



ROCKY VIEW COUNTY



MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Shaping the growth of
Rocky View County

Stage 3 Public Engagement Summary

July 2020

About the Project	1
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Engagement Approach	2
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Key Findings	4
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Growth Areas	4
Land Use Policies	11
County-Wide Policies	17
Implementation and Monitoring	19

Next Steps	20
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About the Project

The Municipal Development Plan outlines the vision for Rocky View County's future from a planning and development perspective, and helps shape how and where the County will grow.

Project Overview

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

- » Update the vision, policies, and actions of the 2013 County Plan
- » Describe the County's preferred direction with respect to growth, land use, infrastructure investments, business development, and provision of County services
- » Provide policy, bylaw and investment direction regarding land use, transportation, infrastructure, and recreation and community services
- » Establish a framework for the County to work with regional partners and stakeholders
- » Help residents and landowners understand how their land may be used now and in the future

We are currently in Stage 3 of the project, as shown in the timeline below. Community feedback from this final stage of engagement will help finalize the MDP before Council readings later this summer.

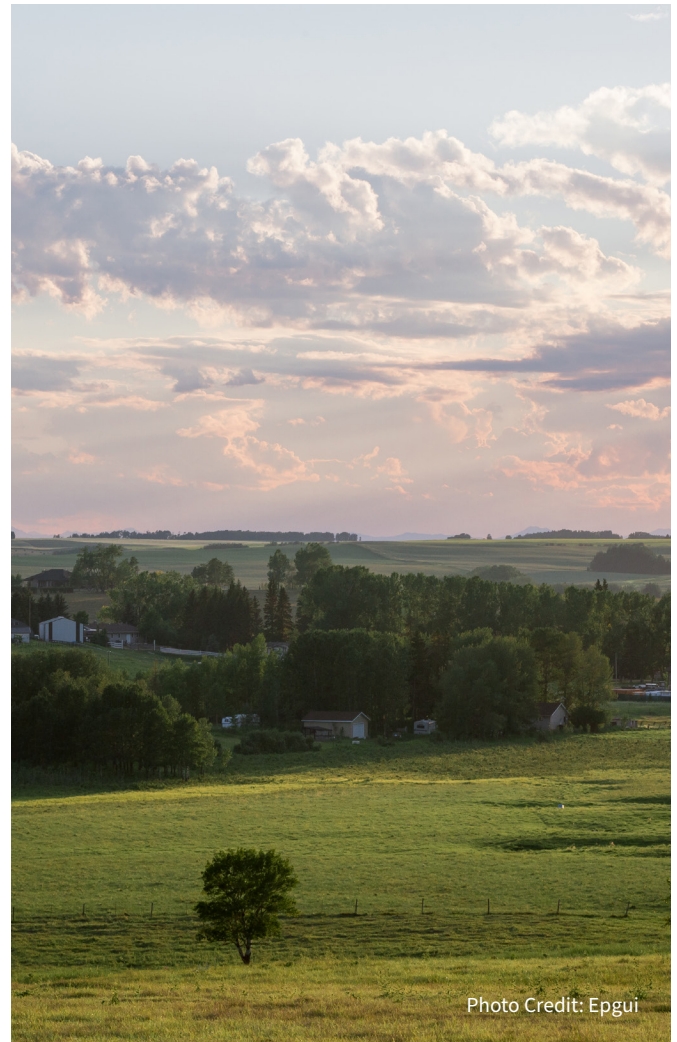
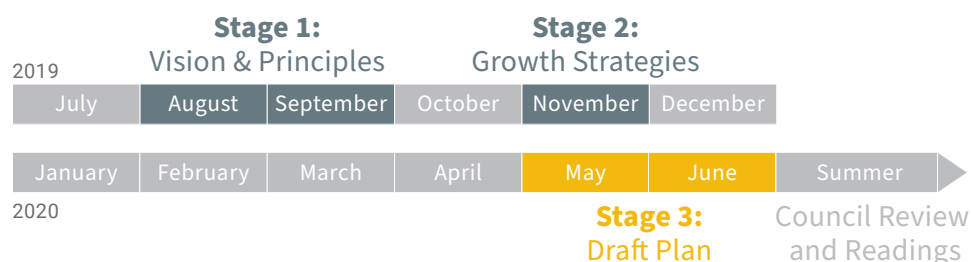


Photo Credit: Epgui



Engagement Approach

Engagement Opportunities

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person County public engagement events were paused. To ensure that the public and stakeholders had opportunities to review and provide feedback on the draft MDP, additional resources were put in place to support online engagement.

An online survey accessed through the project website was available from June 8 to June 21, 2020, for a total of 14 days. The survey was promoted through a number of engagement channels over the course of the engagement period, including: project website updates, social media posts, County newsletters, and the MDP project email list.

People could review the draft MDP as they completed the survey, which was divided into four sections:

- » **Growth Areas** – Participants were shown the draft Growth Concept Map and were asked to indicate their level of support for eight proposed growth areas, as well as their level of support for including Bragg Creek and a future Elbow Valley Hamlet as hamlet growth centres.
- » **Land Use Policies** – Participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with specific proposed policies for development in residential areas and hamlets, commercial and industrial development, and natural resource development.
- » **County-Wide Policies** – Participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with specific proposed policy changes relating to the environment, transportation, and the financial sustainability of the County.
- » **Implementation and Monitoring** – Participants were asked whether they had any comments related to the monitoring and implementation of the MDP.

Two narrated videos were also developed by the project team to help people better understand the draft MDP since in-person questions and conversation at traditional open houses were not possible for this engagement phase. The two videos, which were embedded within the survey, introduced the sections of the draft Plan and provided more detail about the Plan's growth areas.

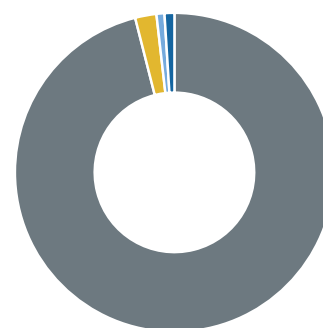
Like with the previous two engagement stages, there was the opportunity for people to send questions or comments directly to the project team through email.

A total of 370 people completed the survey, an increase of 76 people from the Stage 2 engagement survey. However, 214 fewer people completed this survey compared to the Stage 1 survey.



370
ONLINE SURVEY
RESPONDENTS

Survey Respondents



96%	Live or own land in Rocky View County
2%	Live outside of Rocky View County
1%	Represent a Developer in/near Rocky View County
1%	Represent a Business or Organization in/near Rocky View County

