



Hamlet Reinvestment Strategy



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Introduction & Purpose

Parkland County's ("the County") Hamlet Reinvestment Strategy (HRS) was initially developed in 2021.

The purpose was to document several months of ongoing work in exploring and assessing the sustainability, quality of life, and community identity of the County's eight hamlets as supported by the services and amenities currently in place in those communities, whether provided by the County, partner/community organizations, and/or private entities.

The HRS is built on the foundational premise that Hamlets are integral to the sustainability of the County's rural populations. Over time, the HRS will establish services, amenities, and design concepts in the Hamlets within Parkland County that advance the County's desired outcomes for these communities and the surrounding region. The HRS serves as a guiding and directional document that provides the County with context, principles, and priorities to inform more specific operational and capital planning over time. It is a strategy that focuses on hamlet reinvestment and is intended to be used and applied in conjunction with other Parkland County statutory and non-statutory planning and plans.

It is not assumed that all hamlets (and their surrounding areas) share the same priorities, community identity, or growth trajectory. For this reason, the HRS is supported by significant public engagement. Engagement to date has provided the County with insight into the unique needs and preferences of each community. The HRS will be supported by ongoing project communications from the County with residents regarding future investments the County may wish to dedicate to these communities, including both County-wide and Hamlet specific initiatives.

To date, the HRS incorporates qualitative and quantitative input from residents, the business community, County Council, and County Administration and is supported by comprehensive research and analysis.

The objectives of the Hamlet Reinvestment Strategy are to:

- Confirm proposed long-term objectives for the County's hamlets that suit both the individual hamlets, their surrounding areas, and the County as a whole;
- Identify the appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency of current services and service levels; and,
- Develop prioritized work plans for the hamlets based on research and analysis, as well as timeline, budget, and capacity constraints.

Your Community. Your Services.

Context

In recent years, Parkland County has weathered economic storms, including the accelerated shutdown of coal-fired electricity generation and associated coal extraction in the region. Despite the challenges facing the local economy and job market, Parkland County has shown leadership in proactively building a more resilient economy and community through efforts such as economic diversification and regional partnerships. The HRS directly supports the County’s strategic priority of “complete communities” with a range of lifestyle choices for current and future residents.

Parkland County is home to eight hamlets: Wabamun, Entwistle, Tomahawk, Duffield, Carvel, Gainford, Keepphills, and Fallis.

Hamlets are unincorporated urban communities within the County that provide a range of land uses, housing types, employment, and amenities to a local



service area. Parkland County’s hamlets range in both population size and service level.

The County believes all hamlet residents should have access to quality infrastructure and services that support economic development and strengthen the social and cultural fabric of the community.

- By embracing the future together, we can build a growing economy that allows for:**
- local employment opportunities;
 - low residential taxes;
 - opportunities for starting and growing a business;
 - a strong sense of community and vibrant, rural character;
 - a range of amenities; and
 - resilient natural ecosystems

Currently all Hamlet residents are provided with access to a range of municipally provided services and service levels including:

-  **Business Support**
-  **Bylaw Enforcement**
-  **Community Leagues and Libraries**
-  **Emergency Response**
-  **Indoor and Outdoor Recreation**
-  **Internet Access**
-  **Roads and Street Lighting**
-  **Land Use Planning**
-  **Parks and Natural Areas**
-  **Sidewalks and Trails**
-  **Social and Cultural Programs**

-  **Stormwater Collection**
-  **Wastewater Treatment**
-  **Waste Collection, Recycling and Compost**

This baseline level of services supports quality of life and provides residents and visitors with many of the components of vibrant and sustainable communities. Detailed service levels are documented in the service profiles included in Appendix B.

It should be noted, that while they range in size, many of these communities have small populations. For some residents, part of the appeal of their hamlet is that it isn’t a larger town or city. The smaller size encourages closeness within the community and a connection to the natural landscape that may be more elusive to obtain in larger centers.

Due to the size and geographic location of the hamlets within the County, the effective and cost-efficient provision of services to these communities is not without its challenges. The County is looking to develop a set of practical “reinvestment” initiatives that will advance overall outcomes while taking into consideration the unique needs and growth trajectories of each Hamlet.



The Hamlets



In 2017 Parkland County conducted a Technical Growth Study, which resulted in the categorization of the hamlets into three groups:

- 1. Priority growth hamlet
- 2. Growth hamlet
- 3. Rural hamlet

This categorization was based on an assessment of each hamlet’s historical growth trends, existing municipal infrastructure, community services, transportation infrastructure, existing employment, and future employment opportunities.

The results of this study provided key context and background around the community, growth potential and economic environment and opportunities within each of the hamlets.

In January of 2021, the Village of Wabamun was officially dissolved and is now the eighth hamlet in Parkland County. As the County continues to communicate with hamlet residents and update the HRS, Wabamun and its residents will be increasingly engaged by the County and reflected in the future evolution of this strategy.

The County’s hamlets are categorized as follows:

Hamlet	Growth Category	Definition
Entwistle Wabamun ²	Priority Growth Hamlet	• All growth is municipally serviced • Accommodates a range of housing types and densities • Has a range of residential and non-residential land uses • Is a priority area for County investment • Acts as a sub-regional centre • Infills and intensifies over time • Is planned through Area Structure Plans or Outline Plans
Tomahawk Duffield Carvel	Growth Hamlet	• Characterized by some degree of municipal servicing • Growth is municipally serviced when possible • Accommodates some diversity of housing types and densities • Is a location for non-residential growth • Has potential to provide sub-regional level of services over time
Gainford Keephills Fallis	Rural Hamlet	• Development has private, on-site servicing • Development occurs on a site-by-site basis • May have non-residential development

¹ Parkland County Technical Growth Study, October 10, 2017, <https://www.parklandcounty.com/en/county-office/Technical-Growth-Study.aspx>

² The Village of Wabamun became a Hamlet in 2021 as a result of dissolution. It has been designated priority growth status based on high-level comparisons.

Methodology

Parkland County engaged MNP LLP (comprised of MNP LLP, Trend Research and zag creative — together, the “project team”) to undertake the work required to develop the HRS. To assess and understand both the current and future needs of the County’s hamlets, the project team conducted a series of work activities. The table below provides an overview of the main activities that contributed to the development of the HRS.

Activity	Description
Comprehensive Document Review	A comprehensive document review was conducted to inform the HRS with a thorough understanding of all previous analysis of the hamlets, including the services they receive and the socio-cultural context in which they exist. The document review provided insight into the current state of the hamlets’ current services, service levels, amenities, and populations. Numerous County-wide studies and reports, including key planning documents, were also reviewed for their relevance to the hamlets and the HRS. The three pillars identified in the Strategy Overview section of this document were identified as a result of this document review.
Initial Qualitative Phone Survey	In June of 2020, a phone survey was conducted with a random selection of hamlet residents and business owners. Through a series of qualitative questions, this survey captured resident and business owners’ understanding of County services, satisfaction with County services, key values and areas for potential improvement or increased focus, and basic demographic information. The results of this survey guided the subsequent service area analysis, and the development of the broad quantitative phone survey conducted a year later in June 2021. A detailed report on the findings from this survey can be found in Appendix A.
Service Standards Development	Representatives from all County service areas were engaged in a series of interviews to review and validate the service area details captured through document review and the qualitative survey. County administration provided insights into the possibility and practicality of enhancing or altering internal service levels and processes, as well as perspectives on resident needs and wants. These details were compiled into a service standards document which can be found in Appendix B.

Activity	Description
Hamlet Service Area Budget Analysis	A high-level analysis of the County’s budget per service area was conducted to gain an understanding of where and how the County currently invests in the services they offer. Aside from capital costs for specific infrastructure projects, identifying the costs directly associated with services in the hamlets is not possible using the data/information currently collected and compiled by County personnel.
Service Area Analysis And Priority Service Area Rankings	The results of the above project activities informed a formal service area analysis, which included scoring services against key criteria and weighting of the criteria to reflect a prioritized list of service areas most important to hamlet residents and/or with the most opportunity for change/improvement. This analysis led to the confirmation and finalization of the three pillars outlined in the Strategy Overview section of this document. The results of this analysis can be found in Appendix C.
Broad Hamlet Resident Phone Survey	Following the service area analysis, a broad phone survey was conducted with 127 residents from all Parkland County’s hamlets, excluding Wabamun ² . This survey further assessed resident priorities, interest for service level adjustments, key values and general demographics. A detailed report on the findings from this survey can be found in Appendix D.
Website Survey	In efforts to reach additional County citizens, an additional survey was posted to the County’s website to capture broader public feedback on the services residents are provided with in hamlets. This survey was open to all ratepayers, including those outside hamlet communities or their surrounding rural areas. A summary of these results is provided in Appendix E.
Identification Of Priority Service Areas	The results of the service area analysis, the external public engagement, the internal stakeholder engagement, and the previous reports/studies were further compared and analyzed to confirm the key areas for service level adjustments and other supporting initiatives. These key areas are emphasized in the HRS as the services that advance the three key pillars of the strategy: Hamlet Identity, Economic Development and Community Growth and Quality of Life. A summary of the results is provided in Appendix B.



