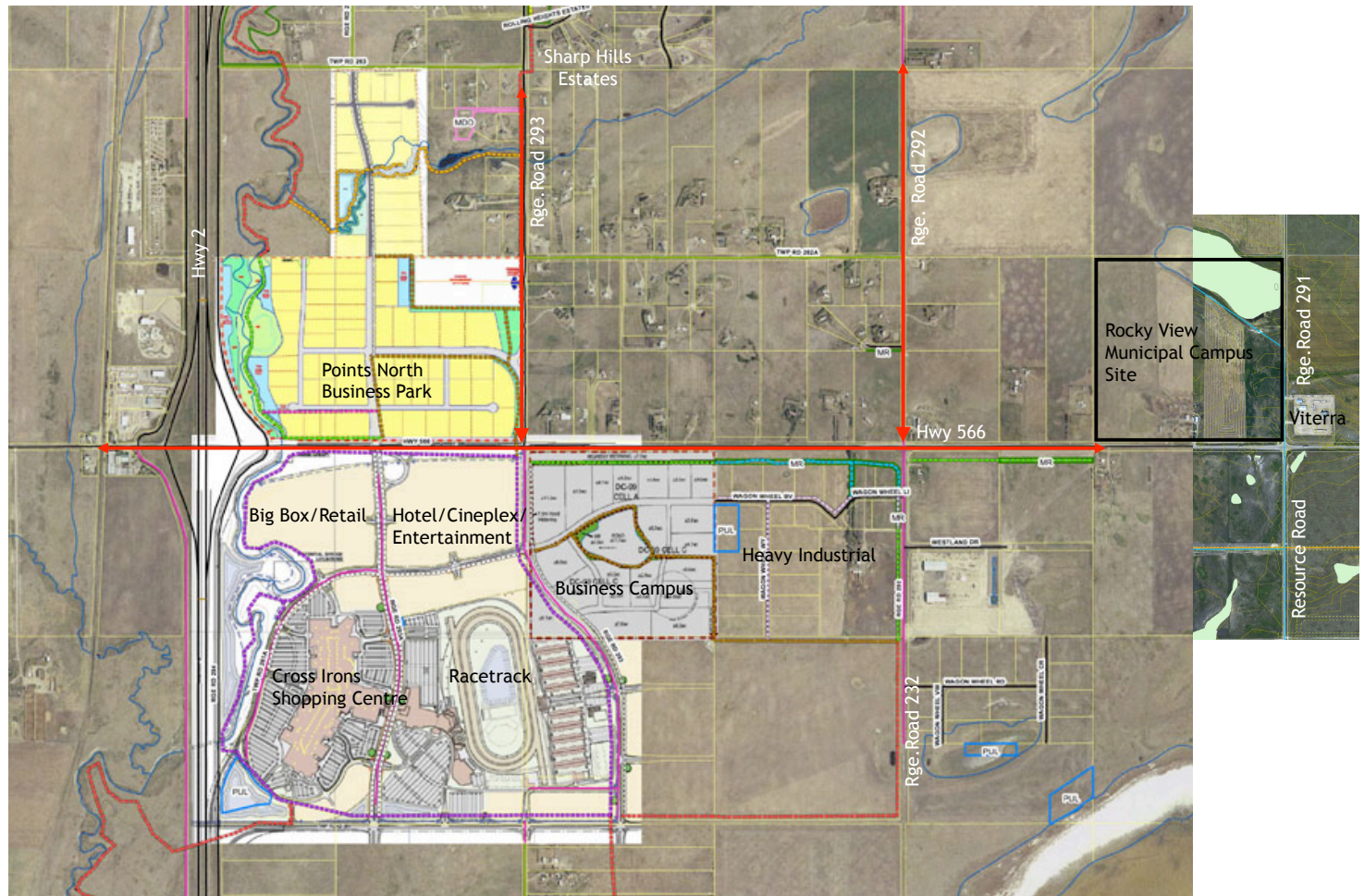


Fig. 2: Local Site Location

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

Rocky View recently acquired a quarter section (SE 14-26-29-W4M) at the north west corner of Highway 566 and Range Road 291 (see Figure 2). The site is currently in agricultural production and contains a number of wetland areas, the largest of which is in the north east corner of the property. The high point on the site is located just north of the mid point of the quarter and provides excellent views of the mountains to the southwest and the agricultural lands to the north and east. The design established in this MSDP will take full advantage of these views.