Online Survey Video Frames

Video 1 - Introducing the Draft MDP



Video 2 - The MDP's Growth Concept



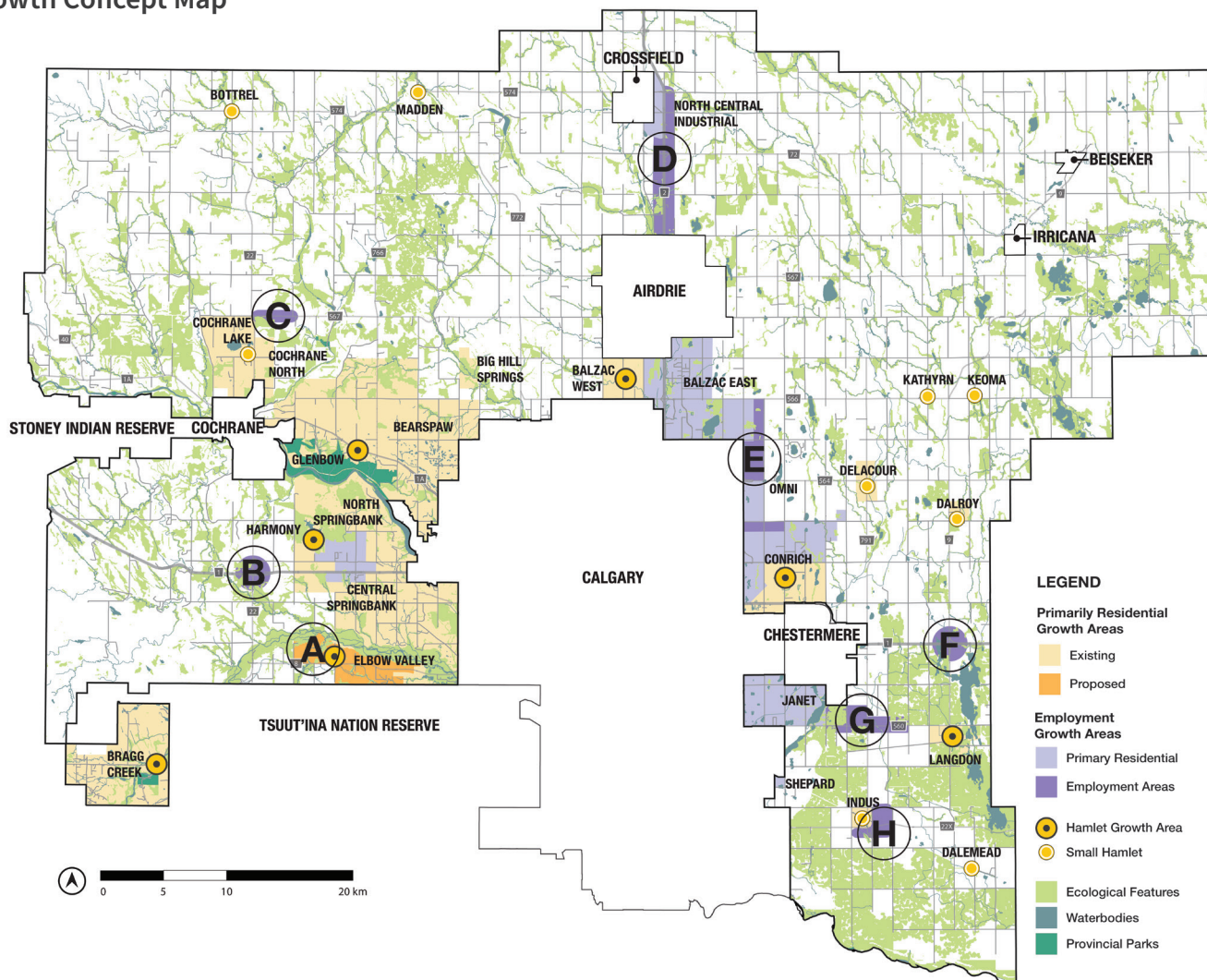
Key Findings

Growth Areas

The draft Growth Concept Map included in the survey (shown below) identifies areas within the County that are prioritized for growth:

- » Existing County growth areas (shown as light yellow and light purple) will accommodate additional growth through infill in areas that have not been fully developed.
- » Proposed growth areas (shown as dark yellow and dark purple, and labeled with large letters) have been identified to provide additional residential, commercial, and industrial development that meets the needs and preferences of a growing population.

Growth Concept Map



Proposed Growth Areas

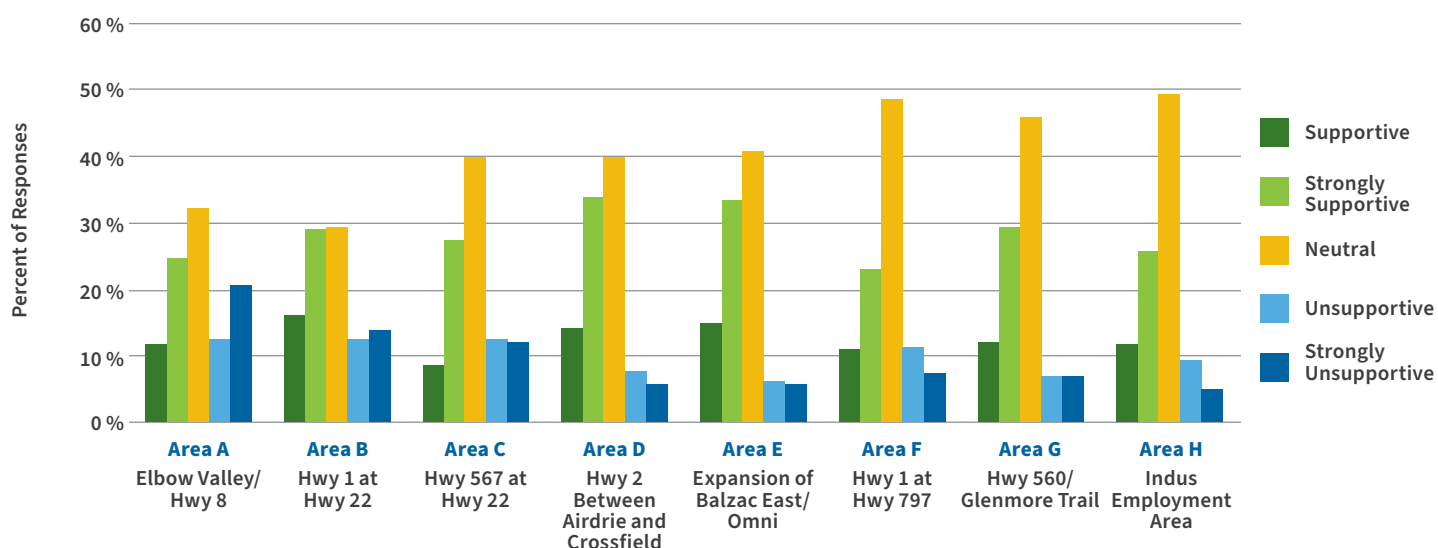
Development in Rocky View County for the next 20 years will be guided by the MDP's Growth Concept. The Growth Concept considers current plans and policies, market patterns, landscapes that may not be appropriate for additional growth (e.g. wildlife corridors), and factors that would increase development suitability (e.g. utilities). The development suitability was presented during Phase 2 engagement.

Survey participants were asked to indicate their level of support, ranging from strongly supportive to strongly unsupportive, for each of the eight proposed growth areas as shown on the Growth Concept Map (Fig. 4). The eight areas are:

- » Area A – Elbow Valley/Hwy 8
- » Area B – Hwy 1 at Hwy 22
- » Area C – Hwy 567 at Hwy 22
- » Area D – Hwy 2 between Airdrie and Crossfield
- » Area E – Expansion of Balzac East/Omni
- » Area F – Hwy 1 at Hwy 797
- » Area G – Hwy 560/Glenmore Trail
- » Area H – Indus Employment Area

For all eight of the proposed growth areas, more people indicated that they were supportive or strongly supportive of them, than there were people who were unsupportive or strongly unsupportive. Of note though, for Area A – Elbow Valley/Hwy 8, 20% of people indicated that they were strongly unsupportive of the area being designated a growth area. Area's B (Hwy 1 at Hwy 22) and C (Hwy 567 at Hwy 22) also had high numbers of people indicating that they were unsupportive or strongly unsupportive of these areas becoming growth areas. However, in all cases neutral was the most common response. The table below summarizes the responses.

Level of Support for the Proposed Growth Areas as shown on the Growth Concept Map

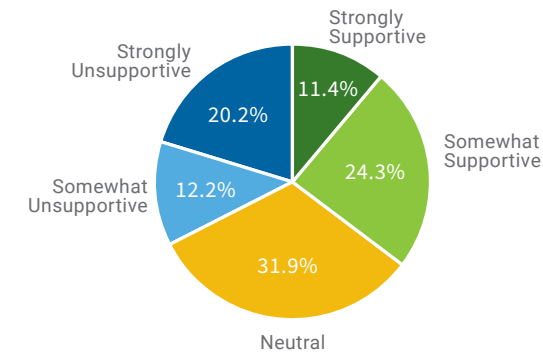


The following three pages summarizes the level of support that people indicated they have for each of proposed growth areas by County-wide responses (shown previously on page 5) compared to responses from the local population only. The local results were determined using postal code data, and include the survey participants that provided the first three digits of their postal code (e.g. T0M). However, as providing postal codes in the survey was optional, the local results is a smaller sample size. They are presented for information purposes only.

