



Municipal Development Plan

Setting Directions and Making Choices Together

Prepared for

Lacombe County

by

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August 28, 2007

(Updated February 14, 2013)

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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PART I

OVERVIEW

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Plan

The Municipal Development Plan provides direction on how growth and development in Lacombe County will be managed. It contains policies on land use, transportation, recreation, economic activity, the environment and quality of life to guide this growth.

1.2 Enabling Legislation

Lacombe County's Municipal Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 632 of the *Municipal Government Act* which indicates that a municipal development plan:

- a) *must address*
 - (i) the future land uses within the municipality,
 - (ii) the manner of and the proposals for future development plans,
 - (iii) the coordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no intermunicipal development plan,
 - (iv) the provision of required transportation systems either generally or specifically, within the municipality and in relation to adjacent municipalities, and
 - (v) the provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically.
- b) *may address*
 - (i) proposals for financing and programming of municipal infrastructure,
 - (ii) the coordination of municipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the municipality,
 - (iii) environmental matters within the municipality,
 - (iv) financial resources of the municipality,
 - (v) economic development of the municipality,
 - (vi) and other matters relating to physical, social or economic development of the municipality,
- c) *may contain statements regarding the municipality's development constraints, including the results of any development studies and impact analysis, and goals, objectives, targets, planning policies and corporation strategies,*
- d) *must contain policies compatible with the provincial subdivision and development regulations to provide guidance on the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities, and*
- e) *must contain policies respecting the provision of municipal, school or municipal and school reserves, including but not limited to the need for amount of an allocation of those reserves and the identification of school requirements in consultation with affected school authorities.*

1.3 Planning Process

The planning process for reviewing and updating the Municipal Development Plan included technical analysis and input from a variety of stakeholders, including County Council, Administration, residents, business groups and neighbouring municipalities. The following consultation activities were undertaken during this time period.

Community Information Program

- A Project Backgrounder was prepared in April 2006 as an information piece for general distribution.
- Media releases were distributed to print and broadcast media in the region at key project intervals.
- Two inserts were featured in the County News. In May 2006, a two-page insert outlined the project purpose, scope, schedule and opportunities for input. This insert was also sent to property owners in a County tax assessment mailout. In October 2006, a seven-page insert profiled the County's current policy direction and three possible growth management options.
- Articles in the County News provided regular project updates.
- All of the above communication pieces were posted on the County's web site.

Consultation with Neighbouring Municipalities, School Boards and Agencies

- Neighbouring municipalities, school boards and provincial agencies were notified of the Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw Review by letter in April 2006.
- Lacombe County held two meetings with neighbouring municipalities involving the City of Red Deer; the Towns of Bentley, Blackfalds, Eckville, Lacombe and Sylvan Lake; the Villages of Alix and Clive; the Summer Villages of Birchcliff, Gull Lake, Half Moon Bay, Jarvis Bay, Norglenwold and Sunbreaker Cove; and the Counties of Clearwater, Ponoka, Red Deer and Stettler. At the first meeting held on April 26, 2006, municipal officials were informed of the project and identified issues and concerns. The second meeting on September 13, 2006 focused on a discussion of alternative growth management strategies.

Vision Building Workshops

- Vision building workshops were held in June 2006 in Blackfalds, Bentley, Gilby and Tees. About 150 people participated. The purpose of the workshops was to engage residents and stakeholders in discussions of their vision for the future of Lacombe County and to identify areas of land use concern.

Alternative Growth Management Strategy Open Houses and Survey

- Three public open houses were held in October 2006 to present three alternative growth management options for Lacombe County. Open houses were held in Tees, Lacombe and Bentley. Approximately 240 people attended. A detailed questionnaire was distributed at each open house, at the County Office and was available on the County web site, to solicit feedback on the growth management options.

Open Houses on the Draft Municipal Development Plan/Land Use Bylaw

- Three public open houses were held in May 2007 to present the Draft Municipal Development Plan and Draft Land Use Bylaw to the public, and invite feedback. Open Houses were held in Tees, Lacombe and Gilby. Approximately 200 people attended. Comments were obtained via a questionnaire which was distributed at each open house and at the County Office.

Public Hearing

- A public hearing was held on August 14, 2007 to provide residents, property owners and other stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on the proposed Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw prior to Council approval.

1.4 Plan Organization

The Municipal Development Plan has been organized into three major parts

PART I – OVERVIEW includes Sections 1 through 3. It profiles the purpose, planning process and legal basis for the Plan. It also summarizes the planning context for the Lacombe County Municipal Development Plan review, along with the vision and guiding principles that have shaped the policy development.

PART II – GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES includes Sections 4 through 10. These sections contain the goals, objectives and policies adopted by Council to guide decision-making related to the future physical, social and economic development of Lacombe County.

PART III – IMPLEMENTATION is covered in Section 11. It describes the methods available to Council to implement the policies contained in the Municipal Development Plan.

As a note to the reader, the headings in the left hand margin are intended to assist the reader by highlighting the corresponding policy statements, and are not to be interpreted as policy statements themselves.

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

- **'shall'** – means mandatory compliance.
- **'should'** – means compliance in principle but is subject to the discretion of the Approving Authority where compliance is impracticable or undesirable because of valid planning principles or circumstances unique to a specific application.
- **'may'** – means discretionary compliance or a choice in applying policy.

To get a complete understanding of the Municipal Development Plan, it is recommended that the reader review the entire document and not read specific sections or policies in isolation of the balance of the document.

2.0 VISION AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2.1 Vision Statement

The County's Strategic Plan 2006-2008 presents the following vision for Lacombe County:

An attractive, balanced, prosperous and progressive community – building on our solid foundation



2.2 Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were identified during the public consultation process. These principles have guided the development of the growth management strategy and Municipal Development Plan policies for Lacombe County.

1) Support Agricultural Viability

Preserve large areas of higher capability land and avoid land use conflicts between non-agricultural uses and agricultural operations.

2) Avoid Land Use Conflicts

Cluster compatible land uses to encourage compact, efficient development and separate incompatible uses with buffers and separation distances.

3) Enhance Economic Development Opportunities

Provide land for industrial and commercial expansion and diversification of the County's economy.

4) Increase Range of Housing Choice

Accommodate a wider range of housing choice, in addition to conventional large lot country residential development.

5) Optimize Roadway and Utility Infrastructure

Maximize use of provincial highways and paved county roads and existing or proposed regional water and wastewater lines.

6) Protect Rural Landscape and Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Protect the rural landscape and preserve environmentally sensitive and scenic natural areas (e.g. river valleys, lakeshores, ecologically unique areas).

7) Positive Fiscal Impact on the County's Tax Base

Increase the proportion of industrial and commercial assessment that makes up the County's tax base, and at the same time, promote orderly and efficient land use patterns so as to reduce operating costs associated with providing municipal infrastructure and services.

8) Enhance Cooperation with Neighbouring Urban Municipalities

Achieve land use patterns that provide for future urban expansion and enhance partnership opportunities with neighbouring municipalities in the area of economic development and the delivery of regional services.

9) Maintain and Enhance Community Appeal and the Quality of Life

Expand the quality and range of recreation opportunities and other community facilities and services.

2.3 Growth Management Strategy

Strategically located within Alberta's rapidly growing Edmonton-Calgary corridor, Lacombe County will continue to face strong growth pressures. This growth will bring both opportunities and challenges, which only reinforces the need for a long-range growth management strategy that optimizes our use of land and minimizes land use conflicts. Growth management is defined as *the process of accommodating growth and change while directing the location and pattern of development*. Not only should it address sound land use planning practices, it must also consider the values important to the County and its ratepayers.

Although agriculture has traditionally been and will continue to be an important contributor to the economy, other opportunities exist to expand and diversify the County's economic base. With the two major petrochemical complexes at Joffre and Prentiss, further value-added businesses are expected to establish in the area. Continued high levels of oil and gas activity and a growing interest in coalbed methane are also likely to attract new service businesses to support these operations. At a broader level, continued growth in the region will attract more commercial and industrial businesses, particularly along the Queen Elizabeth II Highway.

Demand for housing will inevitably increase putting pressure on the County to expand opportunities for residential development. Housing in the County is largely restricted to single-detached homes on relatively large lots. This is expected to remain the dominant housing type. However, higher density development will be encouraged to create more efficient land use patterns that will be easier to service. Opportunities for greater housing diversity, including multi-unit development, will provide housing solutions for a broader mix of the population, including seniors, first-time buyers and those seeking recreational properties.