While there is an existing access off of 566, this will be removed as development occurs. Primary access will be from Range Road 291 which extends along the east side of the quarter section. Long term access at the south west corner of the site may also be possible.

Adjacent lands are currently used for residential, agricultural and business uses. Lands to the west will be residential while areas to the north and east are primarily in agricultural production. Viterra has an agricultural distribution business on a site immediately to the east. Lands to the south are located in the business area of the Balzac East Area Structure Plan and will be developed for business uses over the long term. A priority of this MSDP will be to ensure that impacts on neighboring properties are properly addressed.

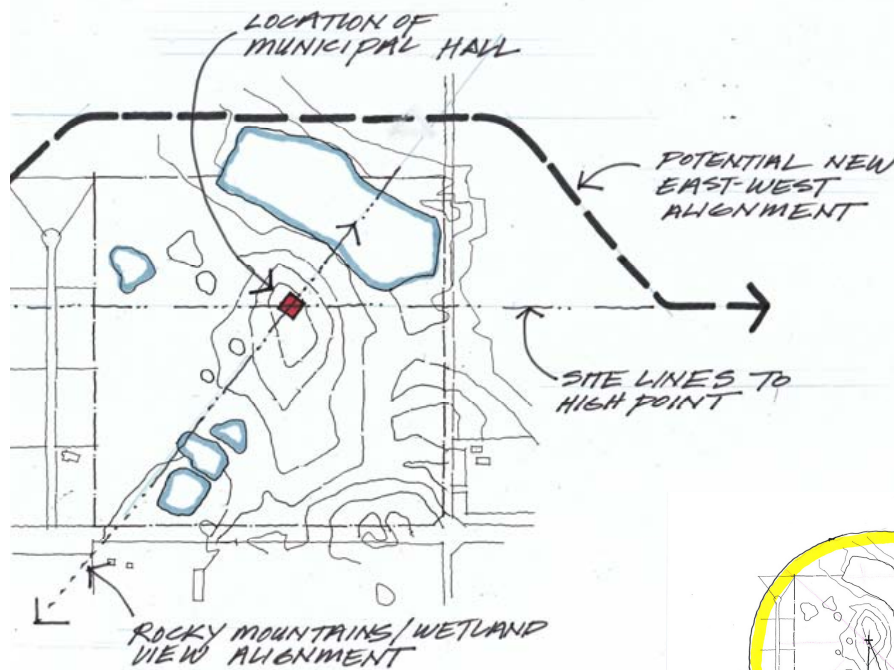
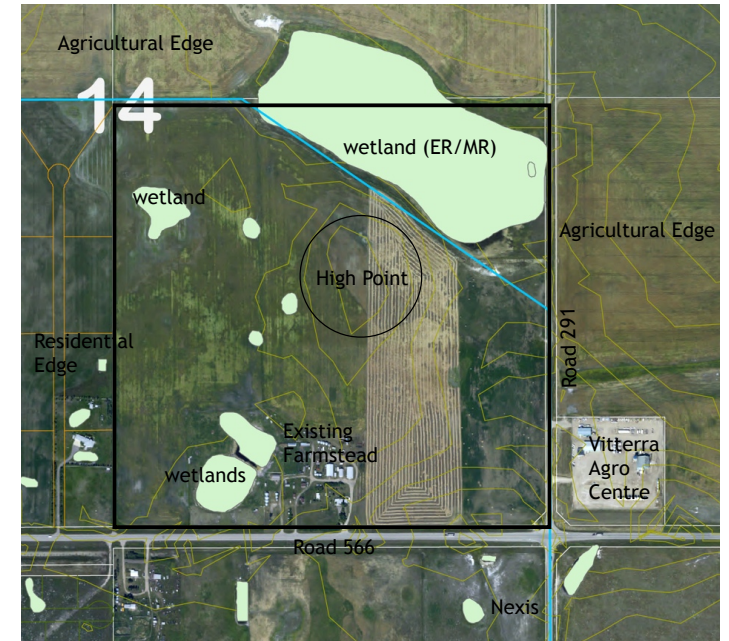
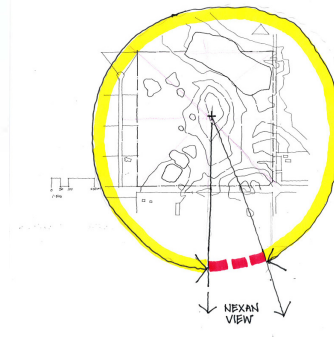