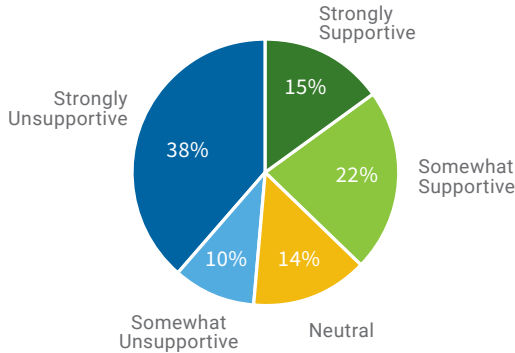
Compared to the County-wide responses, local responses general included fewer people selecting neutral responses, and a higher proportion of people who indicated that they were unsupportive or strongly unsupportive of the proposed growth area that is closest to their residence. This supports the understanding that people are more likely to be interested in planning and development decisions that occur closer to where they live.

**Level of Support for the Proposed Growth Areas
as shown on the Growth Concept Map**

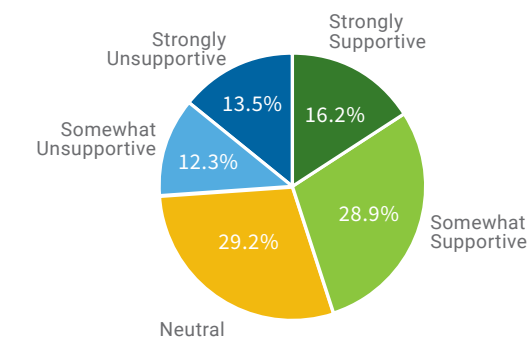
Area A - Elbow Valley/Hwy 8
County-Wide Results (263 Total)



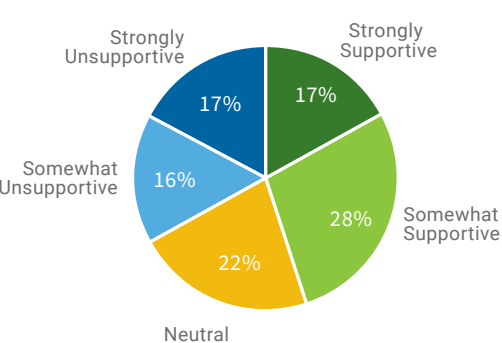
Area A - Elbow Valley/Hwy 8
Local Results (78 Total)



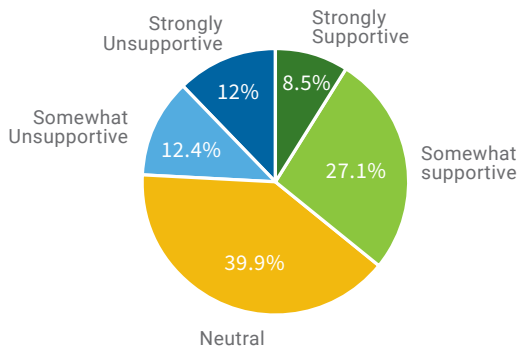
Area B - Hwy 1 at Hwy 22
County-Wide Results (260 Total)



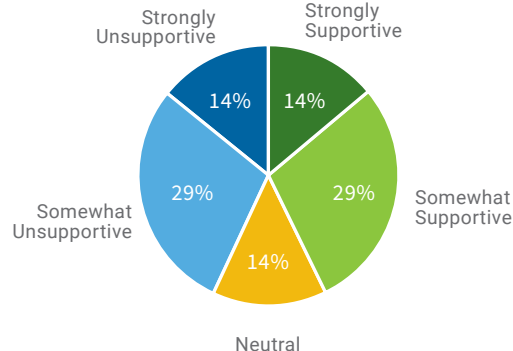
Area B - Hwy 1 at Hwy 22
Local Results (78 Total)



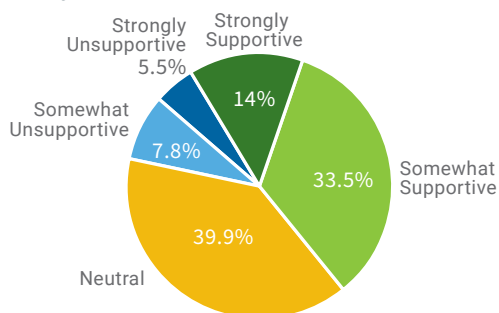
Area C - Hwy 567 at Hwy 22
County-Wide Results (258 Total)



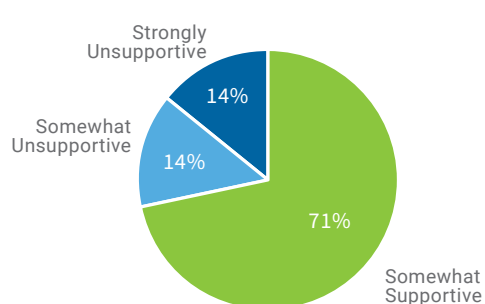
Area C - Hwy 567 at Hwy 22
Local Results (29 Total)



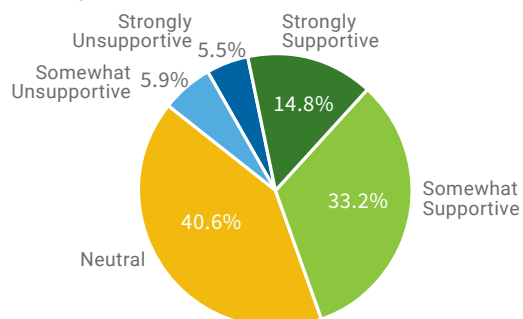
Area D - Hwy 2 Corridor
County-Wide Results (257 Total)



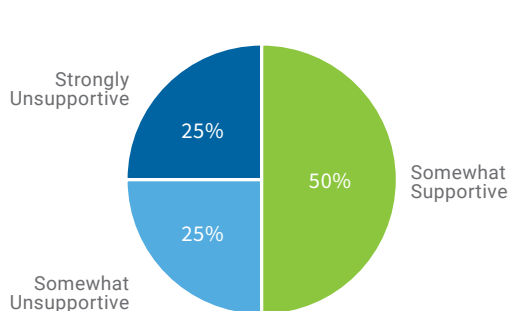
Area D - Hwy 2 Corridor
Local Results (7 Total)



Area E - Expansion of Balzac East/Omni
County-Wide Results (256 Total)

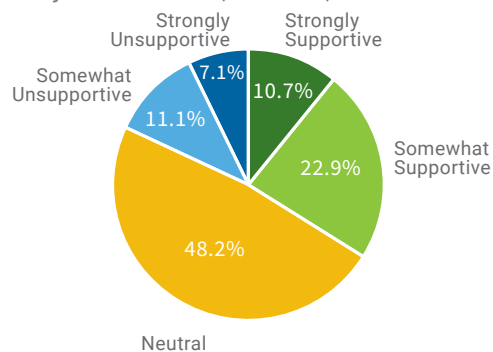


Area E - Expansion of Balzac East/Omni
Local Results (4 Total)



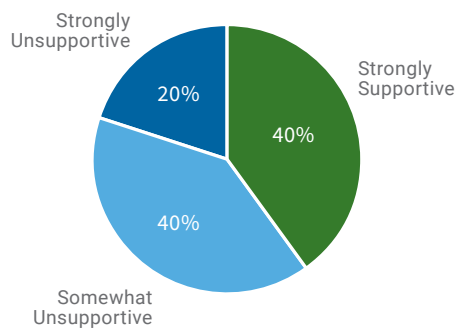
Area F - Hwy 1 at Hwy 797

County-Wide Results (253 Total)



