

ROCKY VIEW COUNTY

SPRINGBANK

AREA STRUCTURE PLAN

OPTIONS REPORT

2024



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Springbank Area Structure Plan (ASP) Option Report has been prepared to address Rocky View County Governance Committee's direction on January 16, 2024:

MOVED by Chair Kochan that Administration be directed to provide a report to Council in Q2 of 2024 on the feasibility of combining the Central Springbank, North Springbank and Moddle Area Structure Plans (ASP) into one ASP with the intent to maintain the existing land use strategies while implementing minor amendments that:

- a) Ensure alignment with higher order policy and guiding documents adopted since the approval of the ASPs;*
- b) Update technical policies to reflect current studies; and,*
- c) Address policy gaps in the existing ASPs identified by Council, Administration, and the public.*

This report explores three options for addressing the existing Area Structure Plans (ASPs) in the Springbank area. Option 1 proposes to merge all ASPs into a single comprehensive document, aiming to maintain existing land use strategies while addressing policy gaps. Option 2 proposes to merge Moddle ASP into Central Springbank ASP, while addressing policy gaps for both ASPs and the North Springbank ASP. Option 3 proposes to maintain the existing ASPs without amendments and rescindment of the project Terms of Reference.

Each option was evaluated against general criteria, including consideration of planning objectives, policy compatibility, administrative effort, and regional engagement. Option 1 presents the most comprehensive approach, aiming to create a holistic, single ASP document for the Springbank area. However, Option 1 faces challenges including policy compatibility and the need for a Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) application to the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB). Option 2 offers an intermediate alternative by proposing to merge Moddle ASP into Central Springbank ASP. Option 2 does not create a single ASP for Springbank but leverages the policy compatibility between the Moddle and Central Springbank ASPs to minimize the scope of amendments, thereby minimizing staff commitment and avoiding a REF application. Option 3 proposes to maintain the existing ASPs without amendments and requires minimal administrative resources, which could then be utilized for other priority projects. However, opportunities to address policy gaps and incorporate updated technical information would not be realized.

Considering the advantages and disadvantages of each option, Option 2 is recommended. Option 2 provides an alternative to partially merge the Springbank ASPs while minimizing staff commitment and regional risk. This would allow administrative resources to be further focused on other statutory planning projects and still achieve the aim of maintaining existing land use framework for the Springbank community.

1 INTRODUCTION

Land use planning for Springbank is guided by three separate Area Structure Plans (ASPs): Moddle (adopted in 1998), North Springbank (adopted in 1999), and Central Springbank (adopted in 2001). The objective of the ongoing Springbank ASP Review Project is to ensure that the Springbank community is guided by planning documents that reflect current community wishes and the existing County and regional policy framework. The three existing ASPs guiding growth within the Springbank community were adopted more than 20 years ago and several important statutory planning documents and technical studies have been implemented in this time.

The Springbank ASP Review Project was initiated in October 2016 and new North and South Springbank ASPs were prepared and approved by Council. These ASPs were refused by the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB) in July 2021. In December 2021, Council gave direction to revisit the draft Springbank ASPs and to undertake further community engagement in 2022 to help inform revisions to the plans.

Considering the feedback of the 2022 community engagement Administration prepared a new single ASP for Springbank and conducted engagement on this new plan in June and July of 2023. On January 16, 2024, Administration presented the feedback from the 2023 engagement and proposed changes to the draft Springbank ASP to the Governance Committee. The Committee, based on community feedback, provided direction to explore the feasibility of combining the ASPs into a single ASP with the intent to maintain the existing land use strategies while implementing minor amendments to update ASP policy and technical information.

1.1 OBJECTIVE

The objective of this report is to assess the feasibility of merging the three Springbank ASPs, Moddle, North Springbank and Central Springbank, into an effective, comprehensive statutory planning document. This report also identifies alternative options and evaluates each option against criteria to develop a recommendation.

1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The three existing Springbank ASPs were adopted between 1998 and 2001 and have received several minor amendments to support individual developments. The ASPs have not been amended to reflect the County's current Municipal Development Plan (2013) or the CMRB Growth Plan (RGP) (2022). A brief description of each ASP is provided below.

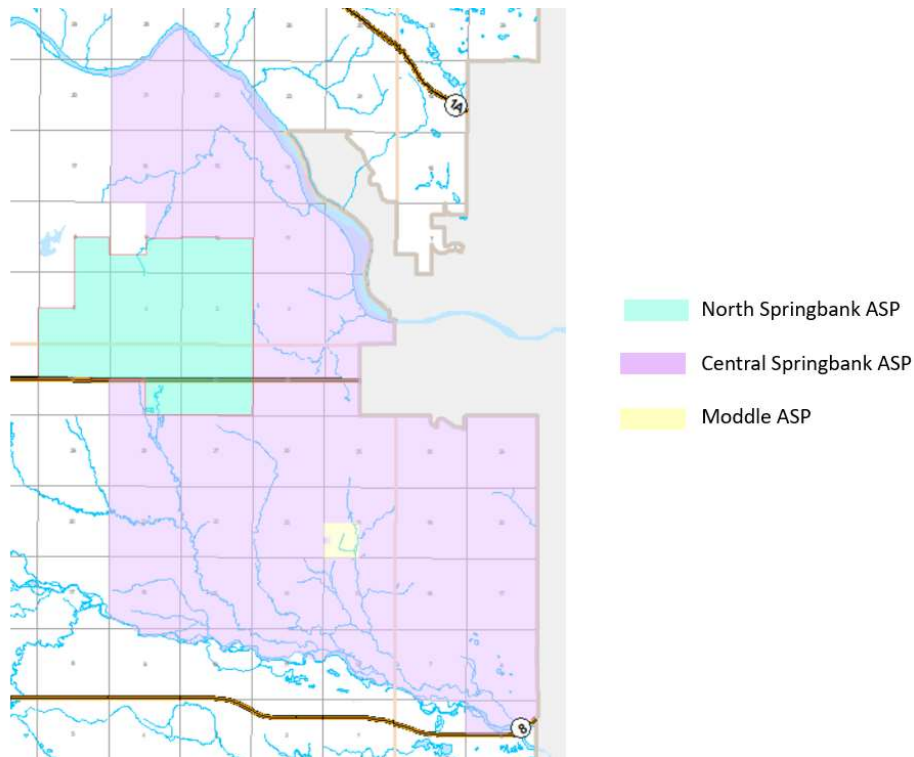


Figure 1: Existing Springbank ASPs

1.2.1 Moddle ASP

The Moddle ASP was adopted by Council in 1998 to support development within SW-24-24-02-W05M and is surrounded by the Central Springbank ASP. Moddle facilitated the redesignation and subdivision of 152 acres country residential use. The Moddle area is fully built out with the exception of a 17-acre parcel in the NW.

1.2.2 North Springbank ASP

The North Springbank ASP was adopted by Council in 1999 and covers 4,350 acres of land surrounding the Springbank Airport. The plans' objective is to maintain existing agricultural uses until development takes place, preserve future development potential of lands for commercial uses consistent with the airport, and include the potential for country residential to maintain the character of the Springbank area.

North Springbank has experienced limited development since the adoption of the ASP in 1999, however, new commercial development is anticipated in the near term within the approved Bingham Crossing Conceptual Scheme.

1.2.3 Central Springbank ASP

The Central Springbank ASP includes approximately 22,000 acres of land and was adopted in 2001 with a vision to offer a rural lifestyle that blends residential uses with its agricultural heritage. The ASP supports primarily new country residential and infill residential planned through conceptual schemes to ensure balanced growth within the area. A main goal of the plan is to minimize the impacts of development on the environment, particularly with respect to watershed issues.

1.2.4 Land Use Statistics

The table below summarizes the total and current developed area and population within each of the Springbank ASPs. The data is provided from each Springbank ASP and the County's Land Use Inventory and Growth Trends Report (2022 Data).