Fig. 3: Site Analysis



4.0 SITE ANALYSIS AND MUNICIPAL HALL LOCATION

- The site is well located east of the Queen Elizabeth Highway (Highway 2) along Highway 566 in Balzac East to provide municipal facilities to all residents of Rocky View;
- The site is a flat and rolling prairie landscape currently used for agricultural purposes;
- It has a central high point that then drains south and north and provides stunning views of the rocky mountains to the southwest;
- A significant wetland in the northeast corner of the site provides for significant enhancement opportunities as a natural feature;
- Primary access will only be permitted from Range Road 291 with limited access to Highway 566;
- Only one residential neighbor currently abuts the site on the southwest property line;
- An agricultural business (Vitterra Agro Centre) is located across Range Road 291 on the corner of Highway 566;
- A potential east-west arterial road will by-pass the north border of the site in the short to medium time frame;
- Services can be provided to the site to permit development; and
- No significant limitations to site development exist.

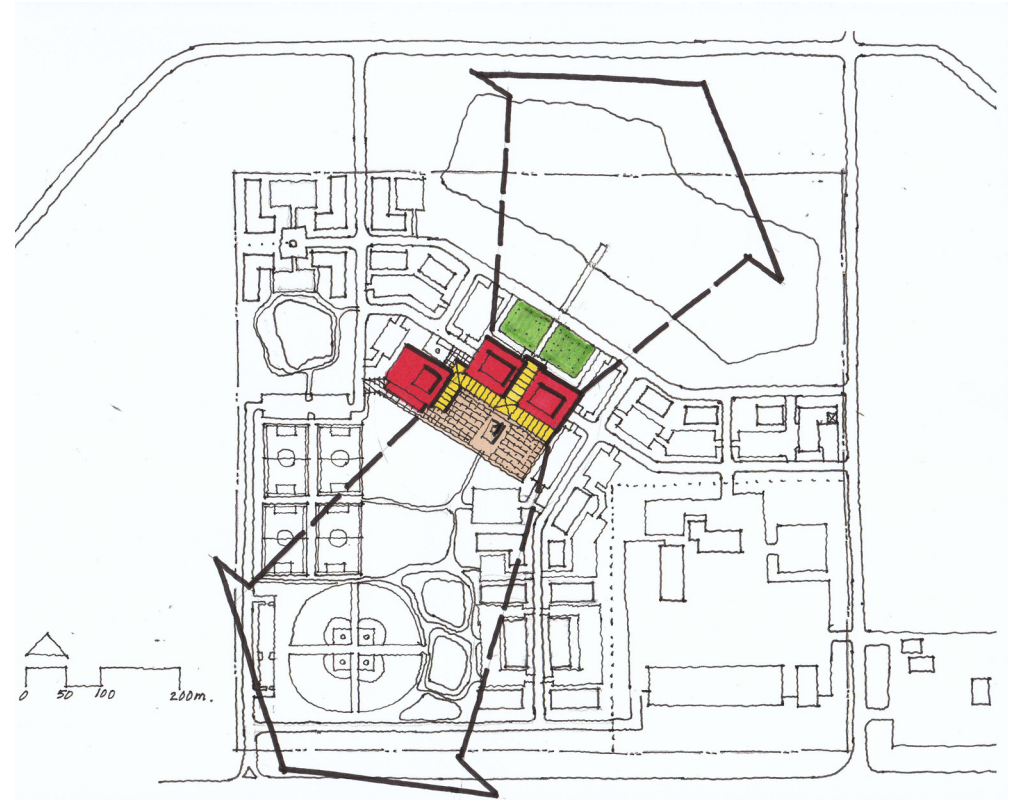


Fig. 4: Location of Municipal Hall

5.0 SITE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The site development concept is based on the previous Guiding Principles and reflects the following program:

- The Municipal Hall is centrally located on the high point of the land with southwest/northeast axis, taking advantage of outstanding views of the rocky mountains to the southwest and the proposed reconstructed wetland to the northeast. At the same time, this orientation maximizes passive solar gain and creates natural drainage flows to existing and enhanced water features on the site. A landmark civic structure (tower) could anchor the Municipal Hall and could be seen at a distance to orient visitors to the Municipal Campus. An indoor “Civic Galleria” could be developed as part of the Municipal Hall complex for indoor events and celebrations. A sunny “Civic Plaza” for outdoor special events and presentations will front on the Municipal Hall while a “Civic Lawn” and drop-off area will frame the other side.