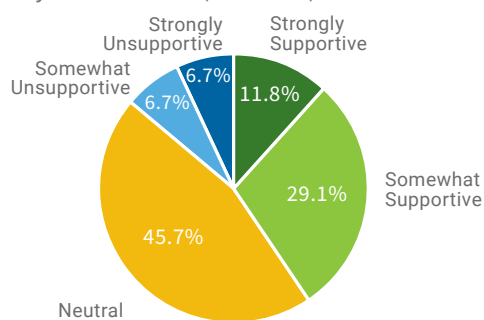
Area F - Hwy 1 at Hwy 797

Local Results (5 Total)



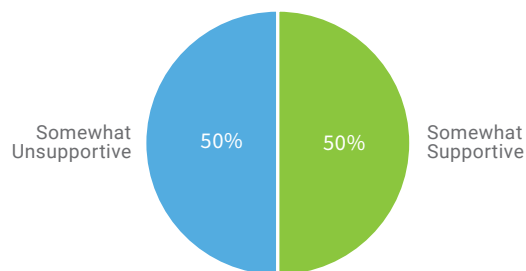
Area G - Hwy 560/Glenmore Trail

County-Wide Results (254 Total)



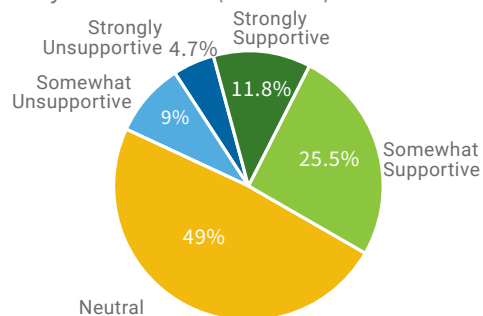
Area G - Hwy 560/Glenmore Trail

Local Results (4 Total)



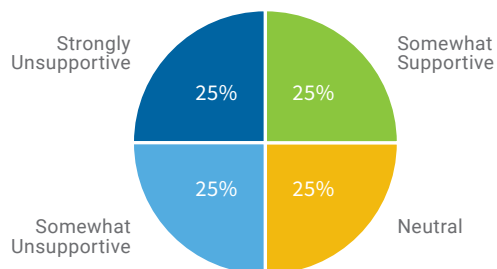
Area H - Indus Employment Area

County-Wide Results (255 Total)



Area H - Indus Employment Area

Local Results (4 Total)



Proposed Hamlet Growth Centres

Bragg Creek and a future hamlet along Hwy 8 west of Elbow Valley have been included as hamlet growth centres on the Growth Concept Map (Fig. 4), along with the existing growth centres of Balzac West, Conrich, Glenbow, Harmony, and Langdon. The draft MDP proposes that these hamlet growth centres should be prioritized by the County for servicing and infrastructure upgrades to support additional growth.

Survey participants were asked to indicate their level of support, ranging from strongly supportive to strongly unsupportive, for designating Bragg Creek and an Elbow Valley Hamlet as hamlet growth centres.

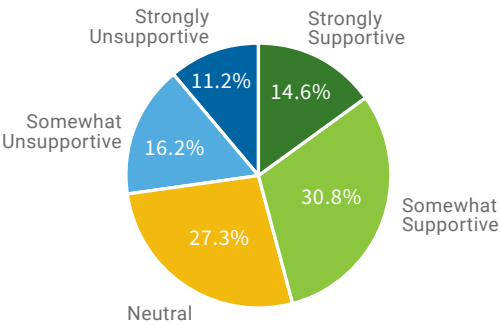
County-wide survey responses reveal that more people are supportive of Bragg Creek as a hamlet growth centre, than

unsupportive. Over a quarter of people said that they were neutral. When only looking at responses from Bragg Creek’s postal code Forward Sortation Area (T0L, not shown) a greater proportion of people are supportive of Bragg Creek as a hamlet growth centre, and only 3% of people indicated that they had a neutral opinion.

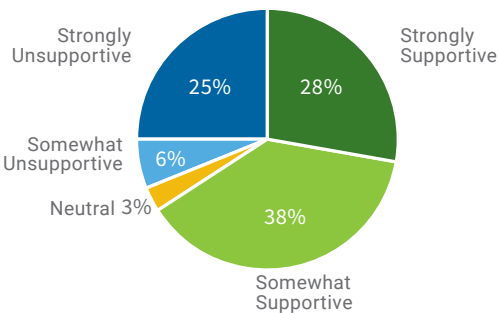
Results for a future Elbow Valley hamlet were more divided. Over a third of County-wide responses were somewhat unsupportive or very unsupportive of the hamlet as growth centre, while 40% of responses were somewhat supportive or very supportive. When only considering local responses, 48% of people were somewhat unsupportive or very unsupportive of the future hamlet as a growth centre, while 37% of responses were somewhat supportive or very supportive. Fewer local responses were neutral (16%) compared to County-wide responses (27%).

Level of Support for Identifying Bragg Creek and a future Elbow Valley Hamlet as Hamlet Growth Centres

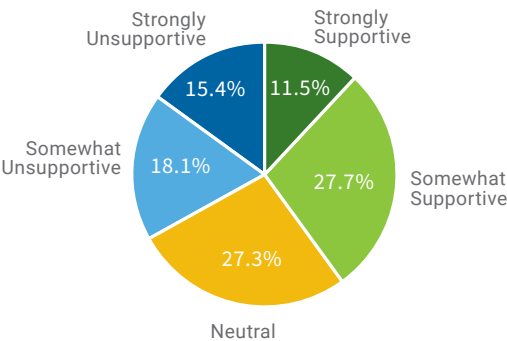
Bragg Creek
County-Wide Results (260 Total)



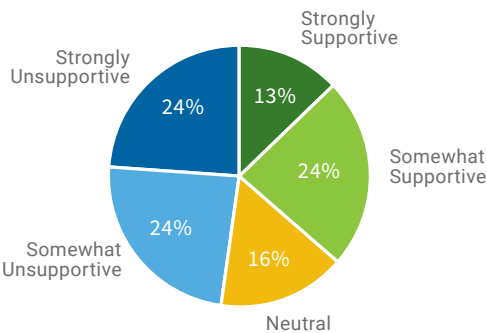
Bragg Creek
Local Results (32 Total)



Future Elbow Valley Hamlet
County-Wide Results (260 Total)



Future Elbow Valley Hamlet
Local Results (78 Total)