Service Area Analysis

In order to identify key areas for adjustments and improvement considerations, the County's services were analyzed based on the public engagement results, document review, County administration interviews and budget analysis. This information was then assessed based on the following criteria defined below and in further detail in Appendix C:

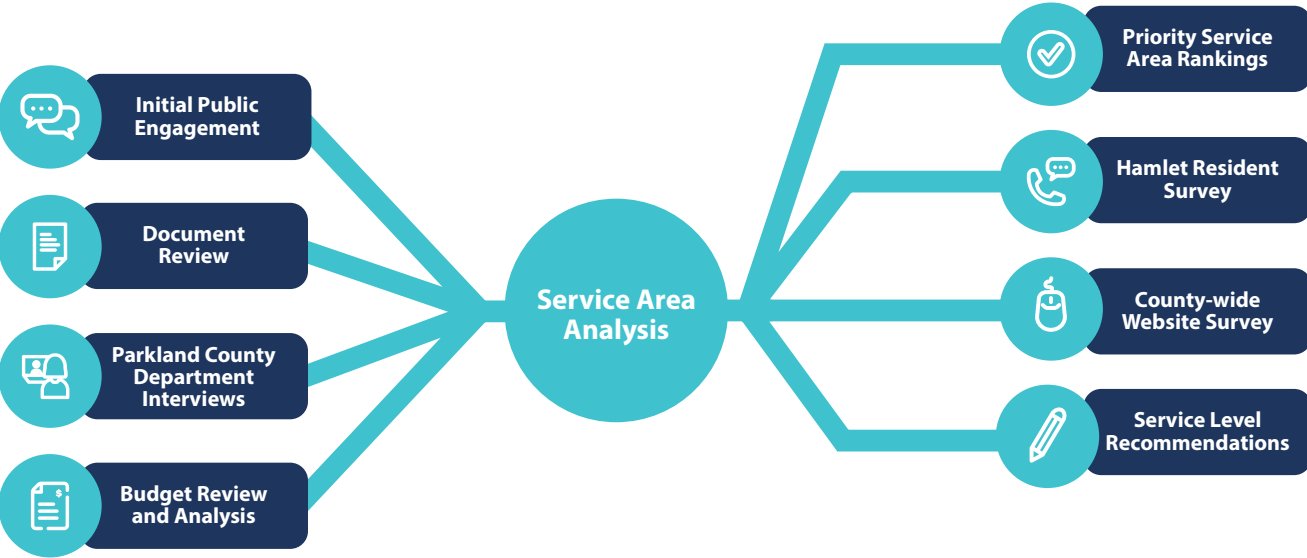
- **Visibility:** prevalence of service to residents
- **Satisfaction:** resident satisfaction with the service received
- **Change:** level of resident desire for change and ability of administration to implement change to services which could be impacted by regulations, complexity, or costs
- **Budget:** percent of taxation, grant dollars, or user fee budget allocated to the service
- **Impact:** perceived impact of services on resident quality of life

- **Service Level Ranking:** internally assessed service level categorization
- **Relevance to Strategic Plan:** amount of alignment a service area has to the County's strategic goals and objectives

Each service area was scored against each criteria resulting in a weighted total score. This allowed for the identification of three service area groups outlined in the table below. Services with the greatest ability to be changed/adjusted, directly impact residents' quality of life, and identified as areas with lower resident satisfaction fell into the Priority A and B categories. Most infrastructure services fell into Group C, largely due to the lower level of visibility in residents' quality of life, and/or the complexity associated with improvements for these services, including vast capital planning, budget, and legislated requirements.

Priority A	Priority B	Group C
Economic Development	Tourism	Engineering
Roads	Beautification	Drainage
Connected Communities	Emergency Services	Solid Waste
Recreation and Natural Areas	Planning and Land Use	Water & Wastewater

Analysis Overview





Community Perspective

"The folks living in the hamlets should have a large voice in the future of their hamlet. If consensus upon hamlet upgrades is wanted by hamlet residents they should be given some long term visibility how their taxes will be affected."
— Hamlet Resident

Public Engagement

The public engagement component of this initiative included three stages:



Initial qualitative phone survey with a sample group of County residents to identify high-level resident needs and service areas with opportunity for improvement.

Detailed qualitative service analysis phone survey with County residents to reach the broader population and identify hamlet-specific needs.

Online feedback survey to allow hamlet and non-hamlet County residents to provide additional feedback on County provided services.

Throughout these surveys, we were able to reach a total of 298 residents. It should be noted that residents were provided with a list of the hamlets within the County and self-identified which hamlet they reside in or near (if any), addresses were not verified as part of this process. Additionally, the website survey in stage 3, was open to all residents, including those who had previously participated in stages 1 and 2.

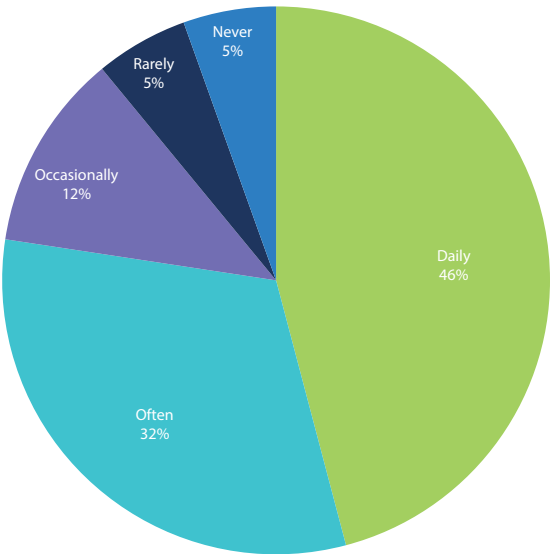
Hamlet	Residents Reached		
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Entwistle	2	8	5
Wabamun ²	Out of Scope		7
Tomahawk	6	23	5
Duffield	2	14	6
Carvel	5	54	22
Gainford	2	15	6
Keephills	1	9	0
Fallis	1	4	3
Non Hamlet Residents	1	0	97
Total	20	127	151

What We Heard

Survey questionnaires were developed that focused on assessing residents’:

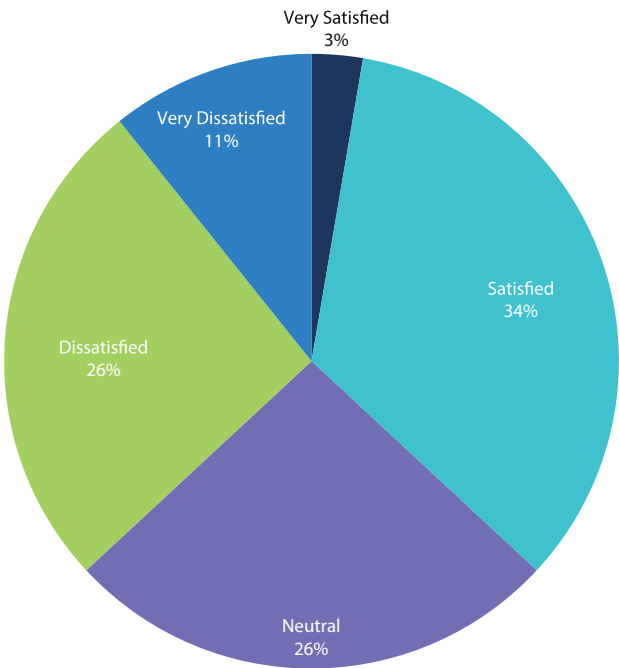
- 1. Perception of the state of the County’s economy
 - 2. Community values
 - 3. Desire for additional community development
 - 4. Overall satisfaction with County services
 - 5. Satisfaction with individual service levels
- The complete set of interview questions are included in each respective appendix.

How often do you use the services and amenities in one or more of the hamlets?



County-wide Service Satisfaction, Use and Value:

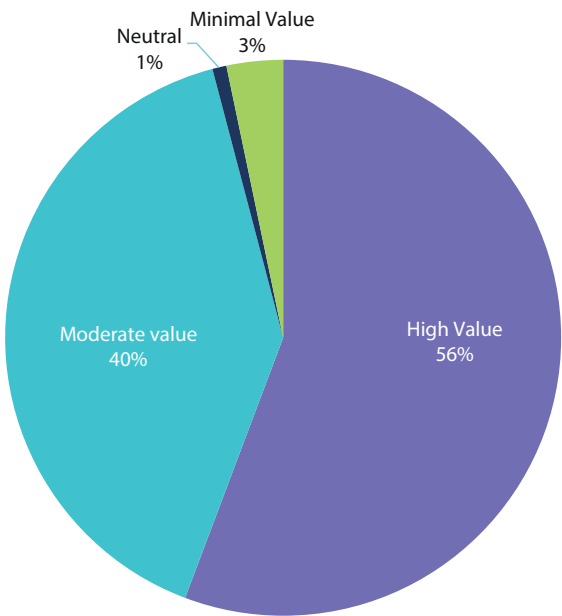
In general, how satisfied are you with hamlet services and infrastructure?



Do you see value in increasing investment in the County’s hamlets?



If so, how much?