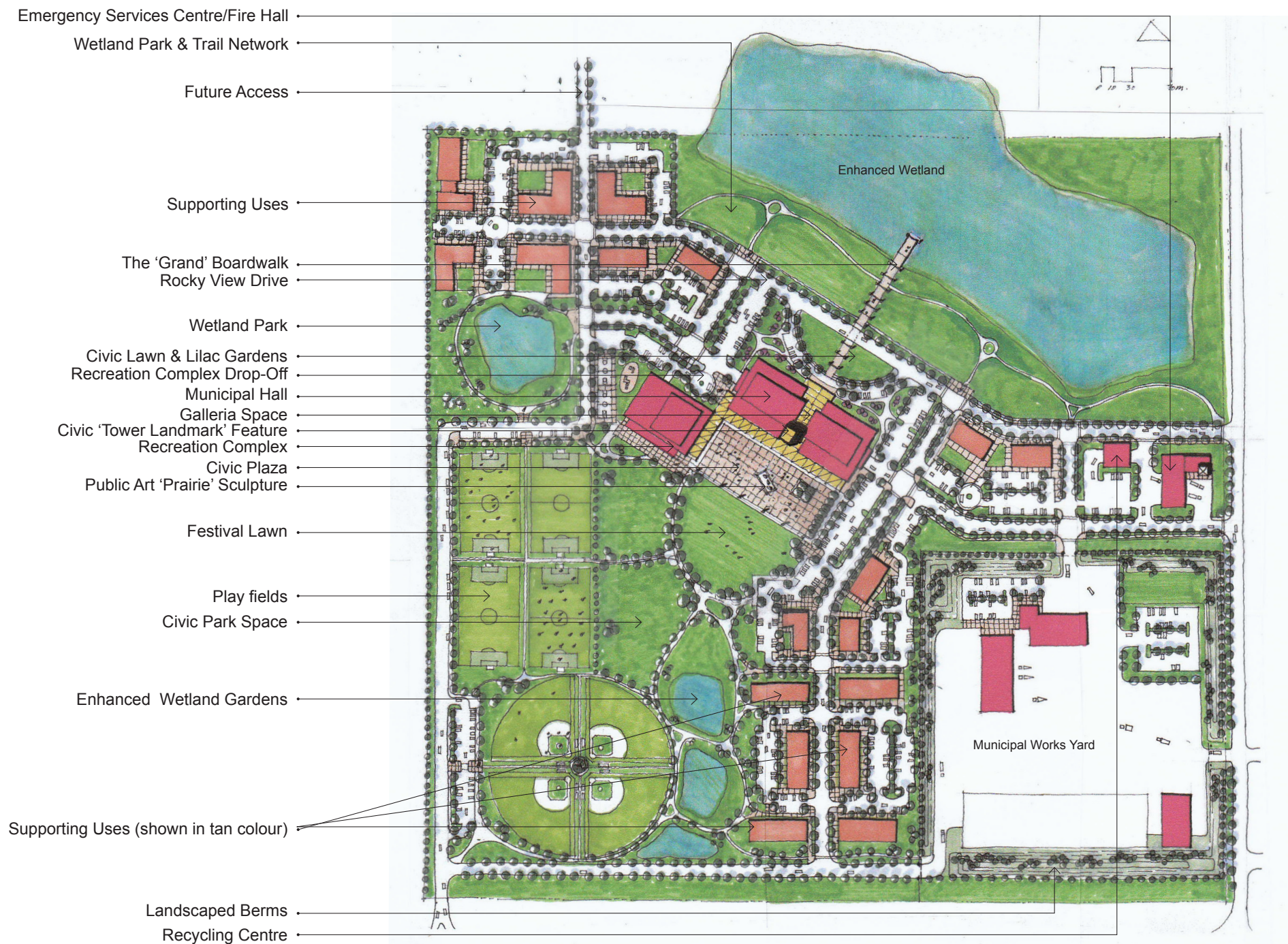
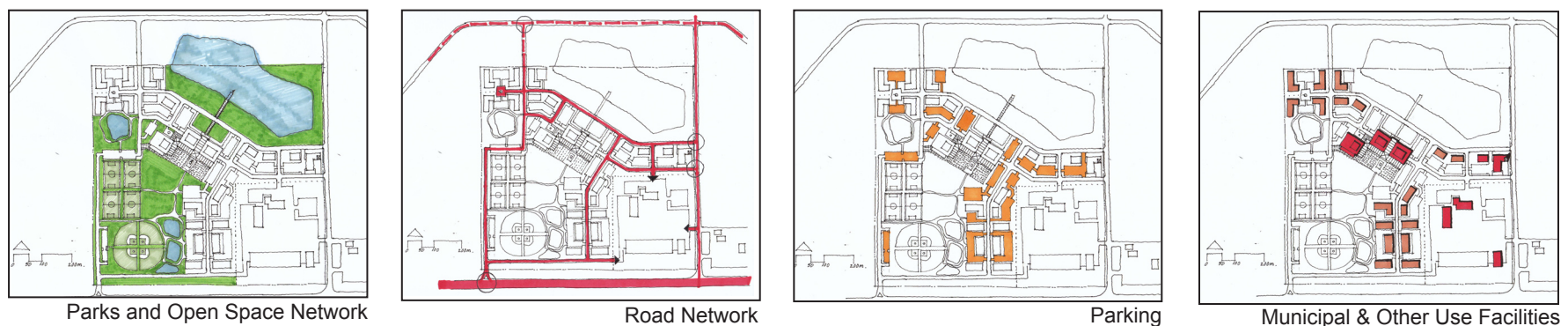