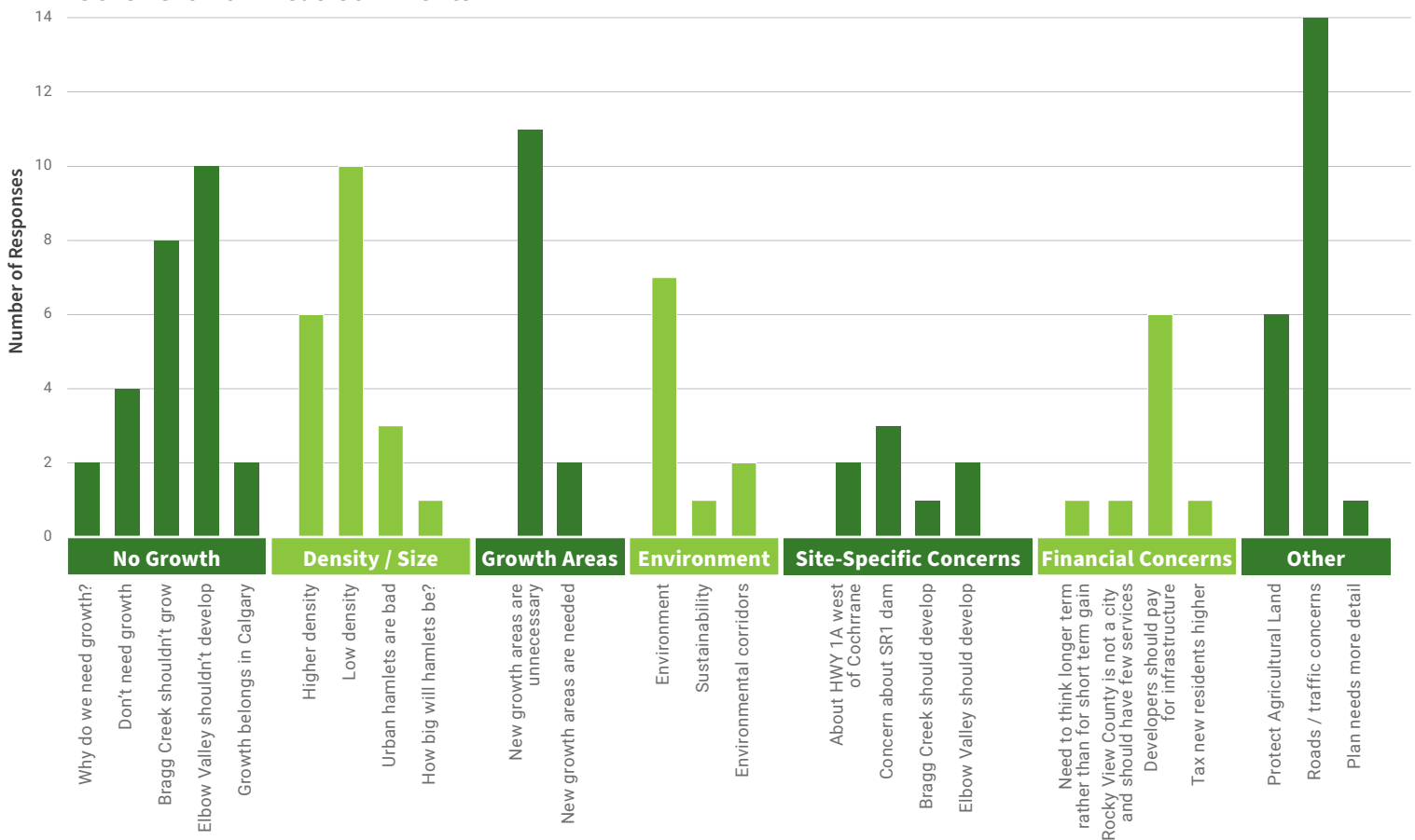


Growth Areas - General Comments

In addition to answering questions about their level of support for proposed growth areas and hamlet growth centres, survey participants could provide any comments they had related to the proposed growth areas. Of the 370 people who completed the survey, 103 provided comments. The comments have been grouped into seven categories:

- » **No Growth** – A quarter of all the comments identified that the County should not grow any further, and specifically that Bragg Creek and the Elbow Valley (proposed as hamlet growth centres) should not be developed further.
- » **Density/Size** – Some people identified that the County should be developed to higher densities, while others preferred lower densities. Three comments identified concern about increasing the size and density of hamlets.
- » **Growth Areas** – Thirteen people said that new growth areas are unnecessary as there is undeveloped land available in existing growth areas. While two people said new growth areas are needed.
- » **Environment** – Ten comments identified concern about the impact of new development on the environment, wildlife corridors, and sustainability within the County.
- » **Site-Specific** – Eight comments were site-specific, including concern over development along Hwy 1A west of Cochrane, concern about development occurring near the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir, and that there should be additional development in the Bragg Creek and Elbow Valley areas.
- » **Financial Concerns** – Some comments addressed financial matters, including the need for the County to think about long term sustainability, that new residents should be taxed higher, and that developers should pay for more new infrastructure.
- » **Other** – Six people identified that they were concerned about the potential impact on agricultural land from development, and one person said that the draft MDP needs to provide more details. Fourteen comments, the most of any topic, expressed concerns about the impacts on traffic and roads from more development.

Other Growth Areas Comments



Land Use Policies

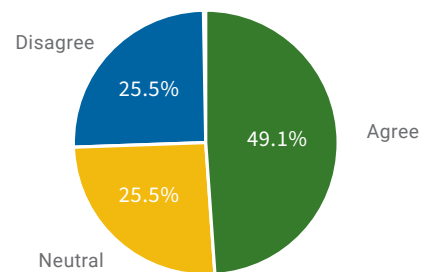
This Land Use Policies section of the draft MDP contains policies to guide development throughout the County, including agriculture, natural resources, and institutional and community land uses, and defines growth areas for new residential, commercial, and industrial development. This section of the survey asked participants to respond to some proposed land use policies.

Residential Development

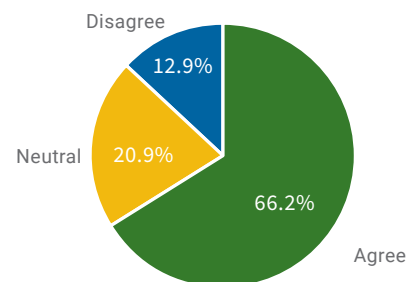
Unless responsibly planned, the subdivision of agricultural land into individual residential lots can create fragmented quarter sections. This can result in smaller or isolated agricultural parcels, and unsustainable residential development patterns. To address this fragmentation, the draft MDP includes a policy that reduces the maximum area allowed for development in an agricultural quarter section from the current 10 hectares (ha) to 4 ha. Survey participants were asked if they agree with this policy change. Nearly half of the participants (49%) agreed with the reduction in the maximum area allowed for development in an agricultural quarter section, while 25% of people disagreed, and 25% indicated that they had a neutral response.

The draft MDP also includes a policy that would require country residential development greater than 4 ha in area to be planned through a detailed Area Structure Plan or a less detailed Conceptual Scheme, at the discretion of Council. This proposed policy would result in more development needing to align with the goals of the County and the vision and guiding principles of the draft MDP. When asked, 66% of participants agreed with this policy, while 13% disagreed. Another 20% of people selected a neutral response.

Do you agree with the reduction of permitted development area from 10 to 4 ha?



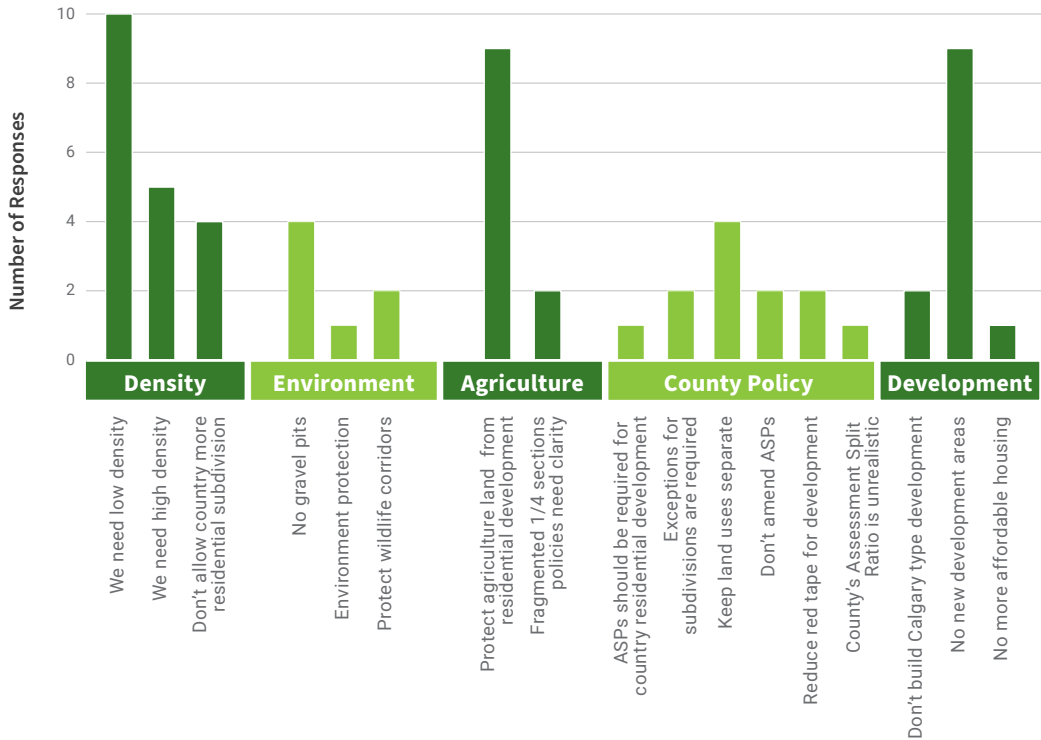
Do you agree that country residential developments greater than 4 ha should be required to be included in an Area Structure Plan or Conceptual Scheme?