As the County grows, preserving the environmental qualities of the County and enhancing opportunities for outdoor recreation and nature appreciation will also be important to maintaining a high quality of life for our residents.

Dispersed, nodal and concentrated growth management strategies were evaluated during the Municipal Development Plan process. Based on the public feedback received, a balanced growth management strategy has been proposed that features elements of all three options. The proposed strategy reflects the County's regional context (see *Map 1 – Regional Context*), historical land use patterns, natural and man-made constraints, roadways and infrastructure, community input and best practices. The balanced growth management strategy is illustrated on *Map 2 – Future Land Use Concept* and described below.

Agriculture

The balanced growth management strategy recognizes that agriculture continues to be an important economic activity and lifestyle in Lacombe County. Agriculture is an industry that is becoming much broader and complex than the traditional family farm we have seen in the past. New farm technologies and farming practices, coupled with the need to achieve economies of scale, have resulted in larger-sized farms and confined feeding operations. At the other end of the spectrum, there has been an increase in the number of smaller specialty farms and intensive operations, such as fruit farms, market gardens and greenhouses, which can be carried out on smaller land parcels.

Land use planning policies have previously been preoccupied with preserving better agricultural land, generally defined as land with a farmland assessment rating of 28% or greater. It is recognized that more needs to be done to support the changing needs of agriculture. New policy directions focus on protecting agricultural operations from conflicting land uses and more flexible subdivision policies to allow for the growth of new farm enterprises on smaller land holdings.

Recognizing the importance of augmenting farm income, a range of home based and minor businesses will continue to be allowed on a discretionary basis.

Rural Policy Area

The balanced growth strategy recognizes that there continues to be a need and desire for traditional larger lot country residential development in select areas of the County with scenic qualities, making them attractive for country residential development. These have been identified as Rural Policy Areas, which could accommodate some country residential development in addition to traditional agricultural uses. Specific areas suited for country residential development in the Rural Policy Areas would need to be determined through area structure plans prepared and approved by County Council.

Higher Density Residential/Industrial/Commercial

The Highways 2/2A corridor of the County is experiencing the greatest development pressures with the continued strong growth of the Towns of Lacombe and Blackfalds and the growing demand to develop lands in the County.

Intermunicipal Development Plans have been prepared and are in the process of being updated with the Towns of Lacombe and Blackfalds to balance future expansion needs and manage development pressures

from County landowners who wish to subdivide and develop their properties for residential, commercial or industrial uses.

In order to better manage development pressures along the Highway 2A corridor between the Towns of Lacombe and Blackfalds, the Lacombe/Blackfalds Urban Corridor Joint Area Structure Plan is currently being prepared. This area structure plan will outline the long-term growth of this corridor that will ultimately be developed at urban densities for residential, commercial and industrial development.

Urban Fringe

In the interests of building a strong region, the County wishes to work co-operatively with all its municipal neighbours. This will involve the preparation of new intermunicipal development plans with Eckville, Bentley, Clive and Alix to ensure mutually beneficial commercial, industrial and residential development patterns occurs in the fringe areas surrounding these communities.

Hamlets

The Hamlets of Mirror and Morningside have been identified as growth hamlets. Mirror, as a former village, has municipal water and wastewater systems, while the North Red Deer River Regional Water Line passes by Morningside. Infill development would continue to be allowed in the Hamlets of Haynes, Joffre and Tees. The County may consider expansion at Tees if the Highway 12/21 Regional Water Line is constructed to the Village of Clive.

Estate Residential

Traditional large lot country residential developments are land consumptive and costly to service. The County wishes to adopt a more sustainable approach to land development where residential land uses are clustered on smaller lots served by communal or municipal water and wastewater systems. Opportunities for future estate residential development have been identified in the Milton-Morningside area and are shown on *Map 2 – Future Land Use Concept*.

Lakeshore Policy Areas

A buoyant Alberta economy and growing population have increased pressure for continued lakeshore development around Gull and Buffalo Lakes. These lakes, together with Chain Lakes, have been identified as Lakeshore Policy Areas, where residential and some commercial development will be considered. Specific areas suited for development in the Lakeshore Policy Areas will need to be determined as part of the review and updating of existing lake management plans. A new area structure plan would be required to guide development at Chain Lakes.

Higher Density/Lakeshore Residential

Sylvan Lake has some of the highest lakeshore property values in Canada. On lakefront properties that have not yet been subdivided, opportunities exist for higher density housing forms, such as row houses or apartments, in return for having developers provide publicly accessible lakeshore park space in excess of what would normally be required through municipal and environmental reserve dedication. Implementation of this initiative would be through policies in the Municipal Development Plan and regulations in the Land Use Bylaw. Development would be guided by new area structure plans.

Industrial and Commercial

Areas have been identified for future industrial expansion, including around Joffre and Prentiss, where opportunities exist to expand existing or attract new petrochemical facilities. Potential locations for business/industrial development have been shown on the west side of the Queen Elizabeth II Highway, easily accessible at the Lacombe (Highway 12) and Blackfalds (Aspelund Road/Highway 597) interchanges. As direct access from the Queen Elizabeth II Highway is not allowed, an internal roadway system will need to be developed to provide access to this development area.

Industrial expansion opportunities have also been identified south of Eckville near the intersection of Highways 11 and 766, the intersection of Highway 597 and Prentiss Road, along Highway 12 immediately east of Lacombe, and on the west side of Highway 21 south of Mirror.

The growth management strategy provides for highway commercial opportunities in select locations along the Queen Elizabeth II Highway. Other opportunities for commercial development have been identified on *Map 2 – Future Land Use Concept*.

Improved design standards are included in the Land Use Bylaw to promote high quality, visually attractive industrial and commercial development.

Environmental Stewardship

Environmental stewardship was clearly identified as a priority during the community consultation process and is addressed in the balanced growth management strategy. Of particular importance are the County's lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands.

PART II

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES
AND POLICIES**

3.0 AGRICULTURE

Goal: To support a healthy and viable agricultural industry as an essential part of the County's economy



Lacombe County's land base is predominantly in agricultural use. Agriculture is an industry that is becoming much broader and complex than the traditional family farm of the past. New technologies, practices and the need for economies of scale, have resulted in larger-sized farms and confined feeding operations. Conversely, there has been an increase in the number of smaller specialty farms and intensive operations, such as fruit farms, market gardens and greenhouses. Another industry trend is the reliance on off-farm income and the move to part-time farming operations. This is an important consideration for rural municipalities making policy decisions related to home based and minor trades businesses in agricultural areas, which can help augment farm incomes.

County residents identified the 'right to farm' as important. Alberta's *Right to Farm* legislation and the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act (AOPA)* help protect Alberta farms and ranches from nuisance claims. Whereas in the past many planning tools focused on the actual protection of farmland, more recent thinking looks at strategies to promote the productivity of the agricultural sector by providing maximum flexibility for farm operations and ensuring agricultural uses are able to integrate into an increasingly diverse economy.

Objectives

The agricultural objectives are to:

- limit premature subdivision and fragmentation of agricultural land;
- minimize conflicts between non-agricultural uses and existing agricultural operations; and
- accommodate the diversification and intensification of agricultural operations.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
3.1	Agricultural Land Use	All lands in the County shall be deemed to be agricultural lands unless otherwise designated by the Municipal Development Plan, an approved statutory or non-statutory plan, the Land Use Bylaw, or provincial legislation.
3.2	Agricultural Viability	The County shall continue to support a viable agricultural economy by allowing farm operators to engage in different types and sizes of agricultural operations, and by endeavouring to maintain large contiguous areas of productive agricultural land to minimize potential land use conflicts.
3.3	No Automatic Subdivision	There is no automatic right to subdivide.
3.4	First Parcel Out	<p>The subdivision of a first parcel out of an unsubdivided quarter section may be considered if the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the parcel contains a habitable permanent residence;b) a habitable residence has been on the site for at least five (5) years preceding the date of the subdivision application;c) the parcel is not greater than 1.62 hectares (4 acres) in size, unless the County is satisfied that a larger parcel is necessary to accommodate residential improvements, such as a shelterbelt, outbuildings or a driveway, or is considered reasonable based on the site's geographical features;d) legal and physical access is available to the parcel and the remainder of the quarter section, satisfactory to the County; ande) the loss of any agricultural land is minimized.
3.5	First Parcel Out Choice of Building Site	<p>If the landowner qualifies for a first parcel out subdivision under Policy 3.4, the landowner may as an alternative subdivide out a different parcel on the same quarter section which may or may not contain an existing residence. Approval of this different parcel would be subject to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the parcel is not greater than 1.62 hectares (4 acres) in size, unless the County is satisfied that a larger parcel is necessary to accommodate residential improvements, such as a shelterbelt, outbuildings or a driveway, or is considered reasonable based on the site's geographical

features;

- b) where the parcel does not contain a residence, a suitable building site exists;
- c) legal and physical access is available to the parcel and the remainder of the quarter section, satisfactory to the County;
- d) the County is satisfied that the choice of building site for an undeveloped parcel would not unduly interfere with existing farming operations; and
- e) the loss of any agricultural land is minimized.

