

**SMOKY LAKE COUNTY**

**A G E N D A: County Council: Committee of the Whole Meeting**

for the purpose of **Planning** to be held on

November 17, 2021, at 9:00 A.M.

**Virtually, Online through Zoom:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89767493106?pwd=MFhyOUdBQ3Ja](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89767493106?pwd=MFhyOUdBQ3JaZ2U4T1ZnbGIEQk5lQT09)

[Z2U4T1ZnbGIEQk5lQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89767493106?pwd=MFhyOUdBQ3JaZ2U4T1ZnbGIEQk5lQT09) Or, by phone: 1-877-853-5257, Meeting ID 897 6749 3106 Password: 852161.

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**1. Meeting:**

Call to Order

**2. Agenda:**

Acceptance of Agenda:  
as presented or  
subject to additions or deletions

**Council Orientation – Planning and Development ©**

**3. Minutes:**

No Minutes.

**4. Request for Discussion:**

- 1. Amendment to Smoky Lake County Land Use Bylaw 1272-14 to create a Recreation District to accommodate a range of recreational uses. ©

**5. Issues for Information:**

- 1. Trails Strategy & Lake Accretion Update ©

**6. Correspondence:**

- 1. Gary & Anita DeWitt, Landowners at Hillside Acres, Whitefish Lake, dated August 16, 2021 – Re: Environmental Reserve Issues ©  
**Letter presented to Council at August 24, 2021 County Council meeting (to be provided as a handout due to FOIP).**
- 2. Lori Danyluk, Landowner at Hillside Acres, Whitefish Lake, dated October, 2021 – Re: Environmental Reserve Issues ©  
**Letter presented to Council at October 15, 2021 County Council meeting (to be provided as a handout due to FOIP).**

**7. Delegation:**

- 1. Gary & Anita DeWitt – Environmental Reserve at Hillside Acres, Whitefish Lake – 9:15 a.m. (attending virtually).
- 2. Lori Danyluk – Environmental Reserve at Hillside Acres, Whitefish Lake – 9:30 a.m. (attending virtually).

**8. Executive Session:**

Nil.

**Adjournment**

# Planning & Development - Council Orientation

November 17, 2021  
Smoky Lake County



# Planning and Development Services Department

## Who we are?



**Kyle Schole**  
Planning, Development,  
& Heritage Assistant ↓



↑ **Jordan Ruegg**  
Planning & Development  
Manager

# Planning Legislation, Bylaws & Policies



## LEGISLATION

- Municipal Government Act
- Subdivision and Development Regulation
- Subdivision and Development Appeals Regulation
- Water Act
- Public Lands Act
- Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act
- Alberta Land Stewardship Act
- North Saskatchewan Regional Land Use Framework (Future)
- Historical Resources Act



## BYLAWS

- Development Authority Bylaw
- Subdivision Authority Bylaw
- Subdivision and Development Appeal Board Bylaw
- Municipal Planning Commission Bylaw
- Land Use Bylaw
- Municipal Development Plan Bylaw
- Intermunicipal Development Plans
- Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks
- Area Structure Plans

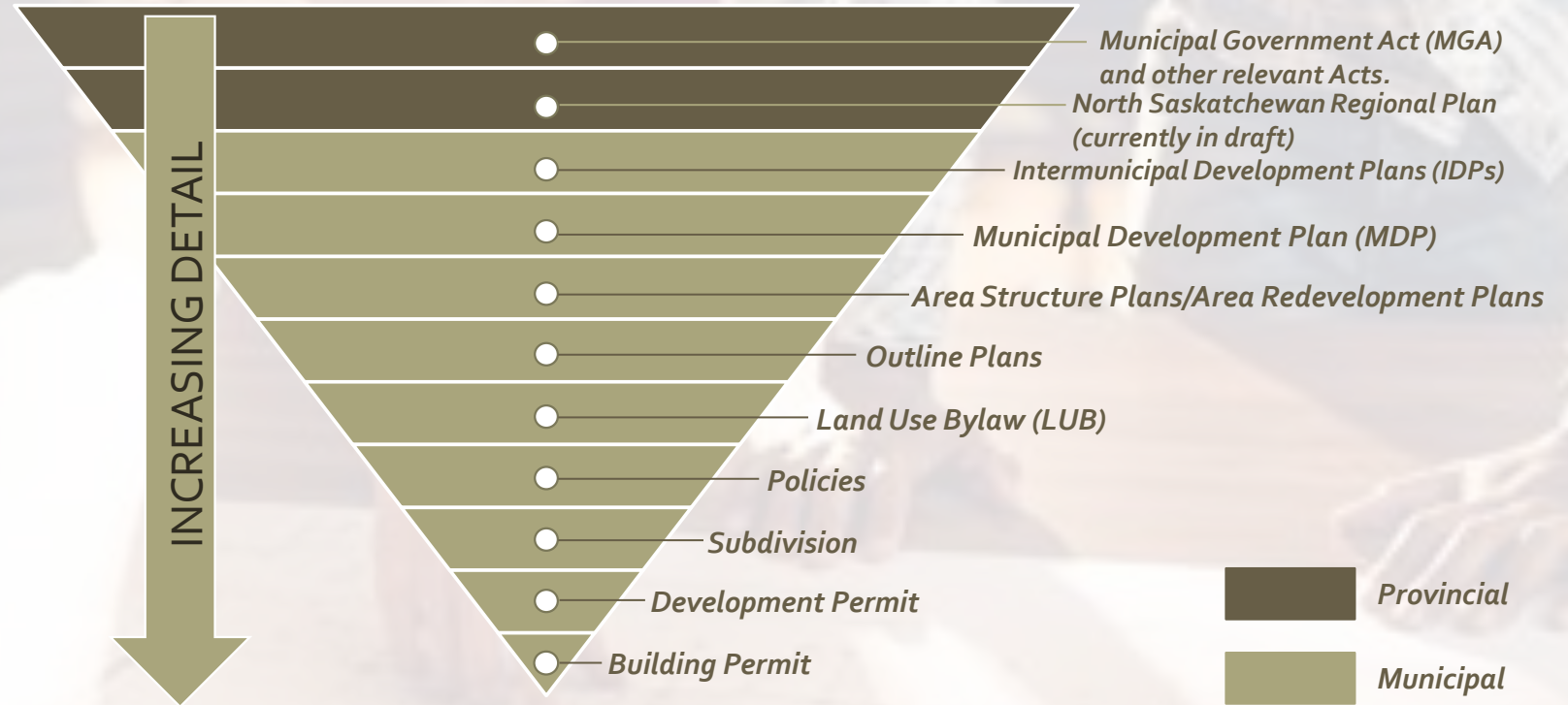


## POLICIES

- Application for Development Permit Policy
- Development Agreement Policy
- Encroachment Agreement Policy
- Disposition of County-Owned Properties Policy
- Heritage Management Plan Policy
- Municipal Historic Resource Designation Policy
- Resource Extraction Policy
- Road Closure Policy
- Roadway Licensing Agreement Policy
- Business License Policy



# Planning Hierarchy & Consistency:



- Section 638(1) of the Municipal Government Act requires that a Municipal Development Plan must be consistent with any Intermunicipal Development Plan.
- Section 638(2) of the Municipal Government Act requires that an Area Structure Plan/Area Redevelopment Plan must be consistent with an Intermunicipal Development Plan and the Municipal Development Plan.
- An IDP prevails over the MDP, ASP and ARP. An MDP prevails over an ASP and an ARP.

# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 3 – Planning Authorities



- The purpose of Part 17 of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, C. M-26, and the regulations and bylaws under this Part is to provide a means whereby plans and related matters may be prepared and adopted, to achieve the orderly, economical and beneficial development, use of land and patterns of human settlement and to maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment within which patterns of human settlement are situated.
- Section 623 of the *Municipal Government Act* requires that a Council **must** establish, by bylaw:
  - a **Development Authority**, to exercise development powers and perform duties on behalf of the municipality; and
  - a **Subdivision Authority**, to exercise subdivision powers and duties on behalf of the municipality.
- Section 625 of the *Municipal Government Act* states that a Council **may** establish, by bylaw, a **Municipal Planning Commission (MPC)**. Should a Council adopt a bylaw establishing an MPC, said bylaw must prescribe the functions and duties of the commission, including but not limited to subdivision and development powers and duties.
- Section 627 of the *Municipal Government Act* requires that a Council **must** establish, by bylaw, a **Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB)**. Furthermore, Section 627.1(1) requires a Council to appoint a clerk of the SDAB.

# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 4 – Statutory Plans



#### Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs)

- Section 631(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* requires that a Council of a municipality **must** establish, by bylaw, an Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) with municipalities that share a common boundary with said municipality.
- Section 631(8) prescribes that an IDP **must** address:
  - the future land use within the plan area;
  - the manner of and the proposals for future development within the area;
  - the provision of transportation systems for the area, either generally or specifically;
  - the co-ordination of intermunicipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the area;
  - environmental matters within the area, either generally or specifically; and
  - any other matter related to the physical, social or economic development of the area that the Councils consider necessary.
- Section 631(8) prescribes that an IDP **must** include:
  - a procedure to be used to resolve or attempt to resolve any conflict between the municipalities that have adopted the plan;
  - a procedure to be used, by one or more municipalities, to amend or repeal the plan; and
  - provisions relating to the administration of the plan.



# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 4 – Statutory Plans



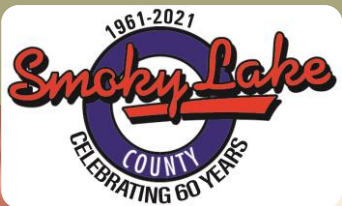
#### Municipal Development Plan (MDP) – Smoky Lake County Bylaw #1249-12

- Section 632(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* requires that a Council of a municipality **must** establish, by bylaw, a Municipal Development Plan (MDP).
- Section 632(3) prescribes that an MDP **must** address:
  - the future land use within the municipality;
  - the manner of and the proposals for future development in the municipality;
  - the co-ordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no Internuncial Development Plan with respect to those matters in those municipalities;
  - the provision of the required transportation systems either generally or specifically within the municipality and in relation to adjacent municipalities; and
  - The provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically.
- Section 632(3) prescribes that an MDP **may** address:
  - proposals for the financing and programming of municipal infrastructure;
  - the co-ordination of municipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the municipality;
  - environmental matters of the municipality;
  - the financial resources of the municipality;
  - The economic development of the municipality; and
  - any other matter relating to the physical, social or economic development of the municipality.

# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 4 – Statutory Plans



### Smoky Lake County Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs)

- Smoky Lake County has Intermunicipal Development Plan Bylaws with the following municipalities:
  - Town of Smoky Lake – Bylaw #1289-16
  - Village of Vilna – Bylaw #1290-16
  - Village of Waskatenau – Bylaw #1304-17
  - County of St. Paul – Bylaw #1334-19
  - County of Two Hills – Bylaw 1335-19
  - Lamont County – Bylaw #1383-20
- Smoky Lake County does **not** have an Intermunicipal Development Plan with Lac La Biche County as Municipal Affairs determined that the two municipalities do not technically share a border with one another as Whitefish Lake is the only contiguous part of the two municipalities.
- Smoky Lake County does **not** have an Intermunicipal Development Plan with Thorhild County as both Thorhild County and Smoky Lake County mutually agreed, subject to Section 631(2) of the *Municipal Government Act*, that they did not wish to enter into an Intermunicipal Development Plan.

# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 4 – Statutory Plans



#### Area Structure Plans (ASPs)

- Section 633(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* allows the Council of a municipality to adopt, by bylaw, an Area Structure Plan (ASP) for the purpose of providing a framework for subsequent subdivision and development of an area of land.
- Section 633(2) prescribes that an ASP **must** describe:
  - the sequence of development proposed for the area;
  - the land uses proposed for the area, either generally or with respect to specific parts of the area;
  - the density of the population proposed for the area either generally or with respect to specific parts of the area; and
  - the general location of major transportation routes and public utilities.
- Additionally, an ASP **may** contain any other matters, including matters relating to reserves, as the Council considers necessary.
- Smoky Lake County has the following Area Structure Plans:
  - Goodfish Lake Area Structure Plan – Bylaw #723
  - Hanmore Lake Area Structure Plan – Bylaw #730-86
  - Bonnie Lake Area Structure Plan – Bylaw #1146-07
  - Whitefish Lake Area Structure Plan – Bylaw #1189-09
  - Mons Lake Area Structure Plan – Bylaw #1216-10
  - Garner Lake Area Structure Plan – Bylaw #1227-11
  - Victoria District Area Structure Plan – Bylaw #1305-17

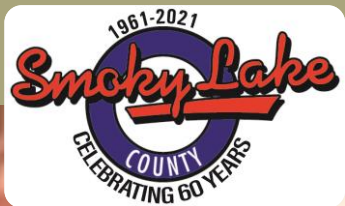
# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 5 – Land Use

#### Land Use Bylaw (LUB) – Smoky Lake County Bylaw #1272-14

- Section 640(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* requires every municipality to have a Land Use Bylaw.
- A Land Use Bylaw may prohibit or regulate and control the use and development of land and buildings in a municipality by:
  - imposing design standards;
  - determining population density;
  - regulating the development of buildings;
  - providing for the protection of agricultural land; and
  - providing for any other matter council considers necessary to regulate land use within the municipality.
- Section 640(2) provides that a Land Use Bylaw **must**:
  - divide the municipality into districts;
  - prescribe which types of uses will be Permitted and Discretionary within each district;
  - establish a method of making decisions on applications for development permits;
  - provide for how and to whom notice of the issuance of a development permit is to be given; and
  - establish the number of dwelling units permitted on a parcel of land.



# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 7 – Subdivision of Land



#### Division 7 – Subdivision of Land

- Division 7 of the *Municipal Government Act* provides the general rules for subdivision of land within Alberta. It provides specific provisions for:
  - When subdivision authority approval is required or not,
  - Requirements for subdivision applications;
  - Timelines for approval of subdivision applications;
  - Conditions that may be imposed upon approval of a subdivision;
  - Requirements of the Registrar for Land Titles for registering subdivisions;
  - Agencies that a subdivision application must be referred to; and
  - Whether or not reserves should be taken and in what form they should be taken

#### Subdivision Timelines

- A Subdivision Authority must determine whether or not an application for subdivision is complete with 20 days of receiving said application.
- A Subdivision Authority must make a decision on an application for subdivision within 60 days of deeming said application complete.

# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 10 – Subdivision and Development Appeals



#### Division 10 – Subdivision Appeals

- Section 678(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* contains provisions for appealing the decision of a Subdivision Authority.
- Appeals must be filed within 14 days of the date of receipt of the decision.

#### Appeals to the LPRT

- The following subdivision appeals lie with the LPRT:
  - lands that are located within the Green Area;
  - lands that contain, are adjacent to, or are within a prescribed distance of:
    - a provincial highway;
    - a body of water;
    - a sewage treatment/waste management facility; or
    - a historical site.
  - Lands that are the subject of a license/permit/approval/other authorization granted by the NRCB, ERCB, AER, AEUB, or AUC.
  - Lands that are the subject of a license/permit/approval/other authorization granted by the Minister of Environment and Parks.

#### Appeals to the SDAB

- All other subdivision appeals not listed above are heard by the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

## Division 10 – Subdivision and Development Appeals



### Division 10 – Development Appeals

- Section 685(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* contains provisions for appealing the decision of a Development Authority.
- Appeals must be filed within 21 days of the date of receipt of the decision.

### Grounds for Appeal

- An applicant for a Development Permit may file an appeal if a Development Authority:
  - fails or refuses to issue a Development Permit to a person;
  - issues a Development Permit subject to conditions; or
  - issues an Order under Section 645 (Stop Order).

### Appeals to the LPRT

- The following development appeals lie with the LPRT:
  - lands that are the subject of a license, permit, approval or other authorization granted by the Natural Resources Conservation Board, Energy Resources Conservation Board, Alberta Energy Regulator, Alberta Energy and Utilities Board or Alberta Utilities Commission; and
  - lands that are the subject of a license, permit, approval or other authorization granted by the Minister of Environment and Parks.

### Appeals to the SDAB

- All other subdivision appeals not listed above are heard by the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

### Division 10 – Subdivision and Development Appeals



#### Division 10 – Subdivision and Development Appeals Continued

- Section 688(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* contains provisions for appealing the decision of the SDAB or LPRT to the Court of Appeal.
- Appeals must be filed within 30 days of the date of the issue of the decision.

#### Grounds for Appeal

- The MGA outlines the limited grounds for an appeal of an SDAB or LPRT decision.
- An appeal lies to the Court of Appeal on a question of law or jurisdiction with respect to:
  - A decision of the subdivision and development appeal board; and
  - A decision made by the LPRT
    - under Section 619 respecting whether a proposed statutory plan or land use bylaw amendment is consistent with a license, permit, approval or other authorization granted under that Section;
    - under Section 648.1 respecting the imposition of an off-site levy or the amount of the levy;
    - under Section 678(2)(a) respecting a decision of a subdivision authority;
    - under Section 685(2.1)(a) respecting a decision of a Development Authority; or
    - under section 690 respecting an intermunicipal dispute.
- Unlike the SDAB & LRPT, the Court of Appeal is not obliged to hear an appeal. If an appellant is given standing by the Court, the Court may confirm, vary, reverse or cancel the decision of the SDAB/LRPT. If the Court cancels a decision, the relevant Board must rehear the matter.



# Planning Legislation:

## Municipal Government Act (MGA) – Part 17

## Division 12 – Bylaws, Regulations



### Division 12 – Bylaws, Regulations

- Section 688(1) of the *Municipal Government Act* contains provisions for adopting and amending planning bylaws.
- A Council must hold a Public Hearing, in accordance with Section 230, and after giving notice of said Hearing in accordance with Section 606, before giving second reading to:
  - A proposed bylaw to adopt an Intermunicipal Development Plan;
  - A proposed bylaw to adopt a Municipal Development Plan;
  - A proposed bylaw to adopt an Area Structure Plan;
  - A proposed bylaw to adopt an Area Redevelopment Plan;
  - A proposed land use bylaw; or
  - A proposed bylaw amending any of the above mentioned bylaws
- If a proposed development relates to more than one of the above mentioned bylaws, the Council may hold a single Public Hearing.
- In the case of a Public Hearing for a proposed bylaw adopting an Intermunicipal Development Plan, the Councils of the municipalities that are party to the IDP may hold a joint Public Hearing and may jointly advertise said Hearing.
- In addition to the requirements of Section 688(1), In the case of a bylaw amending a Land Use Bylaw for the purposes of redistricting a parcel(s) of land, the municipality must include in the notice advertising the bylaw, the municipal address and legal description of the land and a map showing its location. This notice must be advertised **and** mailed to adjacent landowners.



Application to  
Amend  
LUB/ASP/MDP



Application  
circulated  
internally for  
comments



First Reading  
of Bylaw



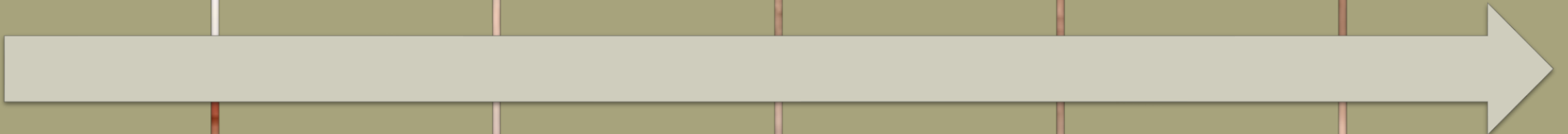
Public Hearing



Second  
Reading



Third Reading



# Planning Legislation:

# Other Legislation and Regulations



## **Subdivision and Development Regulation**

- The Subdivision and Development Regulation provides more detail on subdivision application processes. The regulation itemizes what subdivision applications must contain, where subdivision applications must be referred to, the timelines for a decision on subdivision applications and what must be considered when making a decision on subdivision applications. The regulation also includes conditions and setback requirements for subdivision and development permit applications from sour gas facilities, gas and oil wells, abandoned wells, wastewater treatment facilities, landfills or waste sites and highways.

## **Subdivision and Development Appeals Regulation**

- Modifies the list of matters under the Municipal Government Act that requires subdivision and development appeals to be submitted to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal (LPRT) instead of the local subdivision and development appeal board (SDAB) and clarifies that certain development permit appeals should continue to be directed to the local SDAB instead of the LPRT.

## **Water Act**

- The Act supports and promotes the conservation and management of water, through the use and allocation of water in Alberta. It requires the establishment of a water management framework and sets out requirements for the preparation of water management plans. The Act addresses: Albertans' rights to divert water and describes the priority of water rights among users; the types of instruments available for diversion and use of water and the associated processes for decision-making; and the range of enforcement measures available to ensure the goals of the Act are met.

# Planning Legislation:

# Other Legislation and Regulations

## **Public Lands Act**

- The Act establishes the role of the Alberta government in managing public land. It sets out mechanisms by which rights in public land may be transferred by lease or sale. It provides for and defines the powers of the Minister and the Lieutenant Governor in Council with respect to establishing regulations to govern use and allocation of public land. The Act and its regulations also control public land use through the establishment of public land use zones, recreation areas and trails. The Act provides for appropriate use and management of public land and for the classification of the public land base in Alberta.

## **Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act**

- The Act is the primary act in Alberta through which regulatory requirements for air, water, land, and biodiversity are managed. The Act supports and promotes the protection, enhancement and wise use of the environment by designating proposed activities for which an approval or registration is required.

## **Alberta Land Stewardship Act**

- The Act enables government to provide direction and leadership in identifying current and future land-use objectives of the Province, including economic, environmental and social objectives, while respecting private property rights. The Act provides for the coordination of decisions concerning land, species, human settlement, natural resources and the environment while taking into account cumulative effects of human endeavours and other events.



# Planning Legislation:

# Other Legislation and Regulations

## Historical Resources Act

- Provides for the use, designation and protection of moveable and immovable historic resources; establishes the Historic Resources Fund and The Alberta Historical Resources Foundation.

## Land Titles Act

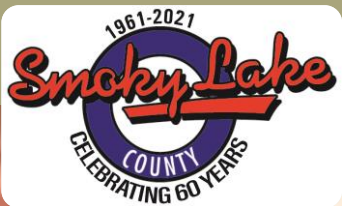
- Details the legal mechanism for registration of land related documents and establishes priority between them. The government guarantees the title and a fund is established to compensate people who have been deprived of an interest in land, for situations such as an error made by the Registrar, fraud or forgery.

## Surveys Act

- The Act provides standards and procedures that govern land surveys conducted within Alberta. These provisions do not apply to surveys of land administered by the Government of Canada, such as in national parks and First Nation Reserves. Under the authority of the Act, property boundaries governing the extent of interest in land are maintained and preserved within the land survey system. The Act provides the authority and means for the continued establishment of the provincial land survey system within territory not surveyed.

## Safety Codes Act

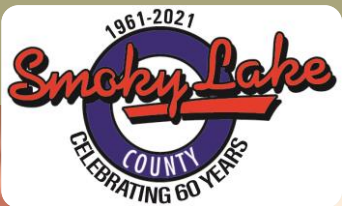
- The Act establishes a unifying framework for the administration of ten safety disciplines which each have their own safety codes and standards.

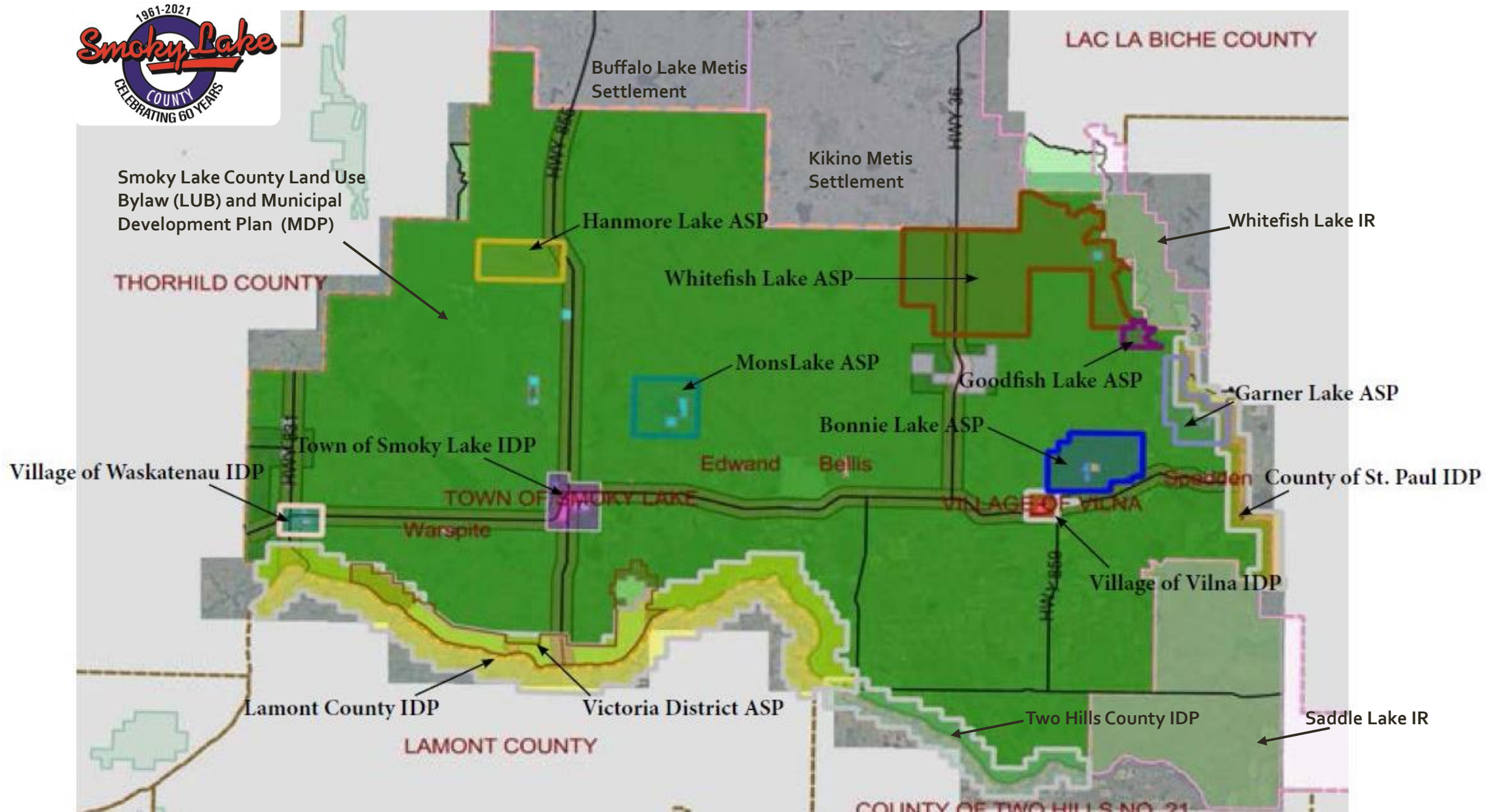


# Planning Bylaws – Land Use Bylaw

## Land Use Bylaw #1272-14

- The County's Land Use Bylaw divides all of the parcels of land within the County into specific Districts
  - AG - Agriculture
  - A1 - Victoria Agriculture
  - R1 - Multi-Lot Country Residential
  - R2 - Residential (Cluster) Conservation
  - R3 - Victoria Residential
  - HG - Hamlet General
  - C1 - Highway Commercial
  - C2 - Victoria Commercial
  - M1 - Industrial
  - M2 - Rural Industrial
  - P - Community & Institutional
  - DC - Direct Control
  - DC1 - Direct Control Landfill
- Each of the Districts contains a list of Permitted and Discretionary Uses as well as contains provisions for subdivision, minimum/maximum lot sizes, minimum setback distances, maximum height, maximum lot coverage and other related provisions.

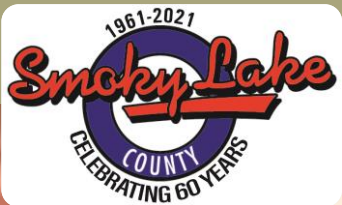




# Planning & Development Policies

## Planning and Development Policies

- Smoky Lake County has the following Policies pertaining to planning and development related matters:
  - **Policy No. 61-01: *Reserve Requirements in Subdivisions***
    - The purpose of this Policy is to standardize procedures for the dedication of reserve land or money-in-lieu of reserve land during the subdivision process.
  - **Policy No. 61-02: *Natural Resource Extraction/Processing***
    - The purpose of this Policy is to outline the procedures and requirements for applying for a Natural Resources Extraction/Processing Development Permit.
  - **Policy No. 61-03: *Application for Development Permit***
    - The purpose of this Policy is to outline the procedures and requirements for applying for a Development Permit in Smoky Lake County.
  - **Policy No. 61-04: *Smoky Lake Region Strategic Plan***
    - The purpose of this Policy is to provide strategic guidance and direction for Council's priorities for its term in office.
  - **Policy No. 61-09: *Development Agreement for Subdivisions***
    - The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the conditions imposed on a subdivision approval are met by the proponent and to safeguard the County's interests.





# Planning & Development Policies

## Planning and Development Policies

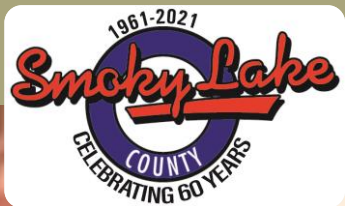
- **Policy No. 61-10: *Disposition of County Owned Property***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to outline the procedures and requirements for disposition (sale) of County owned lands that are not required for present or future use by the County.
- **Policy No. 61-12: *Compliance Certificates***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to outline the procedures and requirements for the issuance of Compliance Certificates which are often requested when a parcel of land is sold.
- **Policy No. 61-13: *Business Licenses***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to outline the procedures and guidelines for the issuance of Business Licenses.
- **Policy No. 61-15: *Designation of Municipal Historic Resources***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to provide standardized criteria for evaluating historic resources and to outline the procedures and requirements for designating an historic resource as a Municipal Historic Resource as defined under Section 26 of the *Historical Resources Act*.
- **Policy No. 61-20: *Heritage Management Plan***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to implement a useful and proactive framework to encourage the effective management and maintenance in facilitating heritage conservation activities in Smoky Lake County.



# Planning & Development Policies

## Planning and Development Policies

- **Policy No. 61-21: *Encroachment Agreement***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to provide clarity and guidance to County administration and ratepayers with respect to encroaching structures and improvements on municipally-owned lands and road allowances.
- **Policy No. 61-22: *Telecommunications***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to establish procedures for the review and approval of requests pertaining to telecommunications towers within Smoky Lake County.
- **Policy No. 61-24: *Victoria District National Historic Site of Canada Caveat Program***
  - The purpose of this Policy is to establish procedures for the voluntary registration of a Caveat on the Certificate of Title for lands located within Smoky Lake County.



# Treaty 6 and Indigenous Acknowledgement

## County Policy 01-53



Adopted May 27, 2021:

### Section 1.1:

*"Smoky Lake County acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory and Regions 1 and 2 of the Métis Nation of Alberta. We benefit from calling this place home, and acknowledge the contributions of First Nations, the Métis Nation, and settlers from around the world in the County's founding and growth. We respect these histories, languages, and cultures, which continue to enrich our vibrant community"*

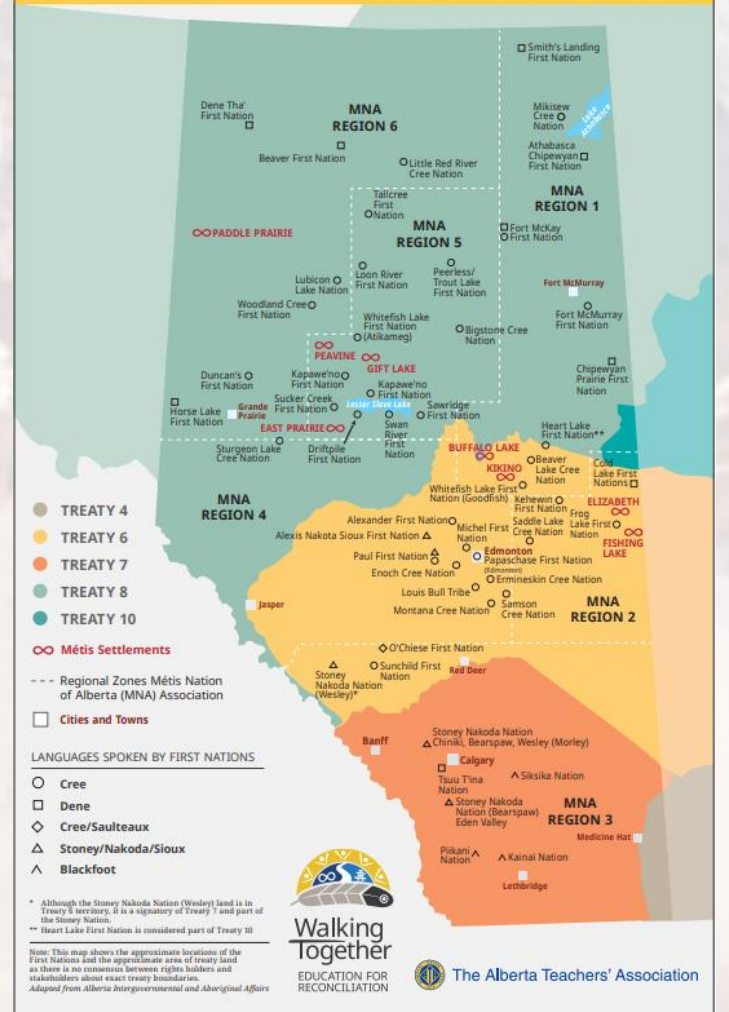
### Section 4.4:

*bᑦᑲᑕᑕᑦ ᑦᑲᑲᑦᑲᑦ (kaskapatau sakahigan) / Озеро Димне (Ozero Dymne) / Lac qui Fume / Smoky Lake, Located on Treaty 6 Territory, and Homeland of the Métis Nation*

### Section 3.3:

*"Following each municipal election, the Council Orientation will include information about the significance of Treaty 6 and Indigenous communities."*

## ACKNOWLEDGING LAND AND PEOPLE



# Treaty 6 and Indigenous Acknowledgement

County Policy 01-53



# Treaty 6 and Indigenous Acknowledgement

County Policy 01-53



<http://www.smokylakecounty.ab.ca/p/land-acknowledgment->



# ONGOING & UPCOMING P&D PROJECTS

Project	Status	Next Steps	Other Notes
LUB/MDP Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The County's Municipal Development Plan was adopted on January 31, 2013</li> <li>The County's Land Use Bylaw was adopted on December 4, 2014</li> <li>Typically, a comprehensive review of these documents occurs every 5-10 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration to conduct an internal review of both the MDP &amp; LUB to identify areas where the Bylaws are out-of-date with current legislative/regulatory requirements and where the Bylaws may need adjustments to reflect recent changes to the County's strategic priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Planning and Development Department has received feedback from ratepayers indicating concerns with several provisions of the LUB (e.g. RVs, campgrounds, shipping containers,</li> </ul>
Mons Lake Erosion (South)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The south shore of Mons Lake has been experiencing significant erosion for several years.</li> <li>The County has budgeted \$20k for the development of a sloped sand beach to prevent further erosion at the site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The P&amp;D Department is working with CPP Environmental Ltd. to obtain the necessary approvals under the Water Act and Public Lands Act from Alberta Environment and Parks to perform the work. It is anticipated that these approvals will be in place by Spring 2022.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration previously considered a range of options to alleviate the erosion issue and determined the beach method would be the most effective method for minimal cost.</li> </ul>
RV Resort Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>P&amp;D will introduce recommendations for changes to provisions contained within the LUB/MDP pertaining to RV campgrounds/resorts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration has completed a review of other jurisdictions to determine how to approach these types of developments and address the concerns raised by ratepayers while also providing certainty to prospective developers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of unauthorized campgrounds/RV parks have sprung up around the County and existing provisions in the County's planning bylaws have been unsuccessful at addressing some of the impacts of these developments.</li> </ul>

# ONGOING & UPCOMING P&D PROJECTS

Project	Status	Next Steps	Other Notes
Trails Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration has conducted a visual survey of the County's trail network and compiled data into an inventory that will serve as the background information for the Trails Strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration will provide the collected data to the Committee of the Whole in Spring 2022 for discussion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Motion #1305-21:</b> That the Smoky Lake County Council accept the verbal progress update on the Lake Trails Strategy project initiated by Council's June 24, 2021, Motion #953-21, in respect to creating an inventory of all trails located on Municipal Reserve, Environmental Reserve or on County Lands; and acknowledge further information will be brought forward once it is finalized.</li> </ul>
Design (Engineering) Standards– ACP Grant Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County Administration will serve as the managing partner (with the Villages of Vilna &amp; Waskatenau &amp; the Town of Smoky Lake as partnering municipalities) to apply to the Alberta Community Partnership Grant to prepare updated Design (Engineering) Standards for road construction, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration is currently preparing the grant application to the ACP.</li> <li>ACP Grant due by Jan 5, 2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each municipality is limited to being the managing partner on one ACP application. The County will partner with the Villages &amp; the Town on other ACP applications.</li> <li>Smoky Lake County currently has Design Standards developed in the 1970's that require updating. The Villages and the Town do not currently have standards but wish to have them.</li> </ul>

# ONGOING & UPCOMING P&D PROJECTS

Project	Status	Next Steps	Other Notes
Joint Use and Planning Agreements (JUPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On June 10, 2020, the <i>Municipal Government Act</i> was amended to require municipalities to enter into Joint Use Planning Agreements with school boards by June 10, 2023.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAO and Planning &amp; Development Department to contact school boards to initiate discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smoky Lake County does not have any schools, however, Aspen View owns two parcels of land that may be subject to these new requirements.</li> </ul>
Town IDP Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The County and Town both recently adopted Resolutions to extend the IDP between the two municipalities as the Bylaw had a sunset clause which would have caused the Bylaw to expire on December 8, 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send notice to the Town of Smoky Lake to begin discussion on adoption of an updated IDP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <i>Municipal Government Act</i> requires that all municipalities that share a common boundary enter into an IDP.</li> </ul>
Wetland Replacement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County administration has approached landowners to gauge interest in participating in the Wetlands Replacement Program. To date, no private landowners have expressed interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact additional private landowners in other target areas to gauge interest.</li> <li>Contact the Province to determine whether they would accommodate proposals on Crown Land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strathcona County has had success working with the Province on Wetland Replacement Program projects on Crown Land.</li> </ul>
Regional SDAB/MPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently, the municipalities of Smoky Lake County, Town of Smoky Lake, Village of Vilna and Village of Waskatenau each have their own individual SDAB &amp; MPC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council would instruct administration to provide notice to the other municipalities of its interest in entertaining an intermunicipal SDAB and/or MPC and to schedule a meeting of the Intermunicipal Collaboration Committee to discuss in further detail.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are potential efficiencies in having an intermunicipal SDAB/MPC as well as removing potential political problems.</li> </ul>



# ONGOING & UPCOMING P&D PROJECTS

Project	Status	Next Steps	Other Notes
Indian Reserves & Metis Settlements ICF/IDP/MOU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently the County does not have a land use agreement/MOU with any of the Indian Reserves/Metis Settlements that border the County.</li> <li>The <i>Municipal Government Act</i> allows a municipality and an Indian Reserve or Metis Settlement to enter into an ICF.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council would need to instruct administration to contact the Indian Reserves &amp; Metis Settlements bordering the County to gauge interest in entering into an ICF/IDP/MOU.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use policies can often have impacts on adjacent lands. Currently the County does not have any land use agreements with neighbouring Reserves or Settlements.</li> <li>Potential regional economic development opportunities/benefits.</li> </ul>
River Accesses (Boat Launches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing accesses to the North Saskatchewan River at Pakan Landing and Desjerlais Crossing &amp; a proposed access south of Warspite require Dispositions from Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Planning Department is in the process of obtaining the necessary dispositions from AEP for Pakan &amp; Desjerlais. Warspite access will be considered in the future if budget allows.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dispositions are valid for 10-25 years depending on the nature of the Disposition.</li> </ul>
REC Leases (Hanmore Lake, Island Lake, Brodyk Lake)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The County has Recreation Leases on Crown Land at Hanmore, Island and Brodyk Lakes that need to be renewed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Planning Department is working with a consultant and AEP to secure the necessary renewals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REC Lease renewals are valid for 25 years provided that a Plan of Survey is provided with the application (County intends to have the Leases surveyed in 2022).</li> </ul>
Dark Skies Preserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The County has been investigating the feasibility of, and public support of/opposition to a potential Dark Skies preserve being established within a part of the County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning Department will contact the International Dark Skies program coordinator to conduct November tests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligns with the County's Victoria District Economic Development Strategy (draw for tourists).</li> <li>Would not apply County-wide.</li> </ul>

# ONGOING & UPCOMING P&D PROJECTS

Project	Status	Next Steps	Other Notes
Lake, River Access & Hamlet Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lake subdivision &amp; river access wayfinding/information signs have been fabricated and are awaiting installation.</li> <li>Hamlet wayfinding/information signs are budgeted for 2022.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate the installation of the lake subdivision signs with the Public Works Department.</li> <li>Contact the sign fabricator to order hamlet signs and prepare for installation upon fabrication.</li> </ul>	
Victoria District Economic Development Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County/Town jointly adopted the Victoria District Economic Development Strategy and subsequent Business Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporation of the Municipally-Controlled Corporation and Smoky Lake Tourism Corporation and appointment of interim board members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lawyers are currently drafting the necessary documents for incorporation.</li> <li>Tony Sefton from Vision XS, the County's consultant on this project will be in Smoky Lake in November.</li> </ul>
Heritage Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2012, the Smoky Lake Region prepared a Heritage Management Plan to guide the protection, preservation and enhancement of the Region's heritage assets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Planning Department will work in conjunction with the Smoky Lake County Regional Heritage Board to accomplish the goals/tasks in the Heritage Management Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage</li> <li>Volunteer appreciation</li> </ul>
McDougall Graves (Access & Management)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cemetery housing the graves of the McDougall family is overgrown and in disrepair.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Planning Department will contact the owner (United Church of Canada) to discuss access/management of the site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This site is a potential tourist destination as the story of George McDougall and his family is told at nearby Victoria Settlement.</li> </ul>

# ONGOING & UPCOMING P&D PROJECTS

Project	Status	Next Steps	Other Notes
Victoria Park Cemetery (Surveying, Access, & Transfer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metis Crossing wishes to purchase the Cemetery as many Metis people are buried there. Wish to incorporate it into their larger development plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Metis Crossing to explore a potential sale of the Cemetery.</li> </ul>	
Waskatenau Nuisance Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Former nuisance ground has been remediated but is currently subject to a 300m setback that restricts certain types of development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The County wishes to apply for a reduction/elimination of the setback but can only do so when a specific development/subdivision application has been made.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Expression of Interest to purchase the lands has been received by the County and a second party has expressed verbal interest in purchasing said lands.</li> </ul>
Public Land Sale (PLS) Application for North Pt. River Lot-10 Victoria Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application has been made to Alberta Environment &amp; Parks to facilitate the sale of Crown Land to the County for eventual resale to Metis Crossing.</li> <li>Application is currently undergoing consultation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If AEP approves the sale of the Crown Land to Smoky Lake County, the Planning Department will work to facilitate the resale of the land to Metis Crossing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metis Crossing plans on incorporating the lands into their existing development to facilitate the expansion of the wildlife preserve/cross-country ski trails, recreation area.</li> <li>Costs associated with the application, acquisition of land, surveying costs and consultation have been paid for by Metis Crossing.</li> </ul>

# ONGOING & UPCOMING P&D PROJECTS

Project	Status	Next Steps	Other Notes
<p><b>Heritage River Initiative: Nomination/Designation of the North Saskatchewan River in Alberta to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoky Lake County is leading this collaborative initiative among fifteen other river-adjacent municipalities, including the City of Edmonton, as well as other Indigenous Organizations, Utilities, and community groups, including Metis Crossing, EPCOR, Fort Edmonton, North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA), River Valley Alliance (RVA), Alberta Riverwatch Institute, Paddle Alberta, Travel Alberta, Explore Edmonton, Senator Paula Simons, and others.</li> <li>• In October 2020, Alberta Environment Minister Jason Nixon endorsed the project.</li> <li>• During 2021, we have been revising a 'Nomination Document'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of Nomination Document to the CHRS Board on Nov 24               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Then to be forwarded first to Alberta Minister of Environment and Parks (AEP), and then the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A non-statutory 'Management Plan' is then to be cooperatively created during 2022.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoky Lake County has published a Request for Expressions of Interest for assistance and facilitation of this work.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks Canada has provided a Funding Contribution supporting work to-date, and will provide another to support future work.</li> <li>• Smoky Lake County has been receiving positive news exposure for this work in the media.</li> <li>• CHRS designation is honorary/commemorative; it does not restrict development nor affects ownership or jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Designation will serve as a vehicle for stewardship and story-telling, as well as to coordinate decision-makers, establish routes and itineraries, promote heritage tourism, and obtain grants.</li> </ul>



QUESTIONS?





<b>REQUEST FOR DISCUSSION</b>		DATE	November 17, 2021	4.1
TOPIC	<b>Amendment to Smoky Lake County Land Use Bylaw 1272-14 to create a Recreation District to accommodate a range of recreational uses and to remove these uses from the Agriculture District.</b>			
PROPOSAL	<p><i>That Smoky Lake County Council instruct administration to prepare an amendment to Smoky Lake County Land Use Bylaw #1272-14, to establish a Recreation District, and further to populate said District with recreational uses, including campgrounds, RV parks, hunting lodges, resorts, bed &amp; breakfasts, and other similar uses, and to make these uses “Permitted Uses” within the Recreational District, and further, to remove these uses from the list of “Discretionary Uses” under the Agriculture District.”</i></p>			
BACKGROUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the past 2 years, the Smoky Lake County Planning and Development Department has received multiple applications for a range of campgrounds and RV parks located on lands within the Agriculture District.</li> <li>• Furthermore, the Planning and Development Department has been made aware of numerous examples of campsites/campgrounds/RV parks located throughout the County where no Development Permit has been issued.</li> <li>• The Planning and Development Department wishes to address these deficiencies by providing greater clarity around campgrounds/campsites/RV parks by establishing a process whereby the Development Authority would be able to consider applications for these types of uses, and to establish a process that would allow for public input, and that would allow the Development Authority to request detailed background information to be provided by the proponent that would inform the conditions placed on a Development Permit.</li> <li>• Under the current iteration of the Land Use Bylaw, these types of uses are considered as “Discretionary Uses” within the Agriculture District. This use classification requires an application for a Development Permit to be referred to the County’s Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) for decision. Moreover, the decision of the MPC is circulated to adjacent landowners, advertised in the local newspaper and subject to a 21-day appeal period.</li> <li>• This process is problematic as it does not provide certainty to prospective proponents of these types of uses and it adds additional time to the development process.</li> <li>• Moreover, some County ratepayers have expressed their frustration over how the process works due to the lack of consultation and public engagement prior to a decision being made on a Development Permit application.</li> <li>• Currently, the public is notified of the issuance of a Development Permit for a Discretionary Use <i>after</i> a decision has been made by the MPC rather than being notified that a Development Permit has been applied for.</li> <li>• Ratepayers claiming they are affected by the development may file an appeal of the MPC’s decision, but there is no obligation for the Development Authority to circulate the application to affected landowners prior to its consideration by the MPC.</li> <li>• Previous attempts to address these types of developments through amendments to the Land Use Bylaw have proven unsuccessful and have created additional challenges for proponents of these types of development.</li> <li>• If a new land use district is created and these types of uses are added as “Permitted Uses” and are also removed as “Discretionary Uses” from the Agriculture District, the issuance of a Development Permit will fall to the Development Authority Officer instead of the MPC. This decision would not be subject to an appeal, however, proponents would require an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw to redistrict their property to the Recreation District prior to applying for a Development Permit. This redistricting would require a Public Hearing to be held, which would provide an opportunity to affected landowners to raise their concerns regarding the proposed development to Council prior to an application being made for a Development Permit.</li> </ul>			

- This process would allow the public to voice their concerns, and for Council to require the proponent to provide detailed information and background studies prior to considering a redistricting.

#### **July 20, 2020 – Committee of the Whole Meeting for the Purposes of Planning**

- A Committee of the Whole meeting was held to discuss a number of complaints that were received regarding the unauthorized development of campgrounds, campsites and RV parks, as well as the unauthorized location of recreational vehicles at the County's lake subdivisions.
- **Motion 947-20:** *"That Smoky Lake County Council recommend administration proceed to prepare an amendment to the Land Use Bylaw No. 1272-14, in regards to campgrounds and recreational vehicles, to include separate definitions for minor, intermediate, and major campgrounds, as well as to further define a recreational vehicle (RV) and RV storage facilities; and, recommend administration proceed to research and prepare information in regard to options for temporary permits for additional RVs placed on lake lots and fees for campground development permits."*

#### **October 29, 2020 – Committee of the Whole Meeting for the Purposes of Planning**

- A draft amendment to the Land Use Bylaw was presented (Bylaw # 1386-20) to the Committee for discussion.
- **Motion 117-20:** *"That Smoky Lake County Council recommend the draft amendment to Land Use Bylaw No. 1272-14 for the purpose of regulating Recreational Vehicles (RVs) and Campsites, be brought forward to the next County Council Meeting for consideration of First Reading."*

#### **December 10, 2020 – Smoky Lake County Council Meeting**

- **Motion 118-20:** *"That Smoky Lake County Bylaw 1386-20: Land Use Bylaw 1272-14 Amendment for Recreational Vehicles, Campgrounds, Campsites & Recreational Vehicle Parks, Shipping Containers, Tiny Homes, being a bylaw for the purpose of amending the Land Use Bylaw No. 1272-14, be given FIRST READING, and to schedule a Public Hearing for the said Bylaw at the January 28, 2021 County Council meeting, and advertise the said Public Hearing, in the local newspapers for two consecutive weeks, in accordance with section 230 and section 606 of the Municipal Government Act, as well as on the County's website, social media platforms and at the County office."*

#### **January 28, 2021 – Smoky Lake County Council Meeting**

- **Motion 302-21:** *"That Smoky Lake County Bylaw No. 1386-20: Amendment to Land Use Bylaw No. 1272-14, for the purpose of revising and addressing the provisions pertaining to Recreational Vehicles (RVs), Campgrounds, Campsites, Recreational Vehicle Parks, Shipping Containers and Tiny Homes, be given SECOND READING as amended. Moved by Councillor Gawalko that Smoky Lake County Bylaw No. 1386-20: Amendment to Land Use Bylaw No. 1272-14, for the purposed of revising and addressing the provisions pertaining to Recreational Vehicles (RVs), Campgrounds, Campsites, Recreational Vehicle Parks, Shipping Containers and Tiny Homes, be given THIRD and FINAL READING and that the Reeve and the Interim Chief Administrative Officer are hereby authorized to fix their signatures to all necessary documents and that the corporate seal also be fastened where it is deemed necessary."*

#### **April 23, 2021 – Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) Meeting**

- Development Permit DP-007-21 for a Campground, Major was approved (subject to conditions).
- Subsequently, this Decision was appealed to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board

#### **June 10, 2021 – Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) Hearing**

- The Subdivision and Development Appeal Board heard from appellants and the applicant in respect of the Decision made by the Municipal Planning Commission, dated April 23, 2021, to approve Development Permit DP-007-21, for a Campground, Major, subject to

	<p>conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SDAB upheld the Decision of the MPC and the Development Permit was subsequently issued.</li> <li>• Appellants were upset that they had not been consulted about the proposed development prior to the application for a Development Permit being considered by the MPC. It is not a statutory requirement to consult with the public prior to considering a Development Permit application, nor does the County's Land Use Bylaw, Municipal Development Plan nor other policy require consultation.</li> <li>• Administration recommends the proposed changes to the Land Use Bylaw to allow for opportunity for the public to provide its input into such matters earlier on in the process.</li> <li>• The current provisions contained within the Land Use Bylaw pertaining to campgrounds/RV parks is attached for reference © <b>Attachment 1</b></li> <li>• The relevant policies from the County's Municipal Development Plan Bylaw 1249-12 are attached for reference © <b>Attachment 2</b></li> <li>• The proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw are attached for reference © <b>Attachment 3</b></li> </ul>
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**CORRELATION TO BUSINESS (STRATEGIC) PLAN**

**Values:** Integrity, Sustainability/Stability, Pride, Fairness, Freedom

**Vision:** Leading the way in positive growth with healthy, sustainable, rural living.

**Mission:** Smoky Lake County strives for collaboration and excellence in the provision of transparent and fiscally responsible governance and services.

**LEGISLATIVE, BYLAW and/or POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

**Municipal Government Act**  
**When to hold public hearing**  
 230(1) When this or another enactment requires council to hold a public hearing on a proposed bylaw or resolution, the public hearing must be held, unless another enactment specifies otherwise,

(a) before second reading of a the bylaw, or

(b) before council votes on the resolution.

(2) When this or another enactment requires a public hearing to be held on a proposed bylaw or resolution, council must

(a) give notice of the public hearing in accordance with section 606, and

(b) conduct the public hearing during a regular or special council meeting.

(3) A council may by bylaw establish procedures for public hearings.

(4) In the public hearing, council

(a) must hear from any person, group or persons, or person representing them, who claims to be affected by the proposed bylaw or resolution and who has complied with the procedures outlined by the council, and

(b) may hear any other person who wishes to make representations and whom the council agrees to hear.

(5) After considering representations made to it about a proposed bylaw or resolution at the public hearing and after considering any other matter it considers appropriate, the council may



(a) pass the bylaw or resolution,

(b) make any amendment to the bylaw or resolution it considers necessary and proceed to pass it without further advertisement or hearing, or

(c) defeat the bylaw or resolution.

(6) The minutes of the council meeting during which the public hearing is held must record the public hearing to the extent directed by the council.

**Requirements for advertising**

606(1) The requirements of this section apply when this or another enactment requires a bylaw, resolution, meeting, public hearing or something else to be advertised by a municipality, unless this or another enactment specifies otherwise.

(2) Notice of the bylaw, resolution, meeting, public hearing or other thing must be

(a) published at least once a week for 2 consecutive weeks in at least one newspaper or other publication circulating in the area to which the proposed bylaw, resolution, or other thing relates, or in which the meeting or hearing is to be held,

(b) mailed or delivered to every residence in the area to which the proposed bylaw, resolution or other thing relates, or in which the meeting or hearing is to be held, or

(c) given by a method provided for in a bylaw under section 606.1.

(3) A notice of a proposed bylaw must be advertised under subsection (2) before second reading.

(4) A notice of a proposed resolution must be advertised under subsection (2) before it is voted on by council.

(5) A notice of a meeting, public hearing or other thing must be advertised under subsection (2) at least 5 days before the meeting, public hearing or thing occurs.

(6) A notice must contain

(a) a statement of the general purpose of the proposed bylaw, resolution, meeting, public hearing or other thing,

(b) the address where a copy of the proposed bylaw, resolution or other thing, and any document relating to it or to the meeting or public hearing may be inspected,

(c) in the case of a bylaw or resolution, an outline of the procedure to be followed by anyone wishing to file a petition in respect of it, and

(d) in the case of a meeting or public hearing, the date, time and place where it will be held.

(7) The certificate of a designated officer certifying that something has been advertised in accordance with this section is proof, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, of the matters set out in the certificate.

(8) The certificate is admissible in evidence without proof of the appointment or signature of the person who signed the certificate.

**Planning bylaws**

692(1) Before giving second reading to

- (a) a proposed bylaw to adopt an intermunicipal development plan,
- (b) a proposed bylaw to adopt a municipal development plan,
- (c) a proposed bylaw to adopt an area structure plan,
- (d) a proposed bylaw to adopt an area redevelopment plan,
- (e) a proposed bylaw to adopt a land use bylaw, or
- (f) a proposed bylaw amending a statutory plan or land use bylaw referred to in clauses (a) to (e),

a council must hold a public hearing with respect to the proposed bylaw in accordance with section 230 after giving notice of it in accordance with section 606.

(2) Despite subsection (1), if a proposed development relates to more than one proposed bylaw referred to in subsection (1), the council may hold a single public hearing.

(3) Despite subsection (1), in the case of a public hearing for a proposed bylaw adopting or amending an intermunicipal development plan,

- (a) councils may hold a joint public hearing to which section 184 does not apply, and

- (b) municipalities may act jointly to satisfy the advertising requirements of section 606.

(4) In the case of an amendment to a land use bylaw to change the district designation of a parcel of land, the municipality must, in addition to the requirements of subsection (1),

- (a) include in the notice described in section 606(2)

- (i) the municipal address, if any, and the legal address of the parcel of land, and

- (ii) a map showing the location of the parcel of land,

- (b) give written notice containing the information described in clause (a) and in section 606(6) to the assessed owner of that parcel of land at the name and address shown on the assessment roll of the municipality, and

- (c) give a written notice containing the information described in clause (a) and in section 606(6) to each owner of adjacent land at the name and address shown for each owner on the assessment roll of the municipality.

(5) If the land referred to in subsection (4)(c) is in another municipality, the written notice must be given to that municipality and to each owner of adjacent land at the name and address shown for each owner on the tax roll of that municipality.

(6) Despite subsection (1), a bylaw referred to in subsection (1) may be amended without giving notice or holding a public hearing if the amendment corrects clerical, technical, grammatical or typographical errors and does not materially affect the bylaw in principle or substance.

(6.1) Subsection (1)(f) does not apply in respect of a proposed bylaw amending a statutory plan or land use bylaw to specify the purposes of a community services reserve.

	<p>(7) In this section,</p> <p>(a) “adjacent land” means land this is contiguous to the parcel of land that is being redesignated and includes</p> <p>(i) land that would be contiguous if not for a highway, road, river or stream, and</p> <p>(ii) any other land identified in the land use bylaw as adjacent land for the purpose of notification under this section;</p> <p>(b) “owner” means the person shown as the owner of land on the assessment roll prepared under Part 9.</p> <p>(8) If an ALSA regional plan requires a council to pass a bylaw referred to in this section, the council must</p> <p>(a) consider whether, in view of the requirement in the ALSA regional plan, consultation is necessary, desirable or beneficial, and</p> <p>(b) decide whether or not to proceed with consultation.</p> <p>(9) If a council decides under subsection (8) that consultation is neither necessary nor desirable or would not be beneficial, subsections (1) to (7) do not apply to the council in respect of the bylaw concerned.</p>
<b>BENEFITS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunity for the public to provide input on proposed campground/RV park developments earlier on in the process;</li> <li>• Allows the Development Authority to require additional information/background studies to be provided by an applicant for campground/RV park uses to demonstrate that these uses are suitable for the lands on which they are applied for;</li> <li>• Provide a more thorough, open and transparent process when considering applications for campgrounds/RV parks.</li> </ul>
<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential of increased environmental impacts caused by campgrounds and RV use;</li> <li>• Potential increase in noise in the areas adjacent to campground developments;</li> <li>• Potential increase in traffic and associated damage to County road network in the areas near campground developments;</li> <li>• Creation of a new land use district that would require a property to be redistricted to accommodate campground/RV park uses would add additional time and costs to a proponent of this type of use.</li> </ul>
<b>ALTERNATIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggest additional or alternative revisions to the Land Use Bylaw with respect to campgrounds;</li> <li>• Take no action and maintain the status quo and do not consider amending the Land Use Bylaw.</li> </ul>
<b>FINANCE/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b>Operating Costs:</b> _____ <b>Budget Available:</b> _____ <b>Budgeted Costs:</b> _____	<b>Capital Costs:</b> _____ <b>Source of Funds:</b> _____ <b>Unbudgeted Costs:</b> _____
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nil.</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNICATION STRATEGY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Planning and Development Department will advertise that the County is considering making changes to the Land Use Bylaw in the local newspapers and on the County’s website and social media platforms in order to obtain public input, both in favor and in opposition to the proposed amendment, and said input will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee of the</li> </ul>

Whole for further discussion.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That Smoky Lake County Council instruct administration to prepare a draft amendment to Smoky Lake County Land Use Bylaw #1272-14, to establish a Recreation District, and further to populate said District with recreational uses, including campgrounds, RV parks, hunting lodges, resorts, bed & breakfasts, and other similar uses, and to make these uses "Permitted Uses" within the Recreational District, and further, to remove these uses from the list of "Discretionary Uses" under the Agriculture District, and to schedule an Open House to obtain public input on the draft amendment, and further to advertise notice of said Open House on the County's website and social media platforms and in the local newspaper, and further to forward said draft amendment and the comments received from the Open House to a future meeting of the Committee of the Whole for discussion.**

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

## LAND USE BYLAW NO. 1272-14 – CURRENT PROVISIONS

**SECTION 1.7 – INTERPRETATIONS/DEFINITIONS**

12. “Amusement Establishment, Outdoor” means a development providing facilities for entertainment and amusement activities which primarily take place outdoors, where patrons are primarily participants. Typical uses include amusement parks, carnivals, go-cart tracks, miniature golf, and motor-cross establishments.”
34. “Bed and Breakfast Establishment” means a development within a private, owner-occupied dwelling which possesses a dwelling unit, where temporary sleeping accommodation, up to a maximum of ten (10) bedrooms, with or without meals, are provided for remuneration to members of the public for a period of fourteen (14) days or less at a time.”
38. “Boutique Accommodation” means development used for the provision of “Artisanal Use” rooms or suites for temporary sleeping accommodation, where the rooms have access from a common interior corridor and may be equipped with individual kitchen facilities. This use may include accessory food and beverage facilities, meeting rooms, and Personal Services Shops.
44. “Campground, Minor” means an area which has been planned and improved for the seasonal short-term occupancy of up to a maximum of six (6) holiday trailers, motor homes, tents, campers or similar recreation vehicles, and is not used as a year-round storage, or accommodation for residential use. Typical uses include tourist recreational vehicle parks, campsites and tenting grounds and recreational activities, such as picnic grounds, boating facilities and playgrounds.”
45. “Campground, Intermediate” means an area which has been planned and improved for the seasonal short-term occupancy of up to a maximum of nineteen (19) holiday trailers, motor homes, tents, campers or similar recreation vehicles, and is not used as a year-round storage, or accommodation for residential use. Typical uses include tourist recreational vehicle parks, campsites and tenting grounds and recreational activities, such as picnic grounds, boating facilities and playgrounds.”
46. “Campground, Major” means an area which has been planned and improved for the seasonal short-term occupancy of more than twenty (20) holiday trailers, motor homes, tents, campers or similar recreation vehicles, and is not used as a year-round storage, or accommodation for residential use. Typical uses include tourist recreational vehicle parks, campsites and tenting grounds and recreational activities, such as picnic grounds, boating facilities and playgrounds.”
47. “Campground, Recreational Vehicle” means a development consisting of sites for the location of four (4) or more recreational vehicles, to be used for overnight accommodation and may also include a development consisting of two (2) or more camp sites used for tenting, including accessory facilities that support the use, such as administration offices, laundry facilities, washrooms, support recreational facilities, but not including the use of manufactured homes, trailers or other forms of moveable shelter on a permanent year-round basis.”

48. "Club or Lodge" means an association of persons, whether incorporated or not, united by some common interest, meeting periodically for cooperation or conviviality. Club shall also mean, where the context requires, premises owned or occupied by members or staff of such association which the activities of the club are conducted, but does not include a cannabis lounge."
66. "Convenience Retail Service" means development used for the retail sale of those goods required by area residents or employees on a day to day basis, from business premises which do not exceed 275.0 sq. m (2,960.0 sq. ft.) in gross floor area. Typical uses include small food stores, gas bars, drug stores and variety stores selling confectionary, tobacco, groceries, beverages, pharmaceutical and personal care items, hardware or printed matter. This use does not include wholesale or retail liquor sales/distribution outlets or facilities, or cannabis retail sales."
71. "Cultural Facility" means a development for display, storage, restoration or events related to art, literature, music, education, history, or science, and may incorporate restaurant, retail, convention and recreational facilities as accessory uses. This term refers to uses such as art galleries, libraries, auditoriums, museums, archives and interpretive centers."
127. "Guest Ranch" means a development of a private owner-occupied ranch house which includes sleeping facilities, which are rented on a daily basis to registered guests and meals are prepared in a certified residential kitchen."
138. "Hotel" means rooms or suites in a commercial development for temporary sleeping accommodation where the rooms have access from a common interior corridor and may be equipped with individual kitchen facilities. Hotels may include accessory food services, neighbourhood pubs, nightclubs, meeting rooms, and personal service establishments.
180. "Motel (or motor inn)" means a development divided into self-contained sleeping or dwelling units, each with a separate exterior entrance and convenient access to on-site parking. Motels may include food services and personal service establishments.
186. "Natural Area" means an area of land and/or water especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means. Areas such as groomed parks, recreational areas for sports, and schoolyards are not included in this definition."
204. "Private Club or Lodge" means a building or part of a building used exclusively by the members and guests of a club for social, recreational or athletic activities. This use does not include cannabis lounges."
211. "Recreation, Active" means a mix of uses in a neighbourhood park that includes the following facilities or facility types: athletic fields, buildings or structures for activities, concession, community garden, courses or courts, children's play area, dog play area or bike path."
212. "Recreation, Passive" means a mux of uses in a neighbourhood park, undeveloped land or minimally improved lands which includes the following: landscaped area, natural area,

ornamental garden, non-landscaped green space, stairway, decorative fountain, picnic area, waterbody, or trail without recreational staffing.”

213. “Recreational use” means a development providing for commercial or non-commercial leisure activities located to take advantage of the natural setting. Without restricting the generality of the foregoing, this shall include:
- A. Non facility oriented recreational activities such as hiking, cross country skiing, rustic camping, and other similar uses; and
  - B. Facility oriented recreational activities such as picnic grounds, swimming beaches, boat launches, parks and other similar uses.”
216. “Recreational Vehicle Park” means the planned development used for the seasonal short-term use of recreational vehicles with a higher level of service provided than a campground. The Recreational Vehicle Park shall not be used as a year-round storage or accommodation for residential use. A Recreational Vehicle Park may be developed in association with related recreational activities; such as hiking or riding trails, picnic grounds, boating facilities and playgrounds.”
224. “Rodeo grounds or riding arena” means a development providing facilities intended for sporting events which are held primarily for public entertainment. Typical events may include but not be limited to bronco riding, calf roping, horse riding, and steer wrestling.”

## **SECTION 7 – SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

### **7.2 Campgrounds**

1. A comprehensive site plan shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Development Authority that shows the location, design standards and site requirements of any common accessory uses and services, such as washrooms, laundromat, recreation buildings, retail store, food concession, fire pits, wood storage, lighting, water supply, wastewater disposal facilities, solid waste collection facilities and any other similar uses or services that may be associated with or required within a campground. The following regulations shall be applied in designing the campground site plan:
  - a. a minimum site area of 0.40ha (1 ac);
  - b. a minimum of 10% of the total site shall be set aside in a location acceptable to the Development Authority as common open space recreation area;
  - c. each stall shall be accessed by an internal road;
  - d. the road system shall be properly signed for users and for emergency response vehicles, and shall be sensitive to the topography and environmental characteristics of the site;
  - e. walkways with a minimum width of 1.62m (4ft.) surfaced to the satisfaction of the Development Authority shall be provided from all stalls to all service buildings and facilities, refuse areas and recreation sites;
  - f. roads shall be hard surfaced or surfaced to the satisfaction of the Development Authority and shall be:

- i. 3.05m (10ft.) in width for one-way traffic; and
    - ii. 6.10m (20ft.) in width for two-way traffic;
  - g. fires will be permitted only in designated fire pits or other such facilities;
  - h. potable water and wastewater disposal facilities are required to the satisfaction of the Development Authority;
  - i. all utility services and all utility wires and conduits shall be provided as required by the Development Authority and the utility companies;
  - j. fences shall be allowed within the recreational vehicle park only if they are erected and maintained by the park operator to a uniform standard throughout the park;
  - k. all stall boundaries shall be clearly defined on the ground by permanent flush stakes or markers, with a stall number or other identification system;
  - l. suitable ground cover and a flat area for each stall shall be provided;
  - m. minimum camping stall size shall be:
    - i. 6.10m (20ft.) in width;
    - ii. 18.29m (60ft.) in depth; and
    - iii. 111.48m<sup>2</sup> (1,200ft.<sup>2</sup>) in area;
  - n. minimum distance between camping stalls shall be 3.05m (10ft.);
  - o. minimum campground front, side and rear yards shall be 3.05m (10ft.) from all site boundaries;
  - p. one (1) parking stall per camping stall; and
  - q. visitor parking shall be provided in a common area to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.
2. A landscaping plan that retains natural vegetation shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.
  3. Campgrounds are considered temporary occupancies.
  4. One on-site security/operator suite may be permitted.

## **7.22 Recreational Uses**

1. Recreational development shall be required to:
  - a. maintain an open space buffer of sufficient size and composition to act as a visual and noise barrier from adjacent uses which may be incompatible; and
  - b. install, when necessary, adequate on-site water supply and sewage disposal systems which have been approved by the authority having jurisdiction.

## **7.22 Recreational Vehicle Campgrounds**



1. Development of roads, facilities and recreational vehicle sites shall occupy no more than two thirds of the proposed site, leaving a minimum of one-third of the site in its natural state (or landscaping one-third to the satisfaction of the Development Authority).
2. Campgrounds should be designed and landscaped to minimize disturbance to the natural environment and to protect heavy use areas from damage.
3. The entire site design shall be at the discretion of the Development Authority.
4. Where the campground directly adjoins a residential area, adequate screening or fencing shall be provided, to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.
5. A sufficient number of picnic tables, fire pits, and garbage cans shall be provided to accommodate the design capacity of the campground. Exact numbers shall be at the discretion of the Development Authority.
6. On recreational vehicle campgrounds next to a lake, if boat launching and swimming facilities are not provided, alternative locations for same should be indicated on a map or sign on the site.
7. An adequate potable water supply and sewage disposal facilities shall be provided, in accordance with Provincial regulations and/or the Safety Codes Act.
8. A portion of the campsites should be serviced by electrical, water or sewage disposal hookups.

#### **7.24 Recreational Vehicle Parks**

1. Each recreational vehicle parking stall shall be a minimum width of 10.0m (32.8ft.) and a minimum area of 250.0sq.m (2,6910sq.ft.).
2. As a condition of approval, the Development Authority shall require the developer to obtain any necessary permits and approvals from all regulatory authorities and agencies having jurisdiction, including any necessary approvals pursuant to the Alberta Safety Codes Act that may be applicable.
3. As a condition of approval the Development Authority may require that the developer construct, upgrade, or pay to construct or upgrade any necessary municipal infrastructure to service the development.
4. All internal roads shall be the responsibility of the developer for both construction and future maintenance. Also, internal roads shall have a minimum of a 6.0m (20.0ft.) usable top, except for one-way roads, which shall have a minimum of a 3.7m (12.0ft.) usable top.

5. The developer shall provide on-site potable water supply which meets all applicable provincial water requirements.
6. The developer shall provide sewage disposal facilities in accordance with the County's servicing requirements as well as all provincial regulations.
7. As a condition of approval, the Development Authority shall require the developer to obtain any necessary permits and approvals from all regulatory authorities and agencies having jurisdiction over this type of development.
8. The developer shall be required to enter into a development agreement with the County as a condition of development approval. The development agreement will include provisions requiring the developer to construct, upgrade, or pay to construct or upgrade the necessary County roads to access the development when determined necessary by the Development Authority.
9. The developer shall designate an area equivalent to ten (10%) percent of the total recreational vehicle campground area as a playground. This area is to be clearly marked and free from all traffic hazards.
10. All stalls shall maintain a minimum setback of 30.0m (98.4ft.) from the shoreline of any body of water.
11. The maximum number of recreational vehicles permitted per stall shall be one (1).
12. A site plan detailing the protection of existing treed areas and site topography is required prior to issuance of a development permit.
13. Spaces for day use, picnicking, and similar activities shall be suitably organized, clearly marked and constructed to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.
14. All other site requirements shall be as required by the Development Authority.
15. Minimum yard setbacks:
  - A. Front, side, corner and rear yard setbacks shall be 7.6m (25.0 ft.) of 10% of the lot width, whichever is lesser.

## MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN BYLAW NO. 1249-12 – CURRENT PROVISIONS

### **SECTION 1.4 – PLAN PHILOSOPHIES AND PRINCIPLES**

#### **1.4.1 Philosophical Principles**

Smoky Lake County's philosophy for managing growth and its land base is reflected by this Municipal Development Plan. The philosophy comprises three principles:

**Principle #1:** Land uses and development activities must respect and maintain the integrity of Smoky Lake County's land base, which varies throughout the County.

**Principle #2:** Growth must be managed and directed in a compatible, equitable manner that recognizes the diverse needs and aspirations of all County residents.

**Principle #3:** Smart growth principles will be applied in maintaining the integrity of the land base and to promote sustainable development such that the needs of the present generation are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

#### **1.4.2 Planning Principles**

The Municipal Development Plan policies recognize three fundamental planning principles that are embodied in the *Municipal Government Act* and the Provincial Land Use Policies.

**Principle #1:** In carrying out their planning responsibilities, municipalities are encouraged never to lose sight of the rights of individual citizens and landowners. Municipalities must assess the impact of any planning decision on individuals having regard to the purpose statement of the planning legislation.

**Principle #2:** Municipalities should establish land use patterns which make efficient use of land, infrastructure, public services and public facilities and which contribute to the development of healthy, safe, and viable communities by encouraging appropriate mixes of all land use types and a wide range of economic opportunities.

**Principle #3:** Planning activities are carried out in a fair, open, consistent and equitable manner.

### **SECTION 1.5 – GOALS**

**1.5.1** Facilitate sustainable growth and development in the County by balancing economic growth, environmental protection and the preservation of recognized historical resources.

**1.5.2** Encourage economic development and renewal by supporting new and existing economic assets within the community including traditional and regional economic drivers.

**1.5.3** Encourage growth of the County's economic development capacity by providing opportunities for commercial and industrial development.

**1.5.4** Maintain and enhance the County's agricultural and forest-based economy.

**1.5.9** Maintain a physical separation between incompatible land uses.

**1.5.10** Establish sustainable and equitable land use planning standards that will minimize adverse impacts on working landscapes and significant natural features for future generations without placing unreasonable burden on individual land owners.

### **SECTION 3.2 – ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

**Policy 3.2.1.2** The County will endeavour to establish environmental quality targets to direct future development within the County and to provide specific points of reference for facilitating management decision making.

**Policy 3.2.1.3** The Development Authority and/or Subdivision Authority may require developers to submit a Cumulative Effects Assessment with propose subdivision and development applications.

**Policy 3.2.1.4** The County may require an environmental impact assessment or evaluation related to a proposed development which may have an impact on an identified natural or environmentally sensitive feature.

**Policy 3.2.1.5** The County will endeavour to identify cumulative impact issues and set targets to mitigate and restore identified issues. Once the targets are set, approval for new projects will be approved with reference to these limits.

**Policy 3.2.2.1** Groundwater of sufficient quantity and quality shall be available to support the proposed development. No development shall occur in areas where reserves of potable water are inadequate.

**Policy 3.2.2.2** Development shall not be allowed in areas characterized by wetlands, swamps, muskeg or saturated soils. Development shall also be prohibited in valets, ravines or seasonal draws.

**Policy 3.2.2.3** Development shall be prohibited on slopes in excess of 15% of on slopes which are subject to slippage or mass movement.

**Policy 3.2.2.4** Development is prohibited in or adjacent to important wildlife habitat areas.

**Policy 3.2.2.5** Development is prohibited on soils which have extremely fast percolation rates and/or which might result in the possibility of groundwater contamination.

### **SECTION 3.4 – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

**Policy 3.4.1.1** The County shall encourage the use of effective wildfire prevention techniques and the development of on-site firefighting measures to reduce the risk of wildfires resulting from development.

**Policy 3.4.1.2** The County may refer applications for subdivision and development to the appropriate provincial department and/or the local fire department for comment in evaluating the suitability of a site in forested land for development.

**Policy 3.4.1.5** The County may ask developers to provide for appropriate fire protection measures in an application for development, subdivision or an Area Structure Plan.

### **SECTION 3.5 – RECREATION**

**Policy 3.5.1.1** Council shall encourage the development of public serving recreational facilities/uses within the Agricultural Use Area and within hamlets:

- a) if they are compatible with the capabilities of a site or surrounding areas;
- b) on lower capability agricultural lands, unless Council decides that the benefits to the community justify the use of higher capability agricultural lands; and/or
- c) near or adjacent to a lake or river if the proponent can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Development Authority, that the proposal is compatible with the lake/river environment.

**Policy 3.5.2.1** Recreational development shall only be allowed where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the County's Development Authority that the development will generate a low net environmental impact.

**Policy 3.5.3.1** The County shall require the proponent of a recreational activity to identify all municipal costs associated with the development. The assignment of these costs shall be the basis for an agreement to be entered into as a condition of subdivision approval or the issuance of a development permit. Normally, however, all development servicing costs associated with the development will be carried out by the proponent.

**Policy 3.5.3.2** Subdivision and development for recreational purposes shall occur in accordance with the following design principles:

- a) the density of development shall be directly related to the development capability of the land resource;
- b) the design shall be directly related to the site's topography, vegetation, soil, and drainage characteristics. In this regard, the development proposal shall include a detailed analysis of the environmental constraints of the site and the means by which the proposal will protect and harmonize with the natural environment;
- c) the design shall protect wildlife habitat;
- d) the design shall protect, maintain and re-establish, where appropriate, tree cover and maximize the quality of the natural features.

### **SECTION 3.6 – TOURISM**

**Policy 3.6.1.1** The County will encourage the utilization and/or development of cultural, historic and recreational resources to promote tourism, where appropriate.

**Policy 3.6.2.1** Smoky Lake County will cooperate with area tourism groups, municipal neighbours and tourism zones in promoting local tourism linkages with neighbouring communities.

**Policy 3.6.2.2** The County shall encourage private sector developers to facilitate tourism development, and may assist in accessing government funding programs to develop new, or upgrade existing, tourism attractions.

#### **SECTION 4.1 – AGRICULTURE POLICY**

**Policy 4.1.1.1** The Agricultural Use Area is to be, for the most part, conserved for working landscapes; agricultural, forestry and resource uses.

**Policy 4.1.1.2** While the primary use of the Agricultural Use Area is for extensive agriculture and confined feeding operations involving the production of feed grains, cereal grains, forage crops, livestock and other animals on a commercial basis, other uses which, in the opinion of Council, do not adversely affect present or future agricultural pursuits may also be permitted on a discretionary basis provided that the development will not adversely affect the agricultural community.

#### **SECTION 4.4 – COMMERCIAL POLICY**

**Policy 4.4.1.1** The County shall consider proposals for commercial development:

- a) that will not unnecessarily fragment the working landscape; and
- b) that do not conflict with adjacent land uses.

**Policy 4.4.1.2** Commercial uses shall be encouraged to avoid locating in areas of critical wildlife habitat wherever possible.

**Policy 4.4.2.2** The Development Authority shall require the developer to construct and/or maintain an appropriate buffer, as determined by the Development Authority, between the development and nearby lands.

**Policy 4.4.3.1** The Development Authority shall require the developer of a commercial development to identify all municipal servicing costs associated with the development. The assignment of these costs between the County and the developer will be the basis of an agreement to be entered into prior to a subdivision approval or upon the issuance of a development permit. Normally, however, all development servicing costs associated with the development will be carried by the developer.

## RECREATION (PR) DISTRICT

### 1. Purpose

The general purpose of this District is to accommodate development that supports growth in recreation and tourism to enhance the character of the County's unique landscapes.

### 2. Permitted Uses

- A. Accessory Buildings and Uses
- B. Bed and Breakfast Establishment
- C. Campground, Minor
- D. Campground, Intermediate
- E. Campground, Major
- F. Campground, Recreational Vehicle
- G. Club or Lodge
- H. Guest Ranch
- I. Private Club or Lodge
- J. Recreational Use
- K. Recreational Vehicle Park

### 3. Discretionary Uses

- A. Boutique Accommodation
- B. Buildings and Uses Accessory to Discretionary Uses
- C. Convenience Retail Service
- D. Cultural Facility
- E. Hotel
- F. Motel
- G. Public Park
- H. Public and Quasi-Public Services
- I. Public Utilities
- J. Shipping Container
- K. Solar Energy Conversion System
- L. Wind Energy Conversion System, Micro
- M. Other Uses which, in the opinion of the Development Authority, are similar to the above mentioned Permitted and Discretionary Uses

### 4. Subdivision Regulations

- A. Minimum & Maximum Lot Area – As determined by the Subdivision Authority

### 5. Development Regulations

- A. Minimum Yard Setback Requirements

It should be noted that adjacent to Provincial Highways, Alberta Transportation may require greater setbacks for development. Contact Alberta Transportation regarding their requirements in this regard.

## i. Minimum Front Yards

From Municipal Road Allowances	23.1 m (92.0 ft.) from the property line
From Highways	40.8 m (134.0 ft.) from the boundary of the right-of-way or as required by Alberta Transportation
Internal Subdivision Roads	7.6 m (25.0 ft.) from the property line

## ii. Minimum Side Yards

From Municipal Road Allowances	18.3 m (60.0 ft.) from the property line
From Highways	40.8 m (134.0 ft.) from the boundary of the right-of-way or as required by Alberta Transportation
When adjacent to an Internal subdivision road	7.6 m (25.0 ft.) from the property line
When adjacent to Another Parcel	7.6 m (25.0 ft.) from the property line

## iii. Minimum Rear Yards

From Municipal Road Allowances	18.3 m (60.0 ft.) from the property line
From Highways	40.8 m (134.0 ft.) from the boundary of the right-of-way or as required by Alberta Transportation
When adjacent to an internal subdivision road	7.6 m (25.0 ft.) from the property line
When adjacent to another parcel	7.6 m (25.0 ft.) from the property line

iv. Notwithstanding **subsections (i), (ii), and (iii)** above, where there is an intersection or sharp curve, the minimum yard requirements shown on **Figures 20 and 21** of this Bylaw shall apply.

## 6. Other Regulations

- A. Development proposals adjacent to a primary highway shall comply with any relevant provincial regulations.
- B. Fences shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.9** of this Bylaw.
- C. Notwithstanding any condition of a Development Permit approval, landscaping shall be provided in accordance with **Section 6.11** of this Bylaw.
- D. Notwithstanding any condition of a Development Permit approval, grading and drainage of the site shall be provided in accordance with **Section 6.11** of this Bylaw.



- E. Accessory Buildings shall be developed in accordance with **Section 6.1** of this Bylaw.
- F. Bed and Breakfast Establishments shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.5** of this Bylaw.
- G. Campgrounds (Minor, Intermediate & Major) shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.2** of this Bylaw.
- H. Motels shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.16** of this Bylaw.
- I. Recreational Vehicle Campgrounds shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.23** of this Bylaw.
- J. Recreational Vehicle Parks shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.24** of this Bylaw.
- K. Shipping Containers shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.34** of this Bylaw.
- L. Solar Energy Conversion Systems shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.35** of this Bylaw.
- M. Wind Conversion System, Micro shall be developed in accordance with **Section 7.39** of this Bylaw.

<b>Issue for Information</b>	DATE	November 17, 2021	<b>5.1</b>
TOPIC	<b>Trails Strategy &amp; Lake Accretion Update</b>		
BACKGROUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoky Lake County has many dozens of kilometers of trails, ranging from lake subdivisions, to Crown/Public lands, to road allowances (which are under the ‘direction and control’ of the municipality).</li> <li>• Trails have long-been a subject of discussion for Smoky Lake County Council, with community members regularly approaching the County on an ad-hoc basis, requesting work or improvements be done, or requesting certain trails be closed or regulated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The ad-hoc nature of these requests often do a disservice to work-planning for Public Works, as well as for residents as there is sometimes conflict about the intended uses (walking vs. motorized) or design/standards/widths of the trails</li> <li>○ Many of these trails have never been inspected or their data captured, which makes it difficult for the County to plan or buget for their maintenance or regulate their use.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Smoky Lake County Council gave First Reading to an Environmental Reserve (ER) Bylaw in September 2019. <b>©ATTACHMENT 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This proposed bylaw proposed to regulate activities within the ER, and establish tickitable penalties. <b>©ATTACHMENT 2</b></li> <li>○ Because this proposed bylaw did not receive three readings within two years of First Reading, it has now expired.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>County Council Meeting</b> <b>June 24, 2021</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>County Trail Inventory</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>953-21: Halisky</b>                      <b>That Smoky Lake Co</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For the purposes of motion 953-21, Administration has been focused on lake subdivisions, where the majority of highest-use trails exist.</li> <li>○ The GIS Department has established a new layer in Munisite, which will eventually host trail data.</li> <li>○ The Planning and Development Department visited lake sites (Hanmore, Mons, Bonnie, Garner, and Whitefish) on August 31<sup>st</sup> and September 16<sup>th</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data from these site visits have been captured digitally, and by hand which is also being digitized to allow for better consideration, though more work is still required.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

**©ATTACHMENT 3 (will be distributed at meeting)**

- **Some general observations may be made in relation to the many trails having been identified:**
  - Many run in parallel with one another along the shore.
  - There are disparities in the state or condition of many of these trails, with some clearly being damaged or torn-up by motorized vehicles.
  - The majority of trails are legally located within the ‘bed and shore’.
  - There has been significant vegetation clearing, both in the Environmental Reserves (ER) and the bed and shore.

**Accretion & Bed and Shore**

- Is an increase of land due to the accumulation of soil on the shoreline, or the lowering of water-levels of a lake.
    - Accretion can wax or wane relatively dramatically, and the exact to-of-bank can only be established by completing a new survey.
- ©ATTACHMENT 4**
- The bed and shore is by definition land that is covered by water long enough to remove the vegetation, or, land marked by a distinct margin in the vegetation or on the ground caused by the presence of water..
    - Bed and Shore is legally vested in the Province of Alberta. However, due to accretion, ‘at-law’, portions of the bed and shore are likely extensions of the Environmental Reserve, wherever ER does exist.

**Bill 79 (if passed, the Alberta Trails Act)**

- The Government of Alberta has introduced new legislation which would allow municipalities or trail groups (such as, for example, Trail Twisters) to adopt a trail management plan, and become designated as a ‘trail manager’ for trails on Crown or Public Lands.
  - Presently, Bill 79 has received First Reading on November 2, 2021, and is anticipated to be adopted before the Legislature rises for Christmas.
  - Planning & Development will continue to learn about this new legislation, and return to Council or Committee in the future as this matter unfolds.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- (Expired) Environmental Reserve Bylaw **©ATTACHMENT 1**
- Aquality Environmental Ltd. ER Presentation **©ATTACHMENT 2**
- Example Lake Trails Map **©ATTACHMENT 3 (will be distributed at meeting)**
- Accretion Example Map **©ATTACHMENT 4**
- Bill 79 (Alberta Trails Act) **©ATTACHMENT 5**
- Strathcona County Trails Strategy **©ATTACHMENT 6**

CORRELATION TO BUSINESS (STRATEGIC) PLAN	
<p><b>Values:</b> Integrity, Sustainability/Stability, Pride, Fairness, Freedom</p> <p><b>Vision:</b> Leading the way in positive growth with healthy, sustainable, rural living.</p> <p><b>Mission:</b> Smoky Lake County strives for collaboration and excellence in the provision of transparent and fiscally responsible governance and services.</p>	
<b>LEGISLATIVE, BYLAW and/or POLICY IMPLICATIONS</b>	<u>Municipal Government Act</u>
<b>BENEFITS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved work-planning and capital planning.</li> </ul>
<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal liability due to knowledge of trails.</li> </ul>
<b>ALTERNATIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take no action/Defer to a future meeting.</li> </ul>
FINANCE/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	
<b>Operating Costs:</b> _____	<b>Capital Costs:</b> _____
<b>Budget Available:</b> _____	<b>Source of Funds:</b> _____
<b>Budgeted Costs:</b> _____	<b>Unbudgeted Costs:</b> _____
<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP)</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNICATION STRATEGY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website, social media, community posters</li> </ul>
NEXT STEPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A jurisdictional scan of how other municipalities are managing their trails.</b></li> <li>• <b>Public participation in spring 2022 to solicit input on trails mapping, and potential options for service levels, maintenance standards, or possible closures or regulation.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>This will likely encompass one or more Open Houses, survey, etc.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Interested members of the public are always invited to contact Planning &amp; Development without waiting for a specific invitation engagement.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Work will continue for this file and will be brought back to Council or Committee for consideration prior to proceeding with public engagement.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>As an eventual outcome of this work, the County may consider adopting a policy statement and/or bylaw which will provide direction for management of trails.</b></li> </ul>	
<b>CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER</b>	

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**A BYLAW OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SMOKY LAKE COUNTY IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, FOR THE REGULATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVES AND MUNICIPAL RESERVES**

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**WHEREAS** pursuant to Section 7(a) of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto, Smoky Lake County may pass Bylaws for municipal purposes respecting the safety, health and welfare of people and the protection of private property.

**WHEREAS** pursuant to Section 7(b) of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto, Smoky Lake County may pass Bylaws respecting people, activities, and things in, on or near a public place or place that is open to the public.

**WHEREAS** pursuant to Section 8(a) of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto, Smoky Lake County may, in a Bylaw passed pursuant to Division 1 of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto, regulate or prohibit certain activities.

**WHEREAS** pursuant to Part 17 of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto, Smoky Lake County may enter into Environmental and Conservation Reserve Easements.

**WHEREAS** Council has deemed it necessary and in the public's interest to pass a Bylaw to regulate and control the use of Environmental Reserve Lands within Smoky Lake County in order to ensure public safety and natural preservation of these Lands, to prevent pollution of adjacent water bodies, and to provide public access to and beside the bed and shore of adjacent water bodies.

**WHEREAS** a Public Hearing has been held pursuant to Section 230 and Section 676 of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto.

**WHEREAS** said Public Hearing has been advertised pursuant to Section 606 of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto.

**NOW THEREFORE** under the authority and subject to the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto, and by virtue of all other enabling powers, the Council of Smoky Lake County, duly assembled, enacts as follows:

**1. TITLE**

This Bylaw may be cited as the Smoky Lake County “**Environmental Reserves and Municipal Reserves Bylaw**”.

**2. PURPOSE**

**2.1** The purpose of this Bylaw is:

- a) to provide for the management of Reserve Lands;
- b) to establish a process to address Encroachments onto Reserve Lands;  
and
- c) to establish a process for the disposal or leasing of existing Reserve Lands.

**2.2** This Bylaw does not contemplate the taking of Reserve Lands, as those matters are addressed under the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto, and considered at the time of subdivision and addressed in the Smoky Lake County Land Use Bylaw.

- 2.3** Smoky Lake County will seek to provide appropriate communication, including but not limited to, installation of signage as well as the provision of other forms of public education, at and about Reserve Lands, regarding their access and use.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

In this Bylaw, unless the content otherwise requires:

- 3.1** “Abutting” means immediately contiguous to or physically touching, and when used with respect to a lot or site, means that the lot or site physically touches upon another lot, site or piece of land, and shares a lot line with it.
- 3.2** “Access” means the right vested in the owner of the land that adjoins a road or other highway, to go and return from his own land to the road or other highway without obstruction. Access to property does not necessarily carry with it possession.
- 3.3** “Act” means the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.M-26 and amendments thereto.
- 3.4** “Chief Administrative Officer” means the person, also referred to as the “CAO”, appointed by Council to the position of Chief Administrative Officer under the *Act*, for Smoky Lake County.
- 3.5** “Council” means the Reeve and Councillors duly elected in Smoky Lake County and who are eligible to continue to hold office.
- 3.6** “County-Owned Land” means all parcels of land or part of a parcel of land, registered in the name of Smoky Lake County, and all parcels of land or part of a parcel of land that Smoky Lake County is currently in the process of acquiring, and includes, but is not limited to, land under the direction, control and management of Smoky Lake County, including parcels of land designated as Municipal Reserve, Environmental Reserve, Public Utility Lots and Road Allowances, as well as easements and rights-of-way registered in the name of Smoky Lake County across privately-owned land.
- 3.7** “Conservation Reserve” means the land designated as conservation reserve under Section 664.2(1) of the *Act*.
- 3.8** “Designated Officer” means a designated officer as defined under the *Act*.
- 3.9** “Earthmoving Equipment” means a machine (such as a skid-steer) used for excavating, pushing, moving or transporting large quantities of material.
- 3.10** “Encroachment” means any improvement, structure, building, landscaping improvement or appurtenance constructed by a private landowner, or any other Person not authorized by Smoky Lake County, which encroaches onto, over or under, County-Owned Land.
- 3.11** “Encroachment Agreement” means an agreement between Smoky Lake County and an owner of Abutting privately-owned land, respecting an Encroachment, and which contains provisions allowing for said Encroachment to remain on County-Owned Land.
- 3.12** “Environmental Reserve Easement” means an easement created for purposes specified in the *Act*.
- 3.13** “Environmental Reserve” or “Environmental Reserve Lands (ER)” means a parcel of land, or part of a parcel of land designated as an environmental reserve as defined under Section 664(1) of the *Act*.

- a) For the purpose of this Bylaw, any County-Owned Land which has any other designation described on its certificate of title other than ER (such as, for example, 'R – Reserve') which appear to bare the traits of an Environmental Reserve, shall be considered as Environmental Reserve, and be subject to the provisions of this Bylaw as if they are Environmental Reserve, at the sole discretion of Smoky Lake County.
- 3.14** “Litter” means any solid or liquid material or product, or combination of solid or liquid materials or products, including, but not limited to:
- a) any rubbish, refuse, garbage, paper, package, container, bottle, can, manure, or sewage, or the whole or part of an animal carcass;
- b) the whole or part of any article, raw or process material, Motor Vehicle or other machinery, that is disposed of;
- c) any dirt, gravel, rock, sand, rubble or clean fill; or
- d) any other material or product that is designated as litter in the *Alberta Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, as amended, and the Regulations thereunder.
- 3.15** “Major Encroachment” means an Encroachment that covers an area of 50m<sup>2</sup> or greater.
- 3.16** “Motor Vehicle” means a motor vehicle as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*, R.S.A. 2000 c.T.6, as amended from time to time and the Regulations thereunder.
- 3.17** “Municipality” means Smoky Lake County, a municipal corporation in the Province of Alberta and where context so requires, means the area contained within the corporate boundaries of the said Municipality.
- 3.18** “Municipal Reserve” (MR) or “Municipal and School Reserve” (MSR) means a parcel of land, or part of a parcel of land, designated as a Municipal Reserve, as defined in Section 666 of the *Act*.
- a) For the purpose of this Bylaw, any County-Owned Land which has any other designation described on its certificate of title other than MR or MSR (such as, for example, 'R – Reserve') which appear to bare the traits of a Municipal Reserve, shall be considered as Municipal Reserve, and be subject to the provisions of this Bylaw as if they are Municipal Reserve, at the sole discretion of Smoky Lake County.
- 3.19** “Nuisance” means any activity, condition or use of property within Smoky Lake County, which, in the opinion of a Designated Officer, the Chief Administrative Officer or Council, constitutes an unreasonable interference with the use and enjoyment of other property, or which interferes with, annoys, disturbs, injures or endangers the safety, comfort, peace or health of others.
- 3.20** “Off-Highway Vehicle” means an off-highway vehicle as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*, R.S.A. 2000 c-T.6, Section 117, as amended from time to time and the Regulations thereunder.
- 3.21** “Order to Remedy” means an order to remedy under Section 545 of the *Act*.
- 3.22** “Peace Officer” means any sworn member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a Peace Officer appointed under the *Peace Officer Act*, SA 2016, P-35 and amendments thereto and employed by the Municipality, or a Bylaw Enforcement Officer employed by the Municipality.
- 3.23** “Permit” means a written authorization issued pursuant to approval granted by the Municipality, in respect to activities on County-Owned Land and Reserve

- Land, but does not include authorizations granted by the Municipality in the form of an Encroachment Agreement issued for a Major Encroachment.
- 3.24** “Permittee” means a Person who applied for, and obtained, a Permit in respect of activities on County-Owned Land and Reserve Land.
- 3.25** “Person” means a corporation or other form of body corporate or other legal construct and their successors or assigns, and individuals and their heirs, executors, administrators, other legal representatives or assigns, or, a person who owns a vehicle, a person whose name appears on the vehicle registration or any person in care and control of a vehicle by implied permission of the owner or by rental agreement.
- 3.26** “Public Utility Lot” (PUL) means a parcel of land or part of a parcel of land that is designated as a public utility lot as defined in the *Act*.
- 3.26** “Recreational Vehicle” means a motor vehicle designed or used for travel with temporary living accommodation for vacations or camping purposes, and which includes, but it not limited to, motorhomes, campers, tent trailers, watercraft on a trailer, or any form of vehicle used or intended to be used for recreational or holiday accomodations.
- 3.28** “Reserve Land” (R) means any of environmental reserve, conservation reserve, municipal reserve, community services reserve, school reserve and municipal and school reserve.
- 3.29** “Service Vehicle” means a vehicle owned by the Municipality, utilized in completing operations of maintenance, or an “emergency vehicle” as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*, R.S.A. 2000 cT.6, as amended from time to time and the Regulations thereunder.
- 3.30** “Shall” means mandatory compliance.
- 3.31** “Strict Liability” means a Person is responsible for the damage and loss caused by their acts and omissions regardless of culpability.
- 3.32** “Structures” may include but are not limited to, sheds, decks, boathouses, stairs, firepits or any other building or appurtenance, whether located on, above or below ground.
- 3.33** “Unauthorized Use” means any use of County-Owned Land that contravenes any of the provisions of this Bylaw or the *Act*.
- 3.34** “Violation Tag” means a tag or similar document issued by the Municipality pursuant to the *Act*.
- 3.35** “Violation Ticket” means a ticket issued pursuant to Part II of the *Provincial Offenses Procedure Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c.P-34, as amended, and the Regulations thereunder.

#### **4. USE AND MANAGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL RESERVES AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESERVES**

- 4.1** All Environmental Reserve Lands in the Municipality shall remain in their natural state, including the preservation of vegetation. All Environmental Reserve Lands shall be available for public enjoyment, and no Person shall, without a resolution of Council, restrict public access to Environmental Reserve Lands or deface or in any way disrupt the natural growth of any tree or plant life within Environmental Reserves, except by:
- 4.1.1** Hand-pulling weeds (as identified in the *Weed Control Act*, SA 2008, c. W-5.1, and amendments thereto); or,



- 4.1.2 With written authorization from the Municipality in the form of a Permit, create a single meandering trail, a maximum of two (2) metres wide (6.6 ft.) from an abutting landowner's private lot in a perpendicular manner directly across an Environmental Reserve parcel to the lake-ward side of that parcel.
  
- 4.2 The Municipality may provide designated public access to a water body over Environmental Reserve Lands if, in the Municipality's sole opinion, such access does not result in deterioration of the Environmental Reserve. Where deterioration occurs, the Municipality may, at its sole discretion and without prior notice, discontinue and prohibit public access until revegetation mitigates the deterioration, of the Environmental Reserve, to the satisfaction of the Municipality.
  
- 4.3 Municipal Reserve Lands:
  - 4.3.1 Are intended to provide areas for public recreation and park space use for the enjoyment of Smoky Lake County residents and the general public as identified in the *Act*; and
  - 4.3.2 May provide important access links to other lands and offer undeveloped greenspaces that act as buffers between different land uses.
  
- 4.4 In general, Smoky Lake County supports the use of Municipal Reserve Lands for:
  - 4.4.1 recreation facilities including indoor and outdoor ice arenas;
  - 4.4.2 indoor and outdoor sports field;
  - 4.4.3 playgrounds;
  - 4.4.4 passive parks and greenspaces;
  - 4.4.5 walking trail systems; and
  - 4.4.5 other facilities utilized for recreation and leisure activities and associated facilities supporting these amenities, including parking lots and public washrooms.
  
- 4.5 Environmental Reserve Lands:
  - 4.5.1 Are intended to protect the natural environment, people and property from hazardous conditions (e.g. flooding, unstable slopes, etc.) and provide public access to or along lakes and rivers as identified in the *Act*.
  
- 4.6 In general, Smoky Lake County will manage Environmental Reserve Lands as follows:
  - 4.6.1 As much as possible, Environmental Reserve Lands will generally be left in their natural state.
  - 4.6.2 Public trails may be developed within a dedicated Environmental Reserve where conditions are suitable above the 1:100 flood levels.
  - 4.6.3 The Municipality will ensure signage is placed along the boundaries of Environmental Reserves to identify the boundaries of said Environmental Reserves.

**4.6.4** The seasonal storage of **one (1)** temporary pier/dock/boatlift per titled parcel of land may be stored on Environmental Reserve Lands, with the prior written consent of the Municipality.

**4.6.5** If an unauthorized temporary pier/dock/boatlift is located on Environmental Reserve Lands, the Municipality may, without prior notice being given, and in addition to any other remedy available to it under this Bylaw or the *Act*, remove and impound said pier/dock/boatlift.

## **5. DISPOSAL OF RESERVE LANDS**

**5.1** The Municipality will not normally dispose of Reserve Lands. Sale or lease of Reserve Lands will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where the Municipality has carefully considered existing and future land use of the property and has determined the said Reserve Lands to be surplus to the Municipality's needs.

**5.2** The procedure for disposal of Reserve Lands shall be conducted in accordance with Section 674, Section 675 and Section 676 of the *Act*, and the Regulations thereunder, and applicable bylaws and policies of the Municipality.

## **6. PEACE OFFICERS' AUTHORITY AND POWERS**

**6.1** Any member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Special Constable or Peace Officer appointed and employed by Smoky Lake County are authorized to enforce any section of this Bylaw

**6.2** A Peace Officer for the purpose of this Bylaw may:

**6.2.1** enforce any part of this Bylaw within Smoky Lake County's corporate boundary;

**6.2.2** access or enter onto or into, any County-Owned Land, Reserve Land or any structure located on County-Owned Land or Reserve, at any time for inspection or enforcement purposes;

**6.2.3** suspend or cancel any Permits issued pursuant to this Bylaw, for activities on Reserve Land;

**6.2.4** order any Person or corporation to cease and desist any activity or use on County-Owned Land, Reserve Land or any structure located on County-Owned Land or Reserve Land, which in the sole opinion of the Peace Officer, such activity or use may compromise the quality of the County-Owned Land, Reserve Land or structure;

**6.2.5** order the restoration of any disturbed County-Owned Land, Reserve Land or structures to their original state at the offender's sole expense;

**6.2.6** remove and seize any items not described within the terms of an authorized Permit; and

**6.2.7** serve written notice describing the unsatisfactory condition(s), expectations of restoration and remedy, and a date by which such restoration and remedy shall be completed. Failure to meet any or all of the conditions described in said notice may result in penalties being levied against the offender, subject to Section 8 of this Bylaw.

## **7. OFFENCES**

- 7.1** In addition to, and without limitation to any other prohibition or restriction in this Bylaw, no Person shall do any one or more of the following on Environmental Reserve Land:
- 7.1.1** injure or remove any turf, tree, shrub, hedge, plant, flower, or any other vegetation;
  - 7.1.2** construct any structure, building, or appurtenance, whether on, above or below ground;
  - 7.1.3** excavate, dig or remove any natural features;
  - 7.1.4** place or erect any sign, bulletin board, post, pole, or advertising device of any kind, or attach any notice, bill, poster, sign, wire or cord to any tree, shrub, fence, railing, post or structure.
  - 7.1.5** conduct or engage in any activity which, in the opinion of a Peace Officer, causes a disturbance to anyone's peaceful enjoyment of public or private property;
  - 7.1.6** remove, alter, deface, adjust, or in any other way alter Municipal signage marking the Environmental Reserve;
  - 7.1.7** deposit or store building materials, topsoil, clay, sand, rock or other aggregate;
  - 7.1.8** discard contaminants or apply pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers;
  - 7.1.9** discard any Litter;
  - 7.1.10** park or operate a Recreational Vehicle, camp or otherwise take up occupancy;
  - 7.1.11** light any outdoor fire;
  - 7.1.12** discharge any firearms, fireworks, or other projectiles;
  - 7.1.13** sell or offer for sale any article of food, drink, or merchandise, or carry on any business;
  - 7.1.14** hunt or trap any animal;
  - 7.1.15** cause or permit livestock to graze, except with the prior written authorization of the Municipality in the form of a Permit. Any Person who fails to produce evidence of a valid Permit issued by the Municipality at the request of a Peace Officer as required by this provision is guilty of an offence; or
  - 7.1.16** undertake any other activity not permitted under this Bylaw without written permission from the Municipality.
- 7.2** No Person shall operate, drive or abandon a Motor Vehicle, or any Earthmoving Equipment, other than an Off-Highway Vehicle, within or upon any Environmental Reserve unless it is:
- 7.2.1** a Service Vehicle responding to an emergency; or
  - 7.2.2** a Service Vehicle for which there is no other reasonable access to the subdivision lot that requires the respective service and that necessary access is conducted in the most direct and least damaging manner.

- 7.3 Application to the Municipality (**Schedule "A": Encroachment on Environmental Reserves**) may be made to allow for a Major Encroachment, existing as of the date of the passing of this Bylaw, to remain on Environmental Reserve Lands. Such application shall be decided upon by Council, taking into consideration liability, operational, financial and public safety issues. An Encroachment Agreement shall be required and will specify an expiry date, at which time a new Encroachment Agreement shall be required to continue the Major Encroachment on Environmental Reserve Lands. An Encroachment Agreement does not transfer with the lands, and cannot be assigned to a subsequent owner or third-party.
- 7.4 Major Encroachments existing as of the passing of this Bylaw for which an Encroachment Agreement has not been entered into shall be removed within sixty (60) days from the date the owner or Person responsible for the Major Encroachment is notified by the Municipality.
- 7.5 The provisions of this Bylaw do not apply to actions, activities and operations of the Municipality or Persons acting upon the instructions of the Municipality, in respect to any activities within Environmental Reserves.

## 8 **PENALTIES**

- 8.1 Any Person who contravenes any of the provisions of this Bylaw is guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction, to the penalty as set out in **Schedule "B": Penalties** herein.
- 8.2 Notwithstanding Section 8.1 of this Bylaw, any person who commits a second or subsequent offence under this Bylaw within one (1) year of committing the first offence may be liable to a fine of not less nor more than the sum as set out in **Schedule "B": Penalties** of this Bylaw.
- 8.3 The levying and payment of any fine provided for in this Bylaw shall not relieve a Person from the necessity of paying any fees, charges, or costs from which he is otherwise liable under the provisions of this Bylaw.
- 8.4 A Person who contravenes any of the provisions of this Bylaw may be subject to enforcement proceedings under this Bylaw and the *Act*, including but not limited to, the issuance of a Violation Tag or Violation Ticket and/or an Order to Remedy requiring the Person to take whatever action or measure necessary to remedy the contravention of this Bylaw at the Person's expense.
- 8.5 When a Person who is guilty of an offence under this Bylaw and who fails to take whatever action or measures the Municipality deems appropriate to remedy the contravention, the Municipality may remedy the contravention and the Municipality's expenses, costs, and charges incurred as a result of its actions associated with remedying the contravention shall be deemed an amount owing by the Person to the Municipality.
- 8.6 Where there is a penalty listed for an offence in **Schedule "B": Penalties** that amount is the minimum penalty for that offence. A subsequent offence means an offence committed by a Person that after said Person has already been convicted of the same offence or has voluntarily paid a fine for the same offence.
- 8.7 A Provincial Judge/Commissioner, in addition to the penalties provided for in this Bylaw may, if they consider the offence sufficiently serious, direct or order restoration of the affected land or, other compensation to be paid to the Municipality as a result of the costs incurred to the Municipality for restoration.

## 9 **COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

- 9.1 No Person shall obstruct, impede, block, interfere with or otherwise hinder a Peace Officer in the performance of their duties and responsibilities, and

exercise of their authority, pursuant to this Bylaw. Any Person who obstructs, impedes, blocks, interferes or otherwise hinders a Peace Officer in the performance of their duties or responsibilities or the exercise of their authority pursuant to this Bylaw is guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction, to the penalty as set out in **Schedule "B": Penalties** herein.

**9.2** Where a Designated Officer finds that a development or use of an Environmental Reserve is not in accordance with this Bylaw, the Designated Officer may, by Order to Remedy, order the Person in possession of the adjacent land or the person responsible for the contravention or all or any of them to:

**9.2.1** stop the development or use of the Environmental Reserve in whole or in part as directed by the Order to Remedy;

**9.2.2** demolish, remove or replace the development and restore the natural features of the Environmental Reserve; and

**9.2.3** take such other measures as are specified in the Order to Remedy so that the development or use of the Environmental Reserve is in accordance with the *Act* and the Regulations passed thereunder, a Development Permit, subdivision approval, or this Bylaw, as the case may be.

**9.3** Where a Designated Officer issues a Person an Order to Remedy in accordance with this Bylaw, the Designated Officer may:

**9.3.1** identify the Unauthorized Use;

**9.3.2** direct the person to take any action or measure necessary to remedy the Unauthorized Use including, but not limited to, the restoration of the Environmental Reserve to its pre-disturbed state;

**9.3.3** state a time within which the Person must fulfill the Order to Remedy; and

**9.3.4** state that if the Person does not abide by the Order to Remedy in the specified time, the Municipality may take action or measures necessary to remedy the Unauthorized Use described in the Order to Remedy, at the expense of the Person.

**9.4** The Order to Remedy may not be prescriptive in the direction as to what slopes, soil replacement or vegetation regeneration methods/species are to be used to remediate a major clearing of vegetation that could negatively impact slope stability. To properly and effectively address the potential soil erosion or other factors caused by unauthorized clearing of vegetation on Environmental Reserves, the Designated Officer may direct the Person to whom is issued an Order to Remedy to contract an environmental planner to create a mitigation plan to the satisfaction of the Municipality.

## **10 VIOLATION TAGS**

**10.1** A Peace Officer is hereby authorized and empowered to issue a Violation Tag to any Person, who the Peace Officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe has contravened any provision of this Bylaw.

**10.2** A Violation Tag may be issued to such Person:

**10.2.1** either personally; or

**10.2.2** by mailing a copy to such Person at his last known post office address.

- 10.3** The Violation Tag shall be in a form approved by the Chief Administrative Officer and shall state:
- 10.3.1** the name of the Person;
  - 10.3.2** the offence;
  - 10.3.3** the appropriate penalty for the offence as specified in **Schedule "B": Penalties** of this Bylaw;
  - 10.3.4** that the penalty shall be paid within 30 days of the issuance of the Violation Tag; and
  - 10.3.5** any other information as may be required and is deemed appropriate by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 10.4** Where a contravention of this Bylaw is of a continuing nature, further Violation Tags may be issued by a Peace Officer, provided however, that no more than one Violation Tag shall be issued for each day that the contravention continues.
- 10.5** Where a Violation Tag is issued pursuant to this Bylaw, the person to whom the Violation Tag is issued may, in lieu of being prosecuted for the offence, pay to the Municipality the penalty specified on said Violation Tag.
- 10.6** Nothing in this Bylaw shall prevent a Peace Officer from immediately issuing a Violation Ticket.

## **11 VIOLATION TICKETS**

- 11.1** In those cases where a Violation Tag has been issued and if the penalty specified on a Violation Tag has not been paid within the prescribed time, then a Peace Officer is hereby authorized and empowered to issued a Violation Ticket pursuant to Part II of the *Provincial Offences Procedures Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. P-34, as amended.
- 11.2** Notwithstanding Section 11.1 of this Bylaw, a Peace Officer is hereby authorized and empowered to immediately issue a Vioslation Ticket pursuant to Part II of the *Provincial Offences Procedures Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. P-34, as amended, to any person who a Peace Officer has reasonable grounds to believe has contravened any provision of this Bylaw.

## **12 SEVERABILITY PROVISION**

- 12.1** It is the intention of Council that each separate provision of this Bylaw shall be deemed independent of all other provisions herein and it is the further intention of Council that if any provision of this Bylaw is declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, then the invalid portion shall be severed and the remainder of the Bylaw is deemed valid and enforceable.

## **13 EFFECTIVE DATE OF BYLAW**

- 13.1** This Bylaw shall take effect on the day of the Third and Final Reading.

READ A FIRST TIME IN COUNCIL THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, AD 2019.

READ A SECOND TIME IN COUNCIL THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, AD 2019.

READ A THIRD AND FINAL TIME IN COUNCIL \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, AD 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_  
REEVE

S E A L

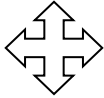
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

## SCHEDULE "A"

### Encroachment on Environmental Reserves Application

<b>Internal Use Only</b>	
Our File Number: _____ Your File Number: _____ Roll Number: _____	
<b>Applicant Information</b>	
Applicant/Agent: _____	Phone: _____
Address: _____	Cell Phone: _____
City/Prov. _____ Postal Code: _____	Fax: _____
Email address: _____	Signature: _____
Applicant/Agent Authorization: I am the applicant/agent authorized to act on behalf of the registered owner and that the information given on this form is full and complete and is, to the best of my knowledge, a true statement of the facts relating to this application.	
<b>Registered Landowner Information</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Owner same as applicant</i>	
Registered Owner: _____	Phone: _____
Address: _____	Fax: _____
City/Prov. _____ Postal Code: _____	Signature: _____
<b>Right of Entry</b>	
Pursuant to Section 542 of the Municipal Government Act, I hereby do ____ or do not ____ grant consent for a designated officer of Smoky Lake County to enter upon the land as described above, for a site inspection.	
Print Name: _____	Signature: _____
<b>Section A - Property Information</b>	
Division _____	
Legal: Lot _____ Block _____ Plan _____ and Part of ____ ¼ Sec _____ Twp _____ Rge _____ W4M	
Subdivision Name (if applicable) or Area _____	
Rural Address/Street Address _____ Parcel Size _____	
Number of existing dwellings on property (please describe) _____	
Has any previous application been filed in connection with this property? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, please describe the details of the application and file number: _____	
<b>Schedule A - Page 1 of 2</b>	
<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	Council Motion Number: _____

Date Received _____ _____	Date of Approval _____ _____
Issuing Officer's Name _____ _____	Date Issued _____ _____
Issuing Officer's Signature _____ _____	Comments _____ _____

Our File Number: _____	Roll Number: _____
<b>SITE PLAN</b>	
	



DATE:	SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:
DATE:	MUNICIPAL/COUNTY AUTHORITY:

Schedule A - Page 2 of 2

## SCHEDULE "B" Penalties

Section	Offence	Fine
<b>7.1.16</b>	<b>Fail to produce a valid Permit</b>	<b>\$200</b>
7.1.1	Injure or deface any turf, tree, shrub, hedge, plant, flower or structure	<b>\$300</b>
7.1.3	Dig or remove any natural feature or man-made structure	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.5	Causes a disturbance	<b>\$300</b>
7.1.9	Discard any litter on land or water	<b>\$300</b>
7.1.8	Discard any contaminants or apply pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers on land or water	<b>\$300</b>
9.1	Obstruct any peace officer	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.2	Construct any structure, building or appurtenance, whether on, above or below ground	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.4	Place or erect any sign, bulletin board, post, pole, or advertising device of any kind, attach any notice, bill, poster, sign, wire, or cord to any tree, shrub, fence, railing, post or structure	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.13	Sell or offer for sale any article of food, drink, or merchandise, or carry on any business	<b>\$200</b>
7.1.12	Discharge or ignite any firearms, fireworks, missiles or other projectiles	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.10	Park or operate any Recreational Vehicle	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.10	Camp or take up occupancy	<b>\$500</b>
7.2	Operate, drive or abandon a Motor Vehicle	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.11	Light any outdoor fire	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.15	Permit any livestock to graze	<b>\$500</b>
7.1.14	Hunt or trap any animal	<b>\$500</b>

**Schedule B – Page 1 of 1**



# GARNER LAKE

SHORELINE ISSUES AND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS



Aquality Environmental Consulting Ltd.



# Overview



- Bed and shore ownership
- Lake accretion
- Compliance and enforcement
- Environmental Reserve law and policy
- Resolutions for shoreline misuse
- Dock disturbance standard in Alberta



# Water Act (1999)

- Water owned by the Provincial Crown
- Defines “water” and a “waterbody”
- Regulates and enforces actions that affect water and water use management, the aquatic environment, fish habitat protection practices, and storm water management
- Prohibits anyone from draining, altering or infilling wetlands on **private or public land** unless authorized to do so by the Province through an approval under the provisions of the *Act*



# Water News (from 1894)



You don't own the water on your land!

- *Water Act* Defines “water” and a “waterbody”
- Regulates and enforces actions that affect water and water use management, the aquatic environment including wetlands
- **Does not** distinguish between wetlands in the White Zone and Green Zone
- Prohibits anyone from draining, altering or infilling wetlands on **private or public land** unless authorized to do so by the Province through an approval under the provisions of the *Act*
- Definition of an **Activity**





# Public Lands Act

- The Crown owns the **beds and shores** of all permanent and naturally occurring bodies of water including wetlands in the White Area, and ALL the land in the Green Area, including its wetlands
- Differentiates wetlands into **White** (settled) and **Green** (forested) Zone areas





# Land News (from 1930)

You don't own the land under the water!

## ***Public Lands Act:***

(1) Subject to subsection (2) but notwithstanding any other law, the title to the beds and shores of

(a) all **permanent** and naturally occurring bodies of water

(b) all naturally occurring rivers, streams, watercourses and lakes is vested in the Crown in right of Alberta





# Municipal Government Act (1998)



## **Municipal Government Act**

- Section 60(1) of the MGA states:

*“Subject to any other enactment, a municipality has the direction, control and management of the rivers, streams, watercourses, lakes and other natural bodies of water within the municipality, including the air space above and the ground below.”*

## Section 664:

- A municipal government can take the entirety of ravines, floodplains, or unstable ground as Environmental Reserve (ER)
- A buffer around any body of water to allow access or prevent pollution





## Not our problem!

Province regulates water under the *Water Act*  
Feds regulate fish habitat under the *Fisheries Act*

...but

MGA gives broad powers to Municipalities for the management of water on Municipal lands AND Municipalities make decisions about development, which impacts wetlands, water bodies and bodies of water

...Muni's are the OWNER of "works" and are liable (Lac La Biche County Admin Penalty \$11,500 March 2017)

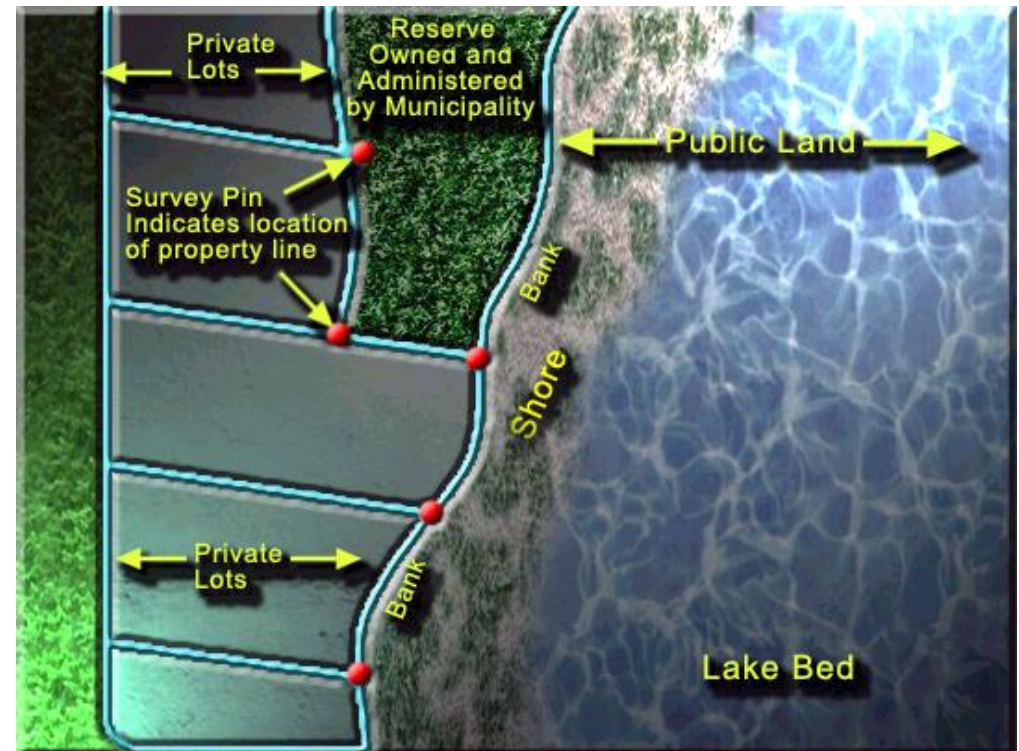




# Bed and Shore Ownership

## Terms

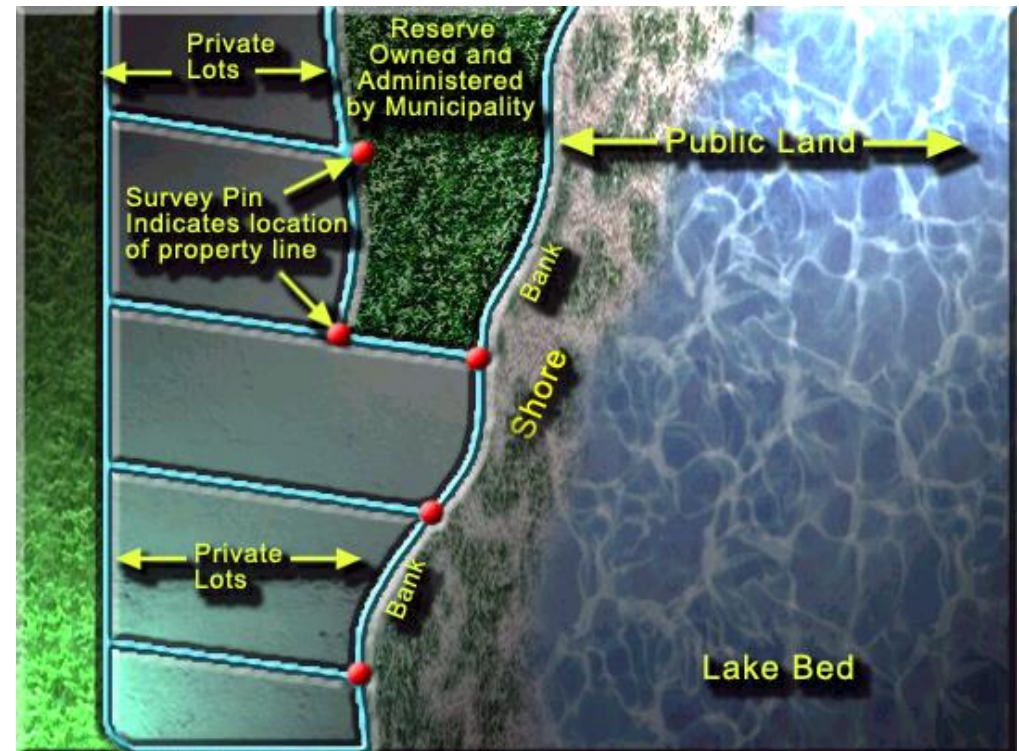
- **Bed:** land on which water sits
- **Shore:** part of the bed which is exposed when water levels are at their lowest
- **Bank:** upper limit of the bed and shore





## *Public Lands Act 2000*

- The **Crown** owns the **beds and shores** of all permanent and naturally occurring bodies of water
- **Beyond the bank** (upper limit of the bed and shore) is **privately owned**





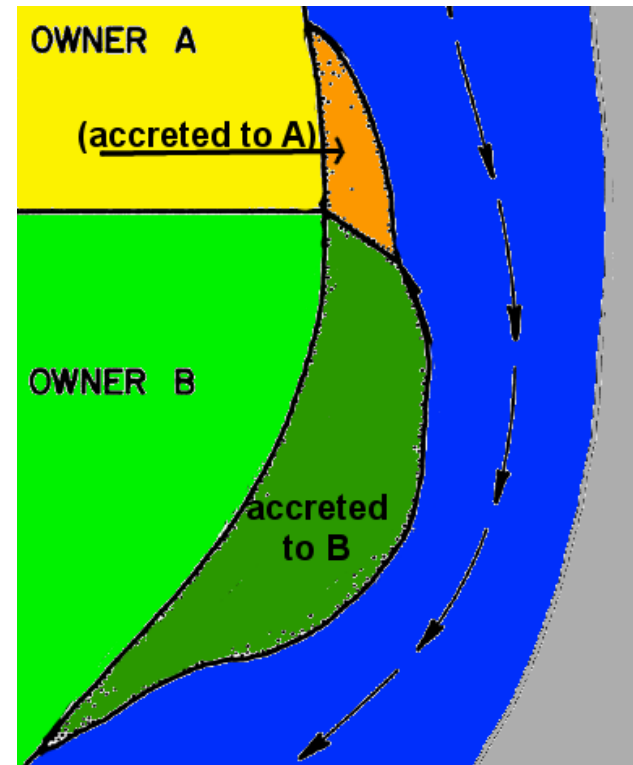
# Lake Accretion Defined



A gradual, imperceptible increase in the size of land that borders a body of water

Occurs by two processes:

1. Gradual recession of water
2. Gradual accumulation of sediment





## **Influence of Flooding on Ownership**

- Banks can erode private property
- Landowners have right to protect land against flooding
- Reinforce with washed rock and cobbles.
- **If flooding causes privately owned land to be lost:**
  - **Landowners can rebuild land**
  - **Must prove that the loss is due to flooding and reclamation doesn't need to occur beyond the pre-flood area**



## Influence of Drought on Ownership

- Permanent water body that is **occasionally** dry:
  - **Crown** still owns bed and shore
- Permanent water body that has the **bed exposed for long periods** AND **upland vegetation** has established:
  - Adjacent **landowner or Crown** can request ownership by applying to the Registrar of Land Titles





If landowners have **purposely** and **artificially** created an accretion, landowners are **NOT** entitled to accreted lands

Damage can result in:

1. Fines
2. Land reclamation to restore lake shoreline stability







# Enforcement Example

March 12, 2013

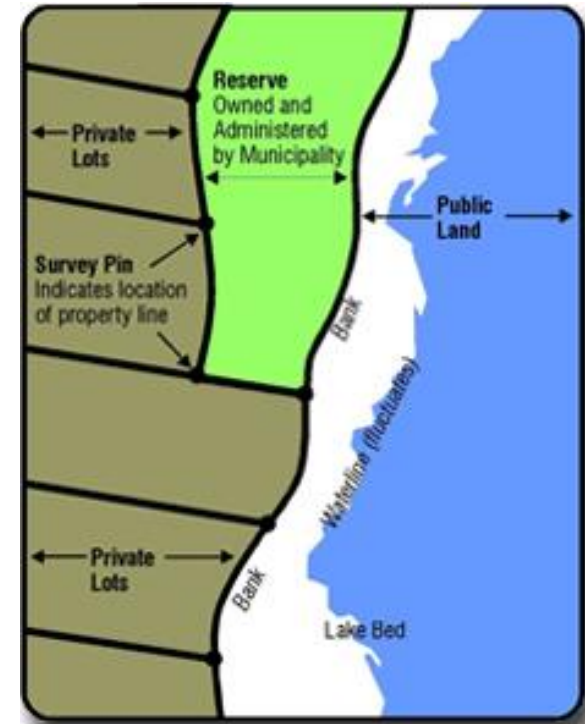
- Dale Andrew Mather fined **\$20,000**
- Charged under the *Water Act* for willfully altering the shoreline of Gull Lake
  - Removed aquatic vegetation to “improve the view” from his property
- Creative sentencing:
  - \$ 15,000 paid to the Gull Lake Water Quality Management Society to fund their Streambed Improvement Project



# Environmental Reserve Law and Policy

## Environmental reserves (ER) on the edge of a lake is meant to:

- Act as a pollution buffer
- Provide public access to the bed and shore
- Safeguards that development does not occur on land sensitive to disturbances





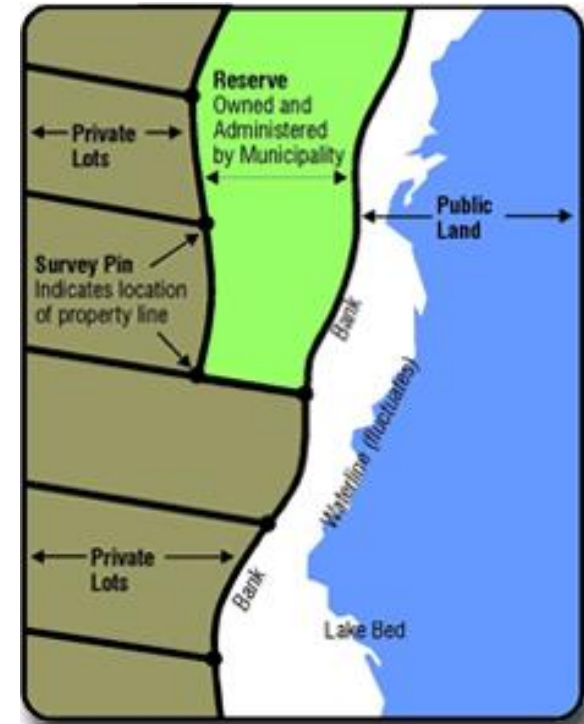
# Environmental Reserve Law and Policy

## ***Municipal Government Act (MGA)*** **(Section 671)**

- An ER must be used as a public park or remain in its natural conditions

### Examples:

- Swamp, gully, ravine or natural drainage course
- Land that is unstable or exposed to flooding
- A strip of land  $\leq 6\text{m}$  in width next to the bed and shore of any body of water





# Environmental Reserve Law and Policy

## Who owns ER's?

- The MGA gives municipalities the ability to create ER's when land is subdivided

## **MGA (Section 664)**

- ER easement requires that the land remain in its natural state
- An ER easement **does not lapse** when:
  - There is a non-enforcement
  - The use of the land subject to the easement is for a purpose that is not outlined in the easement
  - A change in the use of land that surrounds or is adjacent to the land subject to the easement



# Environmental Reserve Law and Policy

## Problems

- Landowners consider reserves to be part of their land
- May clear vegetation, develop on the ER, build fences to keep public out
- Abuse of lands may require updating bylaws for ER's





# Shoreline Misuse at Garner Lake

## Environmental Reserves

- Councils must be prepared to take action and enforce bylaws or create new ones
- Get the word out about who owns where
- Fines paid to water management organizations
- Key aspect: protect the vegetation in this buffer zone



# Shoreline Misuse at Garner Lake



Littoral zone of a lake occurs below the bank

- Contains the highest diversity of wildlife and plants
- Protects against erosion
- Development of docks, stairs, decks, lawns disturbs habitat, especially when landowners don't own it





# Shoreline Misuse at Garner Lake

## ATV's on shorelines

- *Public Lands Administration Regulation 2011 Sec. 43* outlines that **no wheeled or tracked conveyance** shall enter the bed or shore
- Fines, peace officers to enforce
- Public education is key
- Signage







# Resolutions for Shoreline Misuse



- Educating the public on who owns what
- Informing residents on how to legally and ecologically maintain shoreline properties
- Fines paid to local water management organizations
- Careful planning for dock development: building community docks
- Disturbance standard in draft










# Questions?






COUNTY OF ST. PAUL NO. 19


### Legend

-  Indian Reserves
-  County Boundary
- Roads
-  Parks
- Roads Labels
-  Railway
-  Cadastre
-  Industrial Accounts
-  Rural Addresses



Scale 1: 13,080








100 yd 

100 m 

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Legend

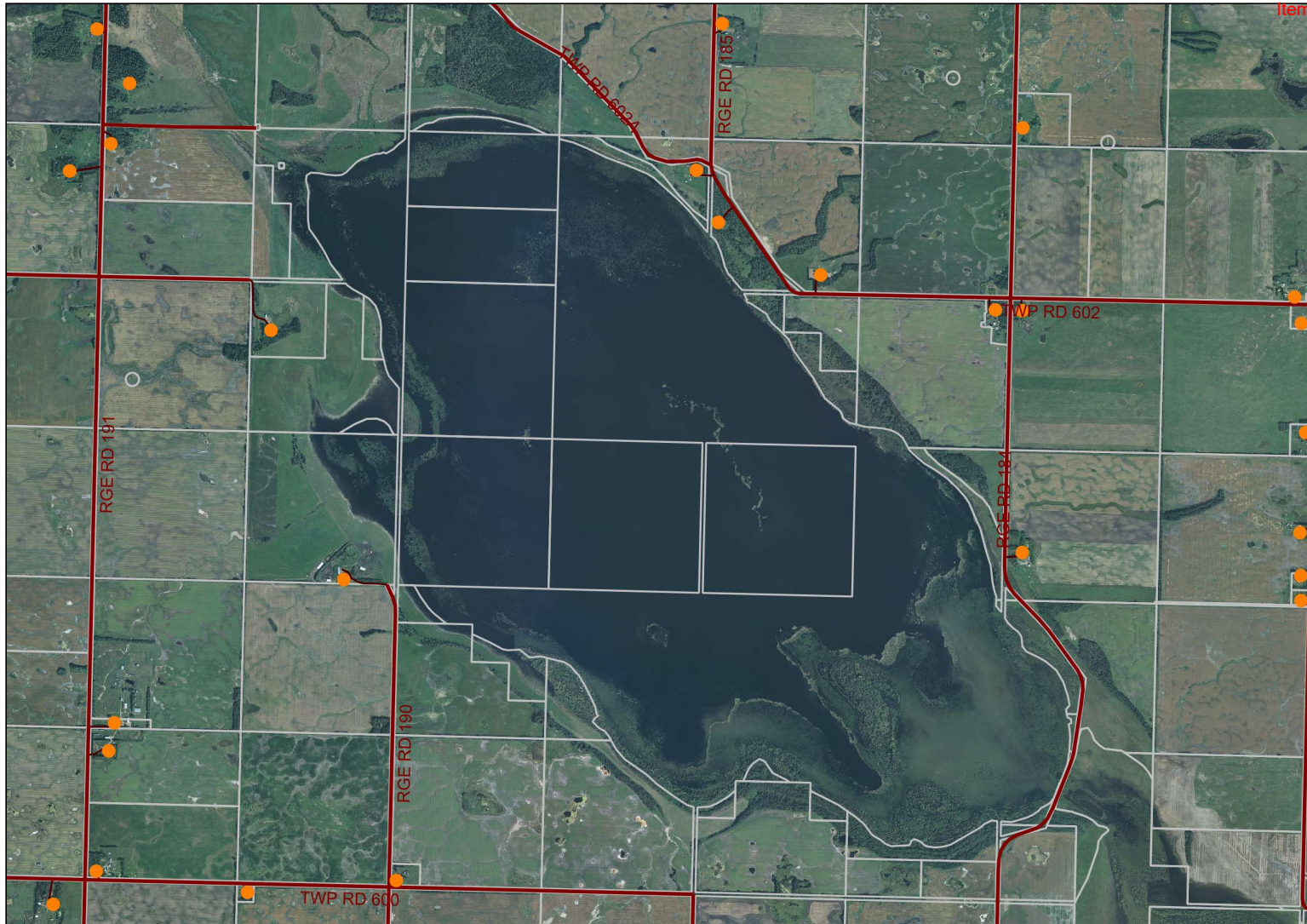
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Scale 1: 32,700

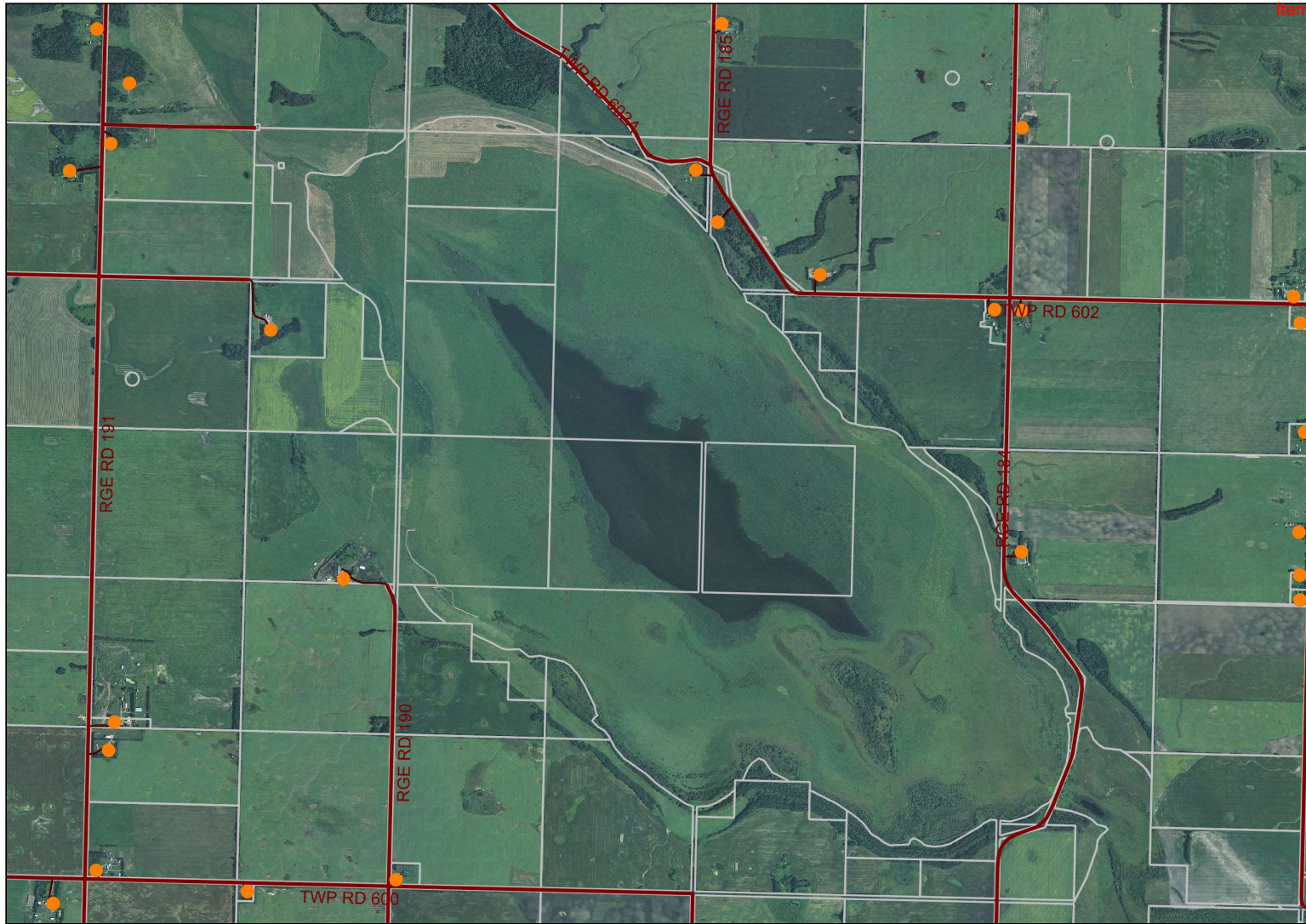
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1 Mi



1 Km





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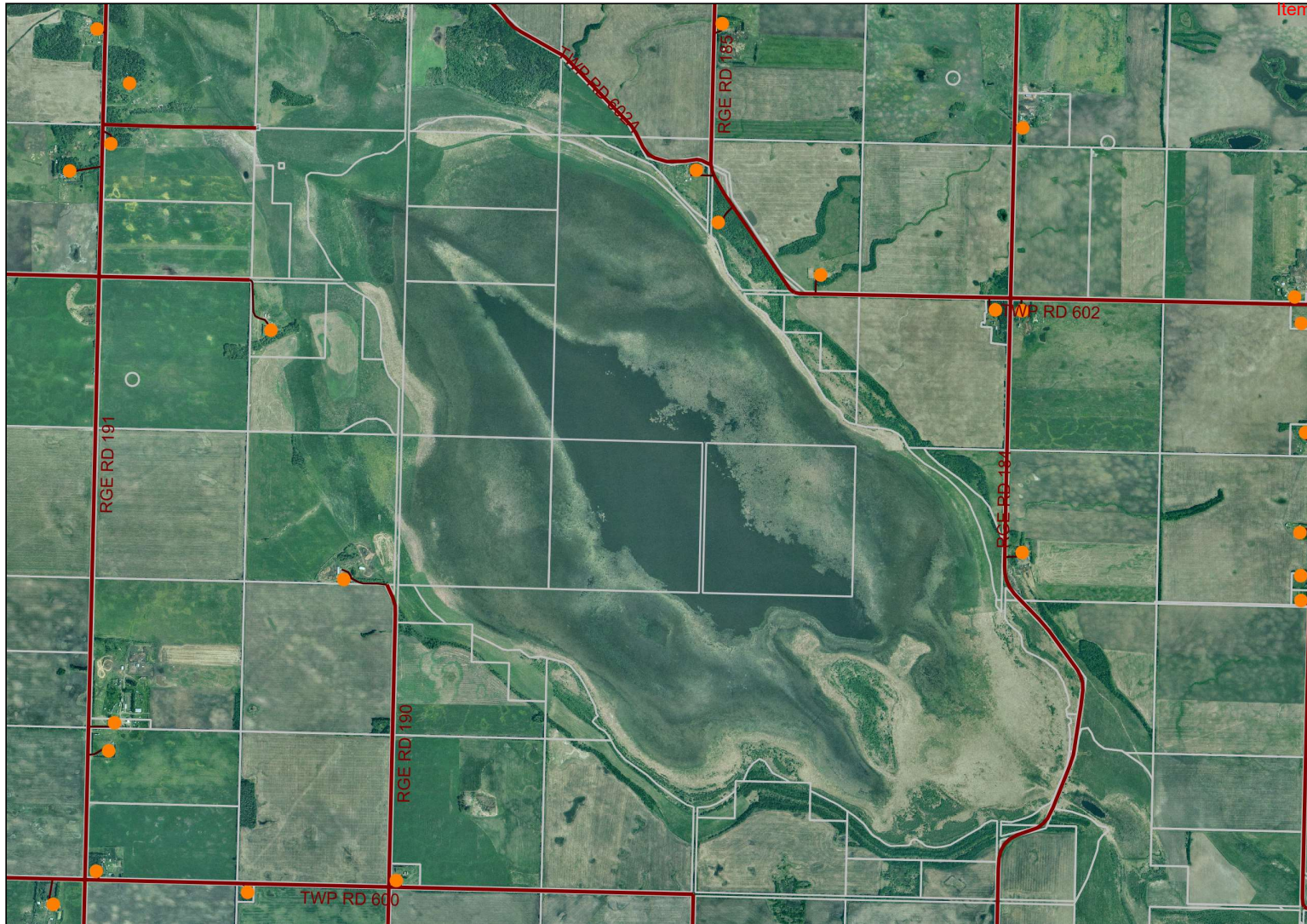


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2021 Bill 79

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Second Session, 30th Legislature, 70 Elizabeth II

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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

# **BILL 79**

## **TRAILS ACT**

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THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

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First Reading . . . . .

Second Reading . . . . .

Committee of the Whole . . . . .

Third Reading . . . . .

Royal Assent . . . . .

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*Bill 79*

## **BILL 79**

2021

### **TRAILS ACT**

*(Assented to , 2021)*

#### *Table of Contents*

- 1** Interpretation
- 2** Purposes of Act
- 3** Application
- 4** Designated trails and designated trail areas
- 5** Trail management plan
- 6** Trail manager
- 7** Trail agreement
- 8** Paramountcy
- 9** Regulations
- 10** Deficiency regulations
- 11** Ministerial regulations
- 12** Consequential amendments
- 13** Coming into force

HER MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the  
Legislative Assembly of Alberta, enacts as follows:

#### **Interpretation**

**1(1)** In this Act,

- (a) “associated structures”, in respect of a designated trail or designated trail area, means any improvement of a

long-term or permanent nature, including but not limited to parking space, launching ramps, trail treads, trail shelters, bridges, litter shelters, corrals, signs or notices and outhouses;

- (b) “designated trail” means a trail designated under section 4(1)(a) or (b);
- (c) “designated trail area” means a trail area designated under section 4(1)(c);
- (d) “Minister” means the Minister determined under section 16 of the *Government Organization Act* as the Minister responsible for this Act;
- (e) “municipality” means a municipality as defined in the *Municipal Government Act*;
- (f) “trail agreement” means an agreement made under section 7;
- (g) “trail management plan” means a plan established under section 5;
- (h) “trail manager” means a person appointed under section 6.

(2) Unless otherwise provided in this Act or the regulations made under this Act, or unless the context otherwise requires, words and phrases used in this Act or the regulations have, as the case may be, the same meaning as provided in the *Public Lands Act* and the *Public Lands Administration Regulation* (AR 187/2011).

### **Purposes of Act**

**2** The purposes of this Act are

- (a) to recognize designated trails as a key component of sustainable outdoor recreation that contribute to positive environmental, economic and social outcomes and individual well-being,
- (b) to establish a trail management planning process with consideration of the many land uses and values on the landscape,
- (c) to provide for the establishment and management of designated trails to support desirable user experiences,

conservation of landscapes and protection of the environment, in concert with other enactments,

- (d) to recognize the cultural and historical significance of trails, and
- (e) to enable collaborative partner participation in trail management and encourage shared stewardship by all users of public land.

#### **Application**

**3** This Act applies to public lands administered under the *Public Lands Act*.

#### **Designated trails and designated trail areas**

**4(1)** The Minister may, by order,

- (a) designate an area of public land and associated structures as a designated trail,
- (b) designate a provincial trail as a designated trail,
- (c) designate an area of public land and associated structures containing a network of designated trails as a designated trail area,
- (d) increase or decrease the area of a designated trail or designated trail area, and
- (e) if applicable, declare a designated trail or designated trail area to be included in a prescribed class or subclass, as the case may be.

**(2)** All designated trails and designated trail areas are resources of the Crown.

**(3)** The *Regulations Act* does not apply to an order made under subsection (1).

**(4)** The Minister shall ensure that an order made under subsection (1) is published and available, which may include publication on the Minister's website.

#### **Trail management plan**

- 5(1)** Subject to the regulations, the Minister may establish trail management plans for designated trails and designated trail areas.
- (2)** All designated trails and designated trail areas are subject to an applicable trail management plan established under subsection (1).
- (3)** If there is a conflict or inconsistency between a trail management plan and any applicable ALSA regional plan, the ALSA regional plan prevails to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

#### **Trail manager**

- 6(1)** Subject to the regulations, the Minister may appoint any person, including a municipality, as a trail manager.
- (2)** The trail manager may post prescribed signs or notices on a designated trail or designated trail area for the purpose of implementing the applicable trail management plan.
- (3)** The signs or notices posted under subsection (2) must conform to the applicable trail management plan.

#### **Trail agreement**

- 7** Subject to the regulations, the Minister may enter into a trail agreement with any person, including a municipality, for the purpose of the operation, management, construction, development or maintenance of a designated trail or designated trail area.

#### **Paramountcy**

- 8** If there is a conflict or inconsistency between this Act and the *Public Lands Act*, the *Public Lands Act* prevails to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

#### **Regulations**

- 9** The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations
  - (a) defining a word or expression used but not defined in this Act;

- (b) respecting any other matter that the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary or advisable to carry out the intent and purposes of this Act.

**Deficiency regulations**

**10(1)** The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

- (a) modifying the provisions of the *Public Lands Administration Regulation* (AR 187/2011) to make those provisions applicable in respect of a designated trail or designated trail area or any other matter under this Act in addition to, or instead of, any provision of the *Public Lands Administration Regulation* (AR 187/2011);
- (b) remedying any confusion in the application of or any difficulty or impossibility in applying any provisions of this Act.

**(2)** A regulation made under subsection (1) is repealed 5 years after the regulation comes into force or on the date specified in the regulation, whichever is earlier.

**(3)** The repeal of a regulation under subsection (2) does not affect anything done or incurred under the authority of the regulation before the repeal of the regulation.

**(4)** A regulation made under subsection (1) that is in force on or after the repeal of this section remains in force until it is repealed in accordance with subsection (2).

**(5)** A regulation may not be made under subsection (1) extending the 5-year period set out in subsection (2).

**(6)** This section is repealed 5 years after this section comes into force, but the repeal does not affect anything done or incurred under the authority of a regulation made under subsection (1) before the repeal of this section.

**Ministerial regulations**

**11** The Minister may make regulations

- (a) respecting the establishment, operation and enforcement of trail management plans;



- (b) respecting the eligibility of a person to be appointed as a trail manager, including the duties and responsibilities of a trail manager;
- (c) respecting signs or notices to be posted under section 6;
- (d) respecting rules and procedures for making and enforcing a trail agreement, including the terms and conditions of a trail agreement;
- (e) respecting rules for sustainable management, operation, maintenance and protection of designated trails and designated trail areas;
- (f) prescribing classes and subclasses of designated trails and designated trail areas.

**Amends RSA 2000 cP-40**

**12(1) The *Public Lands Act* is amended by this section.**

**(2) The following is added before section 71.1:**

**Provincial trail**

**71.01(1)** The Minister may, by order, designate any area of public land to be a provincial trail.

(2) A provincial trail designated under subsection (1) is subject to the applicable trail management plan established under the *Trails Act*.

(3) The *Regulations Act* does not apply to an order made under subsection (1).

(4) The Minister shall ensure that an order made under subsection (1) is published and available, which may include publication on the Minister's website.

**(3) Section 71.1 is amended**

- (a) **in subsection (1)(c) by striking out** "or public land recreation trail";
- (b) **in subsection (3) by striking out** "public land recreation trail" **and substituting** "provincial trail".

## Explanatory Notes

**12(1)** Amends chapter P-40 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000.

(2) Provincial trail.

(3) Section 71.1 presently reads in part:

*71.1(1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations*

*(c) declaring any area of land to be a public land recreation area or public land recreation trail.*

**(4) The following is added after section 71.1:**

**Order by Minister**

**71.11(1)** Notwithstanding any regulations made under section 9(a.1), the Minister may, by order,

- (a) prohibit or restrict entry to all or any part of a provincial trail,
- (b) prohibit or restrict any use or activity in all or any part of a provincial trail, or
- (c) specify rules that apply to the entry to, use of or activities in all or any part of a provincial trail.

**(2)** The Minister may exempt any person or conveyance from the application of subsection (1)(a), (b) or (c), as the case may be.

**(3)** The *Regulations Act* does not apply to an order made under subsection (1).

**(4)** The Minister shall ensure that an order made under subsection (1) is published and available, which may include publication on the Minister's website.

**(5) Section 71.2(a) and (b) are amended by striking out "or public land recreation trail".**

**(6) Section 71.3 is amended by striking out "public land recreation trail" wherever it occurs and substituting "provincial trail".**

*(3) In any enactment made before or after the coming into force of this Part, references to a forest land use zone, forest recreation area and forest recreation trail are deemed to be references to a public land use zone, public land recreation area and public land recreation trail, respectively.*

(4) Order by Minister.

(5) Section 71.2 presently reads:

*71.2 Notwithstanding any regulations made under section 9(a.1), the director may by order*

- (a) prohibit or restrict entry to all or any part of a public land recreation area or public land recreation trail, or*
- (b) prohibit any use or activity in all or any part of a public land recreation area or public land recreation trail.*

(6) Section 71.3 presently reads:

**(7) Section 71.4(1) is amended**

**(a) in clause (b) by striking out** “public land recreation area or public land recreation trail” **and substituting** “public land use zone, public land recreation area or provincial trail”;

**(b) by striking out “or” at the end of clause (b);**

**(c) in clause (c) by striking out** “public land recreation trail” **and substituting** “provincial trail”;

**(d) by adding the following after clause (c):**

(d) the operation of the conveyance is contrary to section 54(1)(e), or

(e) the conveyance is being operated in an area of public land

(i) that is cordoned off or secured, or

(ii) where operation of the conveyance is prohibited and no exemption applies

under this Act or the regulations.

**Coming into force**

**13(1)** This Act, except section 5, comes into force on Proclamation.

**(2)** Section 5 has effect on May 1, 2022.

*71.3 In addition to exercising other powers under this Act and the regulations, an officer may order a person in a public land recreation area or on a public land recreation trail to refrain from doing anything that, in the opinion of the officer, may result in loss or damage or is detrimental to the management or use of the public land recreation area or public land recreation trail.*

(7) Section 71.4(1) presently reads:

*71.4(1) In addition to exercising other powers under this Act and the regulations, an officer may impound a conveyance or other property and take it to a place designated by the director if the officer believes on reasonable grounds that*

- (a) the operation of the conveyance or other property has caused, is causing or might cause loss or damage on public land,*
- (b) the operation of the conveyance or other property has interfered with, is interfering with or might interfere with the management or use of a public land recreation area or public land recreation trail, or*
- (c) the conveyance or other property was left unattended without the written permission of an officer for a period of more than 24 hours in a part of a public land recreation area or public land recreation trail not specifically designated for that purpose.*

**13** Coming into force.







**RECORD OF DEBATE**

Stage	Date	Member	From	To
		<b>Interventions</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
		<b>Interventions</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
		<b>Interventions</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
		<b>Interventions</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>

# *strathcona county trails strategy*

# acknowledgements

Great municipalities are built through active citizen involvement and engagement in planning. Many thanks go out to County Council and administration who assisted in this planning effort, recognized the importance of investing in long range planning and displayed the fortitude to make decisions in the best interest of the County.

Of most importance, thanks go out to the:

- Residents of Strathcona County for participating in household telephone and web surveys and attending focus group meetings, and
- Agency representatives who provided information and attended meetings when asked.

Special thanks go to the project steering committee (listed below) who assisted in this planning effort (through the provision of advice, information, support, and opinions); who recognized the importance of investing in long range planning; and who displayed the fortitude to make decisions in the best interest of Strathcona County.



The project steering committee:

- Saeed Ahmad - Manager Transportation Planning
- Ryan Anders - Manager Traffic Operations and Safety
- Cory Chartrand - Supervisor Traffic Support
- Sarah Feldman- Senior Advisor, Sustainable Infrastructure and Planning
- Cindy Hanson - Manager Outdoor Community Services, Programs and Liasion
- Leslee Laing - Infrastructure Analyst, Engineering and Environmental Planning
- Paula LaPlante - Sr. Property Management Technician
- Christopher Martin - Community Peace Officer
- Dale Miller - Fire Marshall
- Scott Olson - Planner
- Don Polinski - Manager Outdoor Services Maintenance Infrastructure
- Lyndsey Radford - Assistant Transit Planner
- Rene Robertson-Potisk - Social development Liasion
- Scott Sillers - Senior Asset Management Analyst
- Janice Talbot - Landscape Architect
- Jennifer Wilson - Fitness Technician IV

And the consulting team:

- Mike Roma, RC Strategies
- Rob Parks, RC Strategies
- Ted Muller, EDA Collaborative
- Erik Mustonen, EDA Collaborative



# executive summary

This 2011 Strathcona County Trails Strategy will guide the provision of trails for County residents over the next 15 year period. The Strategy has been built upon the foundations of 1998 Trails Master Plan, broad community input and thorough background research and is one of many initiatives occurring under the guidance of the County's Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy. This Strategy is "vision" versus "project" driven and includes new and creative solutions for the future provision of trails throughout the County.

The vision and guiding principles of the Trails Strategy are as follows:

## ***Trails Strategy Vision:***

Rural and urban trails throughout Strathcona County provide for a balance of recreational and active transportation uses and are provided by the County to allow for maximum positive impact to overall quality of life of residents taking into account concerns of all stakeholders.

## ***Guiding principles:***

- trails provide opportunities for recreation pursuits of all ages, thereby increasing community health and well being and improving quality of life;
- trails provide opportunities for active transportation;
- trails are important to the quality of life of both urban and rural Strathcona County residents;
- trails are key components of walkable communities and act as a catalyst for community connectedness;
- should be inclusive and accessible (within the County and beyond), and;
- trails must be provided through the involvement of all stakeholders (planning, usage and maintenance).

In order to achieve this vision and in following the guiding principles, key aspects to the provision of trails outlined in the Strategy include:

- an enhanced trails hierarchy, classification system, and high level maintenance and design guidelines looking at trail provision in four main areas throughout the County

- encapsulating urban, urban fringe, dispersed rural and intense rural areas within in it;
- a project prioritization system, based on 12 project criteria, that will help decision makers contemplate proper distribution of funds allocated to trails;
- a trail effectiveness measurement framework outlining five key performance measures providing the County feedback on how effective trails are in adding to the quality of life of residents,
- a review of potential funding sources and associated thresholds for base level and specialty trail development providing transparency and clear stakeholder expectations for future trails projects.

All of these management tools and recommendations, the details of each explained herein, provide guidance and transparency for the provision of trails in the County.

This strategy also provides a recommendation regarding future off highway vehicle (OHV) use on County lands. Currently OHV's are not permitted on county roads which is not the case in other rural municipalities in the capital region. Due to the level of interest in pursuing OHV use on County lands and considering opposing viewpoints by County resident landowners, it is recommended that the County work with landowners and potential OHV users in establishing an OHV corridor(s) to allow for linkages between areas that allow OHV use under different jurisdictional control. These other areas include water bodies and crown/provincial/federal lands.

This Strategy was built by trails stakeholders in the County. It will be utilized internally by a variety of departments in the programming, planning, constructing and maintaining of the trail system. It will provide advice to County decision makers regarding future investment in, and regulations regarding, trail use.

The Strathcona County Trails Strategy will ensure that the benefits of an effective trail system are realized in the County for years to come.

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# purpose and methodology

Strathcona County requires a Trails Strategy that will guide the provision of trails for County residents over the next 15 year period (to 2025). This Strategy will be built upon the foundations of the existing Trails Master Plan (1998) and is one of many initiatives occurring under the guidance of the County's Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy. Although some of the concepts remain from the existing 1998 document, **this Strategy is "vision" versus "project" driven** and includes new and creative solutions for the future provision of trails based on:

- recent growth and physical site opportunities
- shifts in regional demographics
- new and emerging trends (such as "challenge/circuit trails" and indoor/outdoor trail interaction)
- updated internal strategic planning
- stakeholder engagement (most importantly)

The Trails Strategy will serve as a:

- tool for transparently prioritizing trail enhancement and new development projects as they are presented (both from an internal and external perspective)
- systemized approach for managing, maintaining and promoting utilization of trails throughout the County
- benchmark to measure both the importance and effectiveness of trails throughout the County (both now and as ongoing performance measurement)
- tool, developed on conjunction with all trail users, to deal with user conflicts including motorized (ATV and snowmobile use), non-motorized, cross country skiing, equine, bicycle, walk/jog interaction on trails.
- outline how management and design can mitigate conflicts

This document is the Trails Strategy and outlines recommendations for achieving the vision and goals outlined herein. It has been developed through thorough research and consultation, the results of which are summarized throughout this report and presented, in detail, under separate cover in the following reports:

- Needs Assessment Summary
- Public Consultation Summary

The following chart explains the process undertaken to develop the Trails Strategy.

*Process Methodology*

<p><b>Phase I: Background Research</b></p>	<p>Key Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping</li> <li>• Trends and population analysis</li> <li>• Information review / site visitation</li> <li>• Internal reviews and start up meeting</li> <li>• Media release #1</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase II: First Stakeholder and Public Engagement</b></p>	<p>Key Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercept survey</li> <li>• Vested stakeholder focus group</li> <li>• Vested stakeholder survey</li> <li>• General public focus groups</li> <li>• Web site survey / poll</li> <li>• <b>Needs assessment summary</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase III: Prepare Preliminary Trails Strategy</b></p>	<p>Key Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guiding principals</li> <li>• Supply/demand analysis and prioritization matrix</li> <li>• Trails hierarchy / standards</li> <li>• Trails connections and improvements</li> <li>• Partnership, OHV, user and landowner strategies</li> <li>• <b>Draft Strategy</b></li> <li>• Media release #2</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase IV: Second Stakeholder and Public Review</b></p>	<p>Key Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council presentation</li> <li>• Second round of focus groups</li> <li>• Open house</li> <li>• Household survey</li> <li>• Web site survey / poll</li> <li>• <b>Stakeholder review summary</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase V: Final Trails Strategy for Council and Administration Approval</b></p>	<p>Key Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final strategy documentation</b></li> <li>• Council presentation</li> <li>• Final committee meeting</li> </ul>

# guiding principles

In determining guiding principles for the County's Trails Strategy, consideration must be given to overarching community planning, past trails-based planning and the overall intent of trail provision in the County.

A number of pertinent overarching or related planning documents were reviewed to develop an understanding of broad strategic planning as well as congruent planning in other County departments. Review of pertinent planning in adjacent municipalities was also included.

The Strathcona County Strategic Plan outlines a vision and a number of capstone policies that guide all decision making and service provision in the County. These policies include:

## county vision

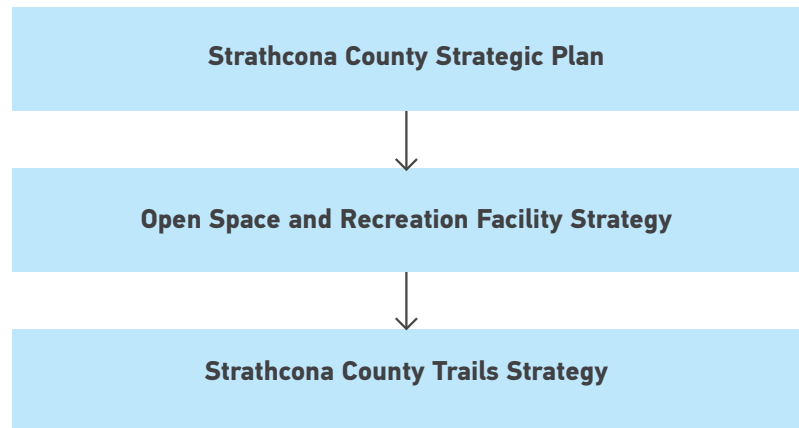
Strathcona County is a safe, caring and autonomous community that treasures its unique blend of urban and rural lifestyles while balancing the natural environment with economic prosperity. Through strong, effective leadership, the County is a vibrant community of choice.

## county capstone policies

- Strathcona County strives for excellence in effective government
- Strathcona County is a safe and caring community whose residents enjoy opportunities for healthy lifestyles.
- Strathcona County fosters an economy which benefits residents, business and industry.
- Strathcona County practices excellence in customer service based on the principles of effectiveness, efficiency, economy and equity
- Strathcona County communicates effectively with its stakeholders.
- Strathcona County's human, financial and physical resources are managed in a manner that addresses community needs and priorities.

The following sources of information were included in preparation of the following guiding principles:

- The Strathcona County Municipal Development Plan
- The Strathcona County Strategic Plan
- The Strathcona County Sustainability Frameworks (Social, Environmental and Economic)
- The Strathcona County Integrated Transportation Master Plan (being developed)
- The Strathcona County Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy
- The Ardrossan Community Recreation Master Plan
- The Strathcona County Trails Master Plan
- The Beaver Hills Tourism Development Opportunity Assessment
- The River Valley Alliance and associated planning
- The Capital Region Growth Plan
- The City of Edmonton Bicycle Transportation Plan
- The City of Fort Saskatchewan Recreation, Culture and Parks Master Plan

*Planning Hierarchy*

The Open Space and Recreation Facility Strategy (OSRFS) is the guiding document for open spaces and recreation facilities flowing from the County’s Strategic Plan (see diagram). As the OSRFS is a guiding document, it provides direction for the Trails Strategy guiding principles.

**The OSRFS vision is as follows:**

- invest in people of all ages through opportunities for improved health and wellness;
- revitalize existing parks, open spaces and recreation facilities before investing in new facilities;
- create an integrated system of indoor and outdoor places and facilities to meet multiple recreation needs, across multiple locations;
- reduce the ecological footprint of development; and
- create opportunities for community partnerships and stewardship.

The **existing Trails Master Plan includes a vision** of “*potential walking, cycling, skiing or riding trail opportunities within 15 (sometimes driving) minutes of most residents and incorporate barrier free design*” as well as numerous objectives for the County’s trail system which can be summarized as follows:

- will provide continuous, multi-use, safe, accessible, seasonal, environmentally sensitive corridors which reflect current plans and development strategies for Strathcona County;
- will incorporate a large “human” component by including community input, educational strategies, “grass roots” approach, opportunities for “sweat equity”, communication and listening to other users to foster innovative alliances and partnerships; and
- will have varied terrain, length of loops, difficulty, uses and scenery.

Based on the aforementioned vision and objectives at the various levels of planning documentation and initiatives, the following guiding principles have been developed for this Trails Strategy.

Strathcona County Trails Strategy guiding principles:

- trails provide opportunities for **recreation pursuits** of all ages, thereby increasing community health and well being and improving quality of life
- trails provide opportunities for **active transportation**
- trails are important to the quality of life of **both urban and rural** Strathcona County residents
- trails are key components of **walkable communities** and act as a catalyst for community connectedness
- should be **inclusive and accessible** (within the County and beyond)
- trails must be provided through the involvement of **all stakeholders** (planning, usage and maintenance)

Stakeholder Input:

- 64% of household survey respondents, 79% of web survey respondents and 82% of group survey respondents agree that trails should be a way for people to travel from one place to another and not just a place for recreation and fitness
- 29% of households survey respondents use the existing trail system for transportation (35% of urban residents and 4% of rural residents)

# needs assessment summary

## trail system analysis

### *Planning Criteria*

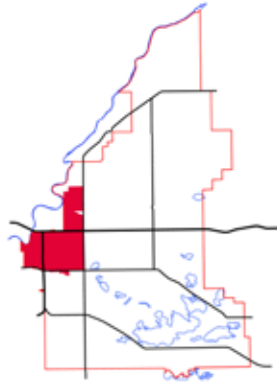
The following criteria have been established in guiding future planning for the County's trails system. The Trails Strategy should:

- further the objectives of Strathcona County's Strategic Plan for Social Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Economic Sustainability and Resource Management;
- realize the resource limitations of the County and/or of other relevant partners, to adequately support the capital development and on-going maintenance required;
- consider the regional context making use of existing linkages and suggesting new ones where needed;
- support active transportation initiatives by providing active commuter routes and realizing that trails use occurs year round;
- integrate with transportation infrastructure in regards to access, parking and public transit;
- consider existing County dynamics in regards to rural and urban areas and associated resource provision;
- accommodate majority need and ensuring trails are assessable by providing for multi-use trail activity thereby leading to an optimum user experience;
- promote public safety on trails and manage County liability on the trail system; and
- consider the perspectives of landowners adjacent to County trails

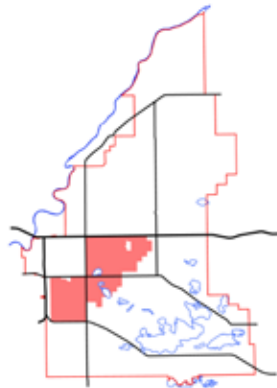
### *Strathcona County Geography*

Trails in the County are offered in both urban and rural areas. The following explains trail provision in six main geographical areas throughout the County. (These areas are derived from the 2007 Strathcona County Municipal Development Plan Bylaw 1-2007, Policy Areas, Map 12. They are, however, generalized in a broad brush analysis to develop a trails strategy and not for any other purpose.)

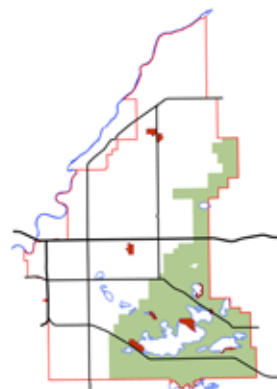
1. The urban area of Sherwood Park to the north includes newly developing / planned neighbourhoods such as Emerald Hills and Cambrian Crossing. The urban area (existing and planned) has a concentration of trail users, destinations and recreational resources. Active transportation commuting linkages with Edmonton are important as are connections to the North Saskatchewan River Valley. Connections to the City and valley are limited due to barriers created by major roadways, railroad lines and land uses not conducive to trails.

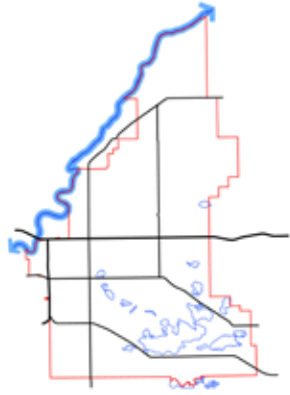


2. The urbanizing area / urban fringe of Sherwood Park extends east to Ardrossan and south to Highway 628. It includes the County's Country Residential Policy Area and the Rural/Urban Transition Policy Area. Linkages between urban Sherwood Park and these fringe areas are important yet limited due to distance and land configuration. The Sherwood Park Natural Area and the off-leash dog park are in the southern portion of the fringe.

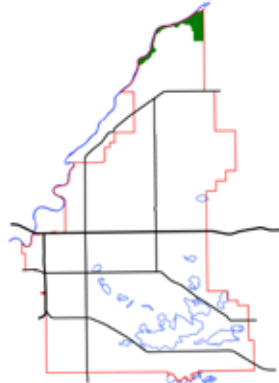


3. The southeastern part of the county is characterized by rural residential developments, several small agriculture based hamlets and intensive recreational uses (such as equestrian trail use, water based activities and snowmobile use on the water bodies in the winter). This area encapsulates the Strathcona Wilderness Centre and it borders on the major regional recreational resources of Elk Island National Park, Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area and Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary. The Beaver Hills Moraine Policy Area and a number of Conservation Policy Areas are also located in this area.

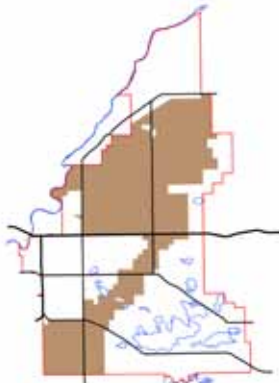




4. The Saskatchewan River Valley borders the County on the northwest. Major existing and proposed regional trails run along the river valley as part of the Capital Region River Valley Park Implementation Plan. Existing and proposed bridge crossings of the river are important points for trail routes.



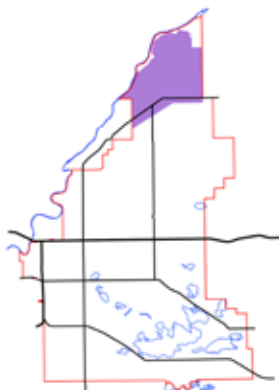
There is also a narrow, isolated Conservation Policy Area at the northernmost end of the County, within the river valley corridor.



5. Rural areas of country residential and agricultural land (Agriculture Large Holdings Policy Area and Agriculture Small Holding Area) predominate in the north-central and southwestern parts of the County. There are limited trails throughout this area.



6. The Heartland industrial area (Industrial Heavy Policy Area, Industrial Light/Medium Policy Area and Agri-Industrial Transition Policy Area) is found in the northern part of the county. There is potential for trails in this area of the County to connect to the Fort Saskatchewan trails system and ultimately to the Ironhorse Trail further north. There is also potential for regional trail connections to the North Saskatchewan River Valley corridor to the north.





## inventory

Strathcona County currently manages and maintains trails in both urban and rural areas. The County is currently undergoing a detailed inventory and assessment of existing trails throughout the County. Although the following maps outline the trail system in Sherwood Park (urban) as well as throughout the rural areas of the County, it is important to note that updating the trails is an ongoing process, and the trail routes outlined on the following maps may be revised. The County maintains 88 km of asphalt and 14 km of granular/brick/stone trails throughout urban Sherwood Park.

### *Existing Trails*

Regional trails traverse or border the county (refer to Figure 1.) The Waskahegan Trail runs from Ministik Lake through the southeastern corner of the County to Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area and Elk Island National Park and then across the north-central part of the county to Fort Saskatchewan. A short segment of the TransCanada Trail from Edmonton goes through Sherwood Park and ends there. Another segment starts in Fort Saskatchewan and heads north.

There are localized pedestrian and/or bicycle trail networks in Sherwood Park (refer to Figure 2), the Strathcona Wilderness Centre (biking not permitted), the Sherwood Park Natural Area and the Strathcona Science Park. The JR Trail provides connections in the urban fringe area. Just outside the county there are existing multi-use trail networks in Fort Saskatchewan, Elk Island National Park, Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary, Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area and the City of Edmonton. Cross country ski trails are maintained at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre.

Current equestrian trails are on private land in relation to the stables east and southeast of Sherwood Park. Ministik Lake Grove Bird Sanctuary, the Sherwood Park Natural Area and the Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area also have equestrian trails.

There are existing snowmobile routes (groomed by non-County groups) on private land in the northern portion of the county and use is permitted on frozen lakes especially Boag, Big Island, Half Moon, Woodenpan, Antler, Cooking, Wanisan and Hastings Lakes. Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary also has an extensive system of snowmobile trails open from December 1st to the end of February (minimum 15 cm snow required.) Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area also allows access in some areas (minimum 30 cm of settled snow.)



### ***Proposed Trails (to date)***

There is a network of proposed county-wide trails identified in the Strathcona County Trails Master Plan (1998). The proposed trails follow potential alignments resulting from natural or man-made features. Within Sherwood Park, there are two especially notable recommended connections. One is to add a route along Petroleum Way through the Highway 216 underpass tunnel (currently being improved) to the Strathcona Science Park and ultimately the City of Edmonton trail system. The second is to provide a route from Clover Bar Road along the south side of the Yellowhead Highway through five interchanges to the Science Park and the pedestrian bridge across the river. Other proposed routes would connect rural areas of the County to Sherwood Park south of Wye Road and southward from Clover Bar Road.

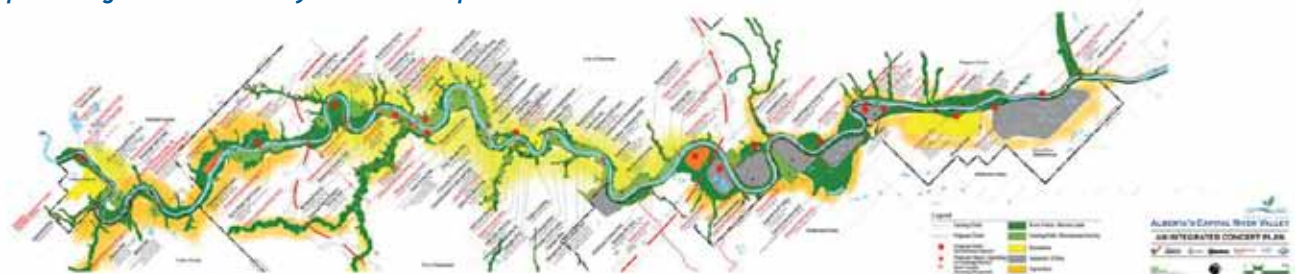


Petroleum Way

The City of Edmonton's Conceptual Bicycle Network master plan (2009) proposes three bicycle paths linking to Strathcona County. One of these currently exists, crossing at a pedestrian bridge just upstream from the Yellowhead Highway to connect with Petroleum Way trail alignment. Improvements are planned at the tunnel beneath Highway 216 (Anthony Henday Drive) and the City of Edmonton proposes an additional bicycle trail connection at the Sherwood Park Freeway – Wye Road intersection.

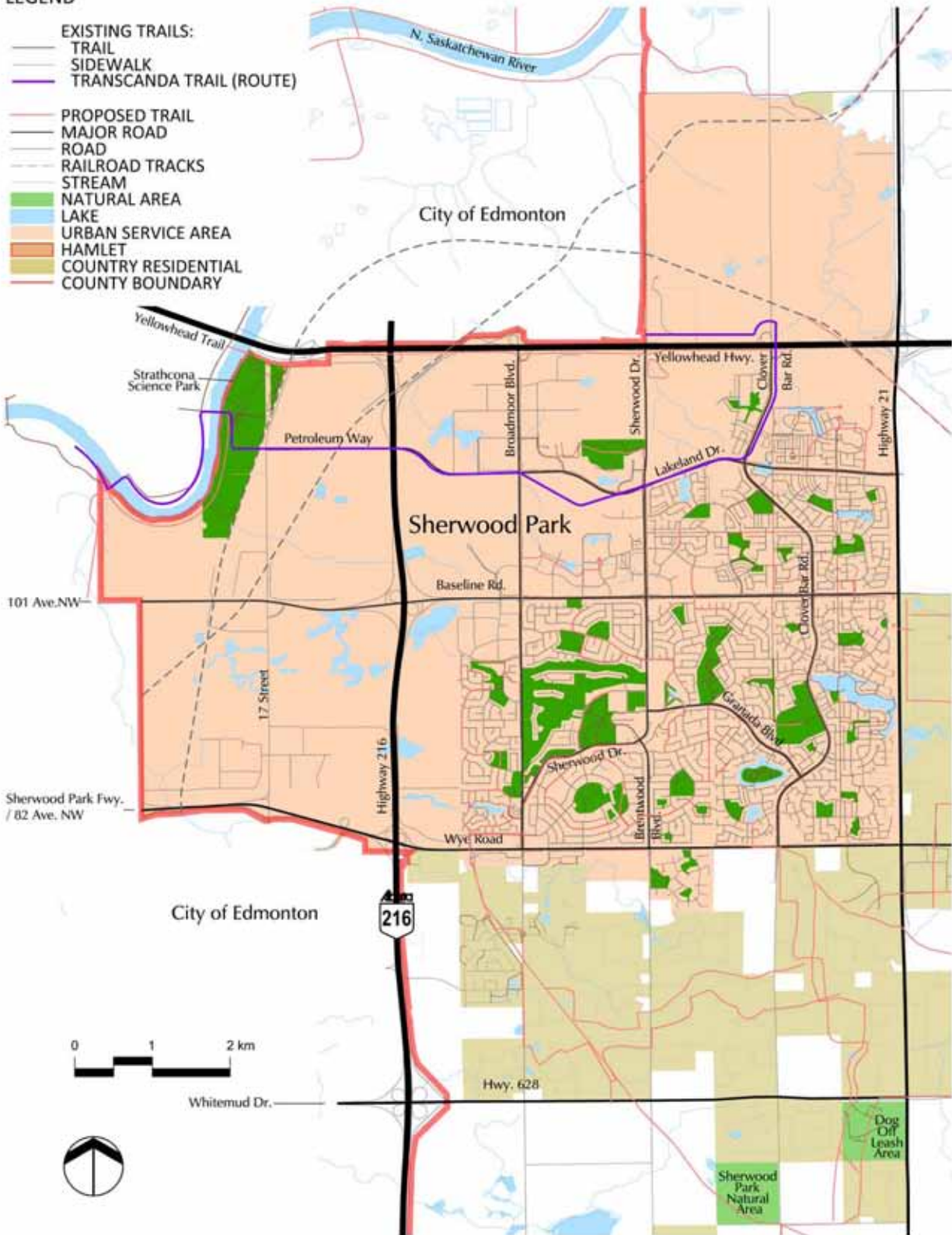
Work completed by the River Valley Alliance also proposes an extensive network of additional trails within the North Saskatchewan River Valley that will ultimately connect and integrate portions of seven Capital Region municipalities that border the North Saskatchewan River Valley. Planning for accessibility of County residents to this regional resource is important in furthering the concept plan..

### ***Capital Region River Valley Park Concept Plan***

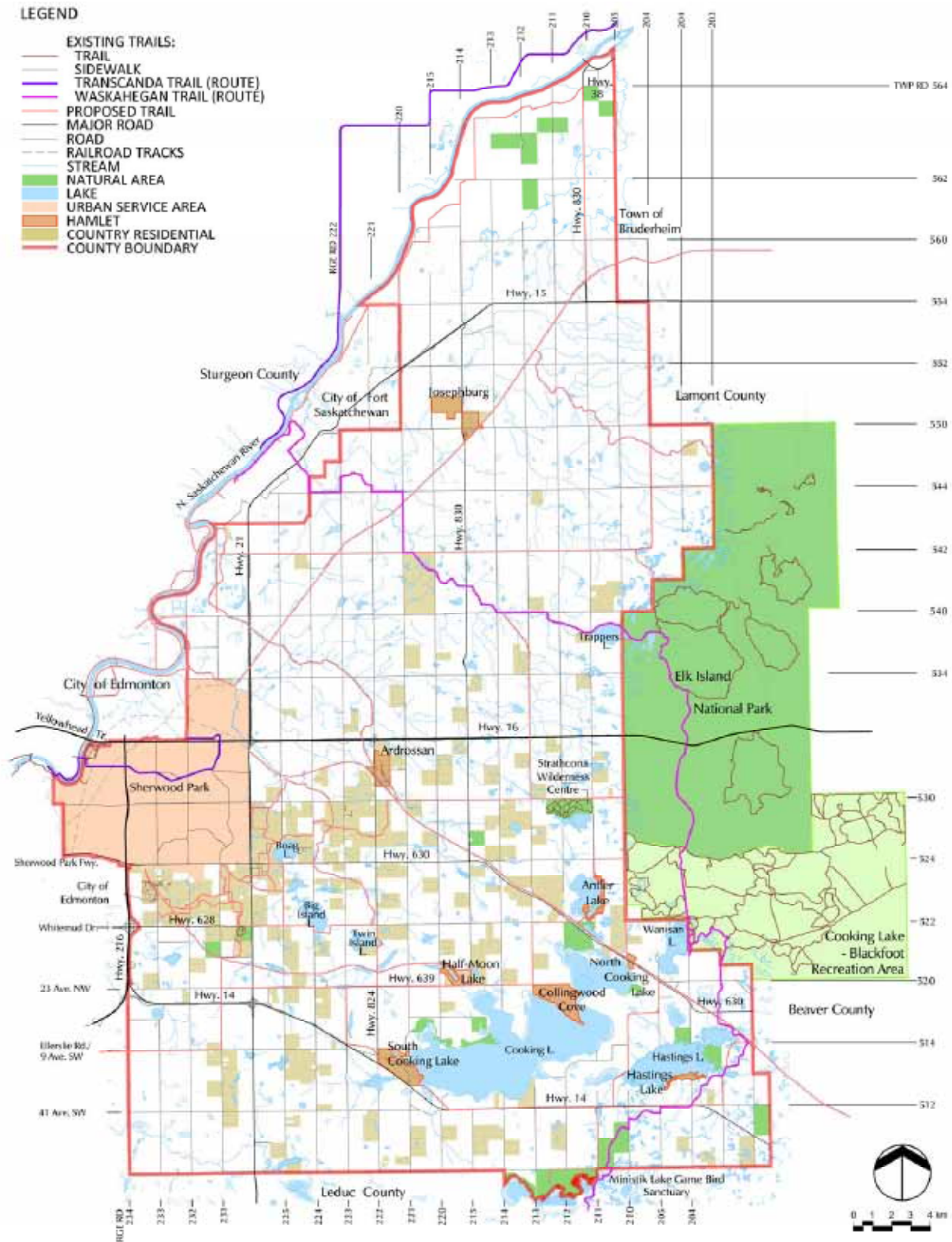


**LEGEND**

- EXISTING TRAILS:
  - TRAIL
  - SIDEWALK
  - TRANSCANDA TRAIL (ROUTE)
- PROPOSED TRAIL
- MAJOR ROAD
- ROAD
- RAILROAD TRACKS
- STREAM
- NATURAL AREA
- LAKE
- URBAN SERVICE AREA
- HAMLET
- COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL
- COUNTY BOUNDARY



*Sherwood Park, Existing Trails Information*



Strathcona County, Existing Trails Information

## needs assessment findings

A number of themes or issues emerged based upon the research conducted as outlined in the Needs Assessment Summary Report (Appendix #1). While in some instances overlap exists between the themes / issues, they are presented as follows and provide a foundation for future decision making regarding trails in Strathcona County. The order in which each is presented is not indicative of its relative importance.

### *Partnerships in Delivery*

Due to increased demands for services and funding limitations, the provision of recreation and transportation services (including trails) has to consider other funding sources to improve and optimize service delivery. This is already apparent as naming sponsorship of existing County recreation resources (i.e. Shell Fitness Centre) and the involvement of third parties in the County taking a greater role in service provision (i.e. Centennial Park, Donaldson Park, Hastings Lake Community Association). In engaging the private sector, not-for-profits and others in trail provision, a framework needs to be developed that describes how Strathcona County will interact with other parties in the development, maintenance and management of trails. The County has developed a Community Partnerships Projects process which is expected to guide how the County partners with groups in the provision of recreation amenities.

### *Off-Highway Vehicle Use*

Off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in rural areas has been a major topic of discussion throughout the Capital Region. It also has been identified in many of the consultation mediums used throughout this process as requiring attention. Although the County current does not allow OHV use on its lands, the level of community interest warrants the County revisiting its stance on OHV use. If a decision is made to allow OHV use on County lands, the permitted use could be in certain areas (i.e. key linkages between water bodies for snowmobile users



The County is willing to continue to partner with groups in the provision of trails infrastructure and maintenance and the County may allow term naming / branding of components of the trail system in exchange for sponsorship.

or direct linkage routes to major thoroughfares like the TransCanada Trail for ATV or dirt bike users). If the decision is made to continue as is (prohibit the activity on County lands), more stringent measures could be taken to monitor and police the situation. Alternatively, efforts to control the situation could remain status quo. If the County is willing to readdress the situation, a strategic approach for allowing or disallowing the activity must be presented.

The County will revisit its stance on OHV use on rural County-owned lands.

**Active Transportation**

Trails are not simply used for recreation; they play an important active transportation role. To a greater extent, trails are being considered as components of a transportation network. Rather than using public transportation or private vehicles more people are using trails as a means of getting to work, to the store, etc. Recognizing that trails are transportation corridors as well as conduits for recreation will impact the design, development, maintenance and management of the trails system.

The County considers trails as part of its integrated transportation network.

Consideration	Description
Connecting employees and employers	Ensuring residences and places of employment, education centres and recreation centres are connected where at all possible, including trail connections to the City of Edmonton and other adjacent municipalities
High speed lanes / direct connections	Allowing known active transport routes and designing to accommodate for direct connections where possible
Education and promotion	Educating residents on the benefits of active transportation to the environment and to the individual
Connecting residents and mass transit system	Ensuring connections exist for residents and mass transit system for commuters

### Rural Trails

Strathcona County is a rare municipality as it includes both rural and urban populations. From a governance perspective, the County has an obligation to provide recreation opportunities for all residents. As such, the idea of a rural trail system was discussed at a number of input sessions and meetings. A rural system could include a variety of activities and trail uses (including walking, hiking, bicycling, equestrian, off highway vehicles, etc.) and would have a significant impact on both capital and operational budgets. Currently the County does not have an interconnected rural trail system however destination “drive to” trail-based activities do occur at areas such as the Strathcona Wilderness Centre.



The County is open to providing trails in an integrated rural trail system.

## trails provision guidelines

Trail provision guidelines are needed for both the development and maintenance of trails. Development guidelines refer to a variety of things such as composition, surface finishes, widths and even accompanying amenities (e.g. benches, garbage receptacles, etc). Guidelines do exist, to some degree, in the County’s Open Space Design Standards (OSDS 2006). In terms of maintenance, guidelines need to be set that would address the conditions of existing trails (e.g. resurfacing, snow clearing, etc). The development of trail guidelines must include a review of the existing approach taken by the County such as examining procedures both internally and in coordination with the development industry, for trail planning and construction. It would also include guidelines for trail maintenance by the Transportation and Agriculture Services (TAS) and Recreation, Parks and Culture (RPC) departments (e.g. snow removal within eight days of a snowfall). The following chart outlines current operations and maintenance responsibilities for County trails (As of August 2, 2011). Note; PDS refers to Planning and Development Services, CPC refers to Capital Planning and Construction.

Task	PDS	CPC	TAS	RPC	Other
Planning	x				x
Conceptual Design	x	x			x
Detailed Design		x			x
Construction		x			x
TCA Reporting			x		
Snowclearing			x		
Re-Gravel (gravel Trails only)				x	
Surface Maintenance (Other than re-gravel)			x		
Surface Preservation			x		
Rehabilitation			x		
Signs				x	
Benches, Trash Cans				x	

### Trail Enhancement Projects

The growth in the number of users and the types of uses for the trails suggests that the existing trail network in Strathcona County needs to continually be enhanced and expanded. There are new areas of development that will require trail development. As well linkages connecting these new areas and linkages between existing areas will require some attention.

Some of the areas that were identified through the consultation and planning process include the following (not presented in rank order).

**It is important to note that these areas of focus were identified during the needs assessment phase of the project and do not necessarily comprise the ultimate recommendation of the Trails Strategy.**

Area	Rural or Urban	Description
Connection to Strathcona Science Provincial Park	Urban / rural	Connection of Sherwood Park to City of Edmonton and River Valley Alliance system including active transportation bicycle commuter routes to Edmonton
Strategic connections for snowmobile access	Rural	North-south connections from Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary, to Cooking Lake and Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area and up the east side of county to connect with Fort Saskatchewan trails in northern Strathcona County and the Iron Horse Trail further north *If the activity is allowed
Walkability in commercial areas	Urban	Commercial areas adjacent Baseline Road and Broadmoor Road
Strathcona Wilderness Centre to Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area	Rural	Linkage from County resource to adjacent Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area to capture interpretive “synergies”
Linkages in higher density rural areas	Rural	Bicycle and pedestrian linkage from high density rural subdivisions adjacent to Sherwood Park’s southwest boundary and continuous linkages along the south side of Wye Road
Equestrian loop trails	Rural	Loop trails at the north end of Cooking Lake and north shore of Hastings Lake
Country Residential Policy Area Trails	Rural	Trail connections throughout the Country Residential Policy area to connect residents to the urban service area. (Refer to Appendix for actual trail routes)

\*some of these initiatives are outlined in the map on page 21 and in the appendix



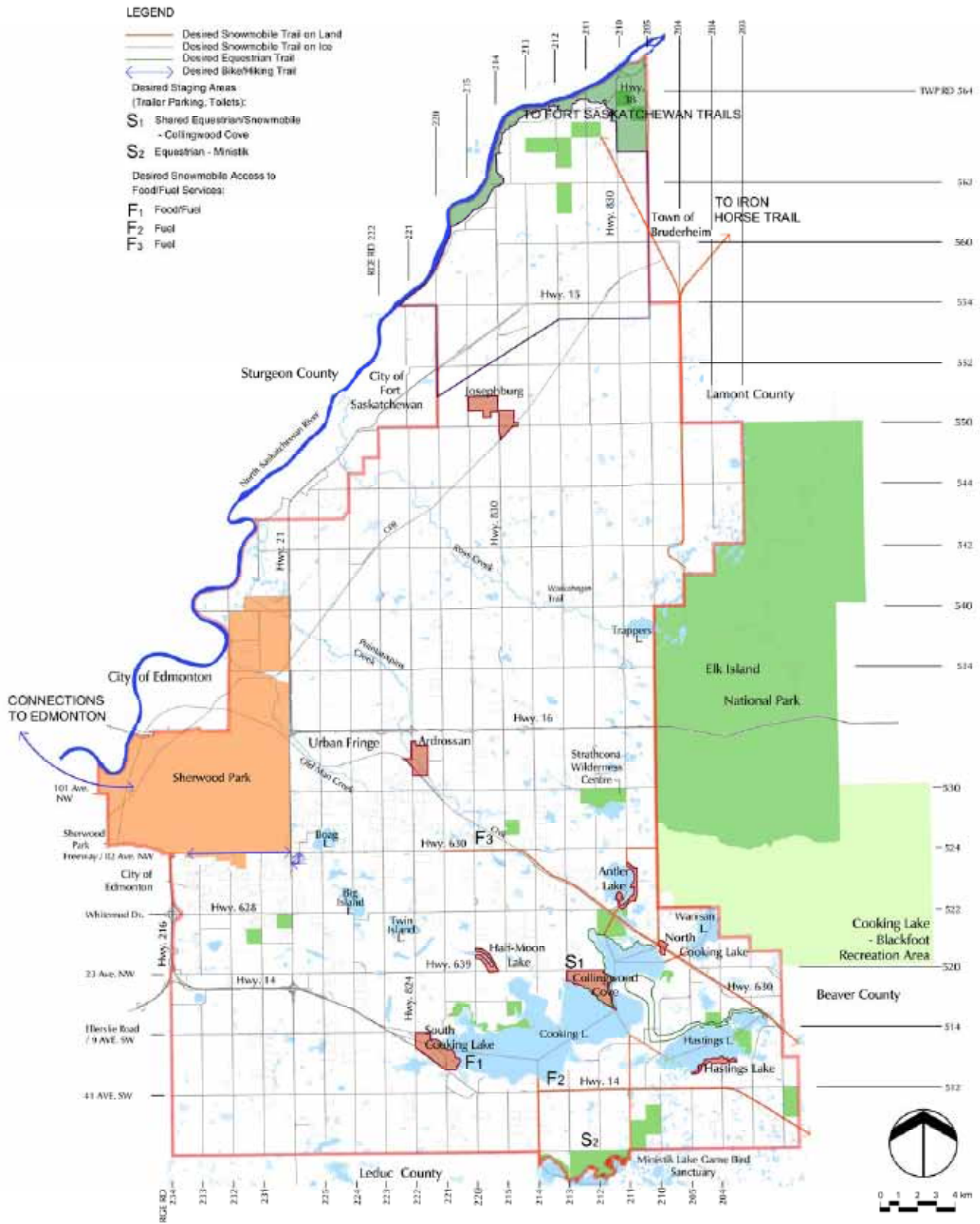
Aside from specific areas of concern, preferences on trail amenities were also identified in the needs assessment process. The most frequently mentioned trail amenities desired were (not presented in rank order):

- Staging areas (rural)
- Waste receptacles (urban and rural)
- Washroom facilities with water (rural)
- Signage (urban and rural)
- Lighting (urban and rural)
- Benches (urban and rural)
- Line painting on trails (urban)

In terms of overall priorities for new types of trails or major enhancements to existing trails, priorities identified through research and stakeholder input included (not presented in rank order):

- Trails that support snowmobile usage
- Trails / connections that improve overall trail connectivity in new and older areas
- Trails that promote / facilitate active transportation
- Paved shoulders/bike lanes on existing trails and roadways
- Rural walking trails and a rural trail system
- Ensure connections to the TransCanada Trail and Iron Horse Trail are established

\*Partnerships with groups were also seen as important considerations for future trail development and could include “in kind” services, financial contributions and maintenance duties.



Specific Future Trail Development as identified through the Needs Assessment Process

### Trail Project Prioritization

Further to the number of current and expected future trail development or maintenance projects that have been uncovered, a prioritization system for assessing trail based projects in the context of limited funds will help County decision makers in contemplating priority projects (now and in the future). Criteria for assessing trail based projects identified throughout the process are identified in the following table:

Criteria	Level of Importance	Description
Internal connectivity	Very	Linkages to established networks and existing resources within the County
Improved safety	Very	Improving safety on existing trail system and / or avoiding safety concerns where trails do not exist
Land ownership (County owned)	Very	If proposed project does not occur on County lands, securing land can be costly and difficult
Partnership opportunities	Very	Partnerships with groups or external organizations in raising construction capital and / or ongoing stewardship
Cost based (capital and operating)	Very	Costs of trail development must be assessed in relation to other projects
Promote active transportation	Very	Creating linkages in areas where active transportation opportunities are enhanced including using trails as a primary mode of transportation as well as limits trail users to the mass transit system
Introduction of new trail activities, programs and events	Somewhat	Provision of trail activities / types that do not currently exist in the County
Balance of activity throughout County	Somewhat	Ensuring that all residents have access to trails, including a rural / urban balance
Majority impact	Somewhat	Ensuring multi-use of system and impacting the most residents possible with investment
Environmental impact	Somewhat	Ensuring that design minimizes environmental impact and promoting linkages where environmental disruption can be avoided
External connectivity	Somewhat	Ensuring that connection between County residents and resources can be achieved with external resources
Avoidance of conflict	Somewhat	Ensuring least impact on non-trail users and designing trails to avoid conflicts between users and landowners as well as different types of trail users

### Multi-use of Trails

There are innumerable activities (including walking, jogging, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian, etc.) for which users access the trails. This has implications for the provision of the trails. Accommodation needs to be considered for a variety of non-motorized and motorized uses. It is important to note that although multi-use can be achieved for some trail activities, there are some activities that cannot occur on a single trail (simultaneously or otherwise). Some ideas and findings related to ensuring multi-use of the trails system (rural and urban) are outlined as follows:



Idea	Rural (R) or Urban (U)	Description
Signage / mapping	R, U	Use signage and mapping to explain proper trail etiquette, bring awareness to multiple user issues and offer suggested "self-mitigation"
Controlled use	R, U	Controlling use of trail system based on type of user, time of use and season
Design	R, U	Ensuring aspects of design such as trail width, surfacing, lines of sight, grading are considered for all user types and to allow for appropriate simultaneous multiple uses
Facilitating volunteer stewardship	R, U	Training and empowering volunteer policing and education of multi-use initiatives
Line painting	U	To facilitate shared use of the trail system by designating lanes for different uses

### Conflict Resolution

As the number of users and types of uses increases on the trail system (rural and urban), the potential for conflict among trail users and between land owners and trail users increases. To avoid conflict and mitigate conflict that does occur, mechanisms / strategies must be in place. These strategies would involve a broad spectrum that could range from simple signage to a mediation process. The following chart explains information collected regarding potential mitigation of different types of conflict.



Mitigation Strategy	User vs User (UU) or Land Owner vs User (LU)	Description
Buffers and screening	LU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating separation from trail and adjacent landowners through design including spatial buffers, tree stands or structures</li> </ul>
Education / promotion	UU/LU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate users on proper trail etiquette</li> <li>• Educate users on landowner issues / concerns</li> <li>• Promote benefits of land value adjacent to trails</li> </ul>
Increased policing	UU/LU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of paid, and potentially volunteer, patrols on trail systems</li> </ul>
Design	UU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sightlines, line painting, trail width, grading</li> </ul>
Signage	UU/LU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate trail users on proper trail etiquette and allowed uses</li> </ul>
OHV use	LU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of specific areas in the County where activity can occur or confirmation that use is not suitable in the County</li> </ul>

### ***Performance Measurement***

As more demands are placed on the County's trail system through increased use and broader functionality and as increasing County resources are allocated to trails, it is incumbent upon the County to develop a performance measurement system to assess the effectiveness of trails in achieving desired outcomes (such as resident access and active transportation). Performance measurement will help Strathcona County assess the effectiveness of investment in trails and will ultimately be valuable in promoting the trail system as a viable, sustainable and important target for public spending. Performance criteria identified throughout this process include the following:

Criteria	Level of Importance	Potential measurement
User counts	Very	Number of users
Safety	Very	Number of incidents (criminal, injury) Number of complaints
Physical state	Very	Consistency of footing Deterioration of surfacing. Spot inspections by staff and / or volunteers for trail condition and 3 yr formal conditions assessment cycle
Satisfaction surveys	Very	Feedback from users Feedback from non-users
Origin of users	Somewhat	Measured economic impact

### *The Role of Strathcona County*

The current role of the County in trail provision involves the planning, programming and developing, constructing, managing managing and maintaining trails throughout the County. Ideas brought forward by groups and through research as to how to enhance this role included:

- Recognition of groups who help manage and maintain trails
- Provide information / mapping, awareness and promoting of trails through existing media (website, newspaper, newsletter)
- Hosting or facilitating trail-based special events
- Facilitation of private land owners allowing access for trail linkages (with insurance)
- Garnering ongoing advice from trail users
- Facilitate trail stewardship groups in neighbourhoods / specific areas

\*For more information on the aforementioned issues / areas of focus or to reference any background research conducted, please refer to the Needs Assessment Summary and Public Consultation Summary under separate cover.

# strategy vision

The following vision for Strathcona County trails has been developed in consideration to existing strategic planning, community consultation and research and incorporates the guiding principles as defined.

Rural and urban trails throughout Strathcona County provide for a balance of recreational and active transportation uses and are provided by the County to allow for maximum positive impact to overall quality of life of residents taking into account concerns of all stakeholders.

Implementing the Strategy Vision requires a coordinated effort between trail planners, users and adjacent landowners. Although the County currently has effective protocols in the planning, development and maintenance of trails, continuous community engagement in the process will strengthen the delivery of existing and new trails throughout rural and urban areas of the County.





# hierarchy and guidelines

## *trail system concept*

In providing and managing trails it is integral to understand the varying functions trails provide. Trails provide:

- linkages between population concentrations and significant destinations—recreational / employment / commercial opportunities—as active transportation
- connection to, or within, regional trail systems
- recreational circuits within attractive natural areas
- recreational circuits where the main user objective is health and well being



The following trail classification system has been developed as a structured hierarchy that recognizes different types of trails based on trail location within the County, expected uses and associated maintenance requirements. This approach ensures that trail resources are invested in an optimal fashion allowing the County to focus efforts where the need for trails is greatest rather than a policy of “one size fits all”. Recognizing a varying level of trail provision within the County is especially important when considering urban and rural areas, especially those rural areas adjacent to Sherwood Park where residents may expect trail provision reflecting an “urban feel”.

## **Opportunities for new and enhanced trails**

**Natural features** throughout the County including creeks such as Old Man Creek, Point aux Pins Creek and Ross Creek, may afford corridors for top of bank trail connections and nature-based interpretation.

Existing **easements** and rights-of-way especially along roads, pipelines, railroads, drainage courses and sewer lines, also provide opportunity for future trail layouts.

Any **new developments** within the urban or urbanizing areas have requirements to provide for pedestrian circulation.

Existing **regional trail systems** such as those outlined in the Capital Region River Valley Park plan and segments of the Trans Canada Trail provide significant opportunity both within the County's existing trail system as well as linking County trail users to broader regional and national trail systems.

Areas of **public land and buffers** in rural areas, such as along the edge of Elk Island National Park, can potentially be used for strategic trail linkages.

**Historical trails** throughout the County and the Strathcona Wilderness Centre could also be further enhanced.

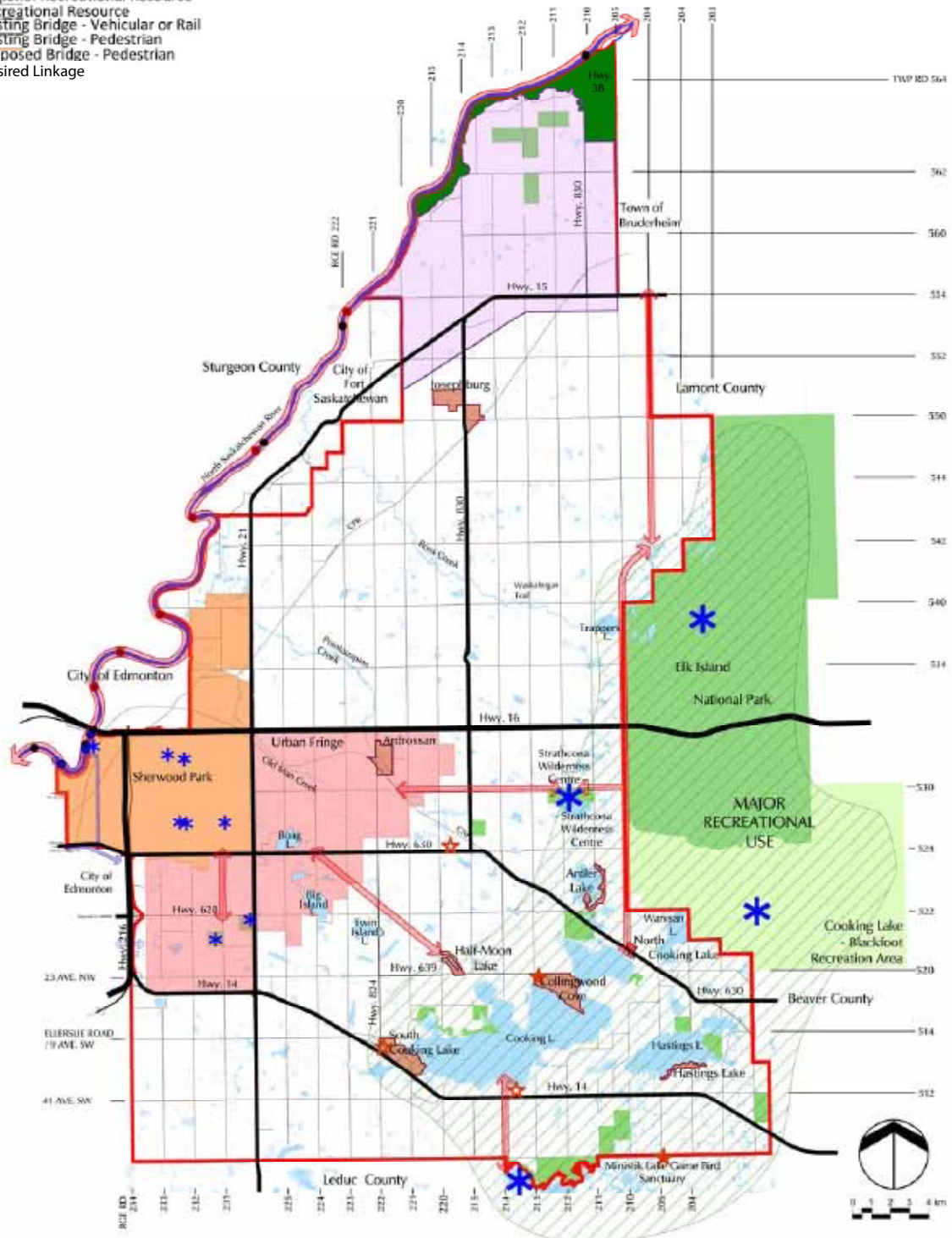
#### **Constraints for new and enhanced trails**

General barriers to trail development include the Canadian National and **Canadian Pacific Railroad tracks, major roadways** especially the Yellowhead Highway, Highway 216 / Anthony Henday Drive and Highway 628 / future Whitemud Drive extension.

The creation of trails in previously developed areas (both rural and urban) is a challenge due to **insufficient land / corridor allocation** for trails and as previously roads constructed in the past often have not allowed enough width for pedestrian or bicycle use.



- LEGEND**
- Staging Area / Trailer Parking
  - Food / Fuel
  - Bicycle Connections to Edmonton
  - Regional Recreational Resource
  - Recreational Resource
  - Existing Bridge - Vehicular or Rail
  - Existing Bridge - Pedestrian
  - Proposed Bridge - Pedestrian
  - Desired Linkage



Trails System Concept, new and / or Enhanced Trails Connections

Trails through rural areas, if provided, will require significant investment in capital and maintenance due to the **geographic disparity** of rural residents and recreation destinations. Emergency services will face challenges both in locating and responding to, situations requiring fire, ambulance or police services on rural trails.

Some trail system components will involve **inter-jurisdictional coordination** and cooperation such as the staging area for Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary, which is on Provincial land but accessed via County land. Access to rights-of-way and easements need to be negotiated with **private landowners** large and small, including CNR, CPR and issues of liability and maintenance responsibility need to be resolved if a rural trail system is desired.



## trail system overview

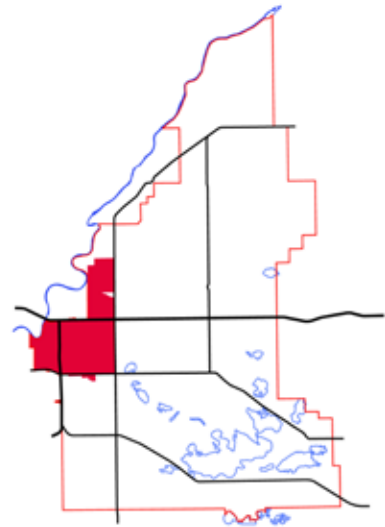
The following guidelines are loosely based on the Alberta Recreation Corridor and Trails Classification System developed by the Government of Alberta (2009). These guidelines reflect the fact that most of the trails found within the County are multi-use, as opposed to single use and that existing and anticipated levels of trail use within the County requires a trail infrastructure suitable to accommodate both recreational traffic and active transportation needs.

### **Location**

Considerations related to geographic location are of prime importance for trail classification. Trails in more densely occupied areas serve more people, are more frequently and easily maintained and are more “safe” due to higher levels of traffic. Expectations of trails in urban areas are different than in rural areas in terms of potential uses and maintenance. The primary geographic aspect for trail classification is an urban – rural continuum (Please refer to Strathcona County Structure in the Needs Assessment Summary section).

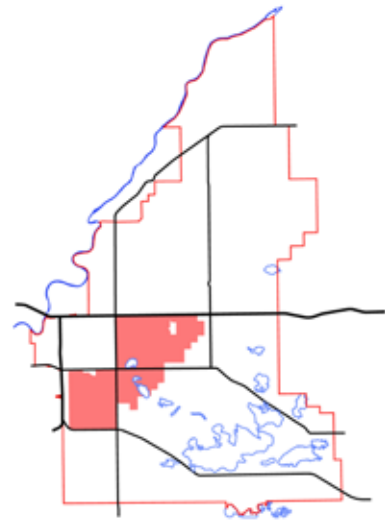
### Intensive Urban (IU)

This area lies within the boundaries of Sherwood Park including the expansion into the Transition Urban Reserve Policy Area (Bylaw 1-2007) to the north. The development and maintenance of trails and related amenities in this area is considered a “high standard” approaching levels similar to roadways in terms of construction and maintenance. Trails within the Intensive Urban area serve a wide variety of users because of the high population density and would be most likely to serve both recreation and active transportation functions.



### Urban Fringe (UF)

The Urban Fringe consists of urbanizing areas adjacent to Sherwood Park where significant residential development has occurred or is planned to occur in the form of concentrated rural residential subdivisions. As residents in the Urban Fringe areas desire more “urban” amenities, it is important to create internal trails within the new developments and link them with Sherwood Park. Currently, residents in the Urban Fringe are walking, jogging and biking to the Urban areas of the County via roadways. The provision of trail connections as an alternative to roadways would provide a much safer mode of transportation.



As part of the County’s Country Residential Area Concept Plan, specific trail alignments have been identified. Please refer to the Country Residential Area Concept Plan Existing and Proposed Trails map in the appendix and the full concept plan report (under separate cover) for more information.

Trails infrastructure in this area must be developed and maintained for levels of use similar to that of the trails in the Intensive Urban areas of the County and should connect to the urban trail system where feasible. Observed levels of trail use in the Urban Fringe may be less than trails in the Intensive Urban Area due to lower population densities.



Trails in this area may also be used for both active transportation and recreation purposes.

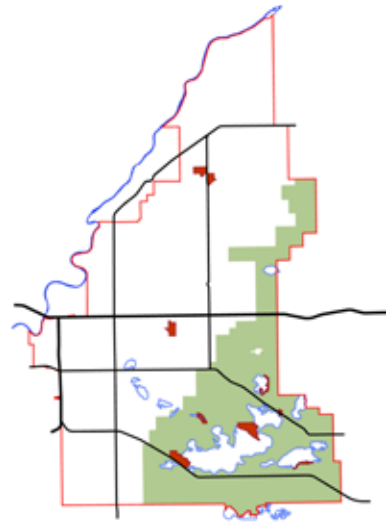
### Intensive Rural (IR)

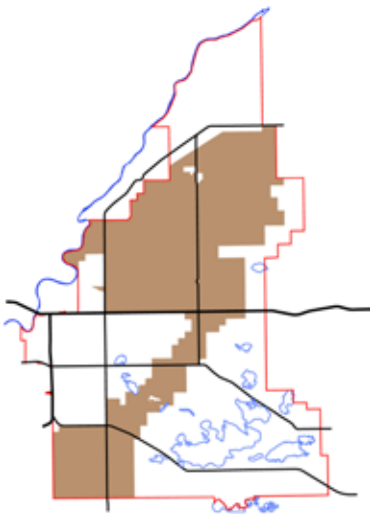
The Intensive Rural area for trails planning includes the rural parts of the county that are most heavily utilized because of the proximity of recreational resources and population density (hamlets). These recreation resources include the Strathcona County Wilderness Centre and various lakes in the southeastern portion of the County as well as lands adjacent to Elk Island National Park, Cooking Lake – Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area and Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary.

This area also contains the county's eight rural hamlets (Ardrossan, Josephsburg, South Cooking Lake, North Cooking Lake, Hastings Lake, Antler Lake, Callingwood Cove and Half Moon Lake) which, due to population density and proximity to water bodies, attract trail user interest. Trails and amenities in the Intensive Rural area should be provided to complement natural features and link to major recreational resources within and adjacent to the County. The type of trails and amenities should be appropriate to a rural / natural area setting rather than to an urban setting.

Staging areas with room for trailer parking would be needed for major trails offered in the Intensive Rural areas. It may be appropriate to have some specialized trails designed, especially for certain specific users such as equestrian and cross-country skiers. The level of maintenance of trails in the Intensive Rural area should be proportional to the level of use with the understanding that some trails will not be multiuse and that maintenance activity may be a function of both the County and / or trail user groups.

Trails in the Intensive Rural area will be utilized for active transportation and recreational and / or interpretive purposes.





### Dispersed Rural (DR)

Dispersed Rural areas are largely agricultural and industrial areas that have a very low population density and a low level of recreational or active transportation use. The only trails likely to be provided in this area would be regional trail linkages. Amenity requirements and the level of trail maintenance would be minimal in this area.

### Trail Classification

Trails are categorized as Primary, Secondary and Tertiary due to their level of use in the four geographic areas: Intensive Urban, Urban Fringe, Intensive Rural and Dispersed Rural. More intensive expected use equates to a higher standard of trail construction and maintenance. Due to the dynamic nature (eg level of use and evolving geography) of the classification system it should be revisited periodically based on performance criteria (discussed in the Trails Effectiveness section).



### Primary

Primary trails are the most important trails in the system and typically correspond to arterial roads in a vehicular circulation system. Primary trails serve both recreation and active transportation uses and may link population centres with significant recreational resources or other major destinations (eg bicycle commuting routes to Edmonton). They may also be components of regional trails such as the TransCanada Trail. They may fulfil a demand for recreational access to regionally significant assets such as the Capital Region River Valley.

### Secondary

Secondary trails, corresponding to collector roads in a vehicular circulation system, form important connections to primary trails to residential and /or commercial areas. These trails provide access to, or through, natural areas of local significance and serve both recreation and active transportation uses.

### Tertiary

Tertiary trails are considered to be similar to neighbourhood streets and may connect smaller population nodes to the broader trail system. Tertiary trails can also serve as linkages to create trail system loop circuits and provide interpretive opportunities.

### *Level of Trail Development*

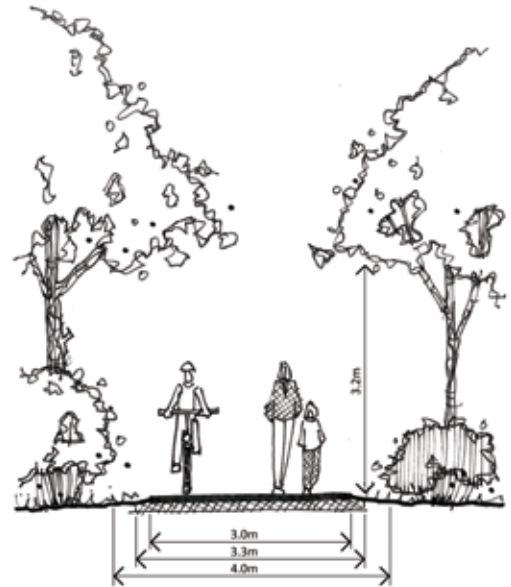
The following guidelines for trail construction include three levels of trail development. The varying levels of development would be based upon the three trail types (above) and the aforementioned trail locations throughout the County.





**Developed**

Developed trails are hard surface on prepared granular base. Hard surface would generally include asphalt although concrete or unit paving may be used for certain applications where appropriate. Slopes should be a maximum of 5% for universal access and could be as high as 10% in some areas. The width of the compacted base (also cleared and grubbed) should be 3.3 m and the paving 3.0 m wide. The cleared path of travel free of overhanging vegetation should be 4.0 m wide by 3.2 m high above ground (accommodating for an average snow depth of 20cm). These trails would also easily accommodate access by service and emergency vehicles and could also be eligible to be considered for Alberta Infrastructure funding.



*Developed Trail – Hard Surface*

**Semi-Developed**

Semi-developed trails have a smooth compacted surface (hard surface desirable but not required) on a prepared granular base, with slopes 15 to 20% maximum (5 to 10% preferred.) The cleared width should be 2.7 m with 3.4 m asphalt paving (if paved). The cleared path of travel should be 3.0 m wide by 3.5 m high and could accommodate two-way bike traffic.



*Semi-Developed Trail – Granular*

*Semi-Developed Trail – Hard Surface*

**Undeveloped**

Undeveloped trails are either turf or bare earth and are 1.0 to 1.5 m wide with a cleared width of 2.0 m by 3.5 m high. Slopes could possibly be as steep as 30% in short segments, although a maximum of 10% should be targeted. These trails may include trails through environmental reserve areas and around storm water management facilities.

**Paved Shoulder/Bike Lane**

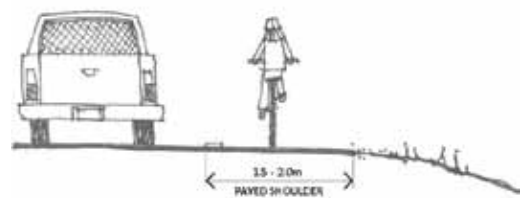
A Paved Shoulder / Bike Lane adjacent to roadways allows bicyclists (and sometimes hikers) to share the roadway with vehicular traffic. This is common in both urban and rural areas where there is insufficient land available.

Liability for shared roadways has to consider the volume and type of vehicular traffic as well as the width of the right-of-way and the type of surface. Safety hazards such as narrow shoulders adjacent to steep ditches, narrowed pavement at bridges or tunnels and hilly terrain where sight lines are poor should be red-flagged for special attention and given priority for improvements. When the level of potential conflict becomes too great, action will be required to construct separate trails or widen roadways for shared lanes. Bike lanes or separate trails should be considered in the design of any new roadways. Painted lines would be required to separate motorized and non-motorized uses.

The following table provides a summary of the proposed guidelines for the Strathcona County trail system comparing them the Alberta Recreation Trails Classification System. Strathcona County currently has one guideline related to trail development corresponding to the "Developed" classification.



*Undeveloped Trail*



*Paved Shoulder – Bike Lane*



*Existing County Roadway Examples*

Guidelines for Trail Dimensions												
Alberta Recreation Corridor & Trails Classification System												
Type of Use	Developed				Semi-Developed				Undeveloped			
	Width	Cleared distance		Max.	Width	Cleared distance		Max.	Width	Cleared distance		Max.
		Width	Ht.	Slope		Width	Ht.	Slope		Width	Ht.	Slope
Walk/Hike/Run	2.5	3.5	3	5%	1 - 2	2 - 3	3	20%	0.3	1	2.5	45%
Bicycle	2.5	3.5	3	10%	1 - 2	2 - 3	3	15%	0.2	1	2.5	30%
In-line Skate/ Skateboard	2	3	3	5%	1 - 2	2 - 3	3	10%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Equestrian Use	3	4	3.5	10%	1 - 3	2 - 4	3.5	15%	0.5 - 2	1.5 - 3	3.5	30%
Cross-country Ski	-	4	3.2*	10%	-	2 - 4	3.2*	20%	-	1 - 2	3.2*	30%
Snowshoe	-	2.5	3.2*	10%	-	1.5 - 2.5	3.2*	20%	-	0.75 - 1.5	2.7*	30%
ATV	3	4	3.5	10%	2 - 3	3 - 4	3.5	20%	1.5 - 2.5	2.5 - 3.5	3.5	30%
Snowmobile	-	5	5.2*	15%	-	5	5.2*	20%	-	2 - 3*	3.7*	45%
Proposed Strathcona County Trails System												
All Trails	3.0	4	3.2*	5 - 10%	2.7**	3	3.5*	15- 20%	1 - 1.5	2	3.5*	30%

\*\* On paved trails the width of the paving is 0.3 m less than the granular base width shown.

\*Cleared height assumes average snow depth of 20 cm

### Definitions

**Clearing Width:** The dimension measured across the trail from which all vegetation, rocks or other obstructions are removed so as not to obstruct movement along the trail.

**Clearing Height:** The vertical dimension which must be cleared of all branches that would otherwise obstruct movement along the trail.

**Tread Width:** The horizontal dimension across the trail which provides adequate space for comfortable and safe movement.

**Tread:** The travelled portion of the trail right of way typically sloped or crowned to shed water.

**Drainage:** Provision of methods to manage excessive water runoff (ditch, dip, culvert, French drain, etc.)

**Clearing Limits:** Point at which the disturbance to the natural environment is limited; defines the trail right-of-way.

### Type of Use

Trails within Strathcona County can most commonly be categorized as multi-use. That being said, different trail-based activities have different requirements including trail surface, width, location and maintenance / grooming. The following trail based activities / uses should be considered in the future of the County's trail system. Where applicable, pertinent stakeholder consultation findings are presented in the shaded areas.

### Universal Access

Trails in urban areas should be universally accessible for people with wheelchairs, scooters and walkers. Accessible trails need a firm, preferably paved, surface with grades to 8.3% for a maximum of 61.0 m, 10% for a maximum of 9.14 and 12.5% for a maximum of 3.0 m. Where these grades cannot be achieved, level or gently sloping rest areas should be provided at intervals of 122m (easy), 275m (moderate) or 365m (difficult.) Cross slopes should be 3% or less, for paved trails and 5% for granular trails. It is important to remember that trail amenities should also be accessible.

### Walking/Hiking/Running

Walking, dog walking, hiking and jogging / running are the most popular forms of trail-based recreation and can occur on virtually any kind of trail in any location during any season. Hiking implies a more natural setting with varying terrain. Joggers / runners usually favour firm surfaces (paved or granular) that are free of obstacles.

#### Stakeholder input:

- 79% of household survey respondents who use the trail system use it for walking
  - 17% for running/jogging
  - 15% for dog walking

### Bicycling

Bicycling includes both recreation and active transportation purposes. Bicycling can occur on granular or hard surface trails and can even occur on roadways (preferably where bike lanes are introduced). Currently the County has a 30km/hr speed limit for bicycle use on trails.



In Intensive Urban areas it is preferable to designate bike lanes on trails with signs and painted lines, to reduce conflicts with pedestrians and other users. In very crowded pedestrian oriented areas, sidewalks and where trails intersect vehicular roadways, cyclists should be required to dismount.

#### Stakeholder input:

- 50% of household survey respondