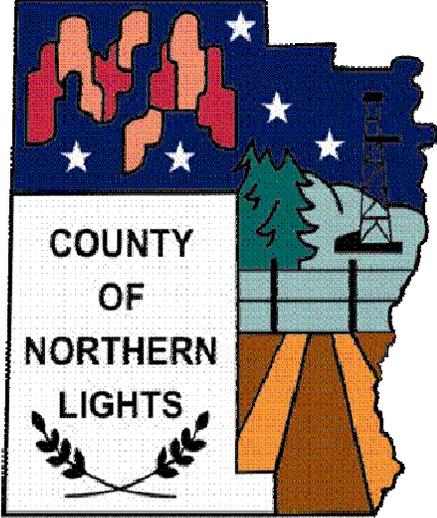

County of Northern Lights



Municipal Development Plan and Land Use Bylaw





County of Northern Lights

Municipal Development Plan Bylaw #10-61-270

February, 2012



Note

Those making use of this office consolidation of the Municipal Development Plan are reminded that all amendments in force as of January 24, 2012 have been included for convenience only. The original Bylaw (No. 10-61-270) and amending Bylaws should be consulted for purposes of interpreting and applying the policies of the Municipal Development Plan.



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREAMBLE

The Municipal Development Plan is the primary planning policy document for use at the municipal level. It is intended to provide a framework for the ongoing development of the County of Northern Lights. This Plan replaces the 1998 Municipal Development Plan and its predecessor, the General Municipal Plan that was adopted in 1985.

The preparation of this Municipal Development Plan has been motivated by a number of factors:

- 1.1.1 The current Municipal Development Plan was approved in 1998 and needs updating to reflect Council's Strategic Plan, a recently completed "Community Vision Survey", current land use conditions, conform to the recently approved Alberta Land Stewardship Act and the Provincial Land Use Framework, and to provide direction for future growth and development.
- 1.1.2 A Joint Development Agreement (JDA) between the County and the Town of Peace River has been signed, a planning study named the Weberville Highway Corridor Area Concept Plan (ACP) is being prepared, and an annexation between the County and the Town of Peace River may be considered. The purpose of the JDA and associated ACP is to serve as an alternative to annexation. The lands involved in the JDA and ACP will require long range planning direction and coordination with current services and development.
- 1.1.3 The County has experienced a significant increase in demand for multiple lot country residential development. This, combined with rural lifestyles, has resulted in changes in the County's agricultural area that need to be recognized by formulating new policies to deal with the interface of agricultural operations with country residential developments.
- 1.1.4 The County recognizes a need to ensure that its land use and development policies reflect the priorities and desires of its residents, including the need to address watershed preservation, the conservation of agricultural land, to maintain the integrity of industrial nodes and formulate sustainable development practices.
- 1.1.5 The County has completed a "State of the Aquatic Environment Report" (Aquality Environmental Consulting, 2009), which examines the condition of the Peace River, its tributaries and all other major lakes and streams. The research, analysis and conclusions of this report informed the policies of this Municipal Development Plan.

1.2 MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT REQUIREMENTS

This Municipal Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 632(3) of the Municipal Government Act.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this Municipal Development Plan is to provide clear direction for the County's



Council and Administration. The Plan is intended to guide growth and development of the County by:

- 1.3.1 Defining the vision, principles, objectives, and policies of the County with respect to planning matters;
- 1.3.2 Minimizing the occurrence of incompatible land uses; and
- 1.3.3 Providing support and direction for the administration of the Land Use Bylaw, and the preparation of other statutory planning documents.

The Municipal Development Plan, in addition to applicable Provincial legislation, will provide the necessary direction to assist Council, Development Officer, and the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board in making land use decisions; provides a foundation for the preparation of more detailed land use plans; is intended to be used in conjunction with the County's Land Use Bylaw to implement the policies of this Plan; and to inform residents and developers of County's future land use strategy.

1.4 INTERPRETATION

For the purpose of interpreting this Municipal Development Plan, the following definitions shall apply:

- 1.4.1 Area Concept Plan means a non-statutory land use plan that provides a comprehensive planning policy framework and a generalized future land use concept designed to guide the preparation of detailed Area Structure Plans undertaken by developers; promote orderly development within the area encompassed by the plan boundaries; and provide guidance to Administration and Council in reviewing future zoning, subdivision and development proposals.
- 1.4.2 Better Agricultural Land means those lands in the Agricultural Policy Area which are designated as Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 by the Canada Land Inventory (CLI) Soil Capability for Agriculture, or rated 28% or more by the Rural Farmland Assessment (RFA) or equivalent, and may be confirmed through site inspections and/or independent soils analysis. Parcel(s) or portion(s) thereof designated CLI Class 4, or with a RFA of less than 41%, may be considered exempt from this definition at the discretion of the Development Authority if they are adjacent to non-agricultural land uses, the proposed use is compatible with adjacent land uses, or subject to slope, configuration, or size constraints.
- 1.4.3 Environmentally Sensitive Areas means those areas identified on the Future Land Use Map, and that are generally unsuitable for development due to the presence of excessive or unstable slopes, the potential for erosion or flooding, or contain sensitive ecological habitat. This definition applies to the Grimshaw Gravels, lakeshores, rivers and other water courses, river valleys, forests and vegetation, unique topographic features, environmentally hazardous lands, and important wildlife habitat and corridors.



- 1.4.4 Farmstead Separation means the subdivision of land from an unsubdivided quarter section to accommodate an existing habitable dwelling unit and associated buildings and related improvements.
- 1.4.5 Outline Plan means a non-statutory land use plan that provides a detailed land use, transportation and servicing concept for the future subdivision and development of land within the area encompassed by the plan boundaries.
- 1.4.6 Rural Municipalities means Clear Hills County, Mackenzie County, and MD of Peace No. 135, Northern Sunrise County, and the Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement.
- 1.4.7 Statutory Plan means a Joint Plan, an Intermunicipal Development Plan, Municipal Development Plan, or Area Structure Plan prepared and adopted in accordance with the MGA.
- 1.4.8 All other words or expressions shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the MGA, the Subdivision and Development Regulation, and the Land Use Bylaw.
- 1.4.9 With the exception of those lands contained within an Intermunicipal Development Plan the policies set forth in this Plan apply to all lands contained within the corporate boundaries of the County. If a situation arises that the applicable Intermunicipal Development Plan does not address, the relevant policies contained in this Plan shall apply.
- 1.4.10 The land use boundaries identified in this Municipal Development Plan are considered approximate and not absolute. Any minor adjustments or variances that may be necessary to land use policy areas shall not require an amendment to this Municipal Development Plan.

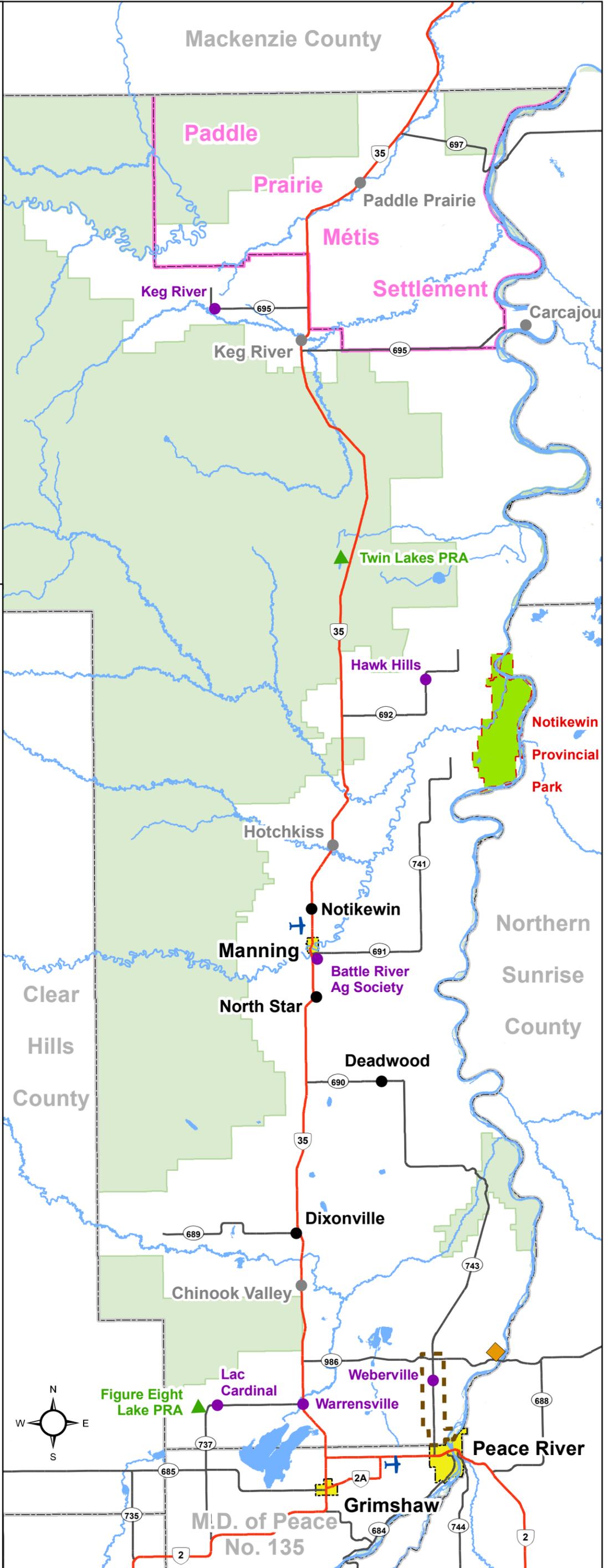
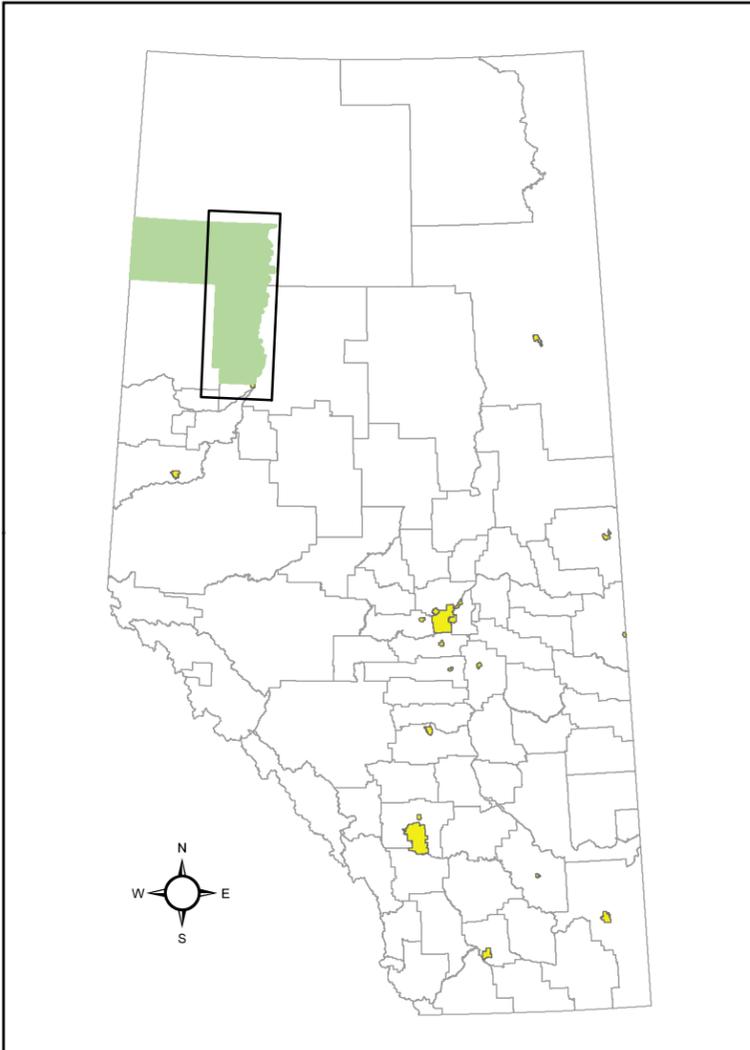
1.5 CONTEXT

1.5.1 *Location*

The County is located in the northwest portion of Alberta, and with approximately 1.7 million hectares under its jurisdiction it is a vast municipality encompassing rolling hills and beautiful valleys. The County, as shown on Map 1, is bordered by the Province of British Columbia and Clear Hills County to the west, Mackenzie County to the north, Northern Sunrise County to the east, and the Municipal District of Peace to the south. The Town of Manning and Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement are located within the boundaries of the County, but operate independently from the municipality.

1.5.2 *Municipal Designation*

The County was originally established as Improvement District (ID) No. 22 in 1913 and was managed by the Province of Alberta prior to 1995. On April 1, 1995, the ID was incorporated as a Municipal District and changed its name to the Municipal District of Northern Lights No. 22. On February 3, 2010 the Municipal District was renamed the County of Northern Lights.