Fig. 5: Site Development Concept Plan

- The Emergency Centre/Fire Hall and Recycling Centre will be located near Range Road 291 for convenient access. The Fire Hall can also be a landmark entry building to the Municipal Campus with its tower leading residents and visitors to the primary entrance of the Campus.
- The Municipal Works Yard will be located at the corner of Highway 566 and Range Road 291 for convenient access. The site planning recommends covered storage and special earth forms and planting along Highway 566 so the edges are attractive.
- Additional Public Uses including complementary government buildings and institutions such as schools and churches are permitted on the site and are simply illustrated on the Master Plan to show the potential of the site in the longer term.
- The Street and Parking Network will provide easy and convenient access points from both Range Road 291 and the proposed east/west arterial road planned to be extended around the north side of the site. A right turn in and right turn out from the property may be permitted from Highway 566 at the southwest corner of the site. The internal street network will provide additional convenient access to the Municipal Works Yard and to the recreational fields for special events. Convenient and abundant parking will be provided on site adjoining the buildings for easy access, especially during the cold winter months.
- A Recreation Complex is located just southwest of the Municipal Hall, along a potential indoor pedestrian spine that links the two facilities together. A broad range of recreational indoor activities (gym, fitness, and indoor sports courts that are still to be determined) will be complemented by outdoor recreational facilities including soccer and softball fields as well as a comprehensive recreational trail system as part of a major civic central park. An outdoor winter program of potential skating on the ponds and cross-country skiing will make the Municipal Campus an outstanding example of active and healthy recreation/work environment during all four seasons.
- The Civic Park Network highlights the retention of the water features as multiple use areas to help manage on site drainage, provide wildlife habitat, environmental education and interpretation, and visual amenity for the site. The major wetland in the northeast corner of the site will be enhanced with a potential boardwalk and interpretive area to provide a leading example of wetland conservation. A comprehensive trail network will link the site together to create a pedestrian orientation as well as a recreational network connecting indoor facilities to outdoor sports fields.