3.6 First Parcel Out Waiving Requirement for Habitable Permanent Residence

Notwithstanding Policy 3.5, the requirement for a habitable permanent residence may be waived if the parcel contains a former building site, which had a habitable permanent residence up to five (5) years preceding the date of the subdivision application, and has not been reclaimed for agricultural purposes. In such cases, legal and physical access must be available to the parcel and the remainder of the quarter section, satisfactory to the County, and the parcel shall not be larger than 1.62 hectares (4 acres) in size.

3.7 Subdivision of a Fragmented Parcel

The subdivision of a parcel that is separated from the balance of the existing titled area by a natural or man-made feature, such as a highway or county road, a railway, or a permanent and naturally occurring body of water, lake, river, stream or watercourse, may be considered if the following criteria are met:

- a) the County is satisfied that the size and characteristics of the fragmented land and/or the difficulty of access from the remainder of the land means the land cannot be reasonably used with the balance of the title;
- b) the applicant is able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County that the intended use would not unduly interfere with the continued agricultural use of the remaining lands in the title or any farming operation on the surrounding lands;
- c) the applicant can show to the satisfaction of the County that the parcel contains a suitable building site that can accommodate on-site sewage disposal and water services; and
- d) legal and physical access is available to the parcel and the remainder of the quarter section, satisfactory to the County.

For the purposes of this policy, the County shall also not approve an application for a parcel that is fragmented by an undeveloped right of way.

Also, for the purposes of this policy, a permanent and naturally occurring body of water, lake, river, stream or watercourse must be proven to the satisfaction of the County by way of:

- a) a visually defined riparian area where the vegetation and soils are strongly influenced by the presence of water or;
- b) written confirmation from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development that title to the bed and shore of the water body, lake, river, stream or watercourse is vested in the Crown in the right of Alberta.

3.8 Further Subdivision of a Fragmented Parcel

Land that is separated from the balance of the existing titled area by a natural barrier, such as a river or ravine, or by a physical barrier, which is registered by a plan of survey, such as a roadway, railway or drainage course, may be considered for multi-lot residential subdivision if the following criteria are met:

- a) the applicant is able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County that the intended use would not unduly interfere with the continued agricultural use of the remaining lands in the title or any farming operation on the surrounding lands;
- b) the land fragmented is less than 8.1 hectares (20 acres) in size and, in the opinion of the County, has sufficient developable area for the intended use; and
- c) legal and physical access is available to the parcel and the remainder of the quarter section, satisfactory to the County.

The land proposed to be subdivided would be required to be rezoned to either R-CR Country Residential District or R-CRE Country Residential Estate District. In either case, a concept plan will need to be prepared in support of the rezoning application. Terms of reference for the preparation of a concept plan are described in *Appendix B of Multi-Lot Residential Development Proposals: A Guide to the Approval Process*, which has been approved by County Council.

3.9 Agricultural Subdivision

The subdivision of land for specialized or intensive agricultural operations, such as greenhouses and other horticultural businesses, may be considered only from an unsubdivided quarter section if the following criteria are met:

- a) submission of adequate detailed information describing the operation, such as a business plan that may include a financial plan, and any other information deemed necessary by the County; and
- b) the proposed lot is not less than 4.05 hectares (10

acres) in size.

3.10 Input to Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) for Confined Feeding Operations

The County shall provide input on applications for confined feeding operations to the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) under the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act*. The County's support is subject to the following:

- a) no new confined feeding operation shall be permitted less than 1.6 kilometres (1 mile) from the boundary of:
 - (i) a city, town, village, summer village or hamlet;
 - (ii) an area developed or designated for multi-lot residential use; or
 - (iii) a provincial or municipal park or recreation area, or other area used or intended to be used for a recreational facility development,

except that where provincial regulations require a larger setback distance, that distance shall apply; and

- b) further restrictions on the development of confined feeding operations may apply as directed by an Intermunicipal Development Plan or other local plan approved by Council.

3.11 Number of Dwellings Allowed on a Parcel

Generally, only one dwelling unit is permitted per parcel. Additional dwellings may be allowed in accordance with the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw.

3.12 Home Based Business and Minor Business or Trade in the Agricultural District

The County will continue to consider *home based business* and *minor business and trade* in the Agricultural District in accordance with the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw.

3.13 Industrial or Commercial Subdivision Restrictions

Under the Agricultural District of the Land Use Bylaw, the subdivision of land for industrial or commercial use shall be restricted to a single parcel from a quarter section that has not been subdivided, except for road widening, public or quasi public use or for the purpose of an oil and gas well, pipeline or installation incidental to a pipeline.

3.14 Criteria for Approval for Industrial or Commercial Subdivision

Subject to the restriction under Policy 3.13, an application for the subdivision of a single parcel of undeveloped land for industrial or commercial use may be considered where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) the intended use would not unduly interfere with the continued agricultural use of the remaining lands in the title or any farming operation on the surrounding lands;
- b) the site has attributes favorable to the establishment and operation of the business;
- c) there would be no significant negative impacts on the

- county road system;
 - d) the site is suitable for on-site sewage disposal and an adequate water supply exists that would not harm other existing water users;
 - e) the intended business activity at the site would not unduly interfere or conflict with existing surrounding land uses; and
 - f) any safety or other environmental issues have been properly addressed.
- 3.15 Exceptions to Policy 3.13** Exceptions to the restrictions under Policy 3.13 may be considered for the following land uses:
- a) oil and gas facilities, uses accessory to the oil and gas industry as defined in the Land Use Bylaw;
 - b) outdoor recreation facilities;
 - c) riding and boarding stables;
 - d) sand and gravel extraction and processing; and
 - e) uses requisite for, or accessory to, agriculture.
- 3.16 Residence Required for Business Location** With the exception of the uses listed above under Policy 3.17, no new industrial or commercial business shall be approved on land within the Agricultural District of the Land Use Bylaw unless there is an existing habitable residence on the same property located at or adjacent to the proposed business site. A condition of development approval shall require a habitable residence to be maintained for as long as the business operates at the site.
- 3.17 Exceptions to Policy 3.16** The requirement for an existing residence under Policy 3.16 shall not apply to the following uses:
- a) oil and gas facilities, uses accessory to the oil and gas industry as defined in the Land Use Bylaw;
 - b) outdoor recreational facilities;
 - c) riding and boarding stables;
 - d) RV storage businesses;
 - e) sand and gravel extraction and processing; and
 - f) uses requisite for, or accessory to, agriculture.

Notwithstanding the polices contained in this Section, the requirements of the *Subdivision and Development Regulation* will prevail for all quarter sections within 800 metres (2,625 feet) from a highway, which may preclude consideration of some of the subdivision opportunities described in this Section. For more information, please contact the Planning and Development Department.

4.0 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To allow for a broad range of housing opportunities in the County that provide for settlement patterns that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable



Residential development is generally scattered across the landscape interrupted by some more concentrated populations in hamlets and other multi-lot subdivisions that have been developed in the County. The housing is dominated by single-detached homes on relatively large lots with their own water wells and private sewage systems.

Low density residential land use can be a fiscal drain for municipalities, very land consumptive and difficult to service. More compact conservation-minded alternatives, such as conservation cluster development or smaller-lot estate residential development with communal or municipal water and wastewater systems, is a more sustainable form of residential development.

