

Town of Eckville/Lacombe County
INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Note: Sections and policies that include edits are highlighted and starred. Updated photos are starred. For more information, please contact Lacombe County Planning Services.

Town of Eckville

LACOMBE COUNTY

2026 DRAFT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLAN BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Intermunicipal planning is an ongoing effort between two or more municipalities to make land use planning decisions in a manner that reflects the mutual and individual interests of the affected municipalities. An Intermunicipal Development Plan is a broad-based policy document that is designed to ensure that development surrounding an urban municipality takes place in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner without significant unnecessary costs and unacceptable negative impacts on either municipality. It recognizes the difficult challenges facing both municipalities as they try to deal with growth pressures in a way that is mutually beneficial. An Intermunicipal Development Plan is expected to provide both municipalities with a comprehensive long range land use based plan that reduces potential development conflicts, addresses other community concerns and provides a framework for ongoing consultation in areas of mutual interest. An Intermunicipal Development Plan is a mandatory document intended to supplement an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework between both municipalities, in accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act*.

Land use planning decisions made by the Town and County affect and influence one another. Some of the prominent planning issues include potential conflicts between urban and rural land uses in proximity to one another and coordinating infrastructure and the provision of services. Positive relations, achieved through communication and consultation, can provide many opportunities to share resources, achieve economic development goals and reduce the costs of providing municipal and community services.

In February 2026, the Town of Eckville and Lacombe County re-assembled the steering committee to review the plan adopted in 2008, and last updated in 2017. The steering committee consists of two Councillors from each municipality, with administrative support from Lacombe County's Manager and Director of Planning Services and the Town of Eckville's Chief Administrative Officer. The Committee, with assistance from municipal staff, consulted with residents and landowners to review the 2017 Intermunicipal Development Plan update, with a planning horizon of 30 years. This plan will, at a very broad scale, guide future growth for both municipalities and provide a forum for intermunicipal discussion and collaboration as development occurs in and around the urban fringe of the Town of Eckville.

Usually focused on lands in and around an urban municipality, the plan attempts to deal with growth pressures in an equitable way that minimizes conflict, infrastructure costs, and addresses the respective visions of both municipalities. It provides a level of consistency and opportunity for conflict resolution as land use decisions by either municipality can have a significant and long-term impact on the adjacent municipality. An Intermunicipal Development Plan attempts to protect environmentally significant areas while still accommodating the demands of growing municipalities. An Intermunicipal Development Plan may also identify opportunities for joint economic development in order to maximize economic benefits that otherwise may not have been achievable by the municipalities on their own.

1.2 ENABLING LEGISLATION

The *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000 cM-26 (as amended) outlines the enabling legislation for the creation of an Intermunicipal Development Plan in the following sections:

631(1) Two or more councils of municipalities that have common boundaries that are not members of a growth region as defined in section 708.01 must, by each passing a bylaw in accordance with this Part or in accordance with sections 12 and 692, adopt an intermunicipal development plan to include those areas of land lying within the boundaries of the municipalities as they consider necessary.

(2) Subsection (1) does not require municipalities to adopt an intermunicipal development plan with each other if they agree that they do not require one, but any of the municipalities may revoke its agreement at any time by giving written notice to the other or others, and where that notice is given the municipalities must comply with subsection (1) within one year from the date of the notice unless an exemption is ordered under subsection (3).

(3) Despite subsection (1), the Minister may, by order, exempt one or more councils from the requirement to adopt an intermunicipal development plan, and the order may contain any terms and conditions that the Minister considers necessary.

(4) Municipalities that are required under subsection (1) to adopt an intermunicipal development plan must have an intermunicipal development plan providing for all of the matters referred to in subsection (8) in place by April 1, 2020.

(5) If 2 or more councils that are required to adopt an intermunicipal development plan under subsection (1) do not have an intermunicipal development plan in place by April 1, 2020 because they have been unable to agree on a plan, they must immediately notify the Minister and the Minister must, by order, refer the matter to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal for its recommendations in accordance with Part 12.

(6) Where the Minister refers a matter to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal under this section, Part 12 applies as if the matter had been referred to the Tribunal under section 514(2).

(7) Two or more councils of municipalities that are not otherwise required to adopt an intermunicipal development plan under subsection (1) may, by each passing a bylaw in accordance with this Part or in accordance with sections 12 and 692, adopt an intermunicipal development plan to include those areas of land lying within the boundaries of the municipalities as they consider necessary.

(8) An intermunicipal development plan

(a) must address

(i) the future land use within the area,

(ii) the manner of and the proposals for future development in the area,

(iii) the provision of transportation systems for the area, either generally or specifically,

(iv) the co-ordination of intermunicipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area,

(v) environmental matters within the area, either generally or specifically,

(vi) any other matter related to the physical, social or economic development of the area that the councils consider necessary,

and

(b) must include

(i) A procedure to be used to resolve or attempt to resolve any conflict between the municipalities that have adopted the plan;

(ii) A procedure to be used, by one or more municipalities, to amend or repeal the plan; and

(iii) Provisions relating to the administration of the plan.

(9) Despite subsection (8), to the extent that a matter is dealt with in a framework under Part 17.2, the matter does not need to be included in an intermunicipal development plan.

(10) In creating an intermunicipal development plan, municipalities must negotiate in good faith.

1.3 PLAN AREA

Establishing an understanding of the area to be covered by an Intermunicipal Development Plan, or defining the urban fringe, involves selecting a geographic area that reflects the mutual and individual interests of the participating municipalities. An Intermunicipal Development Plan should not be restricted to areas in which urban growth is anticipated. Its purpose is not only to guide future urban and rural growth in the Plan Area, but also to help ensure that future development does not have an unacceptable negative impact on either municipality.

Map 1 - Regional Context Map illustrates the plan's boundary, which includes land surrounding the Town of Eckville on all sides.

1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Plan is to guide future growth and development within the Plan Area in a compatible manner that transcends municipal boundaries. For both municipalities, preparing an Intermunicipal Development Plan is a means to:

- Improve communication and cooperation in the planning for orderly development within the Plan Area;
- Avoid potential land use conflicts resulting from incompatible land use patterns;
- Provide more certainty around the types of land use allowed within the urban fringe and the development standards that will be applied.

Specific objectives of the IDP include:

1. To identify and pursue positive and mutually beneficial relationships through the maintenance of open communication between the Town, County, and all affected stakeholders;
2. To recognize the Town and surrounding rural areas as one diverse, mutually supporting community;
3. To ensure compatibility between land uses within the Intermunicipal Development Plan area;

4. To recognize the Town's need for future urban expansion and to ensure that future land uses within the Plan Area do not unduly conflict with the Town's expansion needs;
5. To provide for rural land use and development activities by designating and safeguarding areas for continued rural development;
6. To cooperate in the pursuit of mutually beneficial economic development initiatives;
7. To enable both parties to jointly consider the effects that any development in one municipality might have on the other;
8. To promote effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services, including such things as coordinating transportation planning, providing emergency services, and the development of intermunicipal recreation facilities;
9. To cooperate in the preservation and protection of natural areas and, wherever feasible integrating these areas with future development for passive recreation uses;
10. To develop proposals for the financing and programming of intermunicipal infrastructure for the area; and
11. To coordinate intermunicipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area.

1.5 ROLE AND DURATION OF THE PLAN

The Intermunicipal Development Plan is a very high level policy document that provides long-term guidance to both municipalities. In this case, the time-frame being considered is 30 years. This plan shall act as a means for the respective Councils and Administrative Staff to evaluate and respond to development proposals in a coordinated, consistent and efficient manner.

While the Intermunicipal Development Plan is intended as a long-term planning document, it is assumed that it will evolve over time as it undergoes periodic monitoring, review and amendments to ensure that it remains current and relevant to the issues affecting both municipalities.

As a broad policy document, the *Municipal Government Act*, in addition to good planning principles, requires that the respective Concept Plans and Area Structure Plans having effect over part of the Plan Area shall be consistent with the policies of the Intermunicipal Development Plan. These plans are more specific in nature and provide more detailed guidance on land use planning decisions. The Intermunicipal Development Plan generally provides broad direction with the expectation of more detailed planning at a later date, unless a more detailed plan is already in place.

1.6 INTERPRETATION OF THE PLAN

The plan is divided into a series of sections and topics for ease of reference and use. In interpreting and implementing the plan it is important to recognize that it is a long-term document and that it will take many years to reach the full extent of the land use concept it sets out. Interpretation and implementation of some of the policies will require the exercise of judgment, discretion and ongoing and open communication between the Town and County.

It is also important to bear in mind that the Intermunicipal Development Plan works best as a comprehensive whole. While the plan is structured by topic area it is important to view all of the policy directions in context with one another rather than as individual parts. The policy statements are intended to contribute towards achieving the full essence of the land use planning framework that has been agreed upon by the two municipalities.

Finally, the Intermunicipal Development Plan contains “shall”, “should” and “may” policy statements. “Shall” policies are those which must be followed. “Should” policies mean compliance to the principle is required but the applicable authority has some discretion based on the circumstances of the specific case. “May” policies indicate that the applicable authority determines the level of compliance that is required.



2.0 GROWTH MANAGEMENT



2.0 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

GOAL:

To facilitate orderly and efficient development compatible with the character and physical setting of the plan area minimizing conflicts between agricultural, recreational, and urban land uses.

OBJECTIVES:

A. Maintain a sustainable land use pattern that recognizes the sensitivity of natural areas.

B. Promote contiguous development patterns within the urban expansion area that can be efficiently serviced with the necessary infrastructure networks.

C. Promote an equitable distribution of the indirect costs and benefits of growth between the two municipalities.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

2.1 Future development shall be planned, in accordance with the land uses illustrated on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept**.

2.2 The Town and County shall continue the implementation of cost-sharing arrangements addressing an equitable distribution of the costs associated with increased growth and development.

2.3 Both municipalities shall provide a variety of development opportunities within their jurisdiction maintaining the character of their respective communities.

2.4 Future development shall be planned in consultation with the Alberta Energy Regulator to mitigate any potential adverse impacts of the oil and gas industry on public safety.



3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT



3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

GOAL:

To locate development in a manner that preserves environmentally significant resources, significant tree stands, ground and surface water resources, and lands with aesthetic qualities.

OBJECTIVES:

A. Integrate natural features into all new development.

B. Integrate the Medicine River and Lasthill (Horseguard) Creek into new development as greenways that can be used for passive recreation purposes, wildlife corridors, and stormwater management.

C. Mitigate to the extent possible against adverse impacts resulting from resource development.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

3.1 Both municipalities shall recognize the value of the natural environment and its contribution to the plan area's quality of life.

3.2 As part of the preparation of more detailed planning documents environmentally significant areas shall be identified and integrated into the development proposal.

3.3 Subdivision applicants shall be required to dedicate all lands that qualify as environmental reserve in accordance with the provisions of the County's *Municipal Development Plan*.

3.4 No development shall be allowed in areas that are prone to erosion, landslides, subsidence, or any other natural or human induced hazards. Development on or in proximity to steep escarpments, steep or unstable slopes may be considered only if supported by a geotechnical study prepared by a qualified professional and if adequate setbacks are provided to the satisfaction of the approving authority.

3.5 No structures shall be permitted within the defined floodway.

3.6 Development within the flood fringe may be considered, if properly designed by a qualified professional engineer to the satisfaction of the respective municipality.

3.7 For those areas where 1:100 year flood mapping does not currently exist, as part of a redesignation, subdivision or development application the applicant will be required to obtain confirmation of the 1:100 year flood level of the affected river or creek by a qualified professional engineer.