In addition to answering questions about whether they agree or disagree with two proposed residential development policies, survey participants could provide additional comments related to residential development in the County. Of the 370 people who completed the survey, 76 provided comments. The comments have been grouped into five categories:

- » **Density** – Over a third of received comments were related to the density of residential development. Ten people indicated that they would like to see lower density residential developments, while five people indicated that they prefer higher density developments. Four people said that there should be no additional development permitted in the County.
- » **Environment** – Three comments indicated that residential development should not impact environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife corridors. Four people commented that additional aggregate extraction sites near residential development should not be permitted.
- » **Agriculture** – Nine comments indicated that farmland should be protected from residential development, and two people would like to see greater clarity in some of the draft residential development policies.
- » **County Policy** – Several comments were related to the County’s policies and procedures, including that Area Structure Plans (ASPs) should be required for country residential development, some policy exceptions for subdivisions are needed, land uses (e.g. residential, commercial) should be separated in new developments, existing ASPs should not be amended, and the County’s development process should be made easier for development to occur.
- » **Development** – Several comments reflected a desire for no more residential development areas, and that more affordable housing should not be built in the County.

Other Residential Development Comments



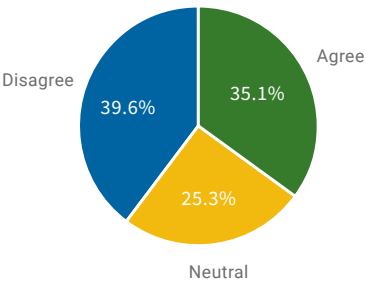
Hamlet Development

When asked if they agree that residential density requirements should not be included in the MDP to allow for market flexibility and a greater range of housing, a majority of people (40%) disagreed, while 35% of people agreed, and 25% had no opinion or were neutral on the question.

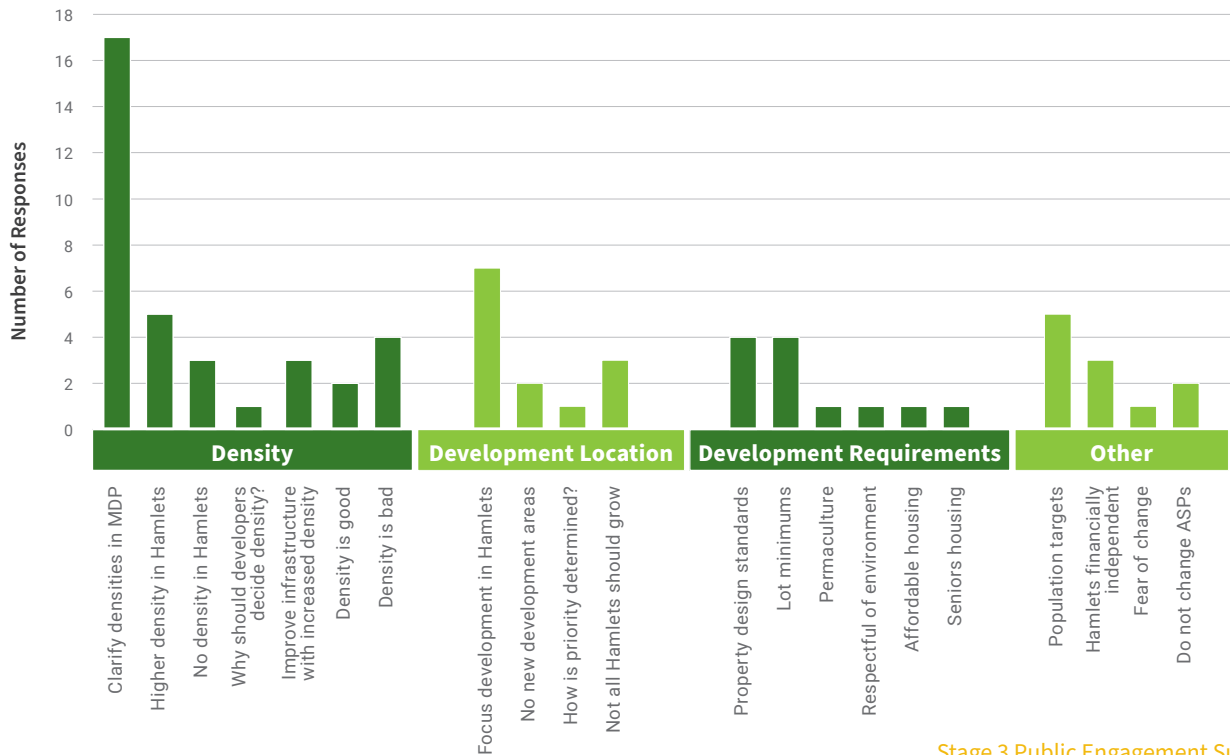
Survey participants were also asked if they had additional comments related to hamlet development in the County. The comments have been grouped into four categories:

- » **Density** – Eighteen people indicated that they would like see hamlet density targets included in the MDP. Other comments indicated that some people would like to see more or less density in hamlets, and that infrastructure should be improved as densities increase.
- » **Development Location** – Some respondents would like to see development focused in hamlets, while others preferred it be focused elsewhere.
- » **Development Requirements** – Several people wanted specific items included as development requirements, including design standards, lot minimums, permaculture, environmental protections, and affordable and seniors housing.
- » **Other Comments** – Five people requested the addition of population targets to the MDP. Other comments requested that ASPs should not be amended, and that hamlets should be financially independent from the County.

Do you agree with not including residential density requirements in the MDP?



Other Hamlet Development Comments



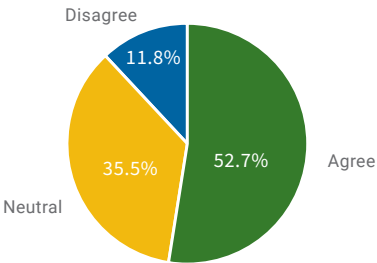
Commercial and Industrial Development

The draft MDP has consolidated the 2013 County Plan’s policies for Regional Business Areas and Highway Business Areas into combined Employment Areas. This change is intended to make development guidance for commercial and industrial development more straightforward in the County, and for the appropriate land uses permitted within these areas to be determined through detailed planning (e.g. Area Structure Plans).