SITE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT (con't)

Fig. 6: Site Development Concept Components



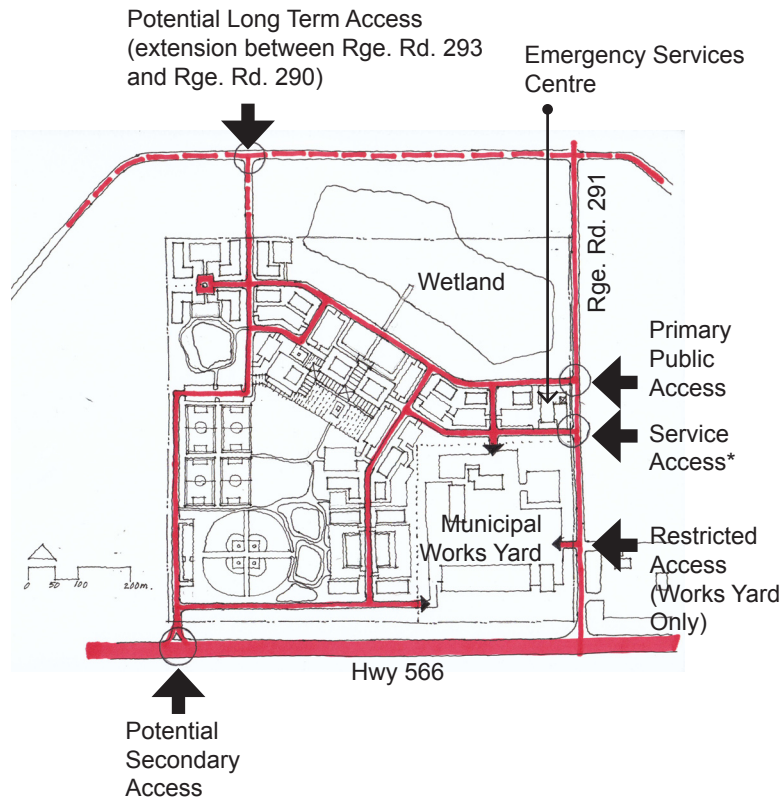
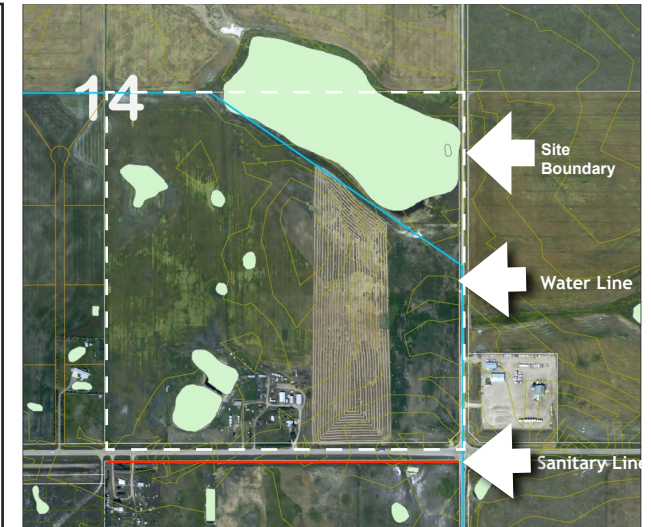
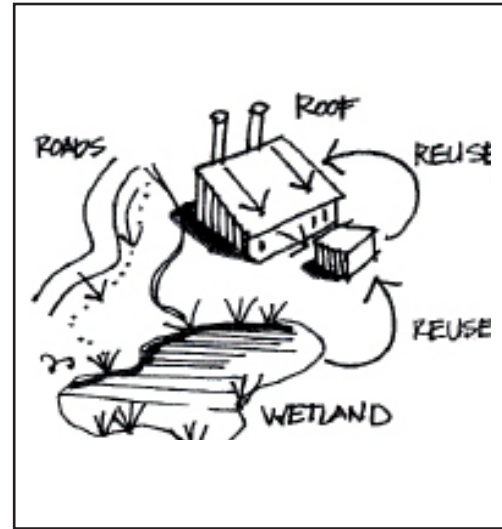