3.8 Redesignation, subdivision, and development applications may be required to conduct a biophysical assessment prepared by an environmental scientist or other qualified professional.

3.9 Energy and utility companies may be required to efficiently locate well sites and pipelines in a manner that avoids the fragmentation of land.



4.0 ECONOMIC AND JOINT DEVELOPMENT

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GOAL:

To enhance economic opportunities within the area by providing areas for a variety of development opportunities which may lead to a basis for future joint development by the Town and County of select areas that may be of mutual benefit and interest.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To foster economic development for the Eckville area by recognizing the needs of both municipalities and the local economy.

B. To provide a land base and land use concept plan capable of supporting a range of appropriate commercial and industrial economic activities.

C. To identify locations for commercial and industrial development opportunities that maximizes visual exposure and access to good transportation networks.

D. The Town and County will work together to establish the broad parameters for reaching agreement on how to implement joint development initiatives, economic initiatives and other partnerships.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

4.1 Both municipalities shall work together to ensure a strong and stable diversified local economy within the broader regional economy.

4.2 The Town and County shall ensure that the Plan provides a suitable inventory of lands for commercial and industrial development which includes a range of choice in terms of parcel sizes and servicing.

4.3 The Town and County shall work together to explore areas of mutual interest. Where an area of mutual interest has been identified, the Town and County may consider negotiating a Joint Economic Agreement (JEA) respecting the orderly and coordinated provision of services and facilities to the area. This agreement may also outline a mechanism for the equitable distribution of tax revenue between each municipality respecting the lands within the identified area.

4.4 While a broad range of commercial and industrial uses and development is desirable, those uses and developments which may detract from the community's character, quality of life for area residents or unduly impact the environment may not be permitted.

4.5 The Town and County shall endeavor to work together to develop joint development initiatives, economic initiatives or other partnerships that are beneficial to both municipalities.



5.0 LAND USE CONCEPT



5.0 LAND USE CONCEPT

5.1 AGRICULTURAL USES

GOAL:

To ensure agricultural operations are able to continue to operate and remain a sustainable contributor to the local economy.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To allow agricultural lands to continue to be used for a variety of agricultural activities as permitted by the County's *Municipal Development Plan* and *Land Use Bylaw*.

B. To allow for urban and rural growth and development in a manner which is mutually acceptable, orderly, efficient and to the best extent possible minimizes the impact on agricultural lands.

C. To reduce the potential for conflict between agricultural uses and other uses.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

5.1.1 Existing agricultural areas shall continue to be used for agricultural activities as provided for in the County's *Municipal Development Plan* and *Land Use Bylaw*, unless a landowner proposes to convert agricultural lands to another opportunity provided for in the Plan.

5.1.2 In order to protect future development opportunities for lands identified for potential residential, industrial, commercial and recreational development, no new confined feeding operations shall be allowed in the Plan Area.

5.1.3 When making decisions on development issues on or adjacent to agricultural lands, both municipalities will respect the right of agricultural operators to pursue normal activities associated with extensive agriculture without interference or restriction based on their impact on adjacent uses.

5.1.4 New and existing businesses on lands currently zoned Agricultural District under the County's *Land Use Bylaw* will be allowed to continue and expand under the provisions of the County's *Municipal Development Plan* and *Land Use Bylaw*.

5.2 RESIDENTIAL USES

GOAL:

Encourage the provision of a variety of housing opportunities that are responsive to market preferences and household needs and compatible to existing and proposed adjacent land uses.

OBJECTIVES:

A. Identify areas appropriate for residential expansion at urban densities.

B. Ensure there is an adequate supply of land available and capable of meeting the Town's long-term growth needs.

C. Establish criteria for rural residential development.

D. Reduce the potential for conflict between residential and non-residential uses.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

5.2.1 Residential use at urban densities shall be the primary use of the Urban Residential policy area illustrated on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept**.

5.2.2 In order to ensure that the Urban Residential area is preserved for future urban growth and future integration into the urban fabric is not compromised the following development conditions shall apply, unless otherwise agreed to by the Town:

a) An urban residential development proposal may be accompanied by an application for annexation to the Town;

b) The density of an urban residential development shall be in accordance with the Town's *Municipal Development Plan*, which states the maximum density shall not exceed 15 units per gross developable hectare;

c) As a prerequisite to subdivision and development, the preparation of an Area Structure Plan shall be required, to the Town and County's satisfaction, to ensure that issues relating to future land use, servicing, transitional treatments, and phasing are addressed in a manner that ensures compatibility with existing or proposed development within the Town;

d) Should the proposed subdivision and development occupy only a portion of the quarter-section the Area Structure Plan shall indicate opportunities for the ultimate build-out of the lands and how the proposed development will be integrated into the Town upon annexation;

e) Water and sanitary sewer shall either be extended from the Town or a communal system shall be constructed to a standard acceptable to the Town and County;

f) Infrastructure standards shall be negotiated with the Town to ensure that adequate standards for urban residential development are met; and

g) Municipal reserve shall be allocated in accordance with the approved Area Structure Plan.

5.2.3 It is not the intent to sterilize lands within the Urban Residential area from development. First parcel out, fragmented parcels and agricultural subdivisions may be allowed in all residential areas illustrated on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept** provided they meet the requirements of the County's *Municipal Development Plan* and *Land Use Bylaw*.

5.2.4 The subdivision of lands for multi-parcel country residential use shall be directed to the those lands identified as Country Residential on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept** and shall require the preparation of a Concept Plan to the County's satisfaction following the County's *Multi-Lot Development Proposals: A Guide to the Approval Process.*

5.2.5 Where the subdivision for multi-parcel country residential development is on lands within the jurisdictional limits of a provincial highway an Area Structure Plan will be required by Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors.

5.2.6 The replacement or upgrading of an existing residential unit may still be allowed in accordance with the provisions of the applicable *Municipal Development Plan* and *Land Use Bylaw* even if the unit is located within a policy area on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept** that only allows for future commercial or industrial development.



5.3 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES

GOAL:

To promote well planned commercial and industrial development that require highly visible and accessible locations and contribute to regional and local economic development.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To ensure there is an adequate supply of commercial and industrial land available and capable of meeting a variety of needs.

B. To identify areas where commercial and industrial activities can prosper and maximize their contribution to the local area economy.

C. To reduce the potential for conflict between commercial uses, industrial uses and other uses.

D. To ensure that other uses do not place restrictions on the development of commercial and industrial areas.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

5.3.1 Both municipalities will work together to take the fullest possible advantage of the commercial and industrial opportunities potentially offered by the ease of access and visibility to Highway 11 and Highway 766.

5.3.2 Commercial uses shall be directed to areas proximate to the future Highway 11/ Highway 766 roundabout while industrial uses shall be directed to be located behind the commercial areas as directed on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept**.

5.3.3 Multi-parcel subdivision of commercial and industrial areas as shown on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept** beyond the Town boundaries shall be preceded by the preparation of a concept plan in accordance with the County's *Multi-Lot Development Proposals: A Guide to the Approval Process.*

5.3.4 Where the subdivision for multi-parcel development is on lands within the jurisdictional limits of a provincial highway an Area Structure Plan will be required by Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors.

5.3.5 Developments shall follow the highest standard set by the County's Highways and County Main Roads Overlay District.

5.3.6 Buffers or similar mechanisms to mitigate potential conflict between commercial, industrial, agricultural and other uses shall be used where needed.

5.3.7 Whenever reasonable to do so, uses and developments that may pose limitations for future commercial and industrial activities shall be directed away from lands identified for commercial or industrial uses.

5.4 PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL USES

GOAL:

To ensure locations are available to provide public and institutional services to area residents.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To accommodate public and institutional uses which serve the local population.

B. To provide for essential public and private utility services.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

5.4.1 Public and institutional uses commonly considered compatible with and complementary to residential uses may be allowed within the Urban Residential and Country Residential Areas shown on the **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept**.

5.4.2 Public and institutional uses commonly considered compatible with commercial and industrial uses may be allowed within the Commercial and Industrial Areas shown on the **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept**.

5.4.3 Essential public uses and private utility services may be allowed throughout the Plan Area based on the optimal location(s) to provide the desired level of service to the Plan Area. Preparation and adoption of an area structure plan or concept plan is not required for essential public uses and private utility services.



5.5 RECREATIONAL USES

GOAL:

To provide for opportunities for a variety of public and private recreational uses and development.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To provide for private recreational uses and development within the Plan Area.

B. To continue cooperation between municipalities in delivering recreational opportunities.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

5.5.1 No development will be permitted in the floodway.

5.5.2 Any development in the flood fringe or adjacent to a watercourse or wetland will require a geotechnical study confirming the site is suitable for the intended use.

5.5.3 New recreational or recreational/recreational vehicle resort uses shall be directed to areas identified for recreational use on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept**.

5.5.4 The rezoning and subdivision of lands for recreational vehicle resort use shall require the preparation of a Concept Plan to the County's satisfaction following the County's *Multi-Lot Development Proposals: A Guide to the Approval Process.*

5.5.5 Water and sanitary sewer shall either be extended from the Town or a communal system shall be constructed to a standard acceptable to the Town and County in recreational vehicle resort developments.

5.5.6 Whenever reasonable to do so, uses and developments that may pose limitations for future recreational activities shall be directed away from lands identified for recreational use on **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept**.

5.5.7 The existing golf courses may continue or expand as may be allowed under the County's *Municipal Development Plan* and *Land Use Bylaw*.



5.6 TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE

GOAL:

To create an integrated trail and open space system that preserves natural features and provide recreational opportunities for the community.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To promote the development of integrated trails and greenways connecting the natural features and community facilities.

B. To ensure that adequate park dedication meeting local and community needs is available through the subdivision process.

C. To protect environmentally significant areas from adverse negative impacts.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

5.6.1 When lands along a waterbody or watercourse are subdivided, a condition of subdivision approval shall require an environmental reserve, or at the County's discretion, an 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 on either side of the bank. A greater setback may be required based on the recommendations of a geotechnical study.

5.6.2 A minimum 5 metre (16 feet) wide municipal reserve dedication shall be required along the environmental reserve to allow for trail development.

5.6.3 A regional trail network shall be encouraged connecting points of interest within the Town and County to concentrations of residential development, natural features and other locations of cultural or recreational value.

5.6.4 All trails shall be built to the standards outlined in the County's *Road and Infrastructure Standards Manual*.



6.0 TRANSPORTATION



6.0 TRANSPORTATION

GOAL:

To work together on a coordinated transportation system that supports future growth and development in the Plan Area.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To integrate transportation and land use considerations in all transportation decision making.

B. To develop a safe and efficient transportation system.

C. To coordinate transportation planning for roads accessing Highway 766 or Highway 11 with Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

6.1 Both municipalities shall coordinate the planning and construction of major transportation links within the Plan Area. Where these links involve provincial highways, each municipality shall work in concert with Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors to provide a satisfactory level of service and safety.

6.2 Both municipalities shall discuss their respective plans for priorities and timing of transportation improvements to ensure continuity of road upgrades.

6.3 As subdivision occurs, lands required for future major transportation corridors as identified in any transportation plan accepted by both municipalities shall be protected.

6.4 As subdivision occurs, a 90 metre right of way along Highway 11 will be protected to facilitate development of the future Highway 11/Highway 766 roundabout.

6.5 As subdivision occurs, a 50 metre right of way along Highway 766 will be protected to facilitate future widening of this highway.

6.6 The right-of-way requirements for roads shall be as set out in the applicable Town or County design standards.



7.0
UTILITY SERVICES



7.0 UTILITY SERVICES

GOAL:

To allow for the efficient provision of municipal utility services capable of supporting future growth and development.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To determine appropriate water and wastewater servicing standards and expectations within the Plan Area.

B. To provide for the coordination and future integration of utility systems within the Plan Area.

C. To promote strategies for storm water management reflecting best management practices.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

7.1 The two municipalities shall explore the potential to extend the Town's municipal water and sanitary sewer services to lands within the County.

7.2 As subdivision and development occurs, lands required for future utility rights-of-way, as identified through the mutual agreement of the Town and County, or subsequent studies, shall be protected.

7.3 Utility rights-of-way within the jurisdictional limits of a provincial highway would have to comply with Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors standards.

7.4 If the Town's municipal services are extended into the County, development levies or equivalent contributions shall be collected from the benefiting developments so that the cost of these extensions does not directly impact existing residents of the Town or County. The utility rate structure shall also be adjusted to place no additional burden on existing Town and County residents.

7.5 All stormwater management facilities shall be designed and managed in accordance with the County's *Municipal Development Plan,* the County's *Standards for Stormwater Management Facilities,* and Alberta Environment and Protected Areas requirements.

7.6 Natural and man-made drainage courses that are critical to the overall management of storm water within the Plan Area shall be protected by the municipality having jurisdiction.



8.0
PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION



8.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION

8.1 INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN COMMITTEE

GOAL:

To facilitate the ongoing sharing of information between the two municipalities and provide a forum to review and comment on topics of mutual interest

OBJECTIVES:

A. To establish broad processes and procedures for ongoing intermunicipal discussions and communication.

B. To define the role of the Intermunicipal Committee.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

8.1.1 An Intermunicipal Committee shall be established between the Town and the County. It shall comprise 2 elected officials from each Council. Administrative support to the Committee will be provided by the County and Town staff attending the Committee meetings.

8.1.2 The mandate of the Intermunicipal Committee may include discussion and consideration of the following:

a) Making recommendations to both Councils on intermunicipal matters that are referred by either municipality (note that all final decisions shall be made by both Councils);

b) Monitoring the performance of the Plan, including overseeing implementation actions;

c) Reviewing any proposed annexations;

d) Reviewing any proposed amendments to this Plan;

e) Serving as an informal review body for any proposed area structure plan, proposed concept plan or application that may have a significant impact on the Plan Area that is referred to the Committee; and

f) Assisting with the resolution of disputes in accordance with this Plan.

8.1.3 The Intermunicipal Committee shall make decisions and recommendations on a majority consensus basis.

8.1.4 The Intermunicipal Committee shall meet on an as-needed basis to discuss planning issues of mutual interest and reflect on how the Plan is working, or further discuss any issues.

8.1.5 The responsibility for providing administrative support to the Intermunicipal Committee shall alternate between the two municipalities on an annual basis, Administrative support to be provided and procedures to be followed shall include:

a) The establishment of dates and locations for all meetings, production of agendas, distribution of pre-meeting information packages, and other matters as deemed necessary;

b) Keeping a record of the Committee meetings; and

c) Convening meetings as required by the Plan.

8.2 COMMUNICATION AND REFERRAL PROCESS

GOAL:

To provide opportunities for each municipality to become informed about and have input on planning and development matters.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To maintain open and ongoing dialogue through direct and timely communication and sharing of information.

B. To establish processes for the referral of plans, amendments and applications affecting lands of mutual interest.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

8.2.1 Each municipality shall share with the other information, data or studies, road plans and utility plans that may have implications for the Plan Area.

8.2.2 Each municipality shall refer to the other proposed statutory plans, concept plans, land use bylaws and amendments to any of these documents where such proposals may affect land within the Plan Area.

8.2.3 Each municipality shall refer to the other proposed subdivision applications falling within the Plan Area.

8.2.4 Notwithstanding the above policies, where in the judgment of the municipality having jurisdiction, any development application is thought to have potential implications for or be of interest to the other municipality the matter may be referred to the other municipality.

8.2.5 Each municipality shall have twenty-one (21) days to review and comment on any referrals. A municipality may request an extension of the initial review period. The municipality sending the referral may agree to an extension of the review period and where an extension is provided it shall be communicated in writing.

8.2.6 Subject to a written and signed intermunicipal memorandum of understanding, items subject to referral and their respective timelines for submitting comments may be added or deleted without the need for a formal amendment to this Plan.

8.2.7 When issues are raised through the communication and referral process, they shall be addressed using the following process:

a) Stage 1: Administrative Review

Every attempt shall be made to discuss the issue with the intent of arriving at a mutually acceptable resolution. If an agreement or understanding on how to approach the issue is reached, the commenting municipality shall indicate same to the other municipality in writing. If no agreement can be reached, the matter shall be referred to the Intermunicipal Committee.

b) Stage 2: Intermunicipal Committee Review

If an issue is referred, a meeting shall be scheduled to allow both Administrations to present their perspectives and views on the issue. The Intermunicipal Committee may:

- Provide suggestions back to both Administrations on how to address the issue and refer the matter back to the Administrative Review stage;
- Seek additional information and alternatives for consideration at a future meeting of the Intermunicipal Committee;
- If possible, agree on a consensus position that resolves the issue; or
- Conclude that no initial agreement can be reached and refer the matter to the two Councils.

In the event that the Intermunicipal Committee reaches consensus and resolves the issue, the details of the consensus shall be provided to each municipality in writing.

8.3 INTERMUNICIPAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION

GOAL:

To create a process that allows for timely resolution of differences of opinion in a manner respectful of each municipality's interests and concerns.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To clarify items that may constitute a dispute and be subject to the dispute resolution process.

B. To establish a procedure for resolving disputes if and when required.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

8.3.1 The following shall form the basis for initiating the dispute resolution process:

a) Lack of agreement between the two municipalities on any proposed amendment to this Plan;

b) Lack of agreement between the two municipalities on any proposed statutory plan, concept plan, land use bylaw or amendment to any of these documents affecting lands within the Plan Area; or

c) Lack of agreement between the two municipalities on an interpretation of this Plan.

8.3.2 A dispute shall be limited to the decisions on those matters listed under item above. Any other appeal by other parties shall be made to and addressed by the respective approving authorities within each municipality.

8.3.3 The dispute resolution process of this Plan may only be initiated by Town Council or County Council and shall only be used for resolving intermunicipal planning disputes. Identification of a dispute and desire to go through the dispute resolution process shall occur within 15 calendar days of a decision made pursuant to items 8.3.1 above. Once either municipality has received written notice of a dispute from the other, the dispute resolution process shall be started within 15 calendar days of the date the written notice was received unless otherwise agreed to by both Chief Administrative Officers.

8.3.4 In the event that the dispute resolution process is initiated, the municipality having authority over the matter shall not give any further approval in any way until the dispute has been resolved or the mediation process has concluded.

8.3.5 A dispute shall be addressed and may be resolved at any stage using the following process:

a) Stage 1: Council to Council Meeting

If the Intermunicipal Committee is not able to resolve the dispute the matter shall be referred to a joint meeting of the two Councils. Each municipality shall be given the opportunity to present their perspectives and views on the issue. The two Councils may:

- Seek additional information and alternatives for consideration at a future meeting of the two Councils;
- If possible, agree on a consensus position that resolves the issue; or
- Conclude that no initial agreement can be reached and refer the matter to mediation.

b) Stage 2: Mediation Process

If a dispute is referred for mediation, a mediated process shall be used to reach agreement subject to agreement by both Councils that mediation is necessary. Prior to the start of the mediation process the municipalities shall:

- Appoint an equal number of representatives to participate in the mediation process;
- Engage a mediator agreed to by the municipalities at equal cost to each municipality; and
- Approve a mediation process and schedule.

If agreed to by both Councils, municipal Administration may be used as a resource during the mediation process. All discussions and information related to the mediation process shall be held in confidence until the conclusion of the mediation process. The process shall be deemed to conclude once the mediator submits a report to both Councils. The mediator's report and recommendations shall not be binding on the municipalities. For disputes that cannot be appealed the report shall be considered binding. If both Councils accept the mediator's report, this shall be communicated to each municipality in writing and the matter shall be considered resolved. The report shall be introduced through the public hearing process along with any necessary amendments to the proposed bylaw or plan. If mediation is not undertaken or the mediator's report is not accepted by both Councils, then the disputing municipality may begin the appeal process.

c) Stage 3: Appeal Process

In the event that mediation proves unsuccessful, was not undertaken or the municipality having jurisdiction proceeds with an approval that does not reflect the accepted mediation recommendations, the disputing municipality may appeal the matter to the Land & Property Rights Tribunal in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*.

8.3.6 The municipality initiating a dispute may withdraw their objections at any time throughout the process. The municipality initiating the dispute shall provide written confirmation that the dispute is withdrawn to the other municipality.

8.3.7 Both municipalities agree that time shall be of the essence when working through the dispute resolution process.

8.4 URBAN EXPANSION AND ANNEXATION

GOAL:

To recognize and consider the aspirations of the Town to grow in an orderly, economical and logical manner.

OBJECTIVES:

A. To identify and protect areas to accommodate future expansion of the Town.

B. To minimize or remove obstacles to accommodate future Town growth.

C. To set out the criteria for timely, cooperative and strategic annexations.

D. To establish a process for managing and assessing annexation proposals.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

8.4.1 Both municipalities shall protect those lands identified within the proposed Urban Residential Area on the **Map 2 - Future Land Use Concept** from land uses and developments that might interfere or conflict with future urbanization.

8.4.2 The Town shall not pursue annexation of any land it cannot economically and reasonably service.

8.4.3 Either municipality or a landowner may put forward an annexation proposal or request. In the case of an annexation proposal by a landowner, the landowner shall simultaneously notify both municipalities in writing.

8.4.4 Where annexation is proposed by either municipality, affected landowners shall be notified prior to the general public.

8.4.5 Annexation proposals shall be reviewed by the Intermunicipal Committee prior to submission of a Notice of Intent to the respective Councils and the Land & Property Rights Tribunal.

8.4.6 If deemed necessary, a joint meeting of the two Councils shall be held to discuss the rationale for the annexation.

8.4.7 In determining the appropriateness of an annexation proposal the following criteria, among others, shall be taken into account and documented in a supporting report:

a) Justification of the need for additional land based on projected growth rates reflecting historic trends or anticipated economic stimulus;

b) Availability and cost of providing municipal services including consideration of economies of scale related to the financing of municipal service extensions;

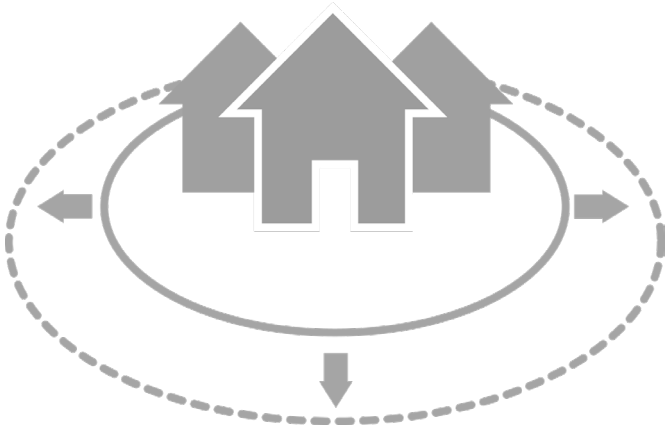
c) Adequacy of transportation system and ability to expand to accommodate demands resulting from annexation including consideration of economies of scale related to the financing of transportation infrastructure;

d) Landowner interest in pursuing development and as high a degree of concurrence among affected landowners as possible;

e) Measures to mitigate the impacts of annexation relating to such aspects as change in taxation levels, service provisions and treatment of and continuation of existing, approved uses and development;

f) Consistency with adopted statutory plans; and

g) Logical extension of jurisdictional boundaries including consideration of long term responsibilities for maintenance and service delivery and the establishment of rational planning units.



8.5 IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL:

To promote the use of the Plan and implementation of its policies

OBJECTIVES:

A. To implement the Plan through other statutory and non-statutory plans.

B. To implement the Plan through decisions of the subdivision and development authorities.

C. To provide for periodic reviews and plan amendments when deemed desirable and necessary.

POLICY DIRECTIVES:

Approving Authorities

8.5.1 In the hierarchy of statutory plans, the Intermunicipal Development Plan shall take precedence over other municipal statutory plans and documents except where the Intermunicipal Development Plan defers to the more detailed, adopted plan.

8.5.2 The Town shall be responsible for the administration and decisions on all statutory plans, land use bylaws, amendments thereto, and subdivision and development applications falling within the boundaries of the Town.

8.5.3 The County shall be responsible for the administration and decisions on all statutory plans, land use bylaws, amendments thereto, and subdivision and development applications falling within the boundaries of the County.

Future Plans and Studies

8.5.4 Area structure plans or concept plans should be prepared and adopted by the municipality having jurisdiction prior to, or concurrent with changes in land use designation. This requirement shall not apply to those areas that do not involve subdivision or areas deemed to be minor developments by the applicable approving authority.

8.5.5 Each municipality may establish their own processes for the preparation of new or amendments to existing area structure plans and concept plans. At the start of these processes, each municipality shall consult the other on issues that concern the neighbouring municipality and should be considered and reviewed as part of preparing the plan. This may involve obtaining comments on the proposed terms of reference for the plan process, where applicable.

8.5.6 The Town and the County shall coordinate future planning efforts including potential collaboration on area structure plans, transportation plans, drainage basin studies, water system studies, feasibility studies relating to provision of municipal utilities, community facilities and open space plans.

Plan Amendments

8.5.7 An amendment to this Plan may be proposed by either municipality.

8.5.8 An amendment to this Plan proposed by a landowner shall be made to the municipality in which the subject land is located.

8.5.9 An amendment to the Plan has no effect if not adopted by both municipalities by bylaw pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*.

Plan Review

8.5.10 At the end of three years from the date that this Plan is adopted by both Councils, the two municipalities shall consider the need for a review of the Plan. If necessary, the Plan shall be updated and revised. Thereafter the Plan shall be considered for review every three years unless some alternative time is agreed to by both Councils.

Procedure to Repeal Plan

8.5.11 If one municipality deems this Plan no longer workable, the municipality may initiate the repeal of the Plan. Repeal of the Plan may be accomplished by one municipality passing a bylaw in accordance with the repeal provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*.

8.5.12 The following procedure to repeal the Plan shall be applied:

a) One municipality shall give the other three (3) months written notice, along with its rationale, of its intention to repeal its bylaw adopting the Plan, or if in mutual agreement the two Councils may repeal the adopting bylaws concurrently;

b) The municipality initiating the repeal procedure may either withdraw its intention to repeal the Plan by giving written notice to the other municipality or proceed to consider a bylaw to repeal the Plan;

c) Once one municipality has passed a bylaw repealing the Plan the other municipality shall also proceed to pass a bylaw repealing the Plan;

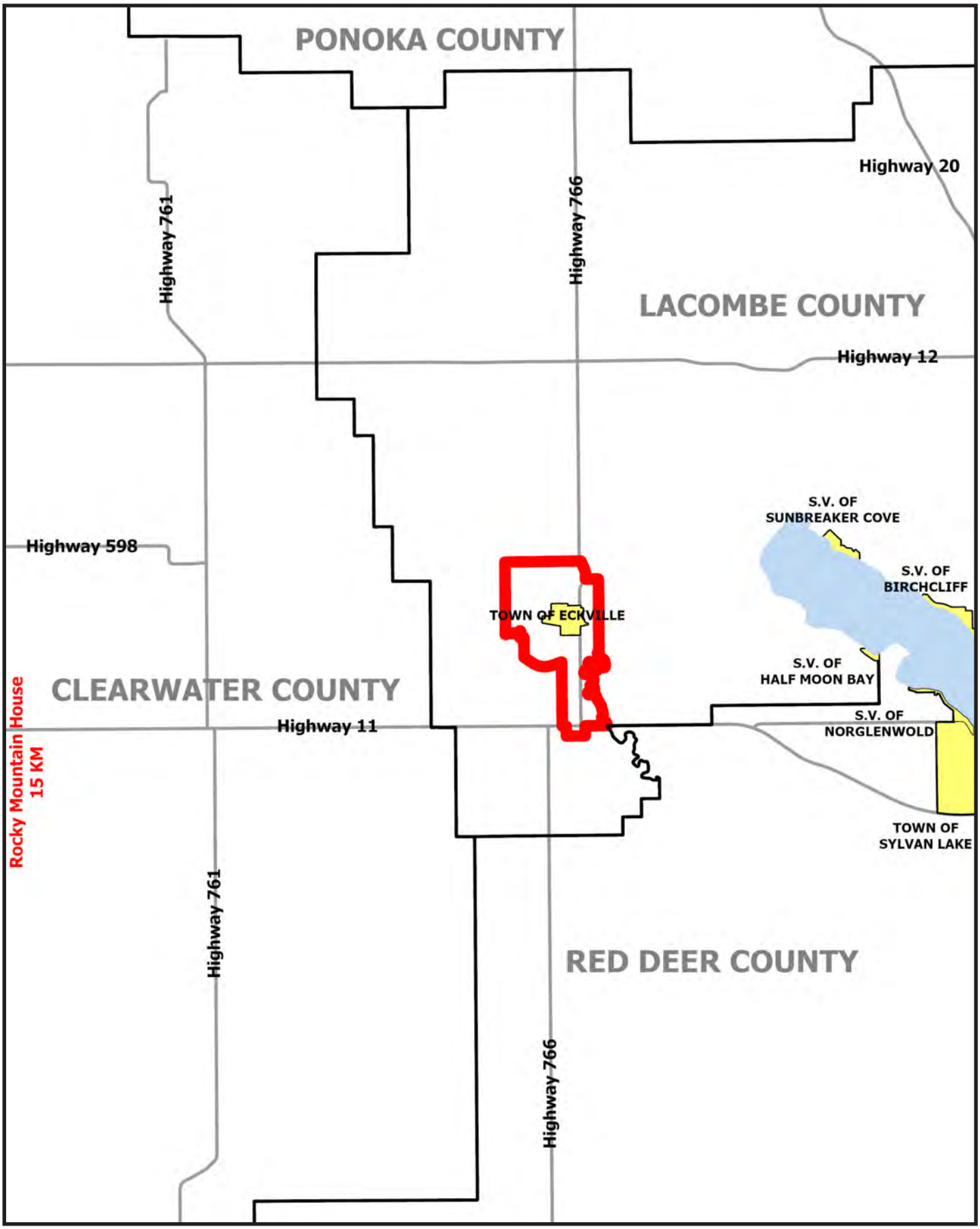
In the event that the Plan is repealed, both municipalities shall seek to initiate the process of developing and adopting a subsequent Intermunicipal Development Plan, in accordance with the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act*.