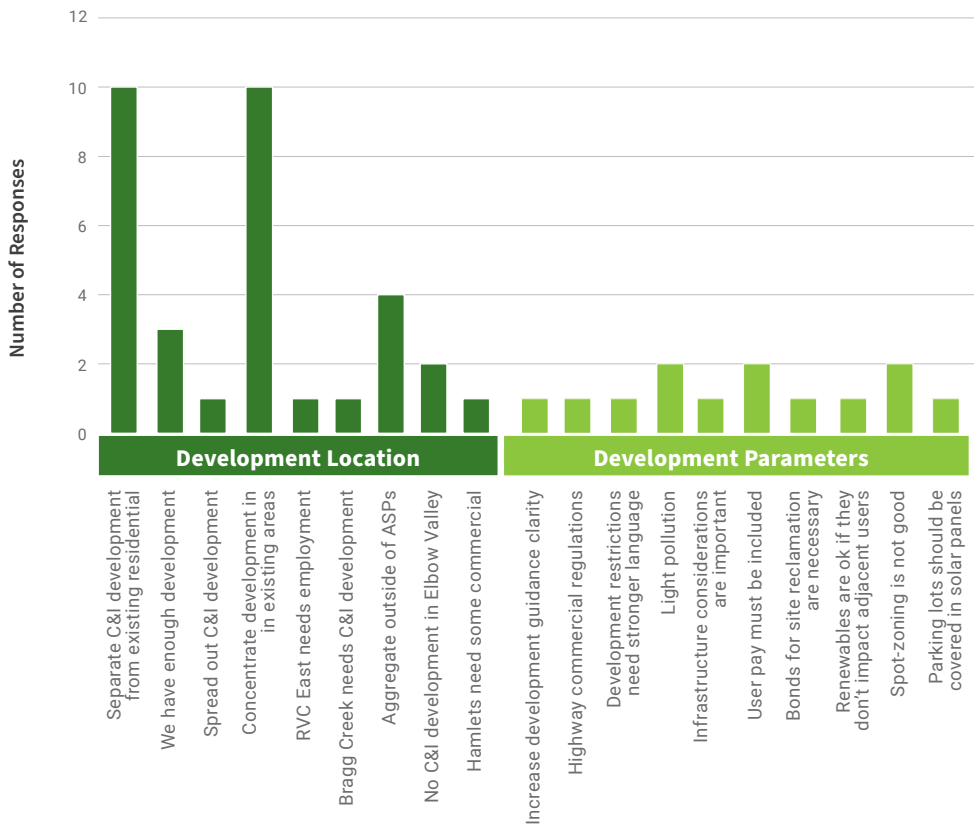
Survey participants were asked if they agree with this change. A majority of people (52%) agreed with the simplified Employment Areas designation, while 35% of people disagreed, and 12% responded as neutral.

Survey participants were also asked if they had additional comments related to commercial and industrial development in the County.

Do you agree that Regional Business Areas and Highway Business Areas should be consolidated into a new Employment Areas designation?



Other Commercial and Industrial Development Comments



The comments have been grouped into two categories:

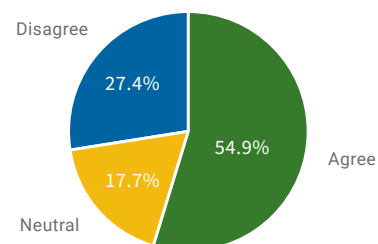
- » **Development Location** – The majority of comments were related to where commercial and industrial development should be located, including away from residential development, or concentrated in existing development areas. Other people thought that development should be spread out, and that there was no need for more development areas. Some people felt Bragg Creek and eastern areas of the County needed more development, while others thought that no commercial or industrial development is needed in Elbow Valley.
- » **Development Parameters** – Several comments requested that certain topics or concerns should be considered when planning or approving commercial and industrial development, including more specific regulations for highway adjacent development, light pollution mitigation, the need to consider supporting infrastructure (e.g. utilities), user pay models, reserve funds for site reclamation, spot-zoning, and a reduction in parking minimums.

Natural Resource Development

The draft MDP has added renewable energy production as a form of natural resource development in the County as a means to diversify the economy. When asked if they agree that the County should support the development of renewable energy production, a majority of people (55%) agreed, while 27% of people disagreed, and 18% responded that they were neutral.

Written comments for this question and other land use topics are summarized on the following page.

Do you agree that the County should support the development of renewable energy production (e.g. solar, wind)?

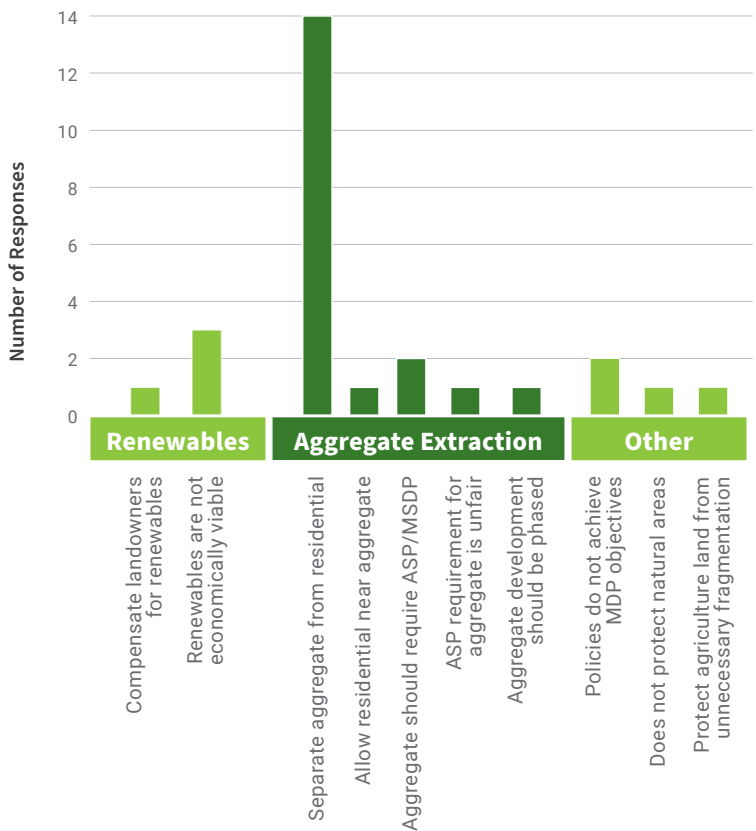


Other Land Use Policy Comments

In addition to answering specific questions about residential, hamlet, commercial and industrial, and natural resource development, survey participants could provide additional comments related to the land use policies section of the draft MDP. The comments have been grouped into three categories:

- **Renewables** – Two people commented that renewable energy projects (e.g. wind, solar) are not economically viable and should not be supported by the County. An additional commenter felt that landowners should be compensated for renewable energy projects located on private land.
- **Aggregate Extraction** – Fourteen people (the most for this question) would like to see greater separation between aggregate extraction areas and residential development. Other comments included that aggregate extraction sites should require an Area Structure Plan or Master Site Development Plan, that current ASP requirements are unfair for aggregate extraction, and development of pits should be phased.
- **Other Comments** – Two people felt that the proposed policies in this section do not support the objectives of the draft MDP. Other comments included the need to protect agriculture land from fragmentation, and that the proposed policies do not go far enough to protect natural areas.

Other Land Use Comments



County-Wide Policies

The County-Wide Policies section of the draft MDP contains policies that provide guidance to maintain County infrastructure and improve services to strengthen community identity and enhance quality of life. They are intended to give high-level direction to County services. The County-Wide Policies section of the survey asked participants to respond to three proposed policies.

The Environment

A significant change in the draft MDP compared to the 2013 County Plan is the inclusion of Ecological Features (e.g wetlands, wildlife corridors) on the Plan's Growth Concept Map (Fig. 4). Survey participants were asked if they agree that proposed development near potential Ecological Features should require development applications that may require the preparation and implementation of a biophysical impact assessment to identify potential negative impacts and mitigation measures. A majority of people (84%) agreed, while 6% of people disagreed, and 10% were neutral on the question.

Transportation

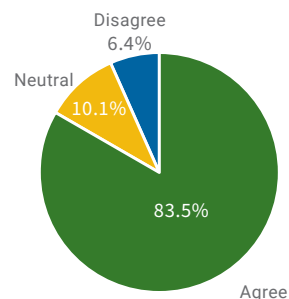
Survey participants were asked if they agree that the County should expand and improve cycling and pedestrian networks in developed and developing areas of the County to improve mobility. A majority of people (75%) agreed, while 11% of people disagreed, and 14% selected neutral as their response.

Financial Sustainability

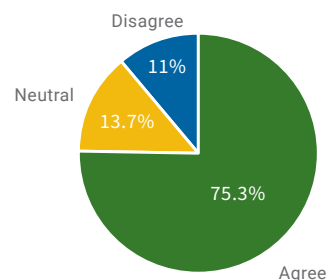
To ensure greater sustainability of the County's finances, the County has a goal of achieving a property tax Assessment Split Ratio of 65% residential and 35% business County-wide. In 2019, the County wide-ratio was 71% residential and 29% business.