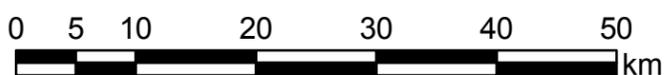


County of Northern Lights Municipal Development Plan



MAP 1 MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

- Hamlet
- Rural Community
- Community Hall
- ✈ Airport
- ◆ Major Industry
- ▲ Provincial Recreation Area (PRA)
- Provincial Highway, 1 to 216 Series
- Provincial Highway, 500 to 986 Series
- ▨ Urban Municipality
- ▭ Rural Municipality
- ▭ Métis Settlement
- ▭ Joint Development Area
- ▭ Provincial Park
- ▭ Provincial Green Area
- ▭ Provincial White Area



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1.5.3 *Population and Demographics*

The County's recent demographic history is presented in Table 1. The County's population has declined by a total of 324 people between 1996 and 2006. This decline has been partially triggered by a combination of the aging of its residents and empty nesting, as evidenced by the County's decreasing average household size and increasing average age of the population.

In general, the average age of residents within a municipality typically increases as birth rates decrease, and the average residents per dwelling typically decreases as children move out of their family's homes (empty nesting). In turn, a municipality's population decreases if in-migration does not neutralize the effects of decreased births and out-migration triggered by empty nesting. Table 1 confirms that these demographic trends are apparent in the County.

Table 1: *Recent Population and Dwelling Count History*¹

Year	Population Count	Net Change	Percent Change	Dwelling Count*	Average Household Size**	Average Age of the Population
1991	3,789	--	--	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	3,880	91	2.4%	n/a	n/a	32.4
2001	3,636	-244	-6.3%	1,248	2.91	36.4
2006	3,556	-80	-2.2%	1,283	2.77	39.2

*Dwelling counts include only those occupied by usual residents.

** Average household size is calculated by dividing the dwelling count from the population count.

However, the County's recent population decline appears to be stabilizing based on a combination of two factors:

1. **In-migration.** The amount of housing starts and dwellings occupied by permanent residents increased between 2001 and 2006. This shows that increased in-migration is occurring. In addition, the increase in the average age of the population slowed between 2001 and 2006 which shows that the in-migrants are likely younger than the County's long-time residents.
2. **Subdivision Activity.** Since 2006, a total of 135 residential lots have been approved by the County. This represents 42% of approved residential lots since 2001, as shown in Table 2 – Subdivision History. As a result, the County's total dwellings occupied by permanent residents should be higher in the 2011 federal census, and the County's population in 2011 is anticipated to remain constant or even show modest growth if younger in-migrants occupy these new residential dwellings.

Table 2: *Subdivision History*

¹ Source: 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006 federal census population and dwelling counts (Statistics Canada) less the population and dwellings on the Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement.



Year	Applications	Residential Lots
2001	10	10
2002	9	16
2003	11	11
2004	10	19
2005	16	40
2006	25	92
2007	19	42
2008	15	34
2009	33	59
Total:	148	325

It is difficult to forecast future population growth beyond 2011 due to ever-changing demographic trends and unanticipated changes in the local and global economies. However, if a significant new industry is introduced in the County or within the Peace River Region, the County is positioned to absorb a significant amount of people that will relocate to the region for the new jobs. In an effort to grow its population, significant new industry or not, the County has prepared an economic development strategy to retain its current population and attract new residents and businesses/industries.

1.6 LAND USE

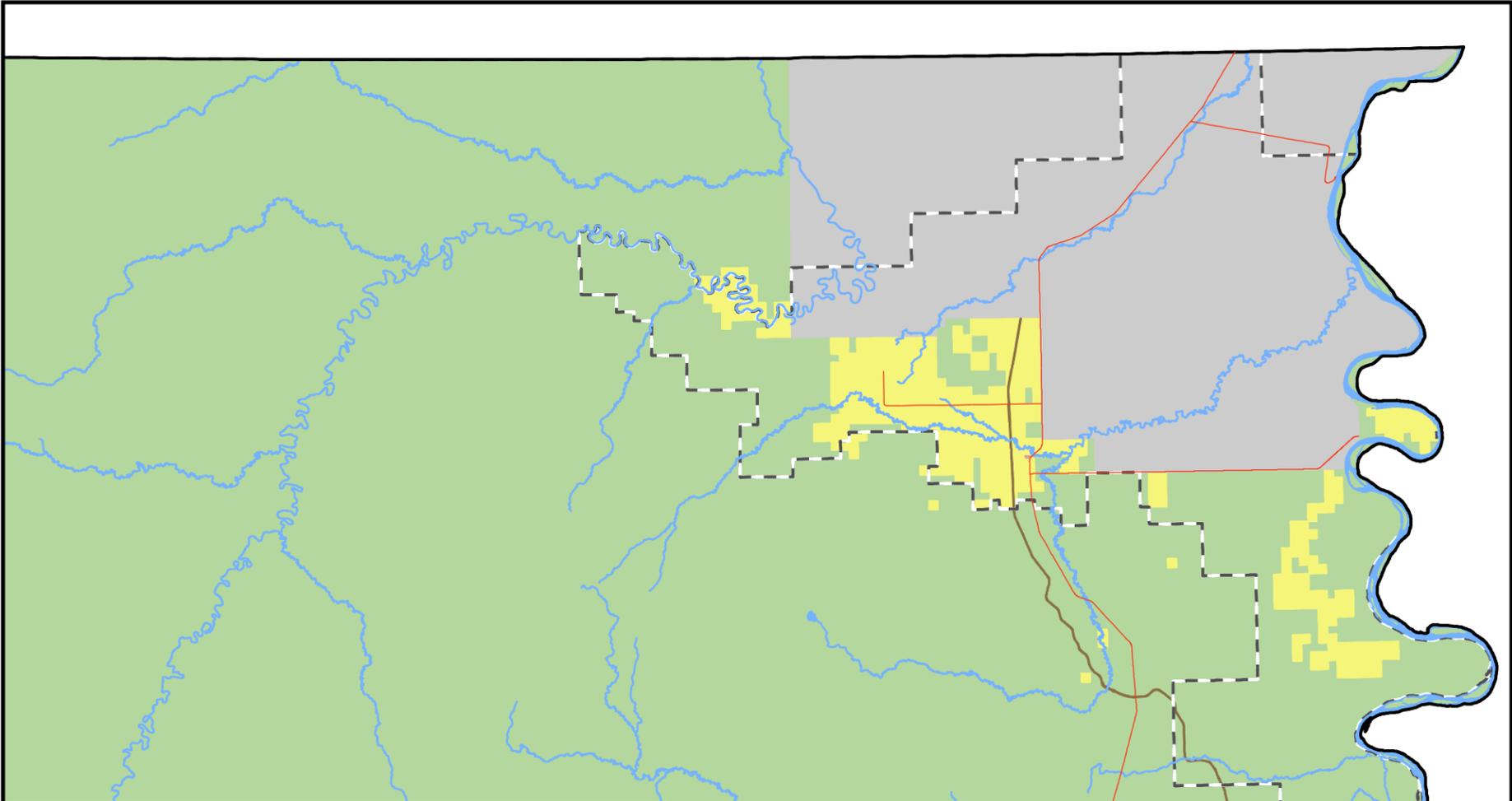
Land use patterns in the County are primarily defined by agricultural operations, a concentration of population and development near the Town of Manning and the Town of Peace River, and the development of commercial and industrial sites adjacent to major highways. Generalized land use classifications and their distribution throughout the County are shown on Map 2, and the County's approved statutory and non-statutory land use plans are shown on Map 3.

1.6.1 Agricultural and Livestock Operations

Based on the 2006 Federal Census, there were 541 farms in the County, with an average size of 461 ha. These farms account for 1.2% of all farms in Alberta, and 12% of the County's area. About 51% of the agricultural land in the County is used to raise crops, which include barley, alfalfa, canola and spring wheat (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Agricultural operations are predominately located in the southern region of the County, with the highest density of farms located just north of the Town of Peace River. A high occurrence of agricultural activity is located in the Deadwood-Manning-Hawk Hills corridor, and the balance of agricultural activity is scattered throughout the remainder of the County (Statistics Canada, 2006).

There are approximately 35,000 cattle and calves in the County, which together account for about 74% of the total livestock population. The County is home to an additional 6,300 bison and elk, which account for about 13% of all livestock. The remaining livestock account for about 13% of all livestock in the County. Cattle are raised only in the southern regions of the County, i.e., south of Nina Lake. The highest density of cattle in the County is north and

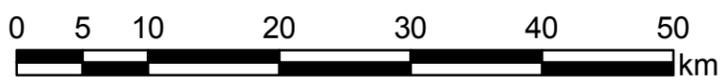


County of Northern Lights Municipal Development Plan

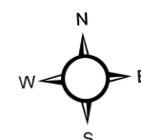
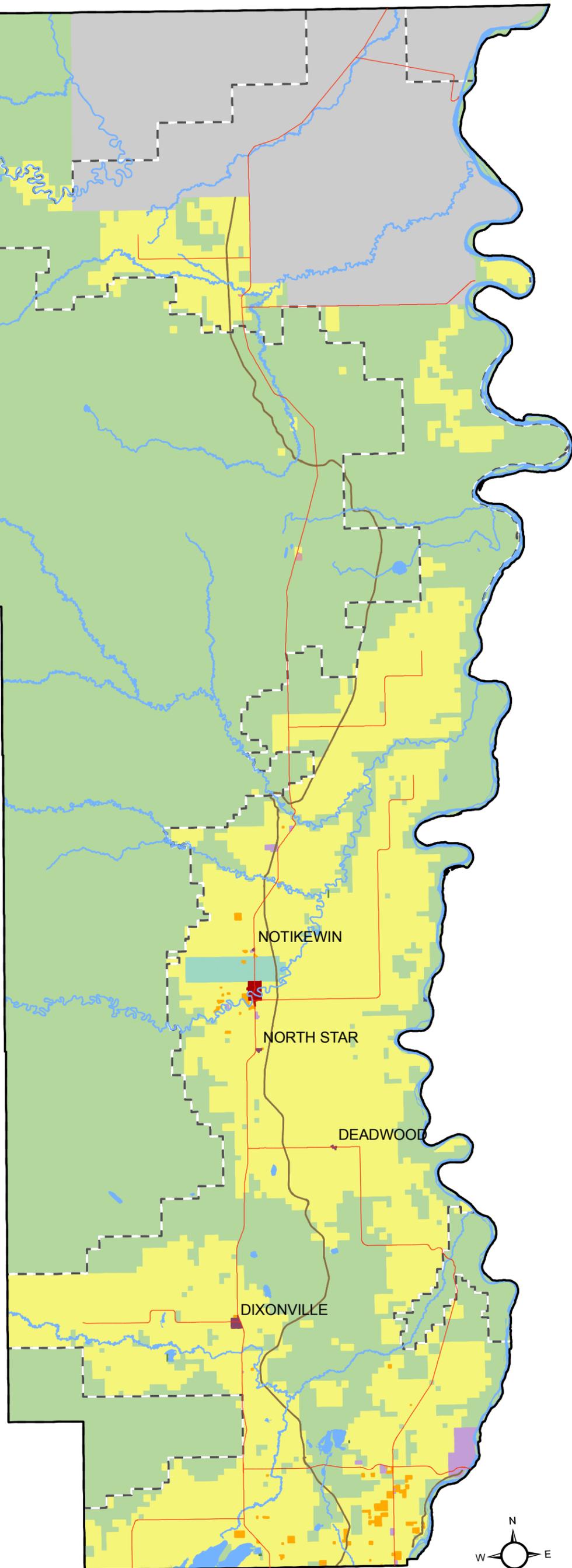


MAP 2 GENERALIZED EXISTING LAND USE

-  Provincial Highway
-  Green/White Area Boundary
-  Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement
-  Town of Manning
-  Rail Line
-  Agriculture Districts (A & AR)
-  Airport Protection District (AP)
-  Crown Land District (CL)
-  Country Residential Districts (CR1-4)
-  Direct Control District (DC)
-  Hamlet District (H)
-  Highway Development District (HD)
-  Industrial Districts (M1 & M2)
-  Recreation District (R)



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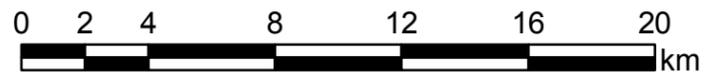


County of Northern Lights Municipal Development Plan

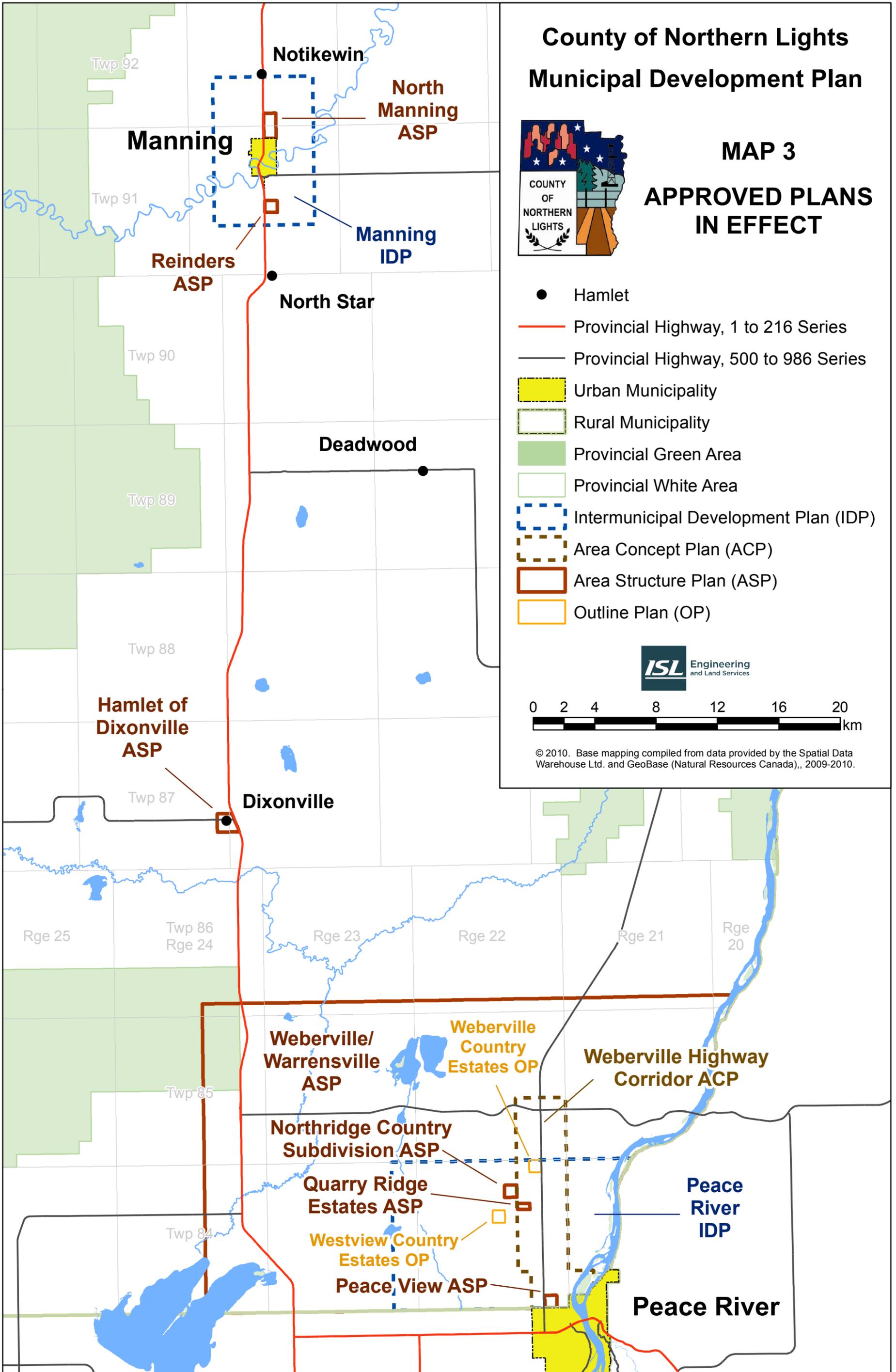
MAP 3 APPROVED PLANS IN EFFECT



- Hamlet
- Provincial Highway, 1 to 216 Series
- Provincial Highway, 500 to 986 Series
- Urban Municipality
- Rural Municipality
- Provincial Green Area
- Provincial White Area
- Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)
- Area Concept Plan (ACP)
- Area Structure Plan (ASP)
- Outline Plan (OP)



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northwest of the Town of Peace River and north and south of the hamlet of Deadwood. Cattle density decreases in the Dixonville area, in the North Star-Manning-Notikewin Provincial Park corridor and with fewer occurrences north of Weberville along the Peace River. The Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) has issued one approval for a Confined Feeding Operation (CFO) in the County. The CFO is located near Manning (NE 4-94-21-5) and manages cattle, cows, chickens, broilers and horses (NRCB, 2005).

1.6.2 *Urban, Rural and Recreational Developments*

Urban, country residential developments and recreational areas represent the expansion of non-agricultural development into the surrounding rural area.

The population of urban, rural and country residential development is 3,556 with most of the population residing near the Town of Manning and Town of Peace River, and with the remainder residing in the County's hamlets, settlements and country residential subdivisions, many of which are located along Highway 35 and Highway 743 (Statistics Canada, 2008).

Several recreational facilities are located in the County, including Notikewin Provincial Park, Figure Eight Lake Provincial Recreation Area, Twin Lakes Provincial Recreation Area and several campgrounds. In addition, the Manning and Whitemud Provincial Grazing Reserves are located in the County. In the western area of the County, the Chinchaga Wildland Park covers an area of about 80,270 ha. Notikewin Provincial Park is located at the confluence of the Peace and Notikewin Rivers.

1.6.3 *Oil and Gas Activities*

Since 1990, the number of oil and natural gas wells has increased from 210 wells to 830 wells by 2002. This represents a rate of well establishment of about 50 wells per year over that 12-year period. Concomitant with the increase in oil and natural gas wells development is also its production. There are a total of 911 oil and natural gas wells in the County of Northern Lights (Natural Resources Canada, 2007). The greatest densities of these wells are in the headwaters of the Meikle and Hotchkiss Rivers, north of Boyer River and west of Highway 35 and upstream of the confluence of Haig and Chinchaga Rivers.

1.6.4 *Linear Developments*

Linear developments include seismic lines, pipelines, roads, railways and utility right of ways. The most prominent linear development in the County are cut lines, which have a total length of 15,070 km and cover 90.4 km² of the County's land base. Most of these are located in the western region of the County. In total, linear developments cover an area of 165.5 km², or 0.8% of the total area of the County of Northern Lights.

1.6.5 *Provincial Land Use Framework*

The purpose of Alberta's Land Use Framework is to manage growth and to sustain the growing economy, but balance this with Albertans' social and environmental goals. It is expected that all municipal planning initiatives be consistent with the Land Use Framework. The Land Use Framework contains seven basic strategies to improve land use decision



making in Alberta. Three key strategies will provide context to the preparation of the Municipal Development Plan:

- Strategy 3** Cumulative effects management will be used at the regional level to manage the impacts of development on land, water and air.
- Strategy 4** Develop a strategy for conservation and stewardship on private and public lands.
- Strategy 5** Promote efficient use of land to reduce the footprint of human activities on Alberta's landscape.

Implementation of the Land Use Framework will be carried out through the preparation of a series of regional plans, including plans for the Lower Peace Region. This region has not entered into the planning stages yet and will not be initiated until 2011 with an expected completion date of 2012. It is intended that these regional plans will "...provide direction and context for local plans within the region".

The Land Use Framework requires that "upon completion of the regional plans, municipalities will need to ensure that their planning documents align with these regional planning directives".

1.7 WATER

- 1.7.1 The County of Northern Lights is characterized by over 12,000 km of water courses, which consist primarily of numerous creeks and rivers. Most of these creeks and rivers ultimately drain into the Peace River or via the Chinchaga River into the Hay River. High quality groundwater resources are abundant in the County and include the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer.
- 1.7.2 Total nitrogen and total phosphorus concentrations in many rivers, creeks and lakes exceed Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life (CCME PAL), which can result in the deterioration of aquatic habitats and negatively impacts aquatic life forms, such as fish and invertebrates. In addition, concentrations of numerous heavy metals also exceed CCME PAL Guidelines. These metals are of particular concern, because many of them are known or suspected carcinogens, mutagens and teratogens and can accumulate in the food web, thereby potentially affecting human health. Many of these contaminants can be traced to land use activities, including agricultural, livestock and industrial operations. Concentrations of bacteria occasionally exceed Alberta Surface Water Quality Guidelines for Recreation and point towards the contamination of aquatic habitats by excessive amounts of nutrients or the influx of fecal matter from humans or animals.
- 1.7.3 Based on the indicators of environmental quality Aquality Environmental Consulting Ltd., in their state of the municipality report (October 2009), gave the County an environmental health rating of "B+". The overall rating is a reflection of the low human population base, generally low levels of agricultural and livestock operations, low levels of industrial



developments and the concomitant high land cover of natural forests in the County. However, because of the phosphorus concentrations and the concentrations of numerous heavy metals, and in order to improve the overall health of the County's water courses the report provides recommendations that fall into four broad categories: planning; stewardship; reclamation and restoration; and data gaps. The recommendations inform the policies of the Municipal Development Plan.

1.8 COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012

The purpose of Council's 2009-2012 Strategic Plan is to identify issues facing the County and to develop an action plan to achieve desired goals. Council's eight key strategies provide context to the preparation of the Municipal Development Plan:

- a. Prepare an Economic Development Action Plan;
- b. Develop priorities for future water line development;
- c. Develop a Cultural Plan;
- d. Work with the Province to finalize the development of Highway 35;
- e. Collaborate with adjacent municipalities to provide services;
- f. Work with the Long Lake Regional Waste Management Service Commission to increase services offered within the County;
- g. Conduct a feasibility study for water and sewer services within North Star; and
- h. Council will promote the County's future vision to residents and non-residents.

1.9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

The County's economy generally involves the agri-business, forestry, and oil and gas industries. In order to take advantage of these industries, and opportunities for valued added agriculture, tourism and nurturing small- to medium sized industry the County prepared an Economic Development Strategic Plan (Western Management Consultants and David Amos and Associates Ltd., October 2009). The Plan identified six strategic priorities, ten key results, and sector strategies in order to achieve economic development success. It also identified there is a strong desire of the political and business communities to collaborate and to involve neighbouring regions in developing strategies to take advantage of the region's assets and opportunities to ensure regional economic success. In general, the Plan describes the creation of an Economic Development Committee, and the formation of Task Forces to implement action plans for Entrepreneurship, the Business Sector, Agri-business Sector, and Tourism Sector. The County has hired an Economic Development Officer to implement the action plans.

1.10 MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The County's economic performance, expansion of farming activity, the growth around the Town of Peace River and the demand for country residential development and industrial development has put pressures on the County's agricultural, residential and industrial lands. These factors have made it necessary to review the existing Municipal Development Plan.

The previous Plan's policies were concerned with the protection of the agricultural land base, accommodating country residential development subject to servicing requirements, encouraging the continued accommodation of resource-related developments, such as forestry and oil and gas,



preserving the County's natural environment, and promoting economic development throughout the County.

Many of the policies contained in the 1998 Municipal Development Plan remain sound. However, changes over the past 12 years in demographics and development patterns have required a review of the Plan.



2.0 PROCESS, PRINCIPLES AND VISION

2.1 MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PLANNING PROCESS

The development of this Municipal Development Plan was guided by a review process designed to develop a long range land use concept, community vision and associated policies. The process was grounded in technical analysis, and gathering feedback from stakeholders, which included members of the County's Council, Administration, and residents. This collaborative process was designed to acknowledge existing policy, recognize current trends, respect community values, and develop a practical and logical strategy for future development.

The County's Council and Administration sponsored the review process between June 2009 and June 2010, and provided opportunities for the public and other stakeholders to make suggestions and provide feedback about the Municipal Development Plan, including:

- a. A review of the County's 2009 Community Vision Survey;
- b. Key interviews with the County's Administration on June 26, 2009;
- c. Advertisements in the Mile Zero News requesting public input, starting in September 2009;
- d. A public open house was held in Manning on January 12, 2009. The purpose of the open house was to develop an understanding of community values, develop a vision of the future, and identify areas of concern. A total of five people attended the open house. A comment form was distributed at the open house to solicit feedback. Advertisements were placed in the Banner Post on Sunday, December 6, 2009 and Sunday December 13, 2009 inviting the public to attend the open houses;
- e. Advertisements in the Mile Zero News requesting public input to the draft Municipal Development Plan, starting September 2010;
- f. The draft Municipal Development Plan and a survey were posted on the County's website in September, 2010;
- g. The draft Municipal Development Plan was sent to adjacent municipalities and affected agencies in September, 2010;
- h. A Public Hearing was held on October 12, 2010 to provide all stakeholders with a final opportunity to comment on the draft Municipal Development Plan prior to Council review and adoption. Advertisements were placed in the Mile Zero News on September 29, 2010 and October 6, 2010.

2.2 STRENGTHS, THEMES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The plan review process identified community strengths, major themes for future development, and guiding principles for the County.

2.2.1 Community Strengths

Two vital and important community strengths emerged in this process and demonstrated that the County:

1. Values its rural lifestyle; and
2. Takes pride in its clean air and water.



2.2.2 Major Themes

Participants in the plan review process described that the County's rural lifestyle is important and that they want a continued source of safe water, and to maintain the County's low density residential development and its mix of agricultural and industrial development. Participants also clearly stated that they want opportunities for outdoor recreational facilities, and improvements to infrastructure, such as paving roads, and recreation facilities. The County's challenge will be to balance future growth with the desire for amenities, and still provides a rural lifestyle.

2.2.3 Five Core Principles

If the County is going to succeed in creating a rural lifestyle, a continued source of safe water, and to maintain the County's low density residential development and its mix of agricultural and industrial development, then any decision made by Council, Administration or stakeholders must recognize the three community strengths, the major themes and the following five principles, which were identified in the plan review process:

1. Agriculture is the most important land use in the Agricultural Policy Area;
2. Growth and development shall be directed to lower quality agricultural lands or in identified development nodes where services and infrastructure are readily available or planned;
3. The integrity and beauty of natural areas shall be protected and open spaces maintained;
4. The County's watershed and water sources shall be protected; and
5. Servicing shall be provided privately, or extended economically and efficiently.

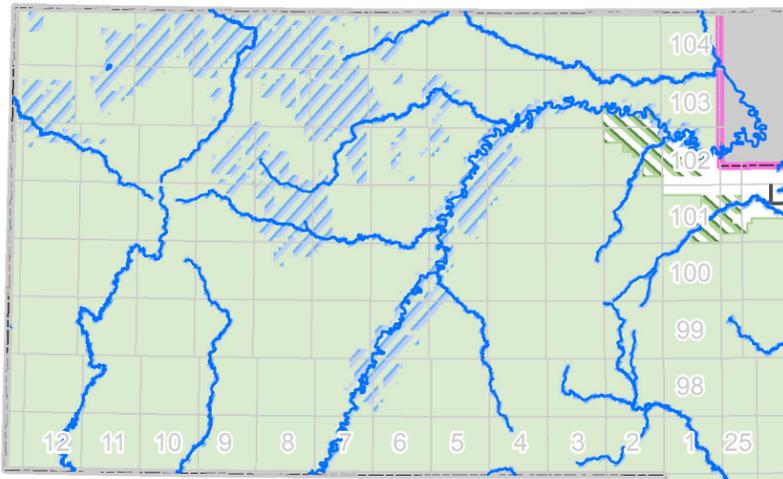
These principles are the core values that: reflect the character of the community as identified in the plan review process; will provide a consistent set of principles for every decision made by Council or Administration; and shall provide a foundation for the vision, objectives and policies of the County.

2.3 COUNTY VISION

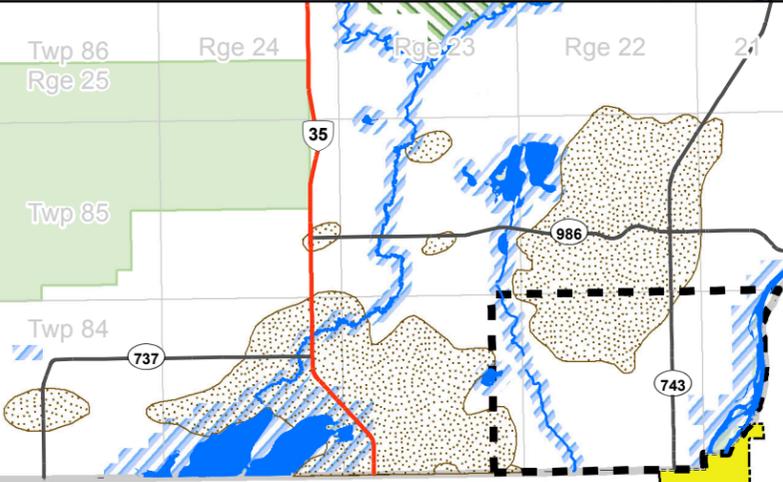
Any plan for future land use and development must be based on a clear understanding of existing conditions, a vision of the future, and what must be done to achieve that vision. Section 1 described the County's existing conditions, and this section describes the County's land use vision, which is intended to inspire and to articulate where the County is headed.

"The County is a prosperous municipality that provides a rural lifestyle and urban settlements to its residents, preserves its farmland and natural areas, locates commercial and industrial developments in strategic locations, offers recreation opportunities and facilities, and works with its neighbors to create regional solutions."

The following sections describe the policies that implement this vision.



Northwest Area Inset

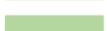


Grimshaw Gravels Area Inset

County of Northern Lights Municipal Development Plan

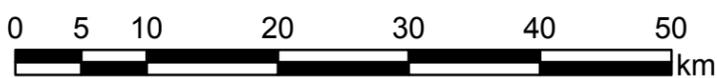
MAP 4 FUTURE LAND USE CONCEPT



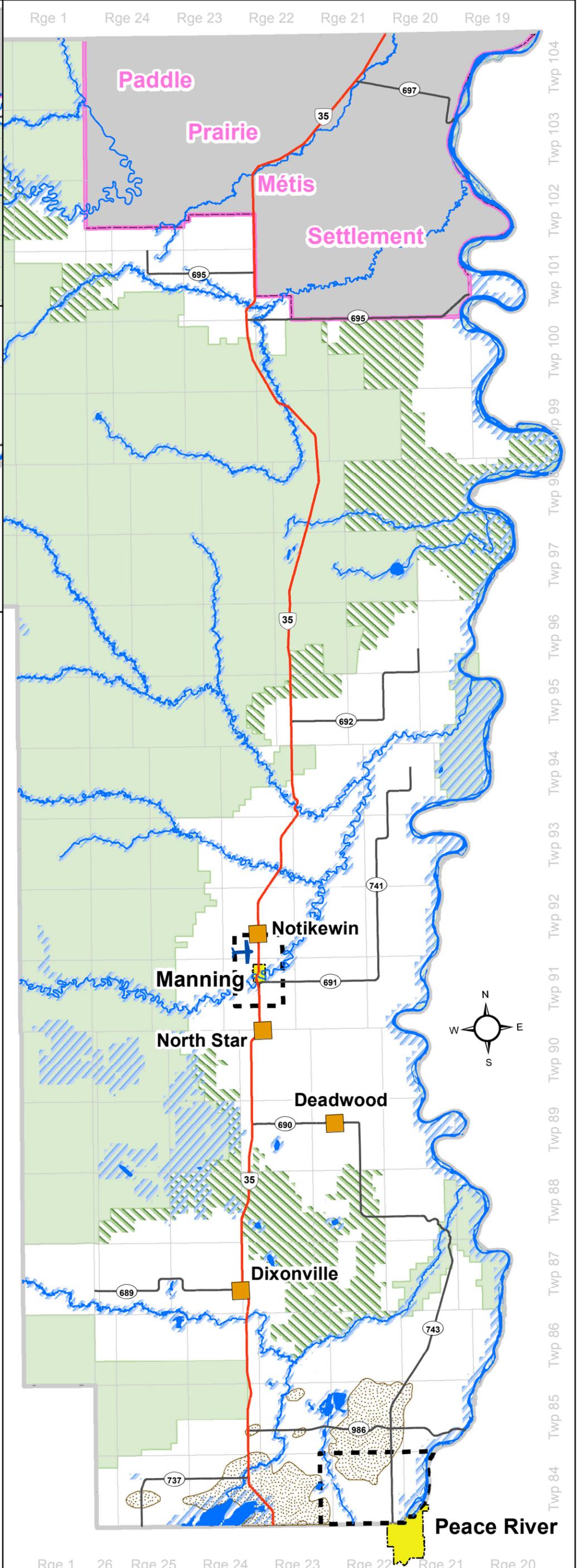
-  Provincial Highway, 1 to 216 Series
-  Provincial Highway, 500 to 986 Series
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Urban Municipality
-  Agricultural Policy Area
-  Crown Land Policy Area
-  Intermunicipal Policy Area
-  Hamlet Policy Area
-  Airport
-  Sustainable Forest Management Area
-  Environmentally Sensitive Area
-  Grimshaw Gravels Area



NOTES:
The Environmentally Sensitive Areas depicted on this map are conceptual.
The Grimshaw Gravels Areas depicted on this map are approximate.



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3.0 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The general development strategy focuses on a pattern of strategic growth and development and reflects the County's past land use pattern, current community values, and desired future. The main objectives of this Municipal Development Plan are:

1. Preserve Better Agricultural Lands and protect agricultural operations to ensure the County has a productive agricultural land base that will provide an abundance of food products and supports the families involved in the agri-business.
2. The County will encourage rural development that is compatible with existing agricultural activities and minimize the impact of non-agricultural development on agricultural operations.
3. Growth and development is located on lower quality agricultural lands or in identified development nodes where services and infrastructure are readily available or planned.
4. The County's watershed and water source shall be protected to maintain their ecological importance.

3.1 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

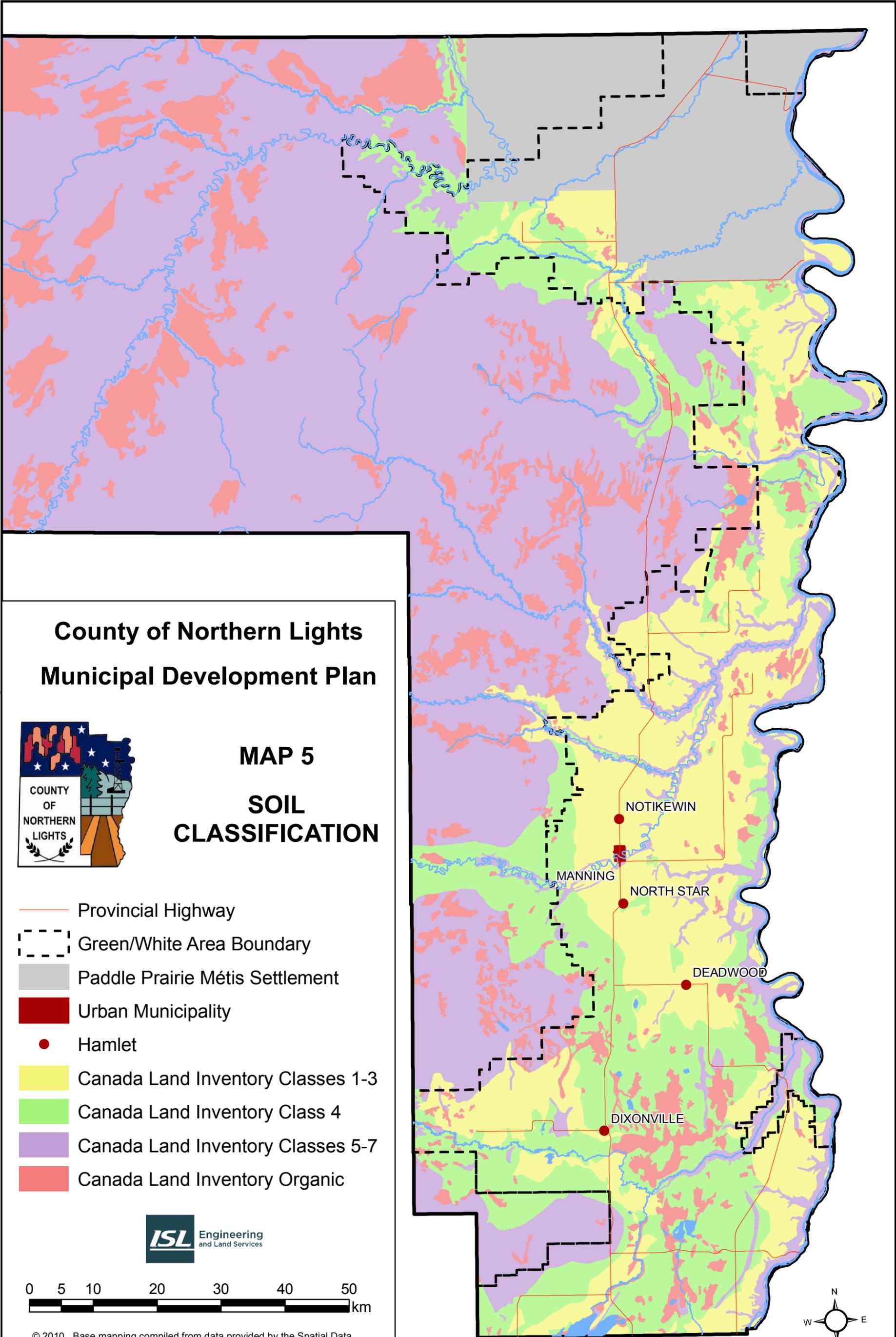
- 3.1.1 The County shall conform to the policies of the Province of Alberta, the Provincial Land Use Framework and any subsequent Regional Plan when considering MDP updates, MDP amendments, Land Use Bylaw amendments, or other development proposals.
- 3.1.2 The County shall plan for development that contributes to its fiscal, social and environmental wellbeing.
- 3.1.3 Future development in the County shall generally conform to the Policy Areas illustrated on Map 4. The Map is designed to provide the County with a broad framework for development and is not intended to be interpreted on a site-by-site basis.
- 3.1.4 The County may require the adoption of an Area Structure Plan, to be prepared in accordance with Section 633 of the Municipal Government Act, or the approval of an Outline Plan prior to subdivision or development, unless otherwise required in this Plan. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, any proposed industrial park, or where development for any proposed multiple lot country residential or highway (commercial) development that exceeds five parcels the County shall require an Area Structure Plan. Terms of Reference for individual plans shall be prepared by the County, but should generally address the following issues as deemed appropriate by the County:
 - a. conformity with this Plan, other Statutory Plans and the Land Use Bylaw;
 - b. impacts on adjacent uses and mitigation methods, such as the provision of any suitable buffers or setbacks;
 - c. impacts on adjacent uses, environmentally sensitive areas, and recreational uses, including provision for buffers;
 - d. proposed land uses and population projections;
 - e. proposed methods of water supply, stormwater management and sewage disposal;



- f. access and internal circulation and impacts on the transportation network;
 - g. allocation of municipal and environmental reserve;
 - h. suitability of the development site in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage;
 - i. a method by which developers pay for off-site costs;
 - j. confirm the location and geographic extent of any Environmentally sensitive areas, hazard lands, and historic or archaeological sites. A detailed analysis shall be undertaken by a qualified consultant with all costs borne to the developer;
 - k. integrate natural areas into the design of developments to form part of the linked and integrated parks and open space system, including the retention of forests, wildlife corridors, muskeg areas, and the provision of stormwater ponds and parks to form continuous open spaces; and
 - l. any other matters identified by the municipality.
- 3.1.5 When land is developed or redeveloped, the County may require developers to enter into a development agreement to provide services to the site. The developer is responsible for the provision of all infrastructure required to service the site.
- 3.1.6 The Land Use Bylaw shall establish standards for development in the County and implement the policies of this Plan.
- 3.1.7 All applications for land use bylaw amendments, subdivisions or development permits shall be evaluated by the County according to the following criteria, where applicable:
- a. compliance with the Act, Regulation, Land Use Bylaw, and any other Statutory Plans that are in effect;
 - b. adequacy of road access;
 - c. proposed methods of water supply and sewage disposal, supported by hydrogeological and geotechnical testing as required by the County;
 - d. compatibility with adjacent land uses;
 - e. site suitability in terms of soils, topography, and size;
 - f. environmental factors, including the potential for erosion, flooding, loss of fish and wildlife habitat, or watercourse contamination; and
 - g. the quality of agricultural land.
- 3.1.8 A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) may be required for any proposed development at the cost of the developer. The ESA shall be prepared in accordance with the Canadian Standards Association Environmental Assessment Guidelines.
- 3.1.9 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and/or a Biophysical Assessment may be required for any proposed development at the cost of the developer, as specified in the policies of this Plan. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 3.1.10 The County shall require that development and subdivision applications in close proximity to sour gas facilities meet Provincial legislation, the standards of the Subdivision and Development Regulation (Alberta Regulation 43/2002) and Energy Resources Conservation



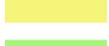
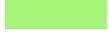
Board guidelines, with respect to minimum separation distances, between sour gas facilities and other land uses.



County of Northern Lights Municipal Development Plan

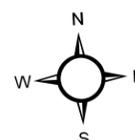
MAP 5 SOIL CLASSIFICATION



-  Provincial Highway
-  Green/White Area Boundary
-  Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement
-  Urban Municipality
-  Hamlet
-  Canada Land Inventory Classes 1-3
-  Canada Land Inventory Class 4
-  Canada Land Inventory Classes 5-7
-  Canada Land Inventory Organic



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4.0 AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is an important and dominant land use activity in the County despite limited locations of high quality soils and short growing seasons. The high quality soils located around the Town of Peace River, Weberville, Dixonville, Deadwood, North Star, the Town of Manning, Notikewin and Hotchkiss allow for the production of successful crops. These lands are also subject to the most pressure for non-agricultural development.

Approximately 6,935 km² or 33% of the lands within the County are located within the Province's White Area². This area is reduced to 5,765 km² or 27% after deducting different jurisdictions (i.e., the Town of Manning and the Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement). Of the remaining White Area, approximately 4,382 km² or 76% of these lands are considered Better Agricultural Land, while the balance of the lands are designated as Class 5-7, or O (Organic Soils) by the Canada Land Inventory (CLI) Soil Capability for Agriculture, as shown on Map 5. These lands may be viable for agricultural production despite their CLI classifications due to local farming techniques and the longer days the County experiences during the growing season.

The protection of the agricultural land base is a necessity, and its protection will assist in the continued viability of farming as an economic activity in the County. It is the intent of this Plan to preserve the County's Better Agricultural Lands, prevent the fragmentation of farm land and promote rural development that is compatible with existing agricultural activities.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 Maintain the long term viability of the County's agricultural land base and avoid fragmentation of Better Agricultural Land.
- 4.1.2 Recognize agriculture as a predominant land use in the Agricultural Policy Area and minimize the impacts of non-agricultural development.
- 4.1.3 Accommodate the separation of a farmstead from a quarter-section, and single lot country residential developments.
- 4.1.4 Provide guidance on the establishment or expansion of Confined Feeding Operations.

4.2 AGRICULTURE POLICIES

- 4.2.1 The subdivision of Better Agricultural Lands for non-agricultural uses in the Agricultural Area, as shown on Map 4, shall not be permitted, unless otherwise allowed for in this Plan, any other Statutory Plan, or an Area Concept Plan.

² The White Area includes all lands that are privately held or may be released for private ownership by the Crown. The remaining land in the County is owned by the Crown and is referred to as the Green Area. The Green Area is primarily managed by Sustainable Resource Development and other provincial departments and boards that set the rules for lands use.



- 4.2.2 The County shall promote agricultural practices that are sustainable and environmentally responsible.
- 4.2.3 Non-agricultural uses, such as public uses and utilities, agricultural industries, site-dependent rural industries, resource extraction, extensive recreational uses, and temporary oilfield equipment storage may be permitted on Better Agricultural Lands provided that:
 - a. They do not disrupt existing agricultural operations;
 - b. They are suitable in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage;
 - c. They have sufficient road access; and
 - d. They are not within identified Environmentally sensitive areas.
- 4.2.4 The County may approve the subdivision of land for extensive agricultural purposes if the proposed parcel is:
 - a. physically severed from the balance of the quarter section and is inconvenient to access;
 - b. to be consolidated with adjacent lands;
 - c. incapable, in the opinion of the County, of sustaining a viable agricultural use; or
 - d. the subdivision is required to accommodate a pre-existing or authorized use
- 4.2.5 Unless otherwise allowed for in this Plan, any other Statutory Plan, or an Area Concept Plan, a maximum of one residential parcel may be subdivided from an unsubdivided quarter section. Subdivisions resulting in the creation of additional residential parcels shall be rezoned to the appropriate District in the Land Use Bylaw prior to approval and reviewed under the appropriate policies of this MDP. Where a quarter section has been subdivided for a public use, public utility or a fragmented parcel, the quarter section shall be deemed to be unsubdivided for the purpose of this policy. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 4.2.6 The County may approve the subdivision of fragmented lands if the following criteria are met:
 - a. is a minimum of 1.2 hectares (three acres) and a maximum of 4.0 hectares (10 acres) in size unless the physical characteristics of the site warrant a larger parcel size;
 - b. that the proposed parcel is inaccessible from the balance or, in the opinion of the County, is inconvenient to farm;
 - c. legal and physical access are available; and
 - d. that the parcel is not subject to erosion, flooding or subsidence.
- 4.2.7 The subdivision of land to accommodate a Farmstead Separation shall be permitted if:
 - a. the parcel contains an existing, habitable residence; and
 - b. the proposed parcel size is the minimum amount necessary to accommodate on-site amenities, services, shelterbelts and/or woodlots, and areas with no agricultural value.
- 4.2.8 The County shall encourage the retention and/or development of windbreaks between agricultural parcels and shelterbelts around Farmstead Separations.



- 4.2.9 The subdivision of a vacant first parcel out of an unsubdivided quarter section may be permitted if the proposed parcel:
- is not located on Better Agricultural Land;
 - is a minimum of 1.2 hectares (three acres) and a maximum of 4.0 hectares (10 acres) in size unless the physical characteristics of the site warrant a larger parcel size;
 - has, in the opinion of the Development Authority, a suitable building site;
 - will not interfere with existing agricultural operations both on the balance and on adjacent lands; and
 - has legal and physical access available.
 - proper on-site water and sewer services are provided; and
 - is not prone to flooding, subsidence and/or erosion. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 4.2.10 Notwithstanding 4.2.9, a subdivision may be permitted on Better Agricultural Land if the lands are not being actively farmed.
- 4.2.11 The subdivision of land occupied by an abandoned farm site may be permitted if, in the opinion of the County, the site in question is suitable for residential redevelopment.

4.3 CONFINED FEEDING OPERATIONS

- 4.3.1 The County encourages the development of Confined Feeding Operations at appropriate locations, as a means of adding value to grain crops, and creating employment.
- 4.3.2 The County considers Confined Feeding Operations greater than ten times the size described in Column 3 of Schedule 2 of Agricultural Operations, Part 2: Matters Regulation (Alberta Regulation 257/2001) as an inappropriate land use and will not support their development within the municipality.
- 4.3.3 Applications to the Natural Resources Conservation Board for the establishment or expansion of Confined Feeding Operations shall not be supported by the County unless they are:
- compatible with adjacent land uses;
 - do not generate adverse health or environmental effects;
 - have an available sustainable water supply that does not negatively impact neighbouring licensed wells as determined by a report prepared by a professional engineer on the proposed site; and
 - the subject of a Traffic Impact Assessment which has assessed potential traffic impacts and evaluated the suitability of the available road surfaces accessing the site for increased truck traffic, and providing recommendations for upgrading affected County roads, as determined by a professional engineer.
- 4.3.4 Notwithstanding the requirements of the Agricultural Operation Practices Act, the expansion or establishment of Confined Feeding Operations or manure storage facility will not be supported:
- within 3.2 kilometres (two miles) of the boundaries of a Town, hamlet, settlement, or a multiple parcel country residential subdivision;
 - within an urban expansion area as established in an approved Statutory Plan;



- c. within the Grimshaw Gravels;
 - d. within 1,600m (one mile) of Provincial Park boundaries, municipal parks, an Environmentally Sensitive Area, water body, watercourse, or drainage channel unless measures are employed to prevent negative impacts on these features to the satisfaction of the County.
- 4.3.5 All setbacks described in Policy 4.3.4(d) are deemed to be measured from the top of the bank of an identified watercourse. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 4.3.6 Confined Feeding Operations should not be established or expanded where there is any risk that runoff will contaminate ground or surface water supplies.
- 4.3.7 The County shall protect existing Confined Feeding Operations by refusing development permits for new residences within the Minimum Distance Separation as defined by Agricultural Operations and Practices Act, of an existing or approved Confined Feeding Operation.
- 4.3.8 The proponent of a Confined Feeding Operation is encouraged to hold a public meeting, to the satisfaction of the County, to address concerns that neighbours may have prior to filing an application with the Natural Resources Conservation Board. The proponent shall identify the technological advancements, communication measures and monitoring aspects of their operation that will mitigate the potential negative impacts on adjacent landowners.
- 4.3.9 All applications for Confined Feeding Operations that are located within 3.2 kilometres (two miles) of an adjacent municipality shall be circulated to the affected municipality for review and comment.



5.0 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

In 1998, approximately 40% of the County's population consisted of non-farm residents, including those in country residential subdivisions and hamlets. According to 2006 census data, this has increased to approximately 53%. Despite losses in population overall, the number of country residential residents is increasing, particularly in the Weberville area north of the Town of Peace River, and to a lesser extent in the vicinity of the Town of Manning.

Since 2001, in excess of 230 residential lots have been created in the County and approximately 20% of those lots are attributable to farmstead separations. An increasing number of residents are moving to acreages, where residents are able to combine a rural lifestyle and access to outdoor amenities with relatively easy access to urban services. This increased activity is also resulting in increased concerns regarding the loss of farmland, the compatibility of land uses, road maintenance, water supply, and sewage disposal that need to be addressed on an ongoing basis.

Given the increased demand for country residential development, strong policies are required to ensure that future development occurs in suitable locations, storm and sewage infrastructure are provided, watersheds are protected, and environmentally sensitive areas are preserved or integrated into the design of the development.

5.1 OBJECTIVES

- 5.1.1 To recognize country residential development as a legitimate land use in the Agricultural Policy Area, while minimizing potential conflicts with non-residential uses.
- 5.1.2 To provide for the establishment of attractive, well-planned and properly serviced country residential development.
- 5.1.3 To provide for a variety of residential development forms.
- 5.1.4 To outline the conditions under which multiple dwellings may be permitted on a lot.

5.2 COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

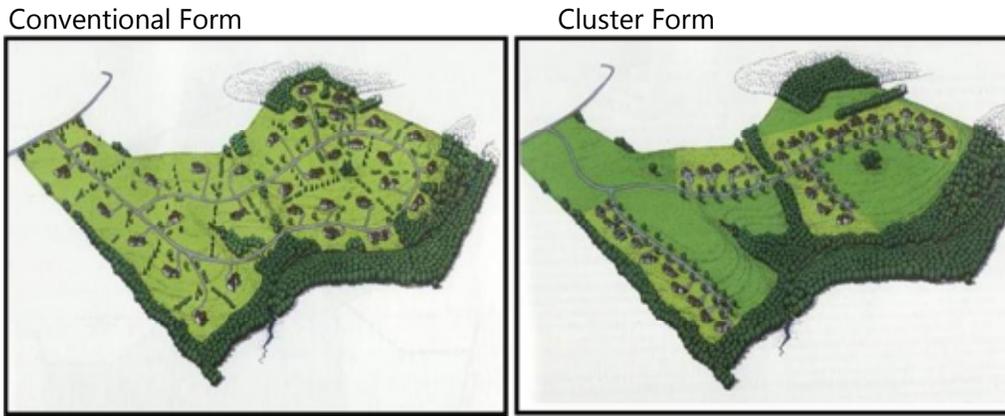
- 5.2.1 The development of multiple lot country residential subdivisions shall not be permitted on Better Agricultural Land, unless otherwise allowed for in this Plan, any other Statutory Plan, or an Area Concept Plan.
- 5.2.2 Notwithstanding Section 5.2.1, the subdivision of a second lot from a quarter section may be permitted provided that:
 - a. it contains an existing habitable residence;
 - b. the maximum density does not exceed three lots per quarter section including the balance, unless otherwise directed by a Statutory Plan or an Area Concept Plan; and
 - c. the lot area complies with Section 5.2.3.



- 5.2.3 The County shall not approve any subdivision application that results in the creation of a residential lot under 1.2 hectares (3 acres) or in excess of 4.0 hectares (10 acres) in size. The County may exercise discretion when a lot contains an existing, habitable residence and/or farm related buildings, and the proposed parcel size is the minimum amount necessary to accommodate on-site amenities and services or the physical characteristics of the site require a larger parcel size.
- 5.2.4 All country residential subdivision development proposals will be evaluated according to the following:
- a. the applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County that the land in question is safe from flooding, erosion, subsidence, groundwater inundation, or other hazards utilizing guidelines prepared by Alberta Environmental Protection;
 - b. the development is compatible with adjacent land uses and environmentally sensitive areas;
 - c. its proximity to other multiple parcel country residential subdivisions;
 - d. the availability of groundwater supply. For any proposal that results in an overall density in excess of five lots per quarter that proposes to utilize wells or groundwater-fed dugouts for water supply, the applicant shall submit an assessment prepared by a qualified professional engineer in accordance with Alberta Environment guidelines. Where lots are proposed to be served by cisterns, restrictive covenants shall be registered as a condition of subdivision approval, prohibiting the use of wells or other means of groundwater collection;
 - e. proposed sewage disposal. The County requires that applicants make provision for sewage disposal in accordance with provincial requirements. For all multiple parcel country residential development proposals in excess of five lots per quarter section, the applicant shall submit a geotechnical assessment prepared by a qualified professional engineer that indicates the suitability of the subject lands to accommodate sewage disposal systems, and provides an assessment of water table conditions; and
 - f. access to existing roads or internal roads required to service the development shall be constructed to County standards;
 - g. consideration for the conservation, use or salvage of any timber required to be removed;
 - h. each of the proposed lots has, in the opinion of the Development Authority, a suitable building site;
 - i. the adequacy of proposed site drainage;
 - j. for multi-lot subdivisions, the internal road system may require two access points to a municipal road;
 - k. the impacts of the development on the road system in the area is considered. (Bylaw 11-61-288)
- 5.2.5 Subdivision proposals that do not meet Policy 5.2.4 to the satisfaction of the County should be refused.



- 5.2.6 The County supports the development of multi-lot country residential subdivisions that are of a compact, clustered form that conserve land and reduce the potential for conflict with agricultural uses. Example:



(Bylaw 11-61-288)

- 5.2.7 No multiple lot country residential development shall be permitted where the depth to the aquifer is less than 3m from the base of the building foundation.
- 5.2.8 The County shall direct the development of multiple parcel country residential subdivisions away from:
- a. urban fringe areas unless contained within a Statutory Plan;
 - b. active sanitary landfills and waste transfer stations;
 - c. environmentally sensitive lands;
 - d. existing confined feeding operations;
 - e. highways, unless accommodated in an approved Area Structure Plan;
 - f. existing sand and gravel extraction sites; and
 - g. sour gas facilities or other potentially hazardous industrial operations.
- 5.2.9 The County shall encourage that country residential developments incorporate Environmentally sensitive areas into their design in order to form part of a linked and integrated parks and open space system, including the retention of forests, wildlife corridors, muskeg areas, and the provision of stormwater ponds and parks to form continuous open spaces.
- 5.2.10 The County shall require that bareland condominium residential developments meet the same requirements and standards as conventional multiple parcel country residential subdivisions.
- 5.2.11 The development of manufactured home parks shall only be supported if they are located in hamlets and are serviced by municipal water and sewer systems.
- 5.2.12 Wherever possible, a landscaped or treed buffer should be provided along the boundaries of country residential lots that are located adjacent to an extensive agricultural use.



5.2.13 The number and type of livestock allowed in Country Residential Developments shall be controlled through the Land Use Bylaw.

5.3 DWELLING UNITS PER LOT

5.3.1 The County shall permit a maximum of two dwellings on agricultural lots that are in excess of 32 ha (80 ac) in size, or on any other lot where a garage suite, garden suite, secondary suite, duplex, semi-detached dwelling, row house or apartment is approved by the Development Authority. The County may allow more than two dwellings on agricultural lots that are in excess of 32 ha (80 ac) in size. The second dwelling shall:

- a. have access to municipal water and sewer services, or is of a sufficient size to accommodate on-site services in accordance with provincial requirements;
- b. be compatible with the use, siting, grade elevations, height, roof slopes and building types and materials characteristic of surrounding dwellings and development; and
- c. not effect the privacy of adjacent properties. (Bylaw 11-61-288).



6.0 COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

The County's economy is based on commercial and industrial enterprises which serve the forestry, agriculture, oil and gas, and aggregate resource extraction sectors. These industries include a lumber mill located north of the Town of Manning, major oil and gas plants located northwest of Manning, a major pulp mill, transportation, oilfield service and industrial storage related companies north of the Town of Peace River, and home occupations.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

- 6.1.1 To promote and accommodate the development of commercial and industrial uses.
- 6.1.2 To support the development of commercial and industrial growth north of the Town of Manning, and in the proximity of Weberville and Warrensville.
- 6.1.3 To accommodate the growth and development of home occupations.

6.2 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- 6.2.1 The County supports the establishment of highway commercial development at appropriate locations, and where the applicant can demonstrate:
 - a. compatibility with adjacent uses;
 - b. the site is suitable in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage;
 - c. provisions for access and impacts on the transportation network are addressed; and
 - d. conformity with relevant Statutory Plans, an Area Concept Plan and the Land Use Bylaw.
- 6.2.2 All applications for highway commercial development shall be referred to Alberta Transportation for comment prior to a decision being issued by the County.
- 6.2.3 The location of local commercial uses shall be limited to existing commercial areas in hamlets and rural settlements. Alternative locations may be considered where designated by an approved Statutory Plan, Area Concept Plan, servicing upgrades are provided, the site is adjacent to compatible uses, or unique site conditions or requirements warrant an alternative location.
- 6.2.4 With the exception of home-based businesses, commercial development shall not be permitted to locate on Better Agricultural Lands, or it is designated for such use in an Area Concept Plan or Area Structure Plan.
- 6.2.5 The County supports and encourages the development of home occupations and requires businesses to address any issues of compatibility with adjacent uses.
- 6.2.6 Commercial development that involve the open discharge of effluent or other liquid waste shall not be allowed within the Grimshaw Gravels aquifer. All commercial developments within the aquifer are to be serviced by sealed holding tanks or other form of closed loop



sewage disposal system. Restrictive covenants to this effect shall be registered on the proposed lots at the time of subdivision.

- a. No commercial development shall be permitted where the depth to the aquifer is less than 5 m (16 ft) from the base of the building foundation. (Bylaw 11-61-288).

6.3 INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

6.3.1 Industrial development shall not be permitted to locate on Better Agricultural Land, unless the proposal is designated for such use in an Area Concept Plan or Area Structure Plan, or involves the extraction of a location-specific resource.

6.3.2 The County may support industrial development in the Agricultural Policy Area if the proposal:

- a. caters to the needs of agriculture, forestry, or natural resource extraction;
- b. has large land requirements;
- c. is not suited to an urban area;
- d. does not conflict with adjacent land uses in terms of appearance, emissions, noise, or traffic generation, unless suitable buffers are provided;
- e. is located on a site that is suitable for the proposed development in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage and the applicant has made provision for sewage disposal in accordance with provincial requirements. For all industrial development proposals located within the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer, and industrial development proposals elsewhere in the County greater than five parcels, the applicant shall submit a geotechnical assessment prepared by a qualified professional engineer that indicates the suitability of the subject lands to accommodate sewage disposal systems, and provides an assessment of water table conditions; and
- f. has minimal servicing requirements.

6.3.3 All industrial development proposals will be evaluated according to the following:

- a. any impact on water supplies and water courses, and conformity with guidelines, policies and conditions as required by Alberta Environment. An environmental impact assessment prepared in accordance with Alberta Environment guidelines shall be required for all heavy industrial developments and industrial park proposals; (Bylaw 11-61-288);
- b. proximity to residential, recreational, and public uses, and environmentally sensitive areas;
- c. the development is not located on Better Agricultural Land unless no suitable alternative is available;
- d. sufficiency of on-site water storage for fire protection purposes in accordance with Fire Underwriters Survey guidelines;
- e. impacts on the local road network;
- f. conformity with relevant statutory plans, Area Concept Plans, and the Land Use Bylaw;
- g. the proponent provides opportunity for public input.



- 6.3.4 Industrial development that involves the open discharge of effluent or other liquid waste shall not be allowed within the Grimshaw Gravels aquifer. All industrial developments within the aquifer are to be serviced by sealed holding tanks or other form of closed loop sewage disposal system. Restrictive covenants to this effect shall be registered on the proposed lots at the time of subdivision.
- a. No industrial development shall be permitted where the depth to the aquifer is less than 5m from the base of the building foundation.
- 6.3.5 With the exception of farm-based industries, resource extraction, and heavy industrial uses, industrial uses shall be encouraged to locate in rural industrial parks at locations identified as industrial nodes in an Area Concept Plan or other Statutory Plan. In addition to those factors identified in Policy 6.3.3, industrial parks shall be developed based on the following criteria:
- a. access to high-yield groundwater sources, that is, with a potential of 20 to 100 l/min (4.4 to 22 gal/min) or higher, to serve the needs of individual developments and fire protection;
 - b. proximity to highways;
 - c. internal road rights-of-way shall be a minimum of 30 m (91 m) in width;
 - d. consideration for the conservation, use or salvage of any timber required to be removed. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 6.3.6 Support for mineral extraction operations shall be contingent on the mitigation or minimization of the impacts upon adjacent land uses, soil, water, and farming operations.
- 6.3.7 The development of sand and gravel extraction operations may be permitted subject to the site being reclaimed to the satisfaction of the County and Alberta Environment.
- 6.3.8 Through provisions in the Land Use Bylaw, the County shall ensure that adequate buffers or transitional land uses are maintained between industrial and non-industrial uses when the potential exists for significant land use conflicts with regard to noise, vibration, dust, odour, environmental hazards or other safety risks.
- 6.3.9 The County supports the future development of:
- a. industrial and commercial uses on Manning Airport lands, and along Highway 35 north of Manning, subject to the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw, Statutory Plan, and Alberta Transportation;
 - b. industrial uses along Highway 743 in areas designated for such development in the Weberville Area Concept Plan; and
 - c. industrial uses within Hamlets, provided they are limited to small scale industries that are compatible with adjacent commercial uses.
- 6.3.10 The County may require the preparation of a Risk Assessment at the cost of the developer, when considering an industrial use or determining the location of a potentially noxious industry that may pose potential environmental contamination or cause nuisance.
- 6.3.11 All waste generated by industrial developments shall be stored and disposed of in a manner that will not result in any contamination to groundwater supplies. (Bylaw 11-61-288)



6.3.12 All businesses and not-for-profit organizations operating within the County of Northern Lights are requested to register their businesses with the Economic Development Officer.



7.0 HAMLETS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

There are four Hamlets (Dixonville, Deadwood, Northstar and Notikewin), and five rural communities (Carcajou, Chinook Valley, Hotchkiss, Keg River, Warrensville and Weberville) in the County. They are primarily residential in nature, although some of these centres provide housing options, commercial and institutional facilities, and services to area residents.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

- 7.1.1 To ensure that future Hamlet development occurs in an orderly and efficient manner.
- 7.1.2 To retain Hamlets as viable rural communities.

7.2 HAMLETS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES POLICIES

- 7.2.1 The County may prepare an Area Structure Plan for each Hamlet or update an existing Area Structure Plan as necessary.
- 7.2.2 The County shall encourage commercial, industrial and institutional uses that are intended to serve the rural area to locate in Hamlets.
- 7.2.3 Within Hamlets the following types of development shall be encouraged by the County:
 - a. residential uses;
 - b. local and convenience commercial uses;
 - c. institutional uses such as churches, community halls, and schools;
 - d. light industrial uses; and
 - e. recreational uses.
- 7.2.4 In order to ensure that future Hamlet development is compatible with existing uses, the County shall ensure that adequate distance or buffers are provided between residential and non-residential uses.
- 7.2.5 The types of industrial uses permitted in Hamlets shall be limited to small scale industries which can be compatibly located adjacent or near residential areas.
- 7.2.6 Dixonville and North Star are recognized as primary growth Hamlets. Although the infilling of existing lots is to be encouraged prior to the establishment of new development areas, expansion and growth may be encouraged due to the presence of municipal services.
 - a. development in all other Hamlets and rural settlements shall be limited to the infill of existing lots with accommodation for private services.
- 7.2.7 With the exception of those developments accessing municipal water and sewage systems, all Hamlet developments are required to utilize private systems in accordance with Alberta Municipal Affairs standards.



- 7.2.8 Rural communities shall be considered as part of the Agricultural Policy Area or Crown Land Policy Area, as applicable.



8.0 ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION

The County possesses a rich ecological network that consists of landscapes consisting of boreal forests, broad lowland plains, discontinuous but locally extensive hill systems, and wetlands including numerous rivers such as the Peace River, lakes, and many bogs, fens, swamps and marshes. These areas provide the County with a picturesque and rugged environment that maintains and restores natural ecological functions and biodiversity, and that can benefit residents and visitors. The value of protecting these areas is demonstrated in Notikewin Provincial Park, Figure Eight Lake Provincial Recreation Area, and Twin Lakes Provincial Recreation Area. It is important that these and similar areas be managed and protected and/or restored in order to maintain ecological connectivity and local biodiversity, provide opportunities for active living, and serve as a source of educational and aesthetic value. These areas can also pose as hazards to development in terms of flooding, erosion, and subsidence, the potential effects of which need to be mitigated.

In addition, the County possesses groundwater resources of great importance, the most significant of which is the Grimshaw Gravels aquifer located in the south end of the County. High standards of development are required to protect this resource. (Bylaw 11-61-288).

8.1 OBJECTIVES

- 8.1.1 To ensure that environmentally sensitive areas are protected from incompatible development activity.
- 8.1.2 Recognize the Peace River and the river valley as an important natural feature.
- 8.1.3 Outline the requirements for the planning and development of land within or adjacent to Environmentally sensitive areas and hazard lands.
- 8.1.4 To encourage and promote the development of outdoor recreational opportunities.
- 8.1.5 Reduce the risk of wildfire, loss of property or loss of life from wildfires.
- 8.1.6 To ensure that the quantity and quality of groundwater resources is maintained. (Bylaw 11-61-288).

8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION POLICIES

- 8.2.1 The policies contained in this section apply to those lands identified as environmentally sensitive areas on Map 4, as well as any other environmentally sensitive areas that the County deems appropriate.
- 8.2.2 All applications for development that are located within the Sustainable Forest Management Area, as shown on Map 4, shall be circulated to Sustainable Resources Development for review and comment.



- 8.2.3 Subdivision and development proposals located in environmentally sensitive areas, including the Grimshaw Gravels, may be submitted to Alberta Environment for comment and advice.
- a. Subdivision and development proposals located within the Grimshaw Gravels aquifer shall be referred to the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer Management Advisory Association for comment and advice.
- 8.2.4 The County may develop targets or thresholds for air and water quality to monitor changes to the environment, and may develop methods to mitigate or eliminate a local or regional effect, in accordance with guidelines provided by a Regional Plan.
- 8.2.5 The County shall work with the Province to ensure that Crown interests in hazard lands, crown owned resources, and environmentally sensitive areas are addressed as early as possible in the planning process. Although Provincial and Federal agencies are the ultimate authority concerning the minimum protections that must be put in place around water bodies, the Municipal Government Act grants broad authority to municipalities to provide more stringent protections.
- 8.2.6 Development setbacks from a coulee, ravine or valley, with or without a watercourse shall be controlled through the Land Use Bylaw.
- 8.2.7 To enhance the quality of the County's watershed developers may be required to utilize the Riparian Setback Matrix Model or prepare a Biological Assessment to determine appropriate water body setbacks from hazard lands, crown owned resources, and environmentally sensitive areas. The setbacks are designed to protect against erosion, flooding, loss of fish and wildlife habitat, and damage to natural features.
- a. All setbacks will be measured from the upper break of a coulee, ravine or valley, with or without a watercourse. The top of bank will be identified during the Area Structure Plan, or the subdivision and development process to the satisfaction of the County.
 - b. Lands subject to the waterbody setback shall be dedicated or provided as environmental reserve, municipal reserve, environmental reserve easements, or conservation easements, or by other statutory means as defined by the Municipal Government Act, or the Alberta Land Stewardship Act.
- 8.2.8 No permanent development shall be permitted on lands that are contained within a 1:100 year flood plain or otherwise known to be flood-prone. Development on such lands may only be considered after satisfactory site assessments are provided and prepared in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw.
- 8.2.9 Permanent development shall not be permitted on slopes exceeding 15% or on land that is subject to erosion. Development on such lands may only be considered after sufficient geotechnical investigation has demonstrated that the site in question is suitable for development in accordance with Alberta Environment guidelines.
- 8.2.10 Commercial or industrial development (with the exception of site-specific resource industries) or multi-lot country residential development shall not be permitted in the Peace River Valley



environmentally sensitive area as illustrated in Map 4, unless accommodated in an approved Area Structure Plan. (Bylaw 11-61-288).

- 8.2.11 Area Structure Plans or Outline Plans shall identify important wildlife corridors. Developments that do not impact wetland habitats and that connect natural habitats and maintain a variety of habitat types in a connected natural landscape will be encouraged. Developers shall be familiar with the Federal Fisheries Act, Provincial Water Act and the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, and other federal and provincial laws, regulations and policies.

8.3 GROUND WATER QUALITY AND THE GRIMSHAW GRAVELS

- 8.3.1 The County may prohibit developments which negatively impact groundwater quality, environmentally sensitive areas, or any other feature which is determined to be environmentally significant by the County. Impacts may result from sand and gravel extraction, Confined Feeding Operations, and major industrial uses.
- 8.3.2 The County shall not permit developments that have the potential to negatively affect groundwater quality to locate in the Grimshaw Gravels aquifer. In order to ensure the protection of the aquifer, the following provisions shall apply:
- a. Sand and gravel operations may be permitted provided that a hydrogeological assessment prepared by a qualified engineer is provided to confirm the depth of the aquifer and identify mitigative measures to ensure that the aquifer would not be compromised by pit activities.
 - b. Confined Feeding Operations shall not be permitted within the aquifer area; and
 - c. Industrial development shall not be allowed unless a hydrogeological assessment prepared by a qualified engineer demonstrates that the depth to the aquifer exceeds 5 metres. Lesser depth to the aquifer may be allowed provided that the engineer's report contains mitigative measures to ensure that the aquifer will not be negatively affected.
 - d. All oil and gas drilling activity proposed within the Grimshaw Gravels aquifer shall be subject to the provisions of the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer Protection Plan, which has been adopted as County Policy No. 203/24/05/11. The County shall advise the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) of this requirement through the ERCB's application notification process. (Bylaw 11-61-281).
- 8.3.3 The County may require developers to identify groundwater recharge areas as part of their subdivision applications. The County may negotiate conservation easements, or require Municipal or Environmental Reserve and/or Environmental Reserve Easements covering groundwater recharge areas. If necessary these instruments may be implemented to protect tree cover surrounding groundwater recharge areas.
- 8.3.4 The County may develop programs for riparian reclamation and the restoration of critical lacustrine marsh areas.



8.3.5 The County may prepare wetland and biodiversity inventories, or initiate long-term monitoring programs for water quality and riparian health assessments.

8.4 ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVE, MUNICIPAL RESERVE AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

8.4.1 As a condition of subdivision, the County shall require that ten percent (10%) of the developable lands be dedicated as municipal reserve as provided for under the Act.

8.4.2 As a condition of subdivision approval, the County shall require the protection and conservation of hazard lands, crown owned resources, and environmentally sensitive areas by dedication of environmental reserve and municipal reserve, the provision of environmental reserve easements and conservation easements, or by other statutory means as defined by the Municipal Government Act, or the Alberta Land Stewardship Act.

8.4.3 The County shall require that municipal reserve be dedicated as cash-in-lieu in all cases except as follows:

- a. where the subdivision results in the creation of a multi-parcel country residential development, municipal reserve may be dedicated in parcel form if required for community open space;
- b. in industrial or other non-residential subdivisions, municipal reserve may be dedicated in parcel form to serve as buffers from incompatible land uses;
- c. reserve requirements may be deferred regardless of the nature of the proposed subdivision if required to assemble larger school or recreation sites in accordance with an approved Area Structure Plan, or if the amount owing is relatively small; or
- d. when subdivision occurs in an urban expansion area as defined in a Statutory Plan, municipal reserve shall be deferred in order to allow the affected urban municipality to optimize the available lands after annexation takes place.

8.4.4 The County may use the funds generated through municipal reserve dedication to acquire lands for recreational purposes, or for the development of parks.

8.4.5 Land dedicated as municipal reserve shall be of similar quality as the land being subjected to development. Land that is deemed undevelopable in its natural state or is otherwise more suited as environmental reserve, will not be accepted as municipal reserve.

8.4.6 For subdivisions adjacent to a river or stream, the upper break may, at the discretion of the County, be required to be identified by survey as part of the application process. This documentation shall serve as the basis for determining Environmental Reserve requirements.

8.5 FIRESMART AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS

8.5.5 The County shall require developers to recognize FireSmart: Protecting Your Community from Wildfire design principles when preparing Area Structure Plans, Outline Plans, and subdivisions, and minimize the potential for wildfire damage through:

- a. the provision of recreational facilities along the outer perimeter of the development so that the developed portions may be separated from Environmentally sensitive areas;



- b. the provision of a fire guard which will serve as a buffer between development and the surrounding Environmentally sensitive areas; and,
 - c. the development of trails between developments and surrounding forested lands which may be used in an emergency for fire prevention purposes.
- 8.5.6 The County shall require the following as conditions for approval for residential development which is too remote to be adequately protected by existing firefighting services:
- a. the provision of adequate on-site water supplies for firefighting purposes;
 - b. the use of fire resistant building methods;
 - c. the installation of spark arresters on all chimneys; and
 - d. the provision of an emergency access to developments to help prevent property damage and the potential for loss of life.

8.6 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE POLICIES

- 8.6.1 The County may prepare a Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, which shall be used as the basis for recreation and tourist planning in the County. The Plan may include, but not be limited to, the identification of recreation sites and the identification of all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile trail systems linking recreation sites and urban centres.
- 8.6.2 The County supports the use of lake shores, river corridors and other environmentally sensitive areas for extensive recreational purposes. Intensive recreational developments may be permitted in close proximity to lake shores, such as Leddy and St. Germain Lakes, where appropriate provided such developments to not disturb wildlife habitat. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 8.6.3 Through the subdivision process, public access to shoreline areas shall be accommodated through the dedication of environmental and/or municipal reserve.
- 8.6.4 The County may require that an Area Structure Plan or Outline Plan be prepared for multiple parcel country residential subdivisions or recreational resorts located next to lakes or other watercourses. These plans shall address the following issues to the satisfaction of the County:
- a. conformity with this Plan, other statutory and non-statutory plans, if any, and the Land Use Bylaw;
 - b. detailed site plans indicating proposed land uses, setbacks from top of bank or shoreline as applicable, existing and proposed vegetation patterns, and proposed access points to shore line areas;
 - c. impacts on adjacent uses and environmentally sensitive areas, including provision for buffers;
 - d. proposed methods of water supply, sewage disposal, storm drainage, and waste disposal;
 - e. provision for access and internal circulation; and
 - f. allocation of municipal and environmental reserve.
- 8.6.5 The County may cooperate with neighbouring municipalities in undertaking a study of the potential to develop recreation and open space areas in the Lac Cardinal area. (Bylaw 11-61-288).



- 8.6.6 Major subdivision or development proposals shall be circulated to Alberta Culture and Community Services for comment in order to determine the need for a Historic Resources Impact Assessment. Wherever possible, significant archaeological and historical resources which are identified through this process will be protected from disruptive development. (Bylaw 11-61-288).



9.0 TRANSPORTATION AND MUNICIPAL SERVICING

The residents of the County are served by an extensive network of highways and local roads, and maintaining the integrity, safety and quality of the road network is a high priority. With the exception of the highway system, the road network is the responsibility of the County of Northern Lights. In addition, the County operates the Manning Airport, an airfield which serves as a provincial forestry tanker base and a base for private aircraft. As a result of increased residential and industrial development activity in the Agricultural Policy Area, clearly defined transportation policies are required.

The utility infrastructure in the County has been developed to serve the population in its Hamlets and rural locations. Other water systems are operated by co-ops, and there is a solid waste system operated by a regional commission. The County currently operates one water system (Dixonville), two water treatment plants (Dixonville and Keg River) and three waste water collection / lagoon systems (Weberville, Dixonville, and North Star). There are also six potable water truck fills, eight non-potable water supplies, and some regional water lines, operated by the County. Water co-ops have been established, but they are not owned or operated by the County. There is a solid waste system operated by Long Lake Regional Waste Management Services Commission.