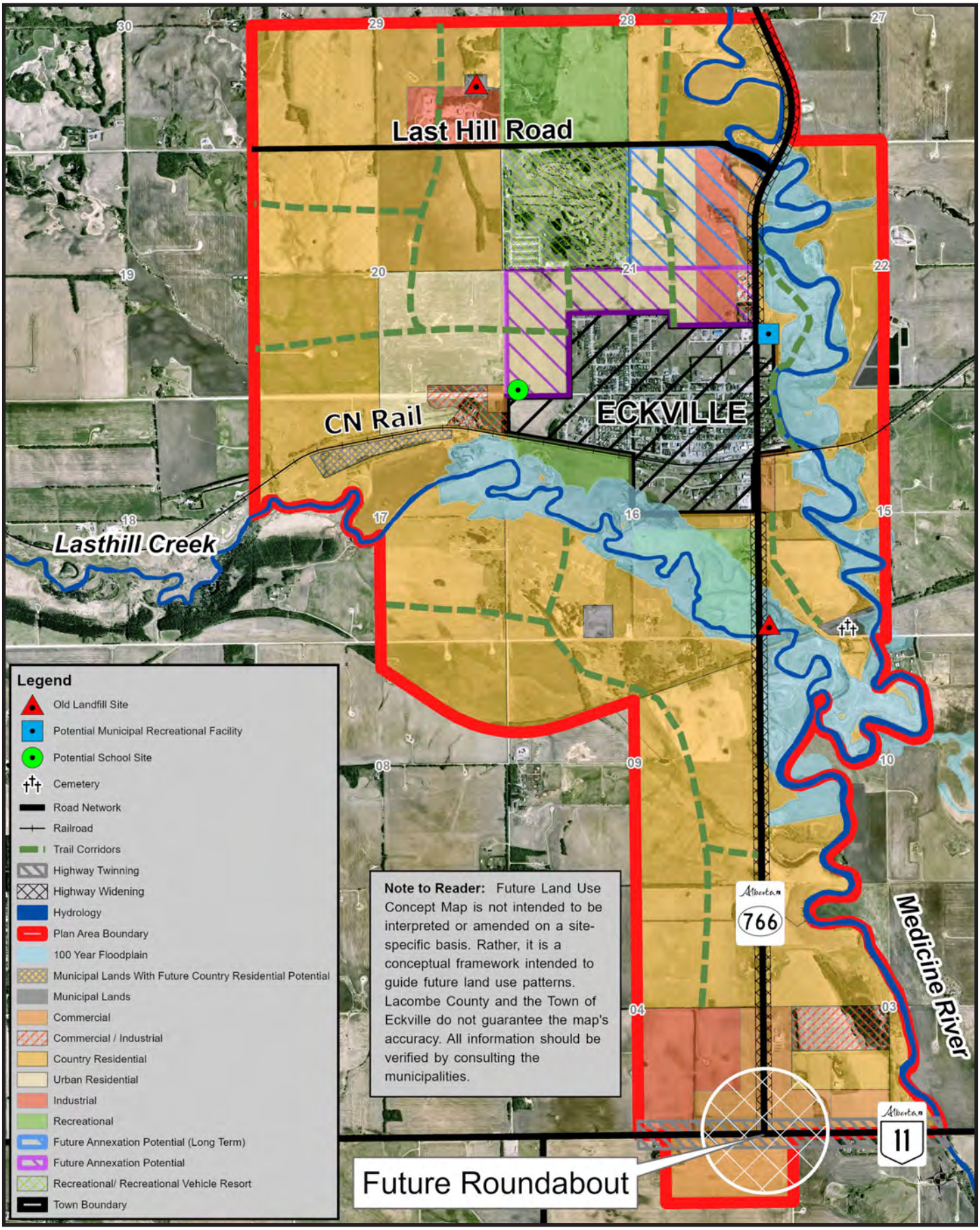
APPENDIX A
MAPS



MAP 1 - REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP



MAP 2 - FUTURE LAND USE CONCEPT MAP



App. A