With an aging population, the rising cost of land, escalating housing prices and the weekend home market, demand will increase for alternative forms of housing in Lacombe County. Multi-family housing, such as row housing and apartments, can enhance a municipality's housing choice by serving a variety of lifestyle needs and age and income levels. The trend in many resort areas has been towards higher density condo-type apartments with extensive amenities. This type of development can be designed to provide more publicly accessible open spaces along lakes and rivers where access to the shoreline is currently limited. Environmentally sound development should be promoted throughout the County.

Objectives

The residential development objectives are to:

- provide for a range of residential land uses, in locations close to amenity, service and employment centres;
- avoid potential conflicts between residential development and incompatible non-residential uses;
- encourage compact and higher density forms of housing in appropriate locations; and
- promote environmentally sound development.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
4.1	Multi-Lot Defined	Multi-lot residential subdivision is defined as a subdivision which results in two or more residential parcels.
4.2	Areas Suited for Multi-Lot Residential Subdivisions	<p>With the exception of any further subdivision that may be allowed of a fragmented parcel pursuant to Policy 3.8, multi-lot residential development shall otherwise only be considered in the areas conceptually shown as Rural Policy Area, Estate Residential, Lakeshore Policy Area, Higher Density/Lakeshore Residential, and Higher Density Residential / Industrial / Commercial on Map 2 – Future Land Use Concept. Further guidance on where development may be allowed within these areas shall be provided by area structure plans, Intermunicipal development plans or any other plans prepared and approved by County Council. The timing for the preparation of area structure plans will depend upon budget priorities and work plans agreed to by County Council.</p>
4.3	Area Structure Plans	<p>Other than the further subdivision of a fragmented parcel that is provided for under Policy 3.8 or further residential subdivision as provided for in an Intermunicipal development plan. County Council shall not consider an application for a multi-lot residential subdivision, unless an area structure plan prepared and approved by Council is in place to guide decisions on development in the area.</p> <p>When identifying lands for multi-lot residential subdivision in an area structure plan, the County should ensure that residential development does not occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) on lands that may restrict the viability of nearby agricultural operations;b) in close proximity to an existing confined feeding operation;c) in areas prone to flooding, subsidence, erosion or other environmental hazard;d) in areas where sufficient potable water to service the proposed development is not available on site or available through a piped water system; ore) in areas where arrangements cannot be made for the treatment and safe disposal of wastewater. <p>Any existing plans adopted by Council prior to the adoption of this Municipal Development Plan shall be recognized in place of an area structure plan.</p>

4.4 Concept Plans

An applicant shall be required to prepare a concept plan in support of a rezoning application for any multi-lot residential subdivision. Terms of reference for the preparation a concept plan are described in *Appendix B of Multi-Lot Residential Development Proposals: A Guide to the Approval Process* approved by County Council and as amended from time to time.

4.5 Residential Conservation (Cluster) Subdivision Design

Lacombe County shall promote conservation (cluster) subdivision design to protect the County's rural character and to preserve environmentally sensitive areas and natural features. This development approach allows for the clustering of smaller-sized lots at low rural densities while providing opportunities for landscape and view protection with common open space.

Areas particularly suited to conservation (cluster) subdivision design include, but are not necessarily limited to, natural features such as woodlands, stream corridors, steep slopes, wetlands, shorelands, ridge tops, wildlife corridors and critical species habitat.

The drawings below illustrate the layouts of conventional and conservation (cluster) subdivision design.

**CONSERVATION (CLUSTER)
SUBDIVISION LAYOUT**



CONVENTIONAL SUBDIVISION LAYOUT



The following planning policies shall apply to a residential conservation (cluster) subdivision design:

- a) a density transfer/bonus system will be used to dedicate open space as outlined in the Land Use Bylaw;
- b) a residential lot that is not serviced by communal, municipal or regional water and wastewater systems shall have an area of at least 0.50 hectare (1.25 acres) but less than 1.01 hectares (2.50 acres);
- c) a residential lot that is serviced by communal, municipal or

regional water and wastewater systems shall have an area of at least 0.20 hectare (0.50 acre) but less than 0.50 hectare (1.25 acres);

- d) there shall be no further subdivision of the residual land. Land uses should be restricted to those associated with the existing use of the land, agricultural production (excluding new confined feeding operations) and other uses that the County considers compatible with the multi-lot residential development of the surrounding lands;
- e) tools, such as conservation easements, may be used by the County to protect the remaining undeveloped land from further development or to safeguard important natural features; and
- f) the dedication of reserve may be required to protect environmentally sensitive lands, such as riparian areas. Reserves shall be designed to interconnect green spaces and possible trail routes.

More detailed regulations are provided in the Land Use Bylaw.

4.6 Requirements for a Residential Conservation (Cluster) Rezoning Application

A concept plan along with supporting technical studies must accompany a rezoning application for a Residential Conservation (Cluster) District. Where a quarter section has already been subdivided into smaller parcels, landowners will be required to work together to develop a concept plan for the entire quarter section. The requirements of a concept plan are addressed in *Appendix B of Multi-Lot Residential Development Proposals: A Guide to the Approval Process*.

In addition, a detailed biophysical site assessment that complies with the requirements of the County must accompany the rezoning application.

4.7 Higher Density Lakeshore Residential

The County may consider higher density housing development along Sylvan Lake provided publicly accessible open space with lakefront access is provided as a trade off for increased density. The following planning policies shall apply to a higher density lakeshore residential development:

- a) a density transfer/bonus system will be used to dedicate publicly accessible open space as outlined in the Land Use Bylaw;
- b) residential and commercial lots shall be serviced only by communal water supply and wastewater collection systems or alternatively, may be directly connected to municipal or regional water and wastewater systems;
- c) the dedication of reserve shall be required to protect environmentally sensitive lands, such as riparian areas, and to provide interconnected green spaces for trails and connections to other public recreation facilities; and

- d) along lakeshores the County shall require 20% of the lakeshore frontage to be provided as municipal reserve.

More detailed regulations are found in the Higher Density Lakeshore Residential District of the Land Use Bylaw.

4.8 Requirements for Higher Density Lakeshore Residential Rezoning Application

A concept plan and supporting technical studies must accompany a rezoning application for a Higher Density Lakeshore Residential District. The requirements of a concept plan are addressed in *Appendix B of Multi-Lot Residential Development Proposals: A Guide to the Approval Process*.

5.0 HAMLETS

Goal: To support and strengthen the long term viability of hamlets within the County



The Municipal Development Plan identifies Mirror and Morningside as growth hamlets with the potential for development to extend beyond their current boundaries. Mirror has municipal water and wastewater systems and in Morningside, there is the prospect of connection to the North Red Deer River Regional Water Line and possibly a future regional wastewater line. A greater range of housing types along with further commercial and industrial development opportunities would be considered in these two hamlets. There is also the potential for Tees to be a growth hamlet if the Highway 12/21 Regional Water Line is constructed to the Village of Clive. Limited infill development will otherwise be allowed in Haynes, Joffre and Tees. Given its proximity to the petrochemical plants, population densities should continue to be kept low in Joffre.

Objectives

The hamlet development objectives are to:

- provide orderly residential and compatible commercial and industrial development;
- make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services; and
- maintain hamlets as local centres serving the surrounding agricultural communities.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
5.1	Growth Hamlets	The further development of the growth hamlets of Mirror and Morningside beyond their existing boundaries may be considered provided such expansion can be supported by regional/municipal water and/or wastewater and other community facilities. Development within the growth hamlets shall be guided by area structure plans prepared and adopted by County Council.
5.2	Other Hamlets	The infilling and redevelopment of sites shall be considered in the Hamlets of Haynes, Joffre and Tees provided such development can be sustained by on-site water and wastewater

services and it does not adversely affect surrounding land uses. No expansion shall be allowed beyond the existing hamlet boundaries.

5.3 Hamlet of Tees

The Hamlet of Tees may be considered as a growth hamlet if regional water and/or wastewater systems can be built to service development in the community.

5.4 Commercial and Industrial Development in Hamlets

The County shall allow, through provisions in the Land Use Bylaw, for a range of industrial and commercial uses compatible with available infrastructure and the residential character and local service role of individual hamlets.