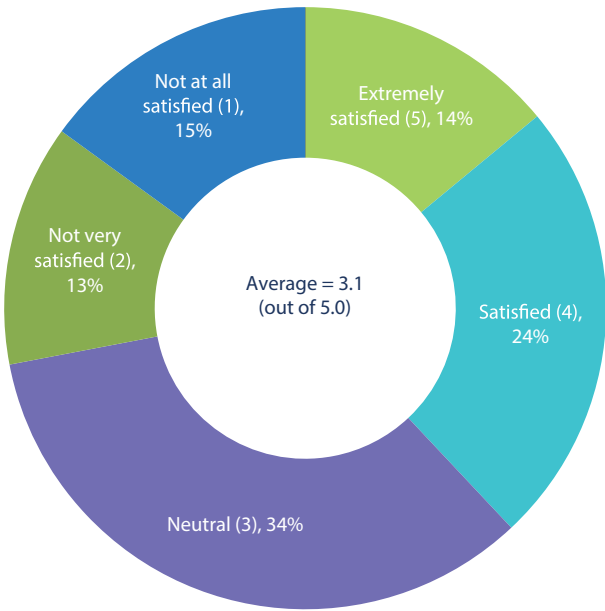


Hamlet-specific Satisfaction:

Overall Satisfaction with County Services

When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the services provided by Parkland County on a scale from one to five, hamlet residents give an average rating of 3.1 out of 5.0.

Just under four in ten indicate they are either extremely satisfied (14%) or satisfied (24%). Just under three in ten indicate they are either not very satisfied (13%) or not at all satisfied (15%). Another 34 per cent are neutral.

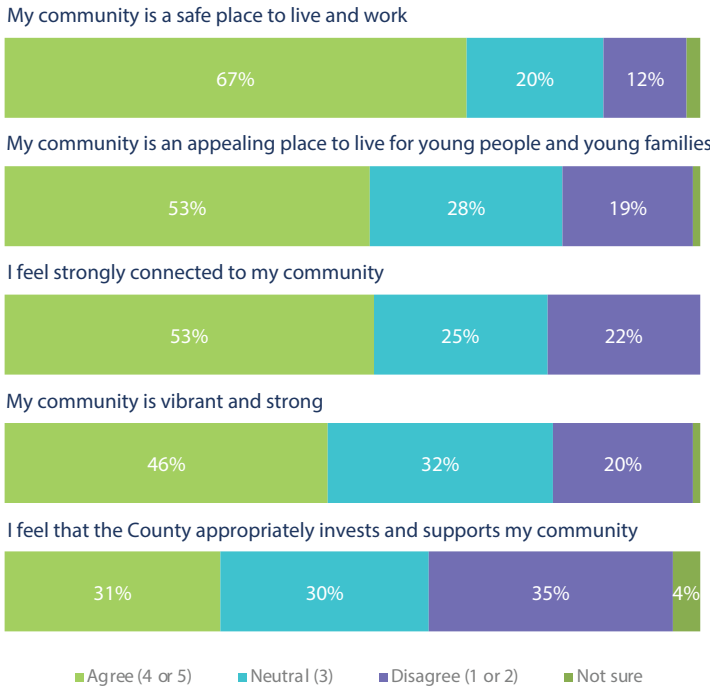


Community Values

In order to get a sense of how hamlet residents feel about their community, survey respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with five statements.

Hamlet residents were most likely to agree that their community is a safe place to live and work (67%). Approximately half also agree that their community is appealing to young people and families (53%), that they feel strongly connected to their community (53%), and that their community is vibrant and strong (46%). Hamlet residents are less likely to agree that the County is appropriately investing in the communities (31%).

Those who express overall satisfaction with the overall community services provided by Parkland County are particularly likely to agree with each of these statements.

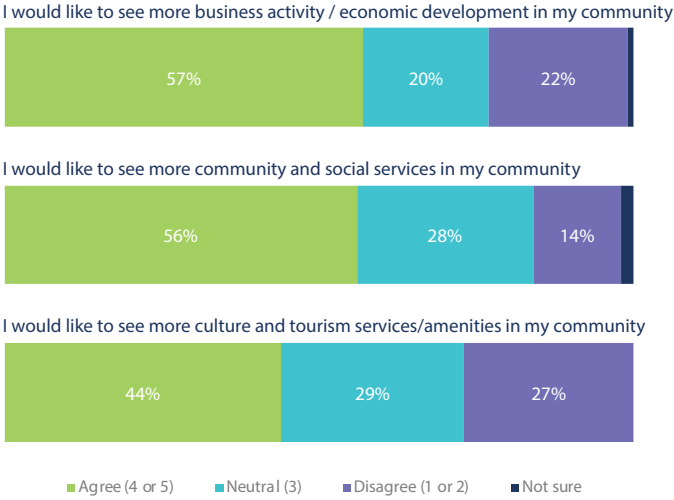


Desire for Additional Community Services

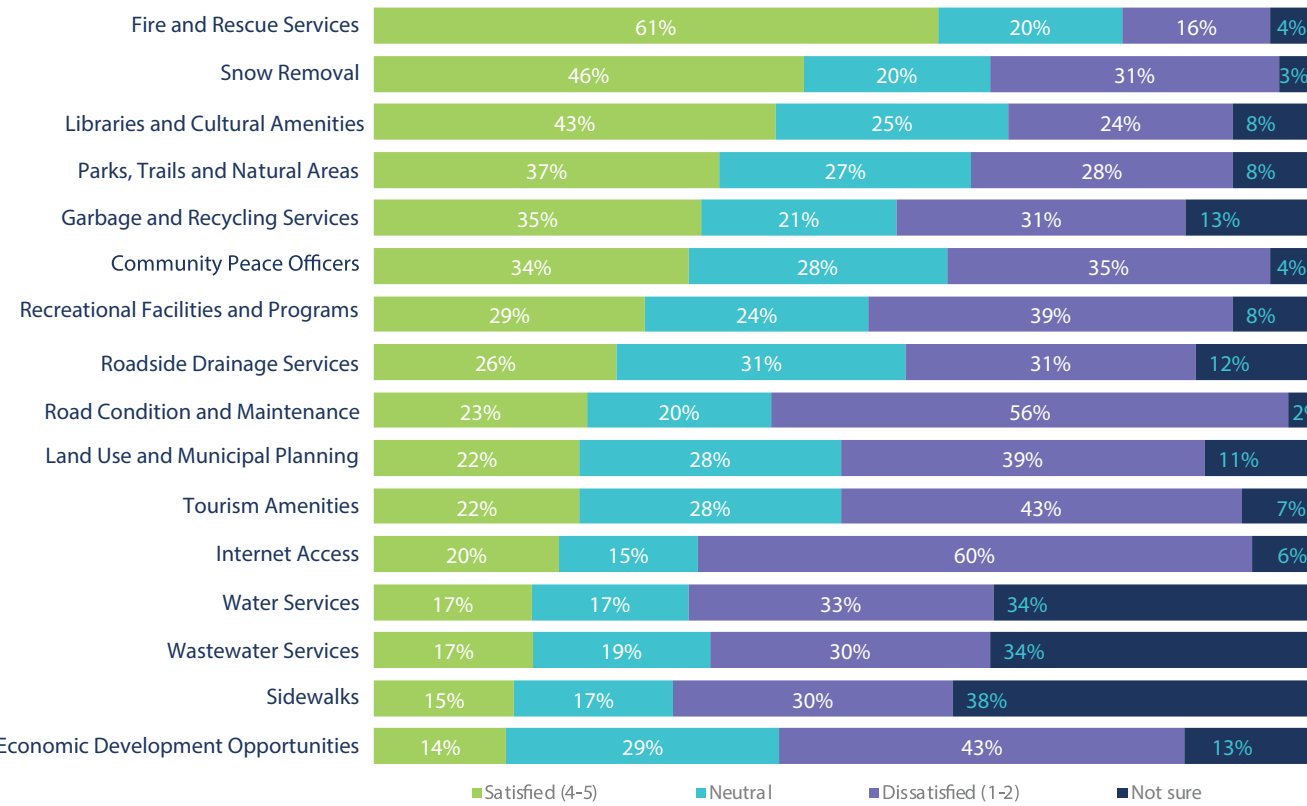
In order to get a sense of the additional services they would like to see in their community, survey respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with three statements.

More than half of hamlet residents agree that they would like to see more business activity and economic development (57%), and community and social services (56%) in their community.

Fewer than half (44%) would like to see more culture and tourism services in their community.



Satisfaction with Specific County Services



Service and Satisfaction Correlation

Additional analysis of the engagement results was conducted to determine correlations between each attribute and overall satisfaction. This analysis helped determine whether services should be leveraged, maintained, further analyzed or improved as per the definitions below. Of note are the services that most strongly correlated to overall satisfaction, including:

**Land use planning**

**Wastewater**

**Internet Access**

**Garbage and Recycling**

- Leverage:** While these are strong areas,they need to be connected to overall reputation (through communication, marketing, etc).
- Maintain Strength:** These are top-performing areas and they are strong drivers of reputation. They are signatures of Parkland County.
- Analyze Further:** While these areas can be improved, they have relatively little effect on reputation.
- Improve Performance:** While they are strong drivers their performance has room to grow.

Community Perspective

“Small Country Hamlets offer a quality family lifestyle, that creates a community that cares and looks out for each other. The outlying farmland creates jobs for youth, and promotes a healthy population, with hardworking ideals and morals.”

— Hamlet Resident

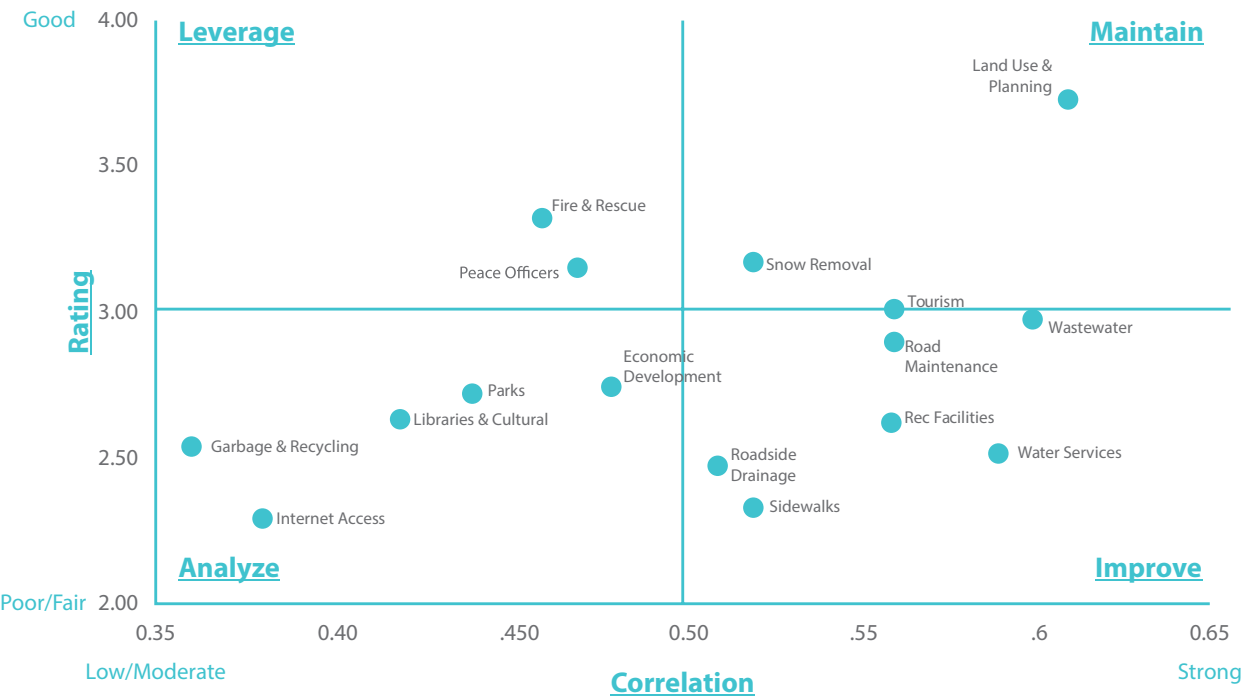
Parkland County Online Survey

Parkland County published an online survey to their website and notified residents of it using a County-wide mailout as well as print and web-based media. This survey acted as a secondary source of input from residents to provide additional perspectives and context around hamlet services. This survey allowed the County to also gather resident feedback from non-hamlet residents to understand how these residents utilize services provided within hamlets. Key results from this survey included identifying the top five services residents would like to see improvements to and the five services that are the

“most important” services to them. It is important to note that four of the five most important services also appear within the top five services residents would like to see improvement to, making them a primary focus of the HRS. However, there are slight differences in the wording of services as the “Most Important Services” survey question provided a broader list of service options.

The complete engagement reports are included in Appendices A, D, and E.

Service Correlation with Overall Satisfaction



Top Survey Results

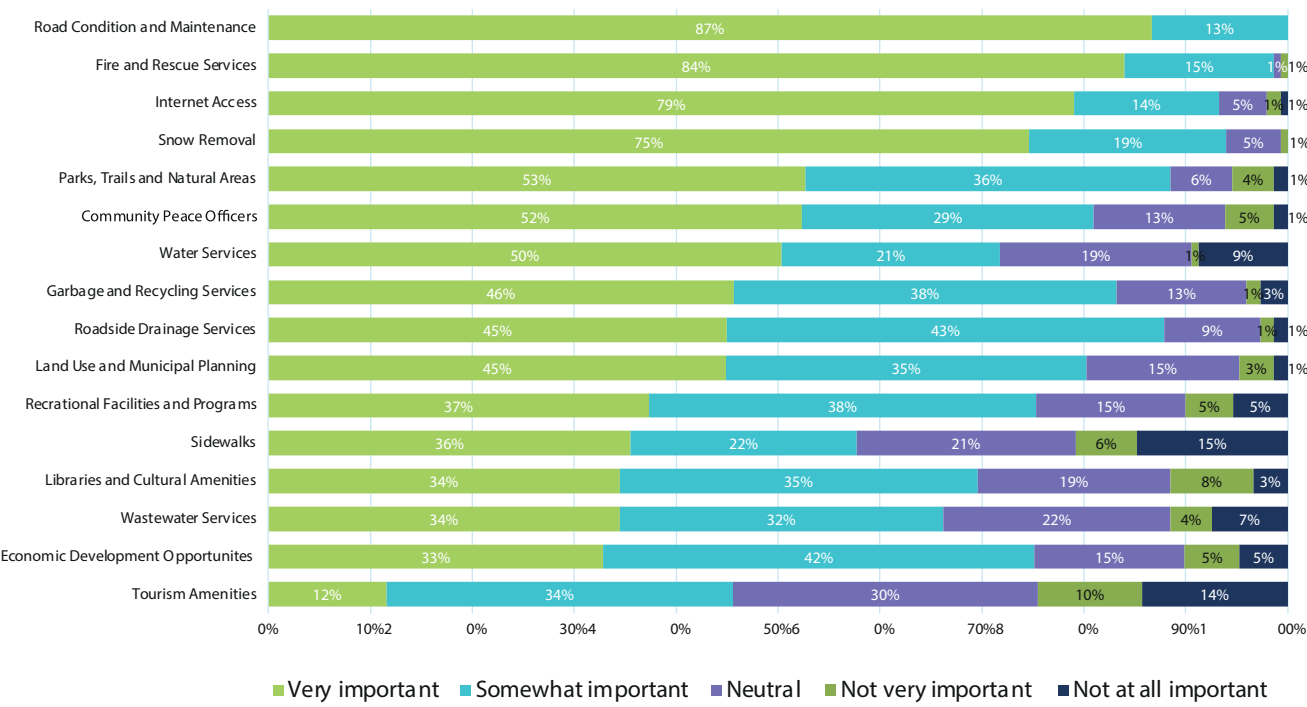
Most Important Services

-  Road Engineering and Maintenance
-  Fire and Rescue Services
-  Internet Access
-  Snow Removal
-  Community Peace Officers

Top Services to Improve

-  Internet Service
-  Parks and Trails
-  Policing and Bylaw Enforcement
-  Road Maintenance
-  Snow Removal

Importance of Specific County Services



Community Perspective

“Minor improvements and beautification go a long way to raise community pride.”

Gap Analysis

Following the public engagement phase, each service area was re-assessed to determine if the service level should be maintained (M), improved (I) or if a new service should be provided (N). This analysis focused on combining public engagement results against the results of the service area analysis to determine not only what services are able to be improved and adjusted, but which services were correlated with low or high satisfaction as reported

by residents. The combination of this analysis led to the determination of how to approach the service area within the HRS (see Appendix B for more details). It should be noted that as Wabamun was out of scope for the majority of this study, their ratings were determined through the results of the internal department interviews and the results of the website survey only.

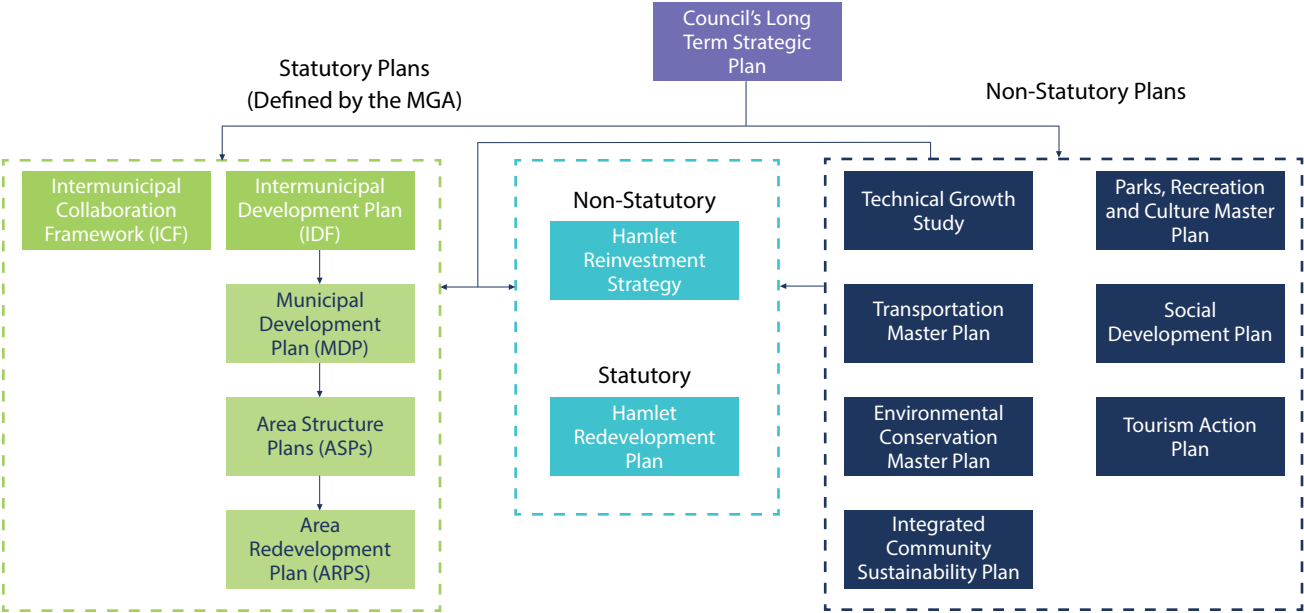
Servicing Gap Analysis

Hamlet	Growth Status	Beautification	Connected Community	Economic Development	Emergency Services	Engineering	Drainage	Planning and Land	Recreation and Natural Areas	Community Programs	Facilities and Signage	Urban Agriculture	Roads	Solid Waste	Tourism	Wastewater	Water
Wabamun	Priority	I	N	I	M	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	I	M	M
Entwistle	Priority	N	N	I	M	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	I	M	I
Tomahawk	Growth	N	N	M	M	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	M	M	M
Duffield	Growth	N	N	M	M	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	M	M	M
Carvel	Growth	N	N	M	M	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	M	M	M
Gainford	Rural	N	N	M	I	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	M	M	M
Keephills	Rural	N	N	M	I	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	M	M	M
Fallis	Rural	N	N	M	I	M	M	I	I	I	I	N	M	M	M	M	M



Connection with Other Plans

The HRS has been developed with consideration and guidance from other statutory and non-statutory County planning documents outlined in the graphic below. The Strategy primarily falls under direction from Council's Long Term Strategic Plan, with insight from, and having alignment with, all other plans listed below. The HRS is focused on defining core operational and service objectives across all of the County's hamlets in coordination with all statutory and non-statutory plans.



Lessons Learned

Many concerns could be solved by increasing communications and awareness of current programs and services and capitalizing on current infrastructure or capacity.

Strategy Overview

As a result of the project activities outlined above, Parkland County has identified three pillars of which the HRS and its corresponding initiatives and activities will be centered around. Recommended initiatives vary depending on resident priorities and hamlet growth classifications.

Pillars of Hamlet Reinvestment



Hamlet Identity



Economic Opportunity and Community Growth



Quality of Life

Hamlet Identity

One of Parkland County’s guiding principles is “offering a range of lifestyle choices, community services, and other amenities to meet community needs is core.” To align with this principle, unique community identities must be recognized and fostered. Throughout the project’s public engagement activities, residents voiced the desire for increased appearance and community feel within the hamlets. To reflect that, this pillar serves the goal of ensuring hamlet residents have access to the lifestyle choices important to them, the feeling of being connected to the place where they

live, and actively contributing to the elements of the community that make it a desirable place to reside. Examples of potential initiatives within this pillar, voiced by residents, may include increased curb appeal (e.g. planters, sidewalks, etc.) and community events. To support this, the County may require upfront investment into capital and ongoing support to manage and maintain the improved level of services, such as development of improved beautification infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks and curbs).

Lessons Learned

Social capital is the key foundation for community prosperity. Infrastructure and economic development should be used to support community development and resident quality of life.

Economic Opportunity and Community Growth

It is critical to understand the specific wants and needs of hamlet residents and the associated opportunities for meeting those needs and supporting appropriate growth in each unique community. Economic opportunity and growth in these communities cannot be taken for granted, and the County aspires to offer services and support that meet the wants and needs of residents in an economical and cost-efficient manner while also making space for private sector and not-for-profit investment in the communities that positively contributes to quality of life and hamlet identity. Residents and County administration voiced a variety of perspectives regarding growth of the hamlets, some stating that the appeal of living within a hamlet is largely due to their rural and quaint environments and others seeing the opportunity to bring in new businesses and residents. Smart investment and support are the

building blocks of this pillar as the County seeks to contribute to the vitality and financial health of the hamlets. This pillar will impact many of the County’s service departments as it is anticipated to require broad support to establish and attract new opportunities within various hamlets. Both the interviews with County Administration and Public Engagement results reflected ample opportunity to further invest in this pillar for the priority growth hamlets, Wabamun and Entwistle. For these specific hamlets, opportunities voiced included increased attraction of new businesses and residents and tourism opportunities as a new economic driver to the communities. As part of this pillar, initiatives are anticipated to focus on further assessing opportunities to attract new business opportunities and residents to select hamlets based on their potential for sustained growth.

Quality of Life

Residents need access to the amenities, services, and recreational opportunities that sustain healthy lifestyles and improve their everyday lives. Hamlet residents are attracted to the communities in which they live and work for a variety of reasons, which, taken together, reflect an overall quality of life that is both similar and distinct from other communities in the County and beyond. The County seeks to support the continued vibrancy of its hamlets, which means delivering services and facilitating opportunities that directly impact the lives of residents in the communities. It is important that the services offered to hamlets are efficiently and effectively delivered and the role of the County in affecting

quality of life is understood and appreciated by all stakeholders, including the hamlet residents themselves. A variety of initiatives that were voiced by residents as possibilities may be developed within hamlets ranging from recreational opportunities to adjustments to basic services, such as water and waste. Depending on which initiatives the County undertakes, this pillar will require support from a variety of County departments through capital budgetary planning, as well as ongoing support and management. These will be developed on an individual hamlet basis, incorporating each hamlet’s own preferences and needs.

Parkland County Services

Beautification

Beautification serves to maintain clean and inviting communities. The service’s purpose is to create a sense of pride and identity for residents and showcase all the hamlets have to offer to potential businesses or residents.

Connected Communities

Internet access is a necessity for business, education, and personal use. Parkland County is one of the first municipalities in Alberta to set a strategic goal of providing reliable, reasonably priced, high-speed internet to 95% or more of its residents. Currently, Parkland County is laying fibre to Entwistle for better internet connectivity. The County is a leader in recognizing broadband as an essential utility, similar to roads, water and sewer, and solid waste disposal.

Drainage

Parkland County aims to provide effective and environmentally responsible stormwater conveyance and collection on public land and in road right of way. Drainage Services are provided to all of Parkland County.

Drainage Services include:

- Culvert Operations and Maintenance
- Catching and Brushing
- Stormwater Collection System and Treatment

Economic Diversification

Parkland County’s Economic Diversification department actively promotes business growth, development, and tourism in the County. Parkland County offers development support, project management, process support, consultation and advice, and training.

Emergency Services

Emergency services are provided to all County residents to ensure their safety.

Services include:

- **Fire and Rescue:** The County’s fire stations are located in Wabamun, Tomahawk, Seba Beach, Acheson, and Parkland Village. Additional coverage is provided through partnerships with Devon, Evansburg, and Stony Plain.
- **Enforcement:** RCMP services are provided through the province according to an agreement with the federal government. The County has Peace Officers located in Stony Plain and Tomahawk.
- **Emergency Management — Ambulance:** Ground ambulance services in Parkland County are the responsibility of the provincial health authority, Alberta Health Services (AHS), and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year

Engineering

Engineering services develop, maintain, and manage all Parkland County-owned infrastructure, such as roads and drainage. Engineering Services also includes the following service areas:

- Asset Management
- Development Engineering
- Land Interests Requirements — Municipal
- Road Construction, Upgrade and Replacement
- Transit
- Shallow Utility — Utility Line Applications

Libraries

Parkland County belongs to the Yellowhead Regional Library System. Parkland County residents can borrow books from any library in the province. Libraries offer programming, lending, as well as

funding and administration services. Branches are located in Wabamun, Entwistle, Keephills, Tomahawk, and Duffield.

Planning and Land Use

Long-Range Land Use Plans, Strategies and Studies are used to ensure Council’s Long-Term Strategic Plan’s vision and goals are reflected in the County’s long-term plans. The plans created by the department include:

- Intermunicipal Development Plans, the Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plans, and Area Redevelopment Plans
- Statutory Plans and Amendments to support subdivision and development functions
- Growth Plans and Technical Studies

Recreation and Natural Areas

Facilities

The County manages and maintains many facilities and outdoor spaces, and partners with other organizations and municipalities to provide a variety of amenities for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Programs

County programs are offered through partner organizations. Summer camps are offered for children ages 6–11 at various locations across the County.

Community leagues throughout the County provide a variety of direct programming to residents. Youth groups and parent and tot groups run as partnerships.

A variety of programming is available including swimming lessons, public swim, first aid courses, youth programs, and senior programs.

Road Maintenance

The County is responsible for the maintenance of all Range Roads and Township Roads, and some subdivision roads. Each year, Parkland County undertakes several construction projects to care for these roads. Roads services include:

- Gravel/Surfaced Road Maintenance
- Snow Removal and Ice Control
- Brush Control
- Road Right of Way Maintenance
- Preservation

Solid Waste

Parkland County intends to manage waste and divert recyclables and organics effectively while controlling adverse impacts to the environment or community. Waste Collection is provided to residents of Entwistle. Waste Transfer Stations are accessible for all rural and Hamlet residents.

Tourism

Parkland County has hundreds of businesses serving the tourism sector. The County has the potential to increase the size and diversity of its tourism sector significantly with its stunning natural amenities, available land parcels, and business supports.

Hamlets have an opportunity to leverage their location and the surrounding exceptional natural areas and recreation opportunities to spur development.

Wastewater

Parkland County aims to provide a safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible wastewater collection and treatment. Municipal wastewater collection and treatment is provided in three hamlets: Entwistle, Tomahawk, and Duffield. Each hamlet has an annual operations and maintenance budget to deliver this service to its residents.

Drinking Water

Parkland County aims to provide safe, reliable, and good quality drinking water to serve community needs. Municipal water servicing is provided to the Hamlet of Entwistle. Entwistle has an annual operations and maintenance budget to deliver this service to residents funded through utility rates.



Lessons Learned

Community champions are one of our greatest assets. Providing the necessary supports for them to coordinate their efforts, engage the wider community, and provide feedback will be the key to revitalizing the hamlet communities.

Recommended Service Changes

As a result of the HRS thus far, the County has assessed service levels across all hamlets and developed the following summary of proposed changes for consideration. These reflect a comprehensive assessment of the results of the project’s public engagement and internal services analysis, and consider resident desires along with County feasibility and proposed impact. The recommendations also include an associated estimated high-level budget impact. It should be noted that this estimate is a best guess based on available information and that further impacts may

be identified through future department business planning, capital planning, and the municipal budgeting process. Capital and operational costs have been captured where possible.

Service Category	Current Standard	Proposed Change	Budget Impact	Comments
Beautification	Not consistent through-out the hamlets. Provide plant material at County facilities and support Communities in Bloom group in Wabamun to maintain additional planters and baskets, as well as Tomahawk Community League to fill one planter. Also provide Christmas lights in Tomahawk and Entwistle.	Increase consistent community beautification in all hamlets, including at a minimum flowerpots and planters and seasonal decorations in priority growth and growth hamlets, improvements to sidewalks and curbs and hamlet roads in priority growth hamlets.	\$\$	This has been identified as a priority in a number of hamlets as described in this strategy. There will be some budgetary impact (new spending), largely operational for manpower, equipment, and material. Assuming that beautification is mainly decorative in nature (i.e. planters, flowers, etc.), additional spend is expected to be around \$60,000 annually. Additional improvements to infrastructure, such as sidewalks and boulevards, need to be determined through department business planning.
Connected Communities	• Wireless broadband provided to growth and rural hamlets, no specific development of equipment in hamlets. • Fibre broadband is in development for Entwistle. • Telus hubs are available for use at libraries.	• Improve broadband in all hamlets. • Provide access to electric vehicle charging in priority growth hamlets along Yellowhead corridor.	NC	There is a county-wide initiative to develop a broadband strategy, Current budgetary planning/plans are deemed to be unchanged. Thus, no net new spending has been identified at this time.
Economic Development	The County currently conducts economic development activities as required at a County-wide level, not hamlet specific.	Expand the County’s current activities to include an additional focus on the priority growth and growth hamlets, respective to needs and opportunities of each community.	\$	The HRS has identified opportunities for increased economic development, primarily in the County’s priority growth hamlets, in addition to the current County-wide economic development activities. Due to the additional focus on these communities, it is expected that there will be a slight increase in budgetary requirements to undertake hamlet-specific initiatives.

*“NC” No Change, “\$” Under \$30,000, “\$\$” \$30,000 - \$100,000, “\$\$\$” Greater than \$100,000

Service Category	Current Standard	Proposed Change	Budget Impact	Comments
Emergency Services	The County provides all emergency services to residents on an as needed basis.	None	NC	Residents were generally satisfied with the level of emergency services provided within the hamlets and, thus, no additional costs were identified.
Enforcement	The County provides enforcement services to hamlets, including Community Peace Officer patrols and service calls as well as supporting the RCMP (third party), as needed.	- Assess the County's current Community Peace Officer patrol and response services to determine if current resources can be distributed differently, or if additional resources are required to increase the service level provided to hamlet residents. - Update and increase enforcement of the unsightly properties bylaw to improve hamlet look and feel. - Actively patrol for bylaw infractions, including land use permitting/zoning, and unsightly properties.	\$-\$\$	Residents within the smaller hamlets (Fallis, Gainford, Keephills) reported relatively high dissatisfactions rates in our public engagement results. Whereas residents in all hamlets, including Entwistle and Wabamun, have reported similar dissatisfaction in public forums not associated with this study.



Lessons Learned

The look and feel of hamlets are important to residents and businesses, both current and prospective. Making small changes to beautification, infrastructure maintenance and building design standards will go a long way towards building community identity.

Service Category	Current Standard	Proposed Change	Budget Impact	Comments
Engineering	The County provides engineering services as outlined in capital planning and additionally as needed for individual projects. Roads: New construction: no standard service level established, no master plan or hamlet redevelopment plan to identify focus roads and streetscape vision. Gravel to surface upgrades: no established standard service level, more than 50% of hamlet roads are gravel Replacement and preservation: no hamlet specific programs Engineering Services maintains Asset Management systems across the County and has good records on condition assessments and lifecycle replacement timing of all our infrastructure. These projects are imbedded within the capital infrastructure programs and budgeted over the long term (25-year Capital Plan). Water and Wastewater: New construction: no existing construction program to loop or upgrade water distribution mains Replacement: replace as needed.	- Improvements to Hamlet beautification may require the capital investment to improve roads, boulevards, sidewalks, and curb appeal throughout various hamlets. - Investment in new/growth infrastructure and upgrades to facilities is generally driven by development activities. This is completed through planning processes and new infrastructure becomes conditional upon development approvals. It could then be expected that more specific engineering (ie. Road resurfacing) will be required following the complete of HARPs or increase economic development. - There may be opportunity to reprioritize some of the infrastructure for lifecycle improvement if specific concerns exist. - Addition of speed controls on main streets such as crosswalks, speed bumps, and flashing speed limit signs.	To be Defined	Engineering services have to be coordinated for the following HRS initiatives: - Beautification (sidewalks and curb improvements) - Road Improvements - Tourism (i.e. benches, public spaces) - Recreational Facilities - Trail Development The cost of these service improvements will need to be assessed by the County and the engineering team, as it is anticipated that not all hamlets would require the same amount of capital investment, depending on the state of their current infrastructure. It should be noted that other service areas rely on support from the engineering team, and project budgets may include engineering costs (i.e. development of new water lines or sidewalks may require additional involvement from the engineering team).
Drainage	Entwistle is the only hamlet with a curb drainage system.	Entwistle, Fallis and Gainford residents expressed dissatisfaction with their current drainage services.	NC	Although residents expressed dissatisfaction, drainage was not identified as a priority service area to improve due to its complex capital and budget requirements. The County should continue to assess their capacity to upgrade drainage services in the future when and if capital budgets/funding opportunities allow through the Stormwater Master Plan.

Service Category	Current Standard	Proposed Change	Budget Impact	Comments
Planning and Land Use	Planning services are provided County-wide.	Increase planning activities specifically around hamlets. Prioritize Hamlet Area Redevelopment Plans (HARPs) for priority growth and growth hamlets. Develop communications on the benefits of developing in Hamlet or other nodal communities.	\$\$\$	Although residents expressed dissatisfaction, drainage was not identified as a priority service area to improve due to its complex capital and budget requirements. The County should continue to assess their capacity to upgrade drainage services in the future when and if capital budgets/funding opportunities allow through the Stormwater Master Plan.
Indoor and Outdoor Recreation	The County operates indoor recreational facilities in Entwistle and Wabamun, outdoor recreational facilities within all priority growth and growth hamlets (excluding Duffield), and various other smaller facilities within the rural hamlets.	Development of an outdoor recreation area in Duffield.	\$\$	Residents were generally satisfied with the recreational facilities they have access to. However, residents of Fallis and Duffield reported significant dissatisfaction with their recreational facilities. The development of an outdoor recreation area (i.e. ice rink) within Duffield has been identified as an opportunity in order to increase the quality of life and access to recreational services for Duffield residents.
Community Programs and Culture	The County provides support to community groups by providing grants to not-for-profits and supporting community leagues and the municipal library board. The County provides social supports through a partnership with local Family Community and Support Services (FCSS).	• Provide increased support for all recreation and culture opportunities to be advertised/promoted in a unified way. • Help build community by providing opportunities for community groups to work together in a cohesive manner. • Provide increased support for community or recreation program set up or administration in hamlets. • Provide support for community building maintenance. • Utilize the Community Sustainability Committee to support small community/ hamlet growth and development, as well as provide feedback on major challenges or ongoing projects. Ensure opportunities for Committee membership are advertised directly to hamlet community champions.	\$	Residents were enthusiastic about suggesting ways to efficiently use the facilities we already have, as well as providing more local opportunities for recreation or other programming.

Service Category	Current Standard	Proposed Change	Budget Impact	Comments
Parks, Trails and Natural Areas	The County provides these spaces County-wide with no special concentration in hamlets, accessible by all residents. Most spaces are unmaintained natural areas.	Develop additional walking trails/sidewalks in the hamlet of Tomahawk, as outlined in the table below. Development of non-motorized trails within all hamlets should also be explored for more accessible transportation. Through a Trails Master Plan, trails that connect nodal communities, such as hamlets, should be prioritized to increase walkability to businesses and services and for recreation. Also increase communication of trails with a Trails Guide or map.	\$\$	Residents of Tomahawk and County administration recognized the need to develop an additional walking trail sidewalk leading to the school within the Hamlet of Tomahawk, which will require increased budgetary costs to develop and maintain (i.e. winter snow clearing). The assessment of additional trails in other hamlets would also need to be supported with the development of Hamlet Area Redevelopment Plan.
Facilities and Signage	The County currently provides some buildings and signage maintenance for the Hamlets on an ongoing, as-needed basis. Hamlet welcome signage is not maintained by Parkland County.	Plan for an increased maintenance and renewal program for rural hamlets, including updating and maintaining signage to develop community identities and maintaining buildings to improve beautification.	\$-\$\$	Residents felt strongly that improved building and infrastructure maintenance or renewal could improve the look and feel of their communities in rural hamlets, as well as support improved economic development. However, further analysis on required improvements is needed.
Road Maintenance	The County develops and maintains all roads within the hamlets. Hamlets receive the same level of road maintenance that is provided County-wide. Maintenance: • Subdivision road maintenance — monthly • County road maintenance — bi-weekly • Resurfacing as required • Brush control as required • Dust control as required Snow removal: • Under 3 days	Pursue improvements to overall road surface quality and increase frequency and efficiency of road maintenance activities, such as pothole repairs, patching, sidewalk trip hazards, roadway drainage, etc.	To be Defined	Residents across all hamlets expressed dissatisfaction with the road maintenance services provided. As Entwistle is identified as a Primary Growth Hamlet, it is recommended that the County assesses road improvements within this hamlet and consider road improvement opportunities for all other hamlets, depending on the budgeting, scoping and sequencing of other capital projects (i.e. align the timing of road improvements with sidewalk development). On the contrary, residents were generally satisfied with the snow removal services they receive. Further analysis did not identify immediate opportunities for improvements to hamlet roads at this time.

Service Category	Current Standard	Proposed Change	Budget Impact	Comments
Solid Waste	All residents have access to County transfer stations. Entwistle and Wabamun hamlets receive curbside waste collection.	None	NC	Residents reported satisfaction with current Solid Waste services provided by the County and the HRS did not identify necessary improvements to this service area.
Tourism	Tourism does not exist as an individual service provided by the County at this time.	Increase tourism efforts (i.e. development of campgrounds, benches and patio spaces, public washrooms, business attraction, marketing) by working collaboratively across service areas and with the economic development team to promote tourism within Wabamun.	\$\$	County administration and public engagement results identified the opportunity to increase tourism services throughout the County, specifically in the hamlet of Wabamun. As Wabamun was not part of the HRS, the initiative specifics and required costs have not been determined at this time but are expected to require increased budgetary requirements from the County.
Urban Agriculture	The current service level for agricultural services is consistent for all County residents and includes weed and pest control advice, as well as roadside mowing for weed control.	Develop an urban agriculture plan for hamlets and support urban agriculture, such as farmers markets and community gardens.	\$\$	Residents expressed a need to improve supports for eating local and connecting with the wider agricultural community.
Wastewater	Wastewater treatment is provided through lagoons to Entwistle, Wabamun, Tomahawk, and Duffield.	No service improvement but continue major lifecycle	NC	Wastewater services were assessed as part of the HRS and were not identified as an area of improvement desired or feasible at this time. Current service levels are guided by regulatory requirements.
Water	Entwistle and Wabamun hamlets receive municipal water. Entwistle through an in-town water treatment plant and Wabamun through the West Interlake District (WILD) Water Commission.	There is interest to further analyze the opportunity to bring treated water to the other hamlets. Fallis, Gainford, Carvel, and Tomahawk expressed relatively high dissatisfaction with their current water services.	\$-\$	Increased municipal water services were identified as an opportunity already underway to bring WILD water to Entwistle, with further analysis required to determine if it's feasible to extend these services to additional hamlets in proximity to the current water lines being developed in the County. This project is expected to have significant upfront budgetary requirements to construct the new infrastructure required to improve this service.



Community-Specific Investment

The table below summarizes the priority initiatives only for each of the priority growth and growth hamlets or each community’s “one big thing” and indicates the associated HRS Pillars and impacts. These recommendations outline service adjustments that go above the current level of baseline services offered to hamlet residents and aim to boost quality of life and economic development within these communities. This will be used as a starting point for the County to further refine reinvestment into each of the hamlets and is supported by findings from the HRS public engagement and service area analysis (see footnotes).

Growth Category	Hamlet	Potential Service Adjustment	Associated Pillar(s)	Financial Implications	Operational Impacts	Communication Considerations
Priority Growth	Entwistle	- Improved sidewalks and curbs - Improved municipally provided drinking water - Increase walking trails	Hamlet Identity	Capital Program includes the following: \$10M for Entwistle Water Reservoir Lifecycle Replacement (Includes connection of WILD waterline into reservoir) \$1.1M for Entwistle Road Replacement of 50A Avenue; maintain existing roadway with lifecycle replacement (new road and sidewalks) \$200,000 for trail development	- Incorporation into capital plans and annual budget (Engineering and Road <Maintenance Services) - Increased capacity for parks trail maintenance - Incorporation into capital plans and annual budget (Engineering and Road <Maintenance Services) - Increased capacity for parks trail maintenance	- Recognition of being part of the HRS - Signage and social media posts to identify re-development within the community

Growth Category	Hamlet	Potential Service Adjustment	Associated Pillar(s)	Financial Implications	Operational Impacts	Communication Considerations
Priority Growth	Wabamun	Increased Recreational and Tourism Amenities	- Economic Opportunity and Community Growth - Quality of Life	\$300,000 for framing document to assess tourism development potential and improve land use planning to meet development requirements - Upfront development costs - Ongoing maintenance and promotional costs - Potential for increased County income (e.g. from new tourism development)	- Increased support from Parkland County's Economic Development team - Incorporation into capital plans and annual budget (Engineering and Public Works)	- Recognition that Wabamun will require additional analysis - Conduct future public engagement for feedback on large development initiatives (if any)
Growth	Tomahawk	- Additional Walking Trails - Local Roadway Resurfacing (completed in 2021)	- Economic Opportunity and Community Growth - Quality of Life	\$150,000 for trail design and build \$625,000 for resurfacing - Increased annual maintenance costs	Incorporation into capital plans and annual budget (Engineering and Road Maintenance)	Recognition of being part of the HRS
	Duffield	Outdoor Recreation Area	Quality of Life	- Upfront development costs - Ongoing maintenance and operational costs	Incorporation into capital plans and annual Parks and Recreation budget	- Conduct future public engagement to further assess facility needs - Recognition of being part of the HRS - Ongoing social media posts to advertise public engagement opportunities and development (once started)
	Carvel	Improved Internet Access (broadband internet)	- Economic Opportunity and Community Growth - Quality of Life	Upfront development costs	- Increased support from Strategic Initiatives - Incorporation into annual budget	- Recognition of being part of the HRS - Ensure communications speak to the County-wide activities underway to support the improvement of rural internet across all Hamlets

Estimated Service Adjustment Costs

The below table summarizes the estimated costs of redevelopment in each hamlet and each service area. The table identifies costs for those services previously identified as requiring new or improved services. Cells within the table marked as “M” indicate a maintained level of service (not requiring any increased funding), and cells marked as “TBD” require to be determined capital costs. These estimates include capital dollars and operational costs where possible. Where capital costs and capital planning are expected, the County may be required to conduct further analysis to estimate these expenditures as they vary depending on scope, scale, and timing of initiatives.

Hamlet	Growth Status	Beautification ⁴	Connected Community ⁵	Economic Development ⁶	Emergency Services ⁷	Engineering ¹²	Drainage	Planning and Land Use ⁸	Recreation and Natural Areas ⁹
Wabamun	Priority	\$20,000	TBD	300k	M	M	M	\$100,000	TBD
Entwistle	Priority	\$20,000	TBD	25K	M	M	M	\$100,000	\$250,000
Tomahawk	Growth	\$20,000	TBD	M	M	M	M	\$100,000	\$200,000
Duffield	Growth	\$15,000	TBD	M	M	M	M	\$100,000	TBD
Carvel	Growth	\$15,000	TBD	M	M	M	M	\$100,000	TBD
Gainford	Rural	\$12,500	TBD	M	TBD	M	M	TBD	TBD
Keephills	Rural	\$12,500	TBD	M	TBD	M	TBD	TBD	TBD
Fallis	Rural	\$12,500	TBD	M	TBD	M	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total		\$127,500	TBD	325K	TBD	-	TBD	\$500,000+	\$450,000

⁴Beautification includes flowerpots, seasonal decorations, and increased curb appeal. Costs for manpower have been divided between the hamlets.

⁵Connected Communities is a County-wide initiative already in early stages of development, costs per hamlet will be determined as the project progresses.

⁶Initial Economic Development Costs include costs required to explore opportunities (Wabamun framing document), advertising, and attraction efforts. Long-term, the County should develop an Economic Development Strategy outlining hamlet-specific projects and associated costs.

⁷The County needs to conduct additional assessments to determine if additional resources are required to meet the service expectations.

⁸It is anticipated that Planning and Land Use will require costs to have HARPs created through external consultants as the internal resources currently do not exist to develop these plans in-house.

⁹This cost estimate will need to include development of trails in all Hamlets, a new sidewalk in Tomahawk to the school and a recreational area in Duffield but require further County analysis. Costs also include money for increased staff capacity for parks maintenance.

¹⁰The Tourism costs are estimated for the development of additional park benches, public areas, etc.. It is recommended that the County establishes a Tourism Strategy that may result in the identification and costs of larger Tourism projects (i.e. campground or park developments) and tourism marketing.

¹¹Bringing WILD water to Entwistle is already a project underway, costs per Hamlet will be determined as the project progresses.

¹²Cost for new road development and speed control will need to be determined through the Area Redevelopment Planning process.

¹³Costs for increased frequency of road maintenance will need to be determined through the business planning process.

Hamlet	Growth Status	Community Programs	Facilities and Signage	Urban Agriculture	Roads	Solid Waste	Tourism ¹⁰	Wastewater	Water ¹¹	Total
Wabamun	Priority	\$2000	TBD	\$75,000	TBD	M	\$100,000+	M	M	>\$597,000
Entwistle	Priority	\$2000	TBD	TBD	TBD	M	\$100,000+	M	\$10M	>\$10,497,000
Tomahawk	Growth	\$2000	TBD	TBD	TBD	M	M	M	TBD	>\$322,000
Duffield	Growth	\$2000	TBD	TBD	TBD	M	M	M	TBD	>\$117,000
Carvel	Growth	\$1000	TBD	TBD	TBD	M	M	M	TBD	>\$116,000
Gainford	Rural	\$1000	TBD	TBD	TBD	M	M	M	TBD	>\$13,500
Keephills	Rural	\$1000	TBD	TBD	TBD	M	M	M	M	>\$13,500
Fallis	Rural	\$1000	TBD	TBD	TBD	M	M	M	TBD	>\$13,500
Total		\$12,000	TBD	\$75,000+	TBD	-	\$200,000+	-	\$10M+	>\$11,689,500

Implementation

As this comprehensive review of hamlet servicing has included a number of large-scale recommendations with potential major impacts to capital and operating budgets, the implementation of the recommendations will need to be gradual over a number of years.

As indicated in the document, there are a number of initiatives which are already being planned for in the County's Capital Plan. However, a review of operating capacity to take on the maintenance and

general operations of many of these projects is still required. It is assumed that departments will use this strategy as a guiding document for future business planning and budgeting, and that initiatives will be put forward through the annual budgeting process once further direction on desired service level changes is received from County Council. It is also recommended that this document and the additional resources that were developed through this process (i.e. Service Profiles) which outline expected implications of service changes, be used during the capital planning process to increase administrative efficiency and develop timelines. Monitoring and reporting of implementation will also be important for realizing redevelopment or revitalization efforts on the ground. Using the Community Sustainability Committee to inform ongoing implementation, provide feedback on reports, and adjust priorities as needed will be essential to the success of the HRS.

Ongoing Communications

The Project Team has developed a suite of communications material for the County to use to provide information to residents on hamlet reinvestment projects moving forward. The material includes roadside signage, social media templates, communications planning and key messaging. Residents can expect to see these materials around town or online as the County continues to invest in their communities.

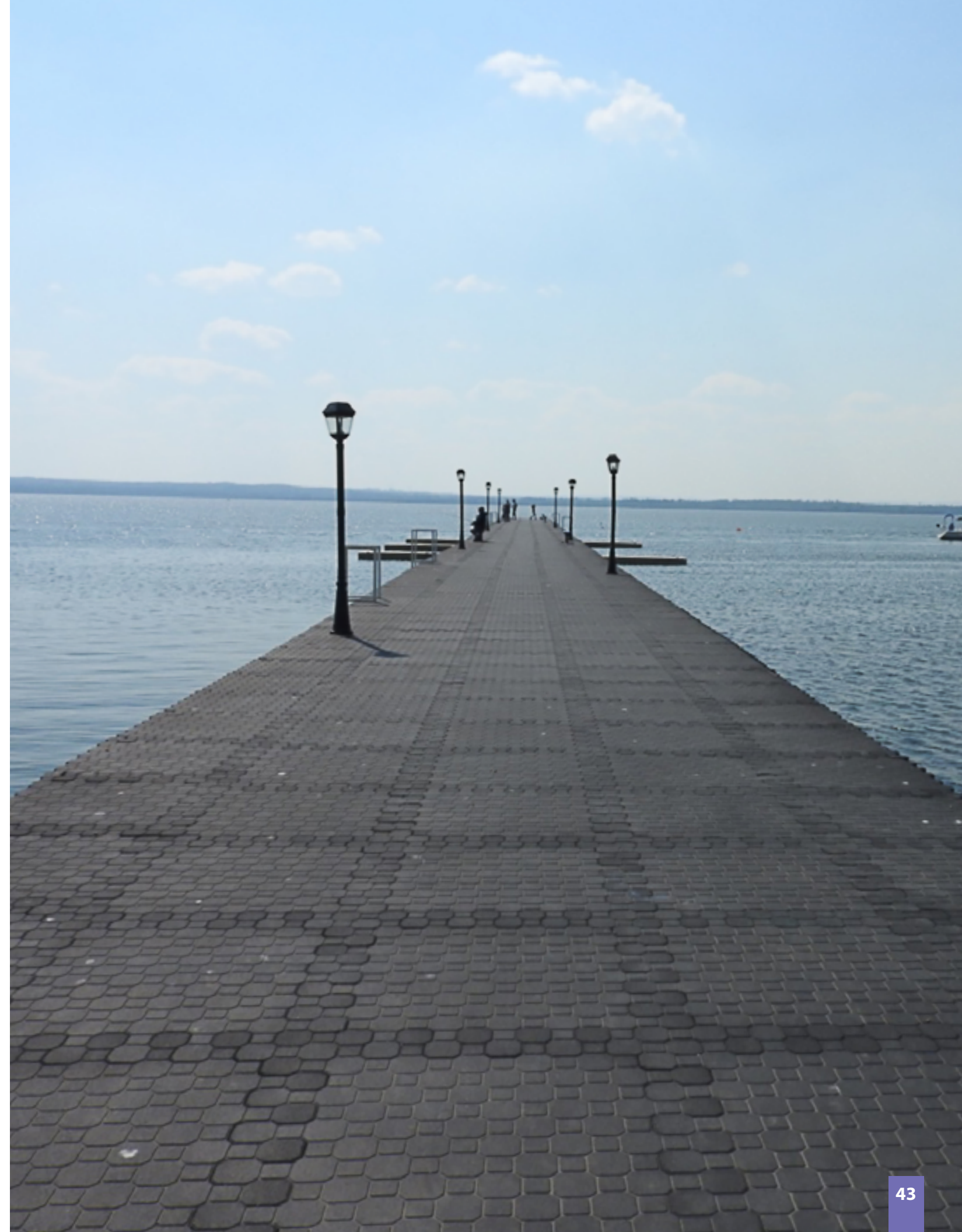


Key Takeaways

There were a number of key messages or themes developed throughout this process, including:

- Social capital is the key foundation for community prosperity. Infrastructure and economic development should be used to support community development and resident quality of life.
- Many concerns could be solved by increasing communications and awareness of current programs and services and capitalizing on current infrastructure or capacity.
- Community champions are one of our greatest assets. Providing the necessary supports for them to coordinate their efforts, engage the wider community, and provide feedback is key to revitalizing the hamlet communities.
- There is a drive for hamlets to be nodal developments that support our rural populations. To increase the sustainability of our populations and decrease urban sprawl, these areas should be planned to concentrate key services and amenities that support sustainable growth.
- When planning for new or improved hamlet servicing, it will be important to consider if the County's current capacity can support the operating impact as many capital investments have repercussions for other service areas.
- Public engagement has demonstrated that most County residents see value in investing in our hamlet communities, as well as a need for the County to re-evaluate its current investment and community support.
- The look and feel of hamlets are important to residents and businesses, both current and prospective. Making small changes to beautification, infrastructure maintenance and building design standards will go a long way towards building community identity.

As new challenges and opportunities are met and priorities change, it is recommended that these themes continue to be utilized and the overarching goals of quality of life, hamlet identity, and economic opportunity/ community growth persist when planning for hamlet reinvestment.



Appendices

Appendix A Initial Public Engagement Survey

Appendix B Service Standards

Appendix C Service Analysis

Appendix D Quantitative Hamlet Resident Survey

Appendix E Broad Public Engagement Survey

(Provided in separate documents)





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