Fig.7: Site Access

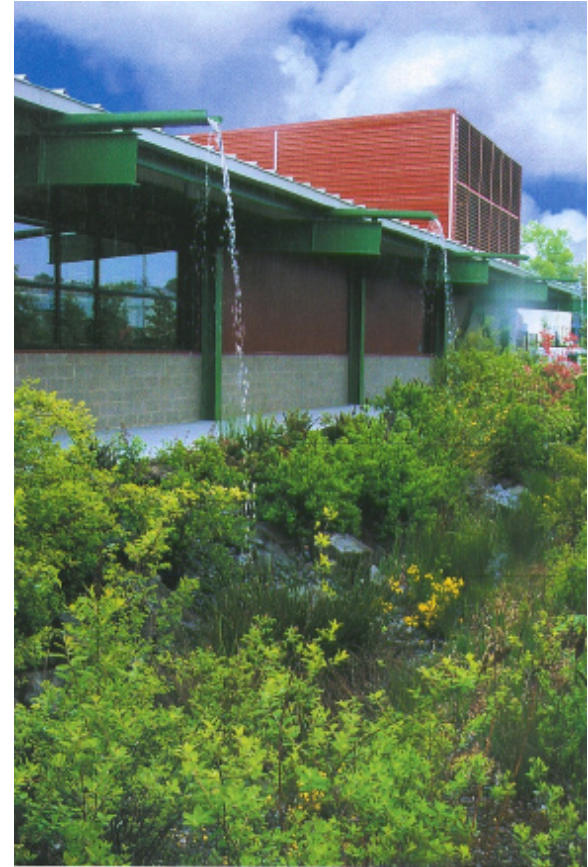
*Access locations are conceptual only and will be finalized at the subdivision and development permit stages. The access south of Emergency Services Centre will be controlled.



6.0 SITE SERVICING

The policies that guide the servicing of the site are as follows.

- Developments on the site will be connected to public water and sanitary servicing systems.
- Storm water management will be to a rural standard utilizing overland flow. Storm water capture and re-use is a priority for landscape irrigation and wetland enhancement.
- Primary access to the site will be from an upgraded Range Road 291 on the east side of the quarter section. No additional accesses will be developed on Highway 566 without the consent of Alberta Transportation.
- Prior to subdivision or development of the property, a Traffic Impact Assessment will be prepared and be acceptable to Alberta Transportation.



7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

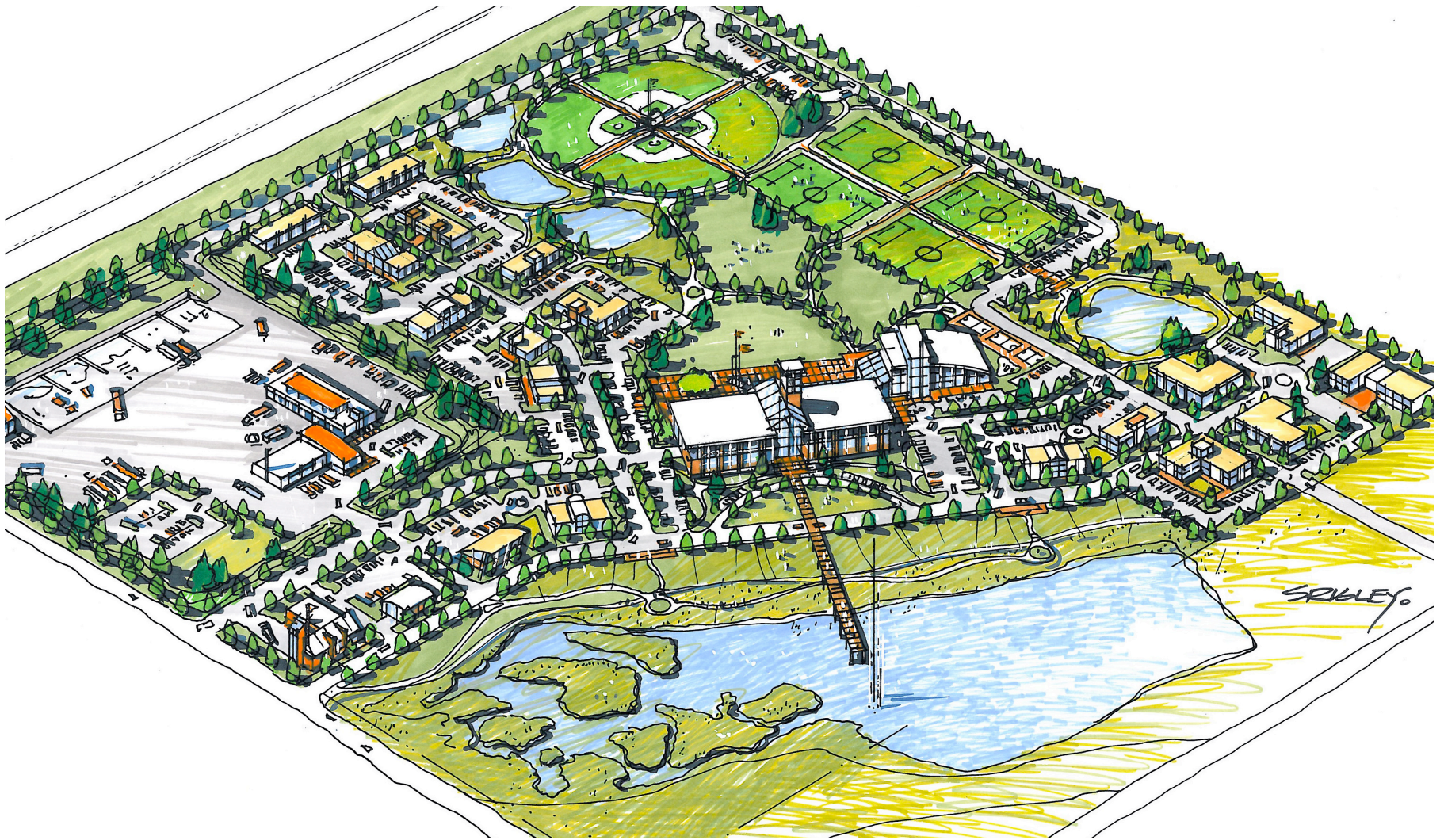
The policies that guide the design of the site are as follows:

- Wetland areas will be enhanced and integrated as an amenity area into the site design, creating an accessible park environment. Wetland areas will capture building runoff and provide a recreational amenity to the site, with viewing platforms, trails, planting and other amenities developed.
- The County will explore alternate energy sources to service the site such as district heating, wind and solar power.
- No potable water will be used for outdoor irrigation. Strategies that may include storm water capture and xeriscaping will be adopted to ensure that potable water is not used for irrigation.
- Water conservation technologies are mandatory in all buildings.



7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (con't)

- A Landscaping Plan will be prepared as part of any subdivision or development approval for the site. The Plan will identify the use of hedge rows and shelter belts for visual screening and wind protection.
- The Landscaping Plan shall pay particular attention to the highway corridors and interface lands. The Plan shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw and the Balzac East ASP.
- Twenty per cent (20%) of the site will be landscaped. Areas of public utility lots, municipal reserve lots and wetland areas that are enhanced with landscaping treatment are included in this number.
- An Open Space Plan will be developed for the site, identifying a pedestrian and cycling network that emphasizes linkages between buildings, to amenity areas and throughout the site.
- On-site lighting will emphasize 'night sky' standards. All lighting should be designed to conserve energy and reduce glare and up-light.



8.0 DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Fig. 8: Aerial View of Municipal Campus (looking southwest)

The policies relating to development standards are as follows:

- Development on the site will protect 20 metres along the south side of the quarter section for the future upgrading of Highway 566.
- The maintenance facility at the south east corner of the site will be appropriately screened from Highway 566 and Range Road 291. A landscaped buffer and appropriate fencing will be used.
- No display areas, parking or storage areas are allowed in any landscaped area.
- On-site signage must have a simple and consistent design and complement the development of the property. Signage will be constructed of permanent, high quality materials and be designed so that signage proliferation does not occur.
- Rooftop apparatus shall be located and screened to reduce or eliminate public view from adjacent roads and residential properties.
- All development regulations contained in the Public Services District and applicable sections of the Land Use Bylaw shall apply to this site.
- More than one principal building may be allowed on a lot.



9.0 IMPLEMENTATION

This MSDP will be implemented through subsequent re-designation, subdivision and development permit applications. All future applications must be consistent with this Plan. Should future circumstances warrant, Council may consider amendments to this MSDP.

Any re-designation application must have a Public Hearing before Council can grant Third Reading to the Bylaw. This mechanism ensures that neighboring property owners are consulted and have the opportunity to present their views on any land use change on the property.