6.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: To encourage economic development in the County through the development of industrial and commercial uses that enhance and diversify the County's economy, create jobs and expand the tax base



Lacombe County has a strong resource-based economy that is driven by agriculture, the oil and gas industry, and two major petrochemical complexes. These business sectors provide substantial employment opportunities and contribute to the County's healthy tax base. The County recognizes, however, the importance of further diversifying the local economy to ensure our long-term economic health and prosperity. Prospects exist for value-added businesses that build on our local strengths and resources. Areas for expanded business and industrial development are identified around Joffre, Prentiss and other strategic locations in the County. Providing an adequate supply of well located commercial and industrial land within the County is one important aspect of economic development and with Alberta's growing residential population, the presence of recreational lakes and scenic river valleys provide tremendous opportunities to expand Lacombe County's tourism industry.

Objectives

The economic development objectives are to:

- diversify and strengthen the County's economy;
- create a positive and competitive business environment;
- provide the necessary infrastructure to retain, expand and attract business and industry;
- provide for an adequate supply of well placed lots for industrial and commercial development;
- avoid conflict between industrial and commercial uses and other land uses; and
- increase tourism by encouraging the private sector to develop tourist attractions, services and infrastructure.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
6.1	Economic Development Strategy	An economic development strategy shall be prepared that identifies how the County could increase employment opportunities and strengthen its tax base.
6.2	Maintain a Positive Business Climate	A proactive and competitive business climate should continue to be maintained by ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is in place and a <i>business friendly approach</i> is adopted in the County's policies and approval processes.
6.3	Regional Partnerships for Economic Development	Lacombe County should work with neighbouring municipalities through the Central Alberta Economic Partnership, Alberta Economic Development and other stakeholders to promote economic development and tourism.
6.4	Tourism Development	Through opportunities provided by expanded uses allowed in the Land Use Bylaw, Lacombe County shall encourage and facilitate development of tourism attractions, services and infrastructure by private and non-profit groups.
6.5	Location of Industrial and Commercial Development	Industrial and commercial development should be directed to areas conceptually identified for this purpose on <i>Map 2 – Future Land Use Concept</i> .
6.6	Industrial Parks	Lacombe County shall encourage the clustering of industrial uses in industrial parks as a means to reduce scattered industrial development in the County. Industrial parks should be located: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) adjacent to, or near, major transportation routes;b) in areas compatible with adjacent land uses;c) in an urban fringe area as agreed to through an intermunicipal development plan or intermunicipal agreement; andd) in areas that would not adversely impact significant environmental, cultural and historical features.
6.7	Review of Application	The County shall assess each application for commercial or industrial development on its own merits and notwithstanding the directions of Policy 6.5, development may be considered in other parts of the County.

- 6.8 Isolated Industrial Development** Industrial uses shall be considered outside of industrial parks where it can be demonstrated that:
- a) the site has attributes favourable to the establishment and operation of the business;
 - b) there would be no significant negative impacts on the county road system;
 - c) the site is suitable for on-site sewage disposal and an adequate water supply exists that would not harm other existing water users;
 - d) the business activity at the site would not unduly interfere or conflict with existing surrounding land uses; and
 - e) any safety or other environmental issues have been properly addressed.
- 6.9 Commercial Development** Consideration shall be given to commercial businesses if they are located:
- a) adjacent to, or near, major transportation routes;
 - b) in an area compatible with adjacent land uses;
 - c) in a hamlet or other densely populated residential area;
 - d) in an urban fringe area at a location agreed to through an intermunicipal development plan or intermunicipal agreement; and
 - e) in an area that would not adversely impact significant environmental, cultural and historical features.
- 6.10 Home Based Businesses** The County shall continue to recognize home based business as a viable lifestyle and economic opportunity option, which is appropriate in both residential and agricultural areas in accordance with the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw.
- 6.11 Minor Businesses and Trades** Opportunities shall also be given for a variety of minor businesses or trades to be established in agricultural areas, which can help augment farm incomes.
- 6.12 Industrial and Commercial Development Standards** The Land Use Bylaw shall contain development standards for industrial and commercial uses that address the siting and design of buildings, landscaping and screening, parking and signage requirements.
- 6.13 Separation Distance from Heavy Industry** A minimum setback of 450 metres (1,500 feet) shall be maintained from the limits of a heavy industrial facility to the outside boundary of the parcel on which the facility is situated, when the parcel is located adjacent to a land use which is deemed incompatible.

6.14 Industrial Buffering Requirements

Through provisions in the Land Use Bylaw, the County shall ensure that adequate buffers or transitional land uses are maintained between non-industrial and industrial uses when the potential exists for significant land use conflicts with regard to noise, vibration, dust, odour, environmental hazards or other safety risks. For example, agricultural uses may be used as a transitional land use between industry and residential uses.

6.15 Sand and Gravel Resources

The County shall endeavour to direct new subdivision and development, particularly residential land uses, away from active and potential sand and gravel extraction areas so as not to conflict, or constrain, the extraction of the resource.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Goal: To protect environmentally significant areas and promote environmentally responsible development



Lacombe County residents place a high value on the natural environment and expressed their desire to see land and water resources wisely managed. It is important that steps be taken to protect and preserve the County's environmentally sensitive and significant areas, particularly when development may have a detrimental effect.

The *Environmentally Significant Areas of the Counties of Lacombe and Stettler Study*, prepared by Sweetgrass Consultants Ltd in 1988, identified fourteen regionally significant sites throughout the County and one of provincial significance at Buffalo Lake. These are shown on *Map 3 – Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. Various planning tools, such as environmental reserves, conservation easements, development setbacks or buffers, and conservation (cluster) subdivisions, can be used to facilitate protection of the County's special areas.

Community workshop participants expressed concern over maintaining and enhancing the quality and quantity of groundwater and surface water. Stormwater management and regional wastewater collection systems, particularly around Sylvan, Gull and Buffalo Lakes, are important initiatives that can help protect local watersheds. Concerns were also raised about the increase in coal bed methane extraction and the potentially detrimental effect it may have on nearby land uses and groundwater. Although this industry is regulated by the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (AEUB), the County recognizes the importance of working with the AEUB, landowners and industry representatives to encourage best practices and better communication.

Objectives

The environmental management objectives are to:

- contribute to the maintenance of a healthy natural environment;
- identify and protect environmentally sensitive and significant areas;
- regulate subdivision and development in order to mitigate against environmental degradation and risks from natural or man-made hazards;
- contribute to the protection and sustainable utilization of water resources; and

- protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitats.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
7.1	Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Features	<p>When considering subdivision or development applications affecting lands considered environmentally sensitive, the County shall be satisfied that appropriate mitigation measures will be used to protect the environmental integrity of these lands. For the purposes of this Municipal Development Plan, Lacombe County considers the following to be environmentally sensitive areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) hazard lands; b) natural areas identified by the Province; c) ecological reserves designated by the Province; d) provincial parks and other recreation areas designated by the Province; e) rivers and their valleys, ravines and escarpments; f) lakes and their immediate shorelands; g) wildlife and migratory bird habitats; h) large tracts of vegetation cover; and i) any other features or lands the County considers significant.
7.2	Environmental Setbacks from Waterbodies and Watercourses	<p>The County shall, as a condition of subdivision approval, require an environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement of not less than 30 metres (98 feet) in width from the high water mark of waterbodies and/or the top of bank of watercourses to the lot line. A greater setback may be required by the County based on the recommendations of a geotechnical study undertaken by a qualified professional.</p>
7.3	Setback from High Water Mark and/or Top of Bank	<p>As a condition of development permit approval where there is no subdivision, a comparable setback of 30 metres (98 feet) shall be required from the high water mark of waterbodies and/or the top of bank of watercourses to the building. A greater setback may be required by the County based on the recommendations of a geotechnical study undertaken by a qualified professional.</p>
7.4	Determining High Water Mark and/or Top of Bank of Waterbodies and Watercourses	<p>Subdivision and development applications adjacent to waterbodies and watercourses may be required to prepare an engineering and/or geotechnical analysis to determine the high water mark and/or top of bank of the subject waterbody or watercourse and also to determine an adequate setback from the top of bank based on soil conditions and slope stability.</p>