This Plan includes infrastructure policies to ensure that all new developments are appropriately serviced and meet the needs of County residents.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

- 9.1.1 To ensure that the County maintains a safe and efficient transportation network.
- 9.1.2 Work with all stakeholders to complete improvements to Highway 35.
- 9.1.3 To ensure that all development is serviced to the satisfaction of the County.
- 9.1.4 Ensure the efficient and effective provision of water supply, sewage treatment.
- 9.1.5 Stormwater run-off control, and sanitary waste disposal facilities to County residents.
- 9.1.6 Responsibly maintain and upgrade existing utility systems as budgets allow.
- 9.1.7 Make potable water available to as many residents of the County as economically possible.
- 9.1.8 Aim to reduce demand for non-renewable energy resources within the County through the promotion of alternative energy sources.
- 9.1.9 To pursue and promote energy conservation within the County.



9.2 TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

- 9.2.1 The County may prepare a Transportation Master Plan, to be used as the basis for transportation network planning and funding.
- 9.2.2 The County shall refer all Area Structure Plans, rezoning, subdivision and development applications that include land located within 0.8 kilometres of a highway to Alberta Transportation for comment.
- 9.2.3 All subdivision and development proposals shall have access to developed roads. The provision of roads within a proposed subdivision and approaches to individual developments shall be developed in accordance with County engineering standards and are the sole responsibility of the developer. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 9.2.4 The County shall, in the evaluation of subdivision and development proposals determine if there is a need for widening and/or upgrading of any roads adjacent to the proposal. All subdivision and development proposals shall require dedication by caveat or plan of survey of a five metre wide future road right-of-way when the site is:
- a. located at the corner of a Township Road or a Range Road that meet. The 5 metres will be located along the frontage of the subdivision as well as the balance of the quarter section along both the Township Road and Range Road.
 - b. located in the middle of the quarter section or bordering another quarter with no road between them. The 5 metres will be located along the frontage of the subdivision and the balance of the quarter that runs along the particular Township Road or Rural Road.
- 9.2.5 All roads shall be developed in accordance with the specifications of the County's design standards. Sustainable Resource Development will be consulted when development occurs on Crown land.
- 9.2.6 Developments that are expected to generate relatively large traffic volumes will be encouraged to locate near highways. Any improvements to the highway system that are required as a result of a development or subdivision proposal shall be carried out at the developer's expense.
- 9.2.7 The County will conduct regular inspection of all roads, implementing road bans when necessary and conducting grading, dust control and snowploughing as needed. The County shall prepare a road improvement priority system and road improvement program.
- 9.2.8 As part of an agreement associated with the approval of a subdivision or the issuance of a development permit, the County may require that the developer pay for all or a portion of any public roadway or trail system.



- 9.2.9 A Road Use Agreement with the County will be required to address haul routes, maintenance and/or upgrading if necessary, dust control, and any other matters relative to the road use.
- 9.2.10 Developments located adjacent to railway lines may require buffering to reduce exposure to noise and vibration. Such buffering, if required, shall be provided to the satisfaction of the County and the railway company.
- 9.2.11 Through the implementation of the Airport Protection District in the Land Use Bylaw, the County shall ensure that development in proximity to the Manning Airport is compatible with the airport and not interfere with the safety and effectiveness of its operation or interfere with future airport expansion.

9.3 MUNICIPAL SERVICING POLICIES

- 9.3.1 The County may prepare a Utilities Master Plan to upgrade and expand its water supply and sewage treatment systems as needed.
- 9.3.2 With the exception of development located within the serviced area of a Hamlet, all developments in the County are required to provide private water and sewer services in accordance with Municipal Affairs standards.
- 9.3.3 As part of a development permit application, the County shall require that developers submit information respecting the proposed location and type of sewage disposal system intended to serve the proposed development. The County may require that soil tests be undertaken by the developer to determine that the soils are suitable to accommodate on-site sewage disposal systems. The generally accepted rate for soil percolation shall be in the range of 4 to 12 min/cm (10 to 30 min/inch). Proposals with percolation rates faster or slower than these standards shall be required to clearly demonstrate that the proposed method of sewage disposal will not contaminate groundwater supplies. (Bylaw 11-61-288).
- 9.3.4 The County may allow developments to be serviced with central (communal) sewage collection, provided that such systems are constructed in accordance with Alberta Environment requirements and maintained by the developer or resident association.
- 9.3.5 When a lot containing an existing house is to be subdivided from a larger parcel, the County shall determine if the setbacks for the existing sewer system comply with the Alberta Private Sewage Systems Standard of Practice. If it is determined the system is not compliant as a result of subdivision, relocation or upgrading of the system shall be identified as a condition of subdivision approval.
- 9.3.6 The County shall require developers to demonstrate proof of water supply if accessing groundwater, or identify proposed method of water servicing, for all multi-lot country residential developments in excess of five lots, and all industrial, and highway commercial developments. Where lots are proposed to be served by cisterns, restrictive covenants shall



be registered as a condition of subdivision approval, prohibiting the use of wells or other means of groundwater collection.

- 9.3.7 As part of an agreement associated with the approval of a subdivision or the issuance of a development permit the County may require that the developer pay for all or a portion of any utility improvement in excess of the requirement for the proposed development. Where such extra improvements are required, the County shall negotiate a cost sharing agreement to cover the costs associated with the extra improvements.
- 9.3.8 The County encourages all well users to register their use of groundwater under the Water Act.
- 9.3.9 The County may provide additional waterpoints and waterfills in strategic locations.
- 9.3.10 Public Utilities, such as telecommunication facilities, wind energy conservation systems or similar infrastructure, may be developed, provided they meet the regulations of the applicable Federal or Provincial legislation, the Land Use Bylaw, and are compatible with adjacent development. The County may also require the proponent to conduct a public meeting, and provide studies, such as but not limited to a Geotechnical Report, Environmental Site Assessment, and Environmental Impact Assessment to support the development.
- 9.3.11 The County may encourage the promotion of energy conservation practices through educational programs, or public awareness campaigns.

9.4 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICIES

- 9.4.1 The County intends to maintain its commitment to the disposal of solid waste through the sanitary landfill system, and should ensure that solid waste disposal sites are located and developed in a manner that shall minimize any impacts on surrounding land uses.
- 9.4.2 The County is in favour of recycling waste or discarded materials and shall generally support the initiatives of local residents in this regard, but shall not undertake a major municipal recycling program unless the monetary benefits of such a program exceed or are similar to the program's costs. The County shall consider developing recycling depots at strategic locations, or prepare a recycling plan.
- 9.4.3 The County shall ensure that all subdivision and development applications located in the vicinity of an active or reclaimed landfill site, sewage treatment facility or transfer station, comply with the provisions of the Subdivision and Development Regulation.
- 9.4.4 The County shall, in cooperation with other local authorities, continue to establish and encourage the use of solid waste disposal sites and transfer stations, and shall ensure that sites and stations are located and developed in a manner that will minimize impacts on surrounding land uses.



- 9.4.5 The County will work with the Long Lake Regional Waste Management Service Commission to consider increasing services offered within the County.



10.0 CROWN LAND

A majority of the County is owned by the Provincial Crown and is commonly referred to as public lands. These lands constitute approximately 67 percent of the County's land base, and are classified as the Province's Green Area. These lands are also significant as they accommodate a diversity of major economic activities, including oil and gas, forestry, sand and gravel extraction, and agriculture. In addition, there are significant areas of Crown land within the County's White Area. As a result, the development of Crown lands is an important land use issue, but the County's role is limited due to Provincial control of these lands.

The Green Area is managed by several Provincial departments and boards that set the rules for lands use, and include but are not limited to, Agriculture and Rural Development, Culture and Community Spirit, Energy, Environment, Sustainable Resource Development (SRD), Tourism, Parks and Recreation, the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB), and the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB).

The County will complement the work of the Crown to encourage the appropriate use of Crown Lands throughout the County.

10.1 OBJECTIVES

- 10.1.1 To cooperate with Provincial government departments in the planning and development processes affecting Crown lands.
- 10.1.2 Facilitate public access to Crown Land areas where deemed suitable, desirable and economically feasible.

10.2 CROWN LAND POLICIES

- 10.2.1 The County shall:
 - a. support the use of Crown Lands for renewable and non-renewable resource development, limited grazing, conservation, and recreational use;
 - b. pursue discussions with relevant government agencies to ensure that they are fully aware of any future proposed use of Crown Lands;
 - c. work with the Province to ensure that Crown interests in water bodies are addressed prior to development.
- 10.2.2 As a means of ensuring that the interests of the County are recognized and reflected in the development of Crown lands, the following measures are supported and encouraged by the municipality:
 - a. participation and involvement in the Province's Land Use Framework Regional Planning; and
 - b. involvement and cooperation in Provincial approval processes for proposed leases and other dispositions, serving as a means for conveying the concerns of residents to the appropriate Provincial agencies, and active participation in the review processes utilized by the ERCB and the NRCB.



11.0 INTERMUNICIPAL RELATIONS

A history of cooperative planning between the County and adjacent municipalities is reflected in the existing Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDP) with Northern Sunrise County, the Town of Peace River and the Town of Manning and other joint agreements, such as the Weberville/Warrens ville Joint Development Agreement Area (JDA). The IDPs and JDA recognize that each municipality has a mutual interest in planning and development proposals near their shared boundaries and ensure that each have an interdependent role in rendering decisions for such proposals.

11.1 OBJECTIVES

- 11.1.1 Maintain mutually beneficial relationships with adjacent municipalities or other stakeholders, as well as Provincial and Federal agencies to achieve the objective of regional cooperation and regional planning.
- 11.1.2 To support and implement the Intermunicipal Development Plans which are currently in place with adjacent urban municipalities.
- 11.1.3 To foster a cooperative approach to intermunicipal development issues.
- 11.1.4 Facilitate intermunicipal communication and referral of planning and development applications.

11.2 INTERMUNICIPAL RELATIONS POLICIES

- 11.2.1 The County shall continue to support its Intermunicipal Development Plans with Northern Sunrise County and the Towns of Peace River and Manning. The County shall participate in the monitoring and review of these Plans to ensure they remain current and reflect the needs of the respective municipalities and area residents.
- 11.2.2 The County shall not approve any development proposal in contravention of an Intermunicipal Development Plan. If such development is proposed and deemed to have merit, then an amendment to the Intermunicipal Development Plan may be pursued in accordance with the provisions of the Plan.
- 11.2.3 The County shall establish a 3.2 km (2 mile) fringe zone adjacent to its boundaries with neighbouring Rural Municipalities. In this zone, the County shall circulate the following to the affected municipality for review and comment:
 - a. subdivision applications, with the exception of applications for farmstead separations, boundary adjustments and public uses;
 - b. development permit applications for discretionary uses under the Land Use Bylaw; and
 - c. statutory plan and land use bylaw amendments.
- 11.2.4 The County will support the annexation of lands into neighbouring urban municipalities provided that the following criteria are met:



- a. the proposal conforms with the relevant Intermunicipal Development Plan;
 - b. the lands in question represent a logical extension to existing urban land use patterns and servicing networks, and are identified as suitable areas for long term expansion in an approved Area Structure Plan;
 - c. that Better Agricultural Lands are not subject to the annexation, unless no practical alternatives are available; and
 - d. there is agreement to the proposed annexation from a majority of the affected landowners.
- 11.2.5 The County supports the continuing use of intermunicipal agreements as means of delivering services, such as affordable housing and transportation and utility infrastructure in a co-operative manner and maximizing available resources.
- 11.2.6 In keeping with Alberta's "Water for Life" initiative, County shall work with provincial agencies and neighbouring municipalities to protect watersheds and maintain the water quality of surface and groundwater systems.



12.0 MONITORING, REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Municipal Development Plan will guide decisions about the future growth and development of the County. More detailed planning is required through subsequent stages of the planning process from preparing or amending Area Structure Plans and Outline Plans to the daily implementation of the Land Use Bylaw and the subdivision and development approval process. Conformity between the Municipal Development Plan, the Land Use Bylaw, and intermediate planning documents must be achieved.

12.1 MONITORING

12.1.1 The Municipal Development Plan must be reviewed to ensure that it adequately deals with unforeseen planning and development proposals. The County's Council and Administration must be prepared at any time to consider proposed amendments to the MDP in order to deal with unanticipated conditions, or proposals contrary to this Plan, but deemed desirable by Council. If amendments are required, they shall be carried out through a transparent public consultation process.

12.1.2 If an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw is required to accommodate a proposed subdivision, the amendment shall receive third reading from Council prior to subdivision approval taking place. Such amendments will not be considered unless accompanied by a subdivision application.

12.2 REVIEW

12.2.1 Comprehensive review of the Municipal Development Plan may take place every five years, as experience in other communities suggests that conditions generally change enough within this time span to warrant such review. In undertaking reviews, consideration should be given to:

- a. reviewing annual land use changes and issues;
- b. reviewing best practices and new development trends; and
- c. communication and consultation with the public.

12.3 Implementation

12.3.1 The County's Land Use Bylaw shall reflect the contents of the Municipal Development Plan by providing a comprehensive system for development. To ensure the County is subdivided and developed in accordance with the vision, objectives and policies of the Municipal Development Plan, Council may amend the Land Use Bylaw, adopt an Area Structure Plan or other Statutory Plan in accordance with the Municipal Government Act or approve an Outline Plan or other non-statutory plan so long as the plan conforms to the Municipal Development Plan.