The Assessment Split Ratio of 65-35% has been included as a draft MDP policy, formalizing the County's commitment to property tax assessment diversification through careful consideration of development applications, and enabling commercial and industrial development where appropriate. Survey participants were asked if they support the inclusion of the Assessment Split Ratio into the MDP. A majority of people (53%) agreed, while 20% of people disagreed, and 27% were neutral on the question.

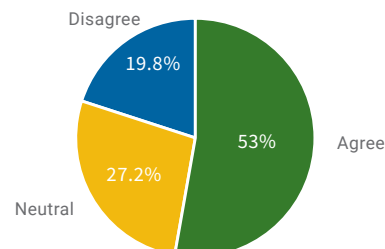
Do you agree that a biophysical impact assessment should be required for development near Ecological Features?



Do you agree that the County should expand and improve cycling and pedestrian networks in developed and developing areas?



Do you support the inclusion of the Assessment Split Ratio of 65% residential and 35% business in the MDP?

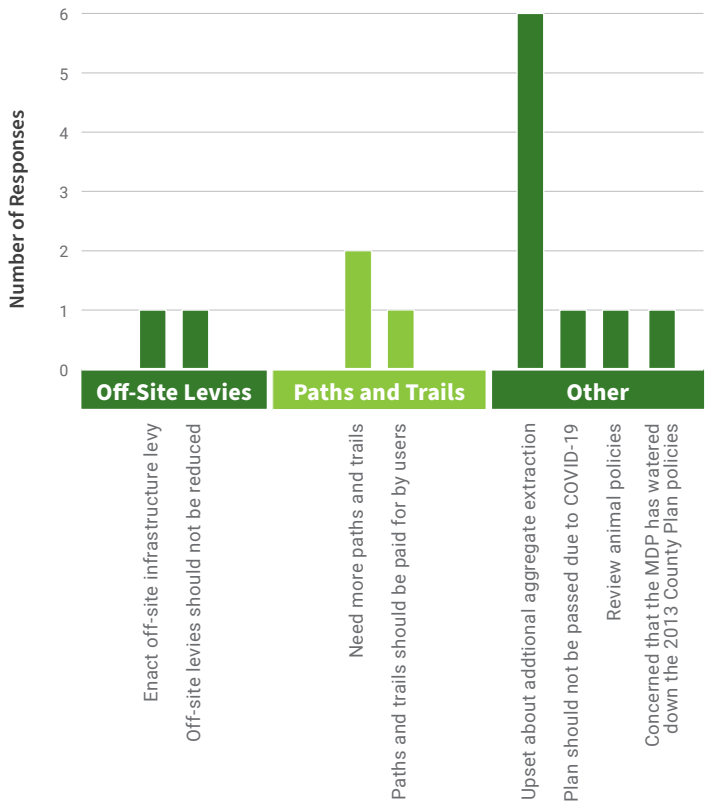


Other County-Wide Policy Comments

In addition to answering specific questions about environment, transportation and financial sustainability policies, survey participants could provide additional comments related to the County-Wide Policies section of the draft MDP. The comments have been grouped into three categories:

- » **Off-Site Levies** – Two people commented about off-site development levies, specifically that levies should not be reduced and that they should be enacted.
- » **Pathways and Trails** – Two people would like to see more pathways and trails across the County, and one commenter thought that new pathways and trails should only be paid for by users.
- » **Other Comments** – The majority of commenters (6) do not want to see additional aggregate extraction sites in the County. The other three comments included: the draft MDP should not be passed due to uncertainty from the COVID-19 pandemic, policies should be reviewed to allow for more livestock on private property, and that the draft MDP is less detailed and specific compared the 2013 County Plan.

Other County-Wide Policy Comments



Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation of the MDP is proposed to occur through several mechanisms and processes, including:

- » Ongoing administration of the development review process and periodically reviewing and amending Area Structure Plans.
- » Carrying out the next steps required to implement the vision, guiding principles, and objectives of the MDP.
- » Collaborating with neighbouring municipalities on planning and development matters.
- » Regularly reviewed based on a series of performance measures to ensure development is being effectively guided.

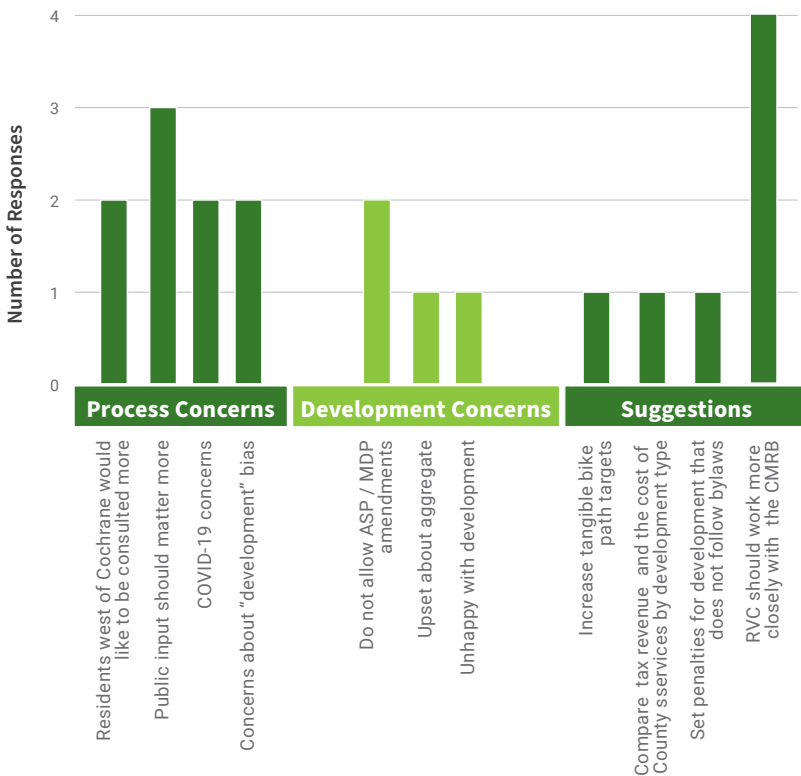
After reviewing the Implementation and Monitoring section of the draft MDP, survey respondents could provide comments. Of the 370 people who completed the survey, 48 provided comments. The comments have been grouped into four categories:

- » **Process Concerns** – Nine people had concerns about how the draft MDP was developed, including that there should have been more opportunity for public input,

that the draft MDP is biased in favour of developers, and that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in fewer people being able to participate in the engagement process.

- » **Development Concerns** – Four people communicated concerns about development, including that Area Structure Plan and MDP amendments should not be permitted, and displeasure with approval of additional aggregate extraction sites and ongoing development in the County in general.
- » **Suggestions** – Other suggestions offered included increasing bike path development goals, to monitor and compare the property taxes collected versus County services expenditures by development type, penalties for development that does not follow or adhere to the MDP and County bylaws, and that the County should coordinate more with the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB).

Other County-Wide Policy Comments



Next Steps

Direction for the Draft MDP

During this third and final phase of engagement the public and stakeholders provided feedback on the draft MDP's Growth Areas, Land Use Policies, and County-Wide policies.

Participants indicated support for the proposed growth areas and most of the proposed policies in the survey. A majority of participants, however, would like to see density targets added for hamlets. There was also more local caution for proposed growth areas and hamlet growth centres.

There was disagreement in where, what form, and at what density development should take place across the County and in specific locations. People also identified concerns with development and aggregate extraction, impacts on existing communities, and impacts on the environment and agricultural lands.

The feedback received will be used to revise and finalize the draft MDP. The final MDP will be presented to Council later in 2020.

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to all three engagement stages, your feedback is essential to the development of the new Municipal Development Plan.

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