- 7.5 Environmental Reserve Dedication** Lacombe County shall require environmental reserve dedication in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*. Wherever possible, environmental reserves shall be linked with municipal reserves to create continuous greenways with enhanced public access. These lands shall be managed in accordance with the County's *Use and Management of County Reserve Lands* policy.
- 7.6 Environmental Reserve Easement** Notwithstanding Policy 8.3, the County may, in accordance with its *Use and Management of County Reserve Lands*, require at the time of subdivision that an environmental reserve easement be placed on lands not suitable for development and where public access is not required.
- 7.7 Conservation Easements** The voluntary placement of conservation easements shall be encouraged to preserve significant natural features and areas that do not qualify as environmental reserve under the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*.
- 7.8 Hazard Lands** No development shall be allowed in areas prone to flooding, erosion, subsidence or any other natural hazard, unless a geotechnical investigation prepared by a qualified professional describes how the development could safely proceed without harm to the property or environment. The approving authority may require a restrictive covenant or caveat to be registered on the land title as notification to the landowners of their responsibility to adhere to any recommendations contained in any geotechnical study that may have been requested by the County.
- 7.9 Development in Flood Plains** No permanent structures shall be permitted within the 1:100 year floodplain of any river, stream, or lakeshore, unless proper flood proofing techniques are applied. A certificate from a qualified professional engineer will be required by the County to confirm that the development has been properly flood proofed. For those areas where 1:100 year flood mapping does not currently exist, the County shall require a qualified professional to confirm the 1:100 year flood level of the affected river, stream or lakeshore.
- 7.9 Provincial and Regional Watershed Planning** In keeping with Alberta's "*Water for Life*" initiative, the County shall endeavour to cooperate with provincial agencies and neighbouring municipalities to protect watersheds and maintain the water quality of surface and groundwater systems.
- 7.10 Historical Impact Assessment** The County shall consult with the Historic Resources Management Branch of Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture to determine when a historical resources impact assessment is required by applicants undertaking rezoning, subdivision and development applications.

7.10 Environmental Impact Assessment

An environmental impact assessment may be required for any development that has the potential to cause any harmful environmental effects on its surroundings. Where required, an environmental impact assessment shall address the following:

- a) a description of the biophysical environment that would be affected;
- b) a prediction of the effects (both positive and negative) that the proposed development may have on the site and its surroundings;
- c) an indication of the limitations of the study, criteria used in predicting effects, and interests consulted; and
- d) recommended measures to mitigate any negative effects identified.

8.0 PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Goal: To provide for parks, recreation and other community services that enhance the quality of life for County residents



Outdoor recreation and nature appreciation is a vital part of the quality of life in Lacombe County. The County's many natural land and water features offer diverse opportunities for enjoyment throughout the year. Lakes and shorelines, parks, river valleys and trails are all highly valued public spaces. As the population grows, there will be more pressure for outdoor recreation amenities. Parks and trails not only provide important buffers for environmentally sensitive areas but they will also contribute to the value and experience of a place, promote healthy living and provide economic benefits.

Currently, the County does not have a plan for a comprehensive trail system. There is good potential for greenways and trail development, particularly around major recreational lakes and river valleys. An overall *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* will be required to assess the current and future recreation needs of County residents. Creating the framework today ensures that these needs are addressed as growth occurs.

Community services (e.g. fire protection, policing, social services, etc) are another important measure of quality of life for County residents. Many of these are provided in partnership with various agencies and authorities, mainly provided through the general tax levy. As the demand for community services grows, additional funding sources will likely be necessary, such as user fees and/or off-site levies, to sustain service levels.

Objectives

The parks, recreation and community services objectives are to:

- provide County residents with varied recreation opportunities;
- prepare and implement a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan;
- link parks and open spaces through greenway corridors and trail development; and
- support the development of adequate community facilities and services.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
8.1	Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Development	The County shall prepare a <i>Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan</i> that assesses the community's needs for recreation and other community facilities and services.
8.2	Regional Trail System	The County shall explore with neighbouring municipalities, County residents and other stakeholders the feasibility of developing a County-wide trail system.
8.3	Maintaining Public Access to Waterbodies and Watercourses	The intensification of development near and adjacent to waterbodies and watercourses within the County will increase the need for new and improved lake and river access facilities. Such access needs will vary depending upon the lake or river and the location of the development lands relative to the lake or river. Developers shall be required to contribute to the costs of providing enhanced lake or river access opportunities and facilities as a condition of subdivision and development approval. These contributions may be included in a development agreement. The amount of the particular contribution will be determined by the County from time to time, taking into account the lake in question, the existing access opportunities and facilities, the proximity of the proposed development lands to the waterbody or watercourse and the public recreation facilities to be otherwise provided by the developer.
8.4	Park Development	The County shall encourage the development of parks and/or recreation facilities on reserves in multi-lot residential subdivisions, which are physically suited, and/or of sufficient size to accommodate the use.
8.5	Management of Local Park and Community Facilities	The County shall encourage local community groups to help with the management of local park and community facilities by entering into management agreements with such groups.
8.6	Municipal Reserve Dedication	<p>In accordance with the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> and its <i>Use and Management of County Reserve Lands</i> policy, the County shall normally require the dedication of 10% of the gross developable area of land to be subdivided as municipal reserve. Cash-in-lieu of reserve land, however, may be required where it is determined that land is not required at present or in the future.</p> <p>The County may opt to defer reserve where it is determined that reserve land is not needed at present but may be required in the future, such as in urban fringe areas, thereby permitting the urban municipality to decide how reserves should be provided as expansion occurs.</p>

Notwithstanding the above requirements, the County has made special provisions in the Land Use Bylaw to provide the opportunity for a developer to provide additional reserve or open space in return for smaller lots in some land use districts.

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| 8.7 | Municipal Reserve Dedication Along Lakeshores | Municipal reserve dedication in a subdivision that borders a lake or river shall be configured in such a manner that at least 20% of the water shore frontage forms part of the municipal reserve parcel. |
| 8.8 | Additional Municipal Reserve | Additional reserve allocations up to an additional 5% of the parcel's developable land may be required, when in the opinion of the County, a proposed subdivision will result in a density of 30 dwelling units or more per hectare of gross developable land, in accordance with the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> . |
| 8.9 | Market Appraisal Requirement for Cash-in-Lieu | Lacombe County shall determine the cash-in-lieu requirements associated with a subdivision based upon a land evaluation prepared by the County Assessor. If the subdivision applicant disagrees with the County's land valuation, then the applicant would be responsible for obtaining an independent appraisal from a qualified appraiser at their cost. |
| 8.10 | School Reserve | Municipal reserve lands or cash-in-lieu shall be used to provide and/or purchase school sites for the school authority on an as needed basis. |
| 8.11 | Appropriate Use of Reserve Lands | Environmental and municipal reserve lands shall be used and managed in accordance with the County's <i>Use and Management of County Reserve Lands</i> policy. |
| 8.12 | Sale of Municipal Reserves | Consideration may be given to the sale or lease of municipal reserve land, which serves no existing or potential open space purpose. Such sale or lease shall be undertaken in accordance with the County's <i>Use and Management of County Reserve Lands</i> policy. Community consultation will take place with residents and landowners in the subdivision where a reserve is being considered for sale. Funds obtained from the sale or lease of such lands will be allocated to the Municipal Reserve Trust Fund and be used in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> . |
| 8.13 | Health Care Facilities and Services | The County shall continue to work with the David Thompson Regional Health Authority to ensure an acceptable level of health care in the County. |
| 8.14 | Emergency and Protective Services | The County shall endeavour to work with adjacent municipalities and relevant government agencies to provide an adequate level of police, fire and emergency response services for County residents. |

- 8.15 Fire Smart** Where appropriate, applicants for subdivision or development may be required to submit a fire hazard assessment and plan to address wildfire mitigation guidelines as contained in the *FireSmart: Protecting Your Community from Wildfire*.
- 8.16 Joint Use Agreements with Urban Municipalities** The County shall continue to co-operate in negotiating joint-use agreements with its urban neighbours to determine the recreational and other major community facilities and service needs of the region.

9.0 TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES

Goal: Plan and develop municipal transportation and utility systems in a manner that environmentally, efficiently, and effectively meets the present and future needs of the County



Lacombe County has a well-developed roadway infrastructure made up of provincial highways and County roads. Land use patterns and transportation and utility infrastructure are interdependent. Regional utility lines are being planned or have already been constructed. For environmental and economic reasons, it is important to direct development in a manner that makes the best use of this strategic investment in infrastructure.