Table 1: Springbank ASPs Land Use Statistics (2022)

	Existing or Developed Area (acres)	Policy Supported Gross Area (acres)	Development Rate (dwellings/year)¹	Estimated Existing Population²	Projected Population³
North Springbank					
Residential	310	2,012	1.09	76	1,400
Business	225	611	-	-	-
Agricultural	1,319	-	-	24	-
Multiple Land Use ⁴	536	-	-	5	-
Central Springbank					
Residential	7,086	18,138	30	4,987	29,000 – 36,000
Business ⁵	320	320	-	-	-
Agricultural	9,126	-	-	127	-
Multiple Land Use ⁴	1,137	-	-	367	-
Middle					
Residential	97	114	2.2	130	133
Business	-	-	-	-	-
Agricultural	17	-	-	3	-
Multiple Land Use ⁴	15	-	-	-	-

1. Development rate from 2001 – 2022.
2. Estimated existing population based on 2022 number of existing dwellings and 2.7 persons per dwelling.
3. Population projections sourced from ASP projections when available.
4. Multiple land use in the Springbank area typically consists of a residential designation within a larger agricultural parcel.
5. Business use does not include gravel extraction.

2 OPTIONS AND EVALUATION

2.1 OPTIONS

Considering the direction received from Governance Committee on January 16, 2024, and a review of existing ASPs, Administration has identified three options to evaluate:

- *Option 1:* Merge all three ASPs together into a new ASP to create a holistic statutory planning document to guide development in the area. This would require amendments to merge existing land use strategies, update policies, address policy gaps, and include current technical information.
- *Option 2:* Merge Moddle ASP into Central Springbank ASP. The Moddle ASP is built out and the land use strategy is consistent with Central Springbank for country residential. This option would implement minor amendments for all ASPs to address policy gaps and include current technical information. The North Springbank ASP would remain a separate statutory document.
- *Option 3:* Maintain the existing area structure plans with no amendments. The Terms of Reference for the Springbank ASP project is rescinded and Administration closes out the project.

Administration has engaged with CMRB Administration on the three options above and it was determined that Option 1 would likely require a Regional Evaluation Framework (REF) application to CMRB, while Option 2 would likely not require an application. Intermunicipal engagement with The City of Calgary will be required for Options 1 and 2 in accordance with the Rocky View County/City of Calgary Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP).

Stormwater and environmental studies have been completed by the County for the Springbank area in the time since the ASPs were approved. County Administration currently utilizes these studies to evaluate development proposals and the use of these studies should be further supported through the statutory planning documents. These studies include:

- Springbank Creek Catchment Drainage Plan
- Springbank Master Drainage Plan
- Environmental Constraints Review

Further technical studies for utility servicing and transportation were completed to support the County's proposed North and South Springbank ASPs that were refused by CMRB in 2021. These studies are not relevant to the existing land use strategies and are therefore not contemplated in this report.

2.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each option was evaluated against the following general criteria:

- Objective to create a comprehensive plan while maintaining the existing land use strategies
- Policy compatibility between merging ASPs
- Level of effort for Administration to complete the work
- Level of regional or intermunicipal engagement and risk

A detailed assessment of each major ASP policy area is presented below and the advantages and disadvantages of each option are evaluated in a table at the end of the section.

2.3 EVALUATION

2.3.1 Residential Policies

Each of the Springbank ASPs includes policy to support residential development, however, difference in policy is present as summarized below:

- The Central Springbank ASP includes comprehensive policies to guide residential development within the Plan area. These policies include:
 - Classification of residential development into two categories: Infill and New Residential Areas.
 - A conceptual scheme is required for any new or infill residential developments to ensure the area is comprehensively planned except for single lot subdivisions greater than 2 acres in size.
 - The minimum parcel size in both the new and infill areas is nominally set at 2 acres, however, within new residential areas parcels with a minimum size of 1 acre may be considered under certain conditions.
 - The maximum number of lots permitted within a new residential area is 64 per quarter section.
- The North Springbank ASP defers residential policy guidance to the County Plan and a conceptual scheme may be required to determine the appropriateness of the proposed residential development. The Plan does not specify a density and therefore there is flexibility in the residential form that could be supported.
- Moddle ASP provides for a complete subdivision plan which has been built out.

There is residential policy difference between the Central and North Springbank ASPs that would need to be addressed when considering merging the ASPs. To maintain the existing land use strategy, the Plan areas could be designated as distinct residential policy areas with wholly separated policies, however, this may be contrary to the objective of creating a holistic planning document. Otherwise, consistent residential policy for both Plan areas could be developed for a combined ASP but this would introduce changes to the land use strategy and likely require approval of CMRB.

The Moddle ASP Is built out and its residential policies could be merged into the Central Springbank ASP with minimal amendments.

2.3.2 Agricultural Policies

The Central and North Springbank ASPs include agricultural policies that support the continuation of agricultural operations until development occurs and policy to require consideration for the impacts of non-agricultural development on existing agricultural. Some differences in policy do exist:

- The Central Springbank ASP provides more specific guidance regarding the intensification and development of new contemporary agriculture as well as agricultural best management practices.
- The North Springbank ASP includes special consideration for Springbank Airport operations and defers the review of intensification of agriculture to compliance with the land use bylaw.

Given that the intent of agricultural policies of the North and Central Springbank ASPs is generally aligned, consistent agricultural policy could be developed for a combined ASP without impacts to land use strategy.

2.3.3 Business Policies

The Central and North Springbank ASPs include policy for business use as summarized below. The Moddle ASP does not include policy for business use.

- The Central Springbank ASP supports local commercial to meet the needs of the local community within the area but directs major commercial development to the North Springbank ASP commercial areas.
- The North Springbank ASP supports commercial development within the Highway 1 and Range Road 33 vicinity. Commercial based business parks are also supported in the airport interface areas along Township Road 250. Industrial uses are not accommodated within the Plan area.

Consistent business use policies could be developed for a combined ASP without impacts to the land use strategy given that the Central Springbank ASP specifically limits business use and directs business development to the North Springbank ASP.

2.3.4 Institutional Policies

Both the Central and North Springbank ASPs include policy support for institutional use as summarized below. The Moddle ASP does not include policy for institutional use.

- The Central Springbank ASP supports institutional development such as schools, places of worship and other institutions that benefit the community.

- North Springbank only supports non-public institutional uses such as churches, organizations and clubs, and private schools.

Similar to the residential policies above, the differing institutional policies of the Central and North Springbank ASPs would need to be addressed when considering merging the ASPs. To maintain the land use strategy, distinct institutional policy areas would need to be established. To develop consistent policy for both Plan areas would introduce changes to the land use strategy.

2.3.5 Environmental Policies

Each of the Springbank ASPs includes policy towards environmental protection as described below:

- The Central Springbank ASP includes the most comprehensive policies around environmental and natural feature preservation, setting out to protect the watershed and provide residents with ample open space.
- The North Springbank ASP includes minimal environmental policies, instead deferring to environmental impact assessments prepared for development proposals.
- Moddle ASP seeks to preserve the Cullen Creek and its ravine to maintain water quality, which aligns with Central Springbank ASP policy. The drainage system terminates at a man-made pond that has also been preserved and used for amenity space for the residents.

Consistent environmental policies could be developed for a combined ASP without impacting the land use strategy. This would be an opportunity to improve environmental policy within the North Springbank ASP area.

2.3.6 Special Planning Areas

Special planning areas are included in both the Central and North Springbank ASPs as detailed below. The Moddle ASP does not include any special planning areas.

- The Central Springbank ASP includes two types of special planning areas:
 - Special Planning Areas: Bow and Elbow River valleys with focus on environmental outcomes; TransCanada Highway with focus on impacts by or to the highway; and Intermunicipal with focus on creating a harmonious transition to the City of Calgary.
 - Joint Planning Area: As identified in the 1998 M.D. of Rocky View/The City of Calgary IDP.
- The North Springbank ASP includes two types of special planning areas:
 - Springbank Airport Interface: Intended to guide the types of development that would be compatible with airport operations.
 - Highway #1 Interface: Sets a focus on impacts by or to the TransCanada highway.

These special planning areas generally remain relevant in the current context and could be integrated into consistent policy within a combined ASP. The 1998 Joint Planning Area has misalignment with the current Rocky View County/City of Calgary IDP and would require amendment.

2.3.7 Transportation and Utilities

All ASPs include policies surrounding transportation, servicing, and utilities based on the technical studies conducted at the time. Since then, a number of studies have been updated and the findings should be reflected in the ASP amendments regardless of them being merged or separate.

2.3.8 Land Use Strategy

The above policy areas of each ASP compose the land use strategy for each ASP area. The main intent of each land use strategy is as follows:

- The Central Springbank ASP supports mainly country residential development with some local commercial.
- The North Springbank ASP supports commercial development adjacent to the Springbank Airport and at the Highway 1 and Range Road 33 node. Residential development is supported within the Plan area with consideration for existing agricultural operations and the airport.
- The Moddle ASP is built-out with country residential development.

The table below provides a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three options presented, based on the evaluation criteria of planning objectives, policy compatibility, Administration resources, and intermunicipal/regional engagement.

Table 2: Option Analysis

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 1 Merge all ASPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive Springbank ASP with consistent policy would be developed. • Opportunities to address policy shortcomings and include update technical information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy consistency between merging ASPs would be difficult to achieve without change to the land use strategy, specifically for residential and institutional land uses. • Highest level of effort for Administration to deliver a new combined ASP. • Creation of a single Springbank ASP document will likely require a REF application to the CMRB.
Option 2 Merge Moddle into Central Springbank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is policy consistency between the Central Springbank and Moddle ASPs to allow effective merging. • Low level of effort for Administration to complete the work. Resources could be directed other ASP projects. • Not regionally significant, a REF application to the CMRB would not be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single Springbank ASP with consistent policy would not be developed.
Option 3 Leave ASPs Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negligible effort for Administration to close-out the project. Resources could be directed other ASP projects. • No regional engagement would be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning objectives would not be achieved as a comprehensive Springbank ASP would not be created. • Opportunities to address policy shortcomings or include updated technical information eliminated.

3 DISCUSSION

The options presented for the evaluation of the existing Area Structure Plans (ASPs) in the Springbank area reflect a careful consideration of planning objectives, policy alignment, administrative feasibility, and regional engagement. Each option carries distinct advantages and disadvantages, which warrant thorough consideration to determine the most appropriate course of action.

Option 1

This option proposes the consolidation of all three ASPs into a single, comprehensive statutory planning document. By merging the ASPs, the aim is to create a holistic approach to guide development in the area while maintaining existing land use strategies. The potential advantages of this option include the achievement of planning objectives and the creation of a unified planning framework. However, challenges may arise in achieving policy compatibility between the merging ASPs, requiring the highest level of effort from Administration to implement. In addition, based on discussions with CMRB Administration, this option would likely require a REF application to CMRB given the scale of the amalgamation.

Option 2

Under this option, the Moddle ASP would be integrated into the Central Springbank ASP, while the North Springbank ASP would receive minor updates but remain a separate statutory planning document. This approach seeks to minimize the need for significant amendments while recognizing that the Moddle ASP is built-out and its policy area could be merged with the larger Central Springbank ASP. The advantages of this option include updating technical information while maintaining existing land use strategies with low administrative effort.

Option 3

This option proposes to leave the ASPs unchanged, preserving the status quo without merging or amending any documents. While this approach entails negligible administrative effort and avoids the need for regional engagement, it would not work towards planning objectives. This option eliminates opportunities to address policy gaps and incorporate updated technical information.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

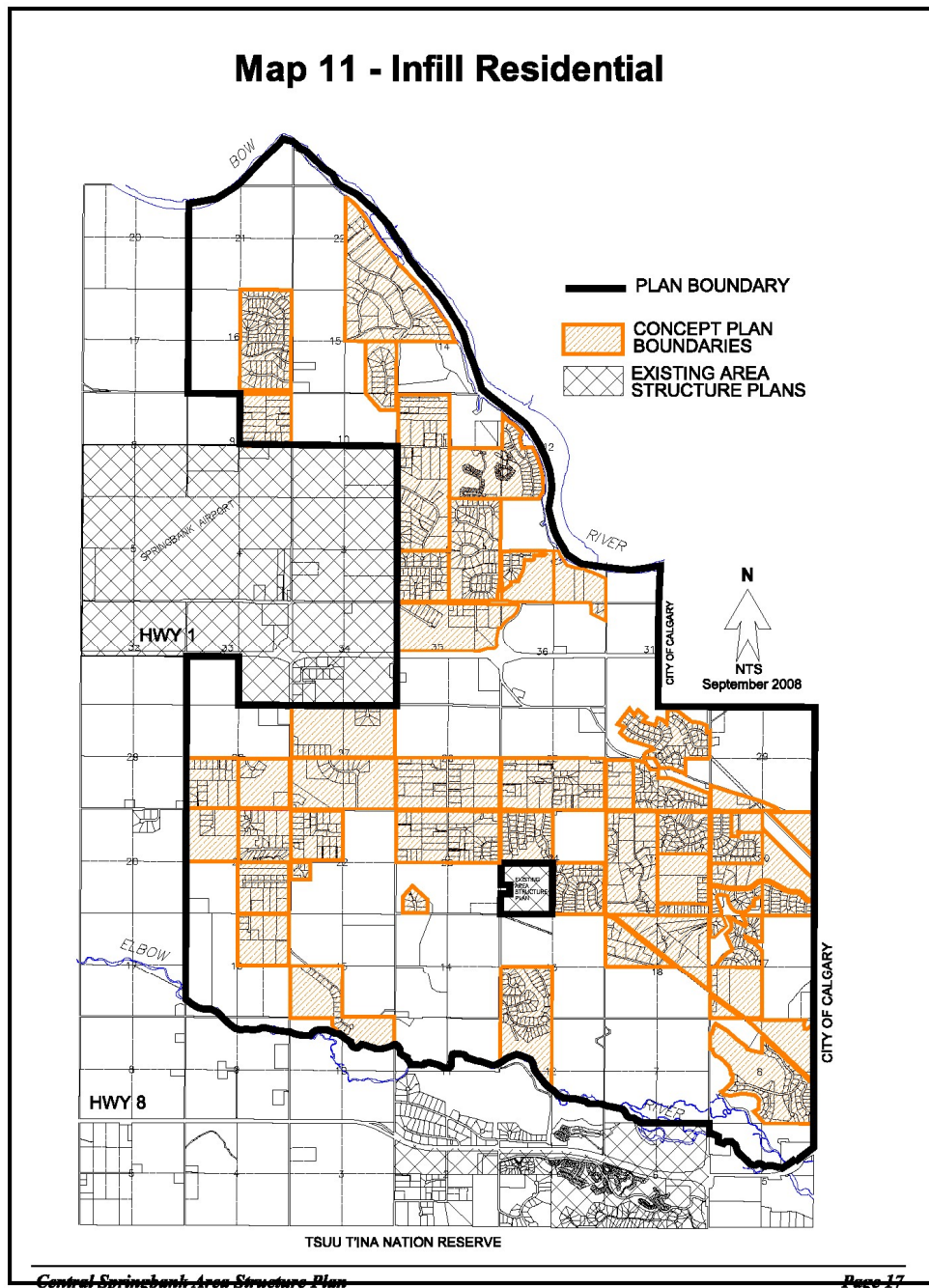
Administration recommends Option 2 to merge the Moddle ASP into Central Springbank ASP. The North Springbank ASP would remain as a separate document. Merging Moddle into Central Springbank would partially accomplish the objective stated in Section 1.1 to combine ASPs while implementing minor policy amendments and including updated technical information. This option minimizes administrative effort and would not require CMRB approval. Intermunicipal engagement with The City of Calgary would still be required in accordance with IDP policies. Administration recommends Option 2 as it provides an intermediate alternative to update the Springbank ASPs while minimizing staff commitment and regional risk. This would allow administrative resources to be further focused on other statutory planning projects.

Should Council provide direction in accordance with Administration's recommendation, Administration would then proceed to draft an updated plan, conduct intermunicipal and stakeholder engagement, and then present the updated plan at a public hearing. The updated plan would then be presented before Council as a public hearing for 1st, 2nd and 3rd reading.

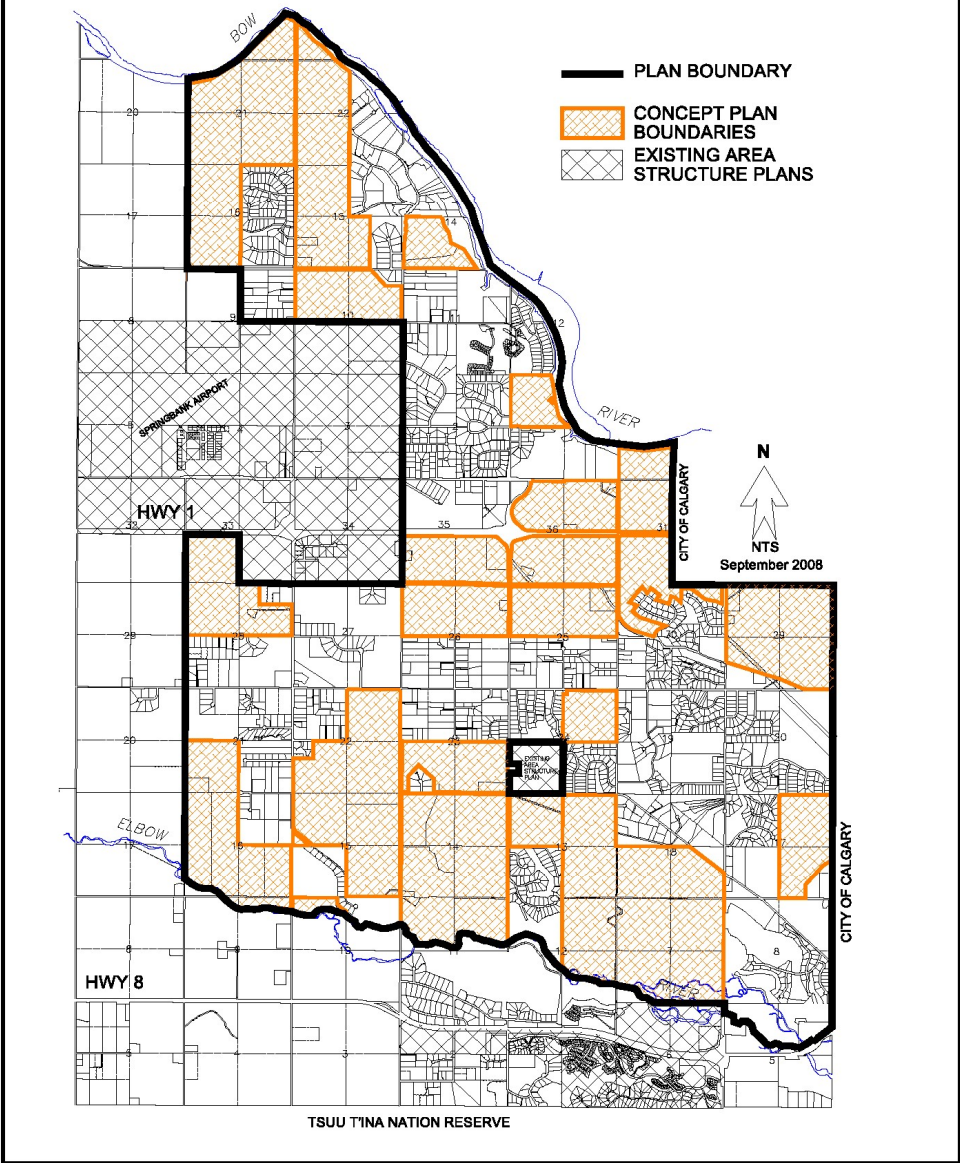
5 APPENDICES

CENTRAL SPRINGBANK ASP LAND USE STRATEGY

Central Springbank ASP covers approximately 22,000 acres, between the Bow and Elbow Rivers. The majority of the Plan area allows for residential uses under two categories – Infill Residential (2 to 4-acre lots depending on surrounding context) and New Residential (2-acre minimum lot size, with potential for 1-acre minimum in some circumstances). Commercial development is directed to the existing regional business park located on the south side of TransCanada Highway and Range Road 33 or to locations outside of the Plan Area.



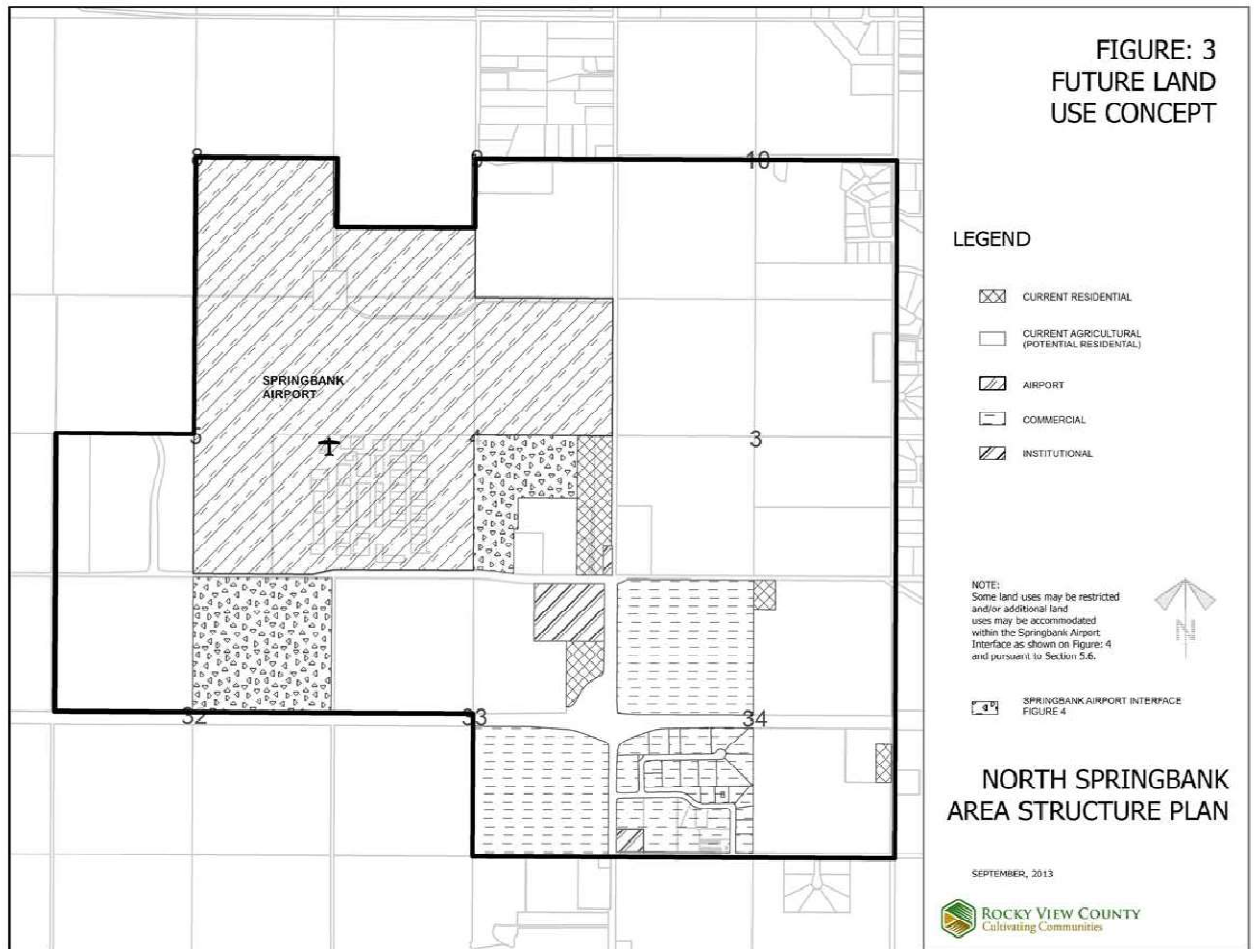
Map 12 - New Residential Areas



NORTH SPRINGBANK ASP LAND USE STRATEGY

North Springbank ASP covers 3,948 acres (1,598 ha) including the Springbank Airport, land on either side of Range Road 33, and three quarter sections south of Highway 1. The ASP's land use concept allows for a potential 2,122 acres for residential use (no minimum/maximum lot size stated), 605 acres for commercial use, and 40 acres for institutional use. Industrial use is not supported within the plan area.

Figure 3 – Future Land Use Concept



MODDLE ASP LAND USE STRATEGY

Moddle ASP encompasses the majority of SW-24-24-03-W05M. This ASP is fully built out, with 48 residential lots of approximately 2-acres in size, with the existing agricultural residence (~17.2 acres).