To promote development that is economically, socially, and environmentally more sustainable, more compact, smaller lot and higher density forms of development are being promoted. These will require either municipal or communal water distribution and wastewater collection systems.

Objectives

The transportation and utilities objectives are to:

- operate the transportation system safely and effectively;
- plan and manage the transportation network in cooperation with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation and neighbouring municipalities; and
- work with neighbouring municipalities to develop improved water and wastewater services to county residents and businesses.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
9.1	Transportation Master Plan	Lacombe County shall utilize the <i>Rural Transportation Study</i> , as may be updated from time to time, as the basis for the operation and maintenance of the County's road system.
9.2	Efficient Use of Roadway Network	The County shall endeavour to make the most efficient use of existing roadway facilities by directing developments with the potential for substantial traffic impact to locate adjacent to those roads, which have been designed and constructed to

		accommodate such traffic volumes.
9.3	Coordination of Transportation Networks	The County shall continue to work with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation to integrate the County roadway system with provincial highways.
9.4	Development and Subdivision in Proximity to County Roadways	Where subdivision and development is proposed along County roadways, the County shall ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the subdivision or development is adequately set back to accommodate future improvement or widening of the roadway; b) access is provided, where possible, to an internal subdivision road or service road built to a standard acceptable to the County; c) the noise impact on the occupants of any residential subdivision or development is minimized by noise attenuation or noise abatement methods, as deemed necessary by the County; and d) the subdivision or development is visually pleasing with regard to landscaping, buffering, signing and lighting in accordance with the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw.
9.5	Traffic Impact Assessment	Developers may be required to provide a traffic impact assessment as part of a rezoning, subdivision or development application.
9.6	Gravel Haul Traffic	The County shall investigate how sand and gravel operations might be better managed to reduce the impact of haul traffic on County roads and local residents.
9.7	Compliance with County Road and Infrastructure Standards	All roadways and municipal infrastructure shall be required to comply with the County's <i>Road and Infrastructure Standards Manual</i> , as may be updated from time to time.
9.8	Utility and Pipeline Rights-of-Way	The County shall recommend that future rights-of-way for pipelines and power lines avoid residential areas wherever possible and minimize the impact on agricultural lands by sharing or paralleling existing pipeline and utility corridors or following property lines.
9.9	Buffering Along Railway Lines	Area structure plans and concept plans shall be required to provide minimum setbacks and/or buffering requirements, as determined in consultation with the railway operators, for developments proposed in close proximity to active railway lines.
9.10	Regional Water and Wastewater Lines	The County shall continue to cooperate with neighbouring municipalities and the provincial government in the development of regional water supply and wastewater collection

lines for the benefit of County residents and industry.

9.11 Communal Water and Wastewater Systems

Communal water and wastewater systems shall be operated by a condominium association or community organization unless directed otherwise by the County.

9.12 Stormwater Management

The preparation of stormwater management plans shall be required, as necessary, to regulate stormwater discharge and water quality according to Alberta Environment and County standards.

9.13 Regional Solid Waste Management

The County shall continue to cooperate with neighbouring municipalities in establishing and managing regional waste management and recycling systems.

9.14 Franchise Utilities

Developers shall be required to determine the requirements for the provision of franchise utilities, such as gas, electricity and telecommunications, at the concept plan/rezoning stage of development, based upon capacities and rights-of-ways required. The cost of installation of all utility services shall be borne by the developer.

10.0 INTERMUNICIPAL PLANNING AND COOPERATION

Goal: Maintain mutually beneficial relationships with neighbouring municipalities, and other authorities and agencies in the region



With the prospects of continued strong growth, it is important that the County continue to work with its municipal neighbours to ensure that all enjoy the benefits of future growth and development in the region. As noted by William R. Dodge, an international authority on regional cooperation and author of *Regional Excellence: Governing to Compete Globally and Flourish Locally*, “Regions that learn to work together and govern together will emerge as the most desirable place to raise a family and open a business in the 21st Century.”

Intermunicipal development plans have been prepared with the Towns of Lacombe and Blackfalds to promote a cooperative approach to managing growth and development in the fringe areas around both Towns. Similar cooperative efforts have made to deal with the growth pressures around Sylvan, Gull and Buffalo Lakes. Some of these existing plans will need to be reviewed and updated. In other cases, new intermunicipal development plans may be required.

Lacombe County is also interested in continuing to work with both its urban and rural neighbours, and public and private groups to look at ways of providing municipal and community services to ratepayers in the most cost effective and efficient way possible.

Objectives

The intermunicipal planning and cooperation objectives are to:

- engage in joint planning with neighbouring municipalities to establish planning frameworks and land use patterns that are mutually beneficial;
- provide opportunities to jointly plan fringe land uses with each of the County’s neighbouring urban municipalities;
- investigate and pursue potential shared services, enhancing cooperation and partnerships; and
- maintain open lines of communication to resolve problems and identify opportunities for collaboration.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
10.1	Communication and Collaboration with Neighbouring Municipalities	The County shall endeavour to maintain effective communications, cooperation and collaboration with neighbouring municipalities at both the political and administrative levels.
10.2	Intermunicipal Development Plans and Intermunicipal Development Agreements	The County may update existing intermunicipal development plans or intermunicipal agreements with neighbouring urban and rural municipalities as required. New intermunicipal plans shall be prepared to guide land use and development in the fringe areas of urban municipalities where no plan currently exists.
10.3	Annexation	Intermunicipal planning and an incremental annexation approach will be applied by the County to meet the growth needs of its urban neighbours. This approach will prevent premature or permanent sterilization of fringe lands in anticipation of urban expansion.
10.4	Annexation of Revenue Producing Property	An annexation which represents primarily an attempt to transfer existing revenue producing property from the County may not be supported unless the area to be annexed requires specialized services which only the annexing municipality is capable and willing to provide.
10.5	Referrals to Adjacent Municipalities	Planning and development referrals in areas subject to an intermunicipal development plan or an intermunicipal agreement shall be directed by these plans and agreements.
10.6	Referrals to Adjacent Municipalities for Areas Without Intermunicipal Development Plans or Agreements	<p>For those areas not subject to an intermunicipal development plan or intermunicipal agreement, the following shall be referred to affected municipalities for their review and comment prior to a decision being made by the County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) any proposed amendments to the Municipal Development Plan or textual changes to the Land Use Bylaw;b) other proposed statutory and non-statutory plans and plan amendments;c) rezoning and subdivision and development applications. <p>Further adjustments may be made to these general referral arrangements in consultation with the affected municipality to ensure that only matters of interest or potential concern are referred. This will reduce unnecessary delays in the processing of simple, straightforward applications.</p>

PART III

IMPLEMENTATION

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: To effectively implement the goals, objectives and policies of the Municipal Development Plan

Orderly, effective and beneficial development can be achieved by ensuring that decisions and actions taken on land use and development matters are consistent with this Municipal Development Plan. The County will implement the Municipal Development Plan through its Land Use Bylaw, other statutory and non-statutory plans and other outcomes and decisions that affect planning and development. However, it is important to note that the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Municipal Development Plan are subject to budgetary considerations by County Council.

The Municipal Development Plan is meant to be a 'living planning document' so its effectiveness will need to be monitored over time to respond to changing needs and conditions. Where changes are required, it is important that they are considered through an open and transparent process that gives opportunities for the public to express their views.

Objectives

The implementation objectives are to:

- apply the policies contained in the Municipal Development Plan to guide future growth, development, and capital investment in infrastructure; and
- provide more detailed planning and development direction through the Land Use Bylaw and other statutory or non-statutory plans.

Policies

	Key Phrases	Policy Statements
11.1	Plan Implementation	Lacombe County shall implement this Municipal Development Plan and the policies contained within it through the Land Use Bylaw, and other statutory and non-statutory documents.
11.2	Amending the Municipal Development Plan	Only the County may initiate an amendment of the Municipal Development Plan.
11.3	Public Request to Amend the Municipal Development Plan	The general public may request that the County undertake an amendment. In such cases, the County shall require the proponent of the proposed amendment to provide documentation explaining the reasons for their request.

- 11.4 Other Plans and Studies** Lacombe County shall undertake the following plans and studies:
- a) prepare area structure plans for the Rural Policy Areas;
 - b) prepare area structure plans and/or amend lake management plans and/or intermunicipal development plans for Lakeshore Policy Areas;
 - c) prepare area structure plans for the Higher Density/Lakeshore Residential Area identified around Sylvan Lake
 - d) update the *Milton-Morningside Area Outline Plan*;
 - e) prepare an Economic Development Strategy; and
 - f) prepare a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.
- 11.5 Development Costs** The costs directly associated with servicing a new development shall be borne by the developer so that undue financial burden is not placed on the County.
- 11.6 Monitoring and Updating the Municipal Development Plan** Lacombe County shall undertake an annual review and reporting on the Municipal Development Plan to ensure that the objectives and policies remain valid in view of population growth, changing development patterns and market trends. A more comprehensive review of the Municipal Development Plan should be undertaken at regular intervals of not more than five years.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Area Structure Plan (ASP)	Refers to a statutory plan as defined in the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> that establishes the general land use, transportation and servicing requirements for specific areas experiencing development pressures.
Buffer	Refers to a separation space between incompatible land uses, or adjacent to a public roadway, that may contain trees and shrubs, an earth berm or fencing to provide visual or physical separation and/or noise attenuation.
Concept Plan	Refers to a plan that provides a framework for the subsequent subdivision and development of a property by providing a description of: land uses proposed for the property; the staging (or phasing) of the development; the size of lots proposed; the location of proposed roadways and utility infrastructure; and other issues deemed appropriate by the County.
Conservation	Refers to the activity of protecting from degradation the essential biological, physical and chemical characteristics of the natural environment.
Conservation (Cluster) Development	Refers to the grouping of residential uses and structures in a concentrated rather a dispersed pattern. The intent of clustering is to achieve desired economic densities, while providing opportunities to protect important landscapes, natural features and open spaces.
Conservation Easement	Refers to an agreement registered against title whereby a landowner grants to Lacombe County (or other government, government agency, or non-profit society with conservation objectives satisfactory to Lacombe County) provisions for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the environment, including the protection, conservation and enhancement of biological diversity and natural scenic or aesthetic values.
Confined Feeding Operation	Refers to a confined feeding operation as defined in the <i>Agricultural Operation Practices Act</i> .
Council	Refers to the Lacombe County Council.
Country Residential	Refers to a non-farm rural residence, normally on a site 0.51 hectares (1.25 acres) or larger in size.
County	Refers to the Corporation of Lacombe County and where required by the context, shall include all lands within the corporate boundaries of the County.
County Main Road	Refers to a right-of-way designated as a main road by the County.
Development	Refers to an excavation or stockpile and the creation of either of them; a building or an addition to or replacement or repair of a building and the construction or placing of any of them in, on, over, or under land; a change of use of land or a building, or an act done in relation to land, or a building that results in, or is likely to result in, a change in the use of the land or building; or a change in the

intensity of use of land or a building, or an act done in relation to land or a building that results in, or is likely to result in, a change in the intensity of use of the land or building.

Economic Development	Refers to creating a positive environment from which local businesses can succeed and grow and attract new enterprise to the community.
Environmental Impact Assessment	Refers to processes and activities designed to contribute pertinent environmental information to land use decision making. An environmental impact assessment attempts to predict and measure the environmental effects of specific human activities and identify means of mitigating those effects.
Environmental Reserve	Refers to land dedicated (given) to a municipality during the subdivision process for environmental reasons in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act. Environmental reserve may include areas, such as wetlands, ravines, drainage courses and steep slopes.
Environmental Reserve Easement	Refers to a caveat registered with Land Titles in favour of the municipality for lands that would be normally taken as environmental reserve in accordance with the Municipal Government Act.
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	Refers to lands in their natural or altered state, due to their fragile characteristics or ecological or aesthetic significance that are unusual or unique in the County and perform a natural function that is of importance beyond the site. Included are lands having limitations to development due to naturally occurring conditions or processes such as flooding, erosion or slumping.
Environmentally Significant Areas	Refers to areas deemed to be ecologically unique and which may be regionally, provincially or nationally significant.
Environmental Site Assessment	Refers to an evaluation of a property to determine the likelihood or presence of potential contamination on the property.
Floodplain	Refers to all land adjacent to a watercourse over which water flows in times of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood defences where they exist. The limits of the floodplain are defined by the peak level of a 1 in 100 year return period flood or the highest known water level, whichever is greater. The floodplain is normally kept free of encumbrances to allow the free flow of water during a flood.
Greenway	Refers to a corridor of undeveloped land that is designed for recreational use.
Goal	Refers to an idealized end towards which planned action is directed and which provides an indication of what is to be achieved.
Hazard Lands	Refers to lands that may be prone to flooding, erosion, slope instability, or other natural or man-made hazards.
High Water Mark	Refers to a mark indicating the highest level reached by a body of water.

Highway, Provincial	Refers to a highway as defined in the <i>Public Highways Development Act</i> , and which falls under the jurisdiction of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation.
Incremental Annexation Approach	Refers to annexation done on staged basis as the urban municipality requires land for expansion.
Infill Development	Refers to development that occurs on vacant or underutilized lands in an already built up part of a community.
Infrastructure	Refers to systems and facilities (e.g. roads, water and wastewater treatment and distribution networks, power lines, telephone and cable systems) that service development.
Intermunicipal Development Plan	Refers to a plan adopted by Council and the Council of one or more other municipalities pursuant to the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> to guide future land use and development in an area of common interest.
Land Use Bylaw	Refers to a document that regulates the use and development of parcels of land. The land use bylaw divides the municipality into districts, prescribing permitted and/or discretionary uses for each district. The bylaw establishes development standards within each district and provides for a system for issuing development permits.
Municipal Government Act	Refers to provincial legislation that gives the County the authority for municipal planning, subdivision and development control. The Act allows the County to adopt plans and a land use bylaw and make planning decisions to achieve the beneficial use of land without infringing on the rights of individuals except to the extent necessary for the greater public interest.
Municipal Reserve	Refers to land provided as part of a subdivision by the developer, without compensation, for parks, buffering, trails, and school purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Government Act.
Natural Features	Refers to landscapes that are found in their natural state and may be remnant, undisturbed, diverse or contain unique environmental characteristics.
Objective	Refers to directional statements that are usually phrased in measurable terms for given time frames.
Open Space	Refers to reserve lands and/or other lands to be kept in an undeveloped state and preserved in that state by way of an easement or other legal instrument, and shall include other recreational uses which may be authorized by the County.
Policy	Refers to a statement identifying a specific course of action for achieving objectives.
Park	Refers to a development of public land specifically designed or reserved for the general public for active or passive recreational use and includes all natural and manmade landscaping, facilities, playing fields, buildings and other structures that are consistent with the general purposes of public parkland, whether or not such recreational facilities are publicly operated or operated by other organizations

pursuant to arrangements with the public authority owning the park.

Recreation Use	Refers to development including natural open space, improved parkland and active and passive recreational areas, and any facilities or buildings associated with recreation, serving the needs of a municipality, area or region.
Row Housing	Refers to a group of three or more dwelling units, each unit separated by a common or party wall and having a separate front and rear access to the outside grade.
Semi-Detached Dwelling	Refers to a building containing two dwelling units located immediately adjacent to each other and sharing a common wall and each having a separate entrance.
Single Detached Dwelling	Refers to a residential building containing one dwelling unit and intended as a permanent residence.
Suitable Building Site	Refers to a residential parcel which can accommodate on-site sewage disposal and water services, and has a minimum area of 0.2 hectares (0.5 acres).
Sustainable Development	Refers to development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development implies economic growth together with the protection of environmental quality, each reinforcing the other in a way that allows a community to sustain its quality of life.
Transitional Land Use	Refers to land uses of intermediate intensity that act as a buffer between incompatible uses such as those that protect residential developments from the adverse impacts of industrial sites.
Unsubdivided Quarter Section	Refers to a quarter section that has not been subdivided, except for road widening, a public or quasi public use or for the purposes of an oil or gas well, pipeline or installation incidental to a pipeline, OR may refer to a parcel of land that is legally and physically severed from the balance of a quarter section and which constitutes more than one-half of the area of that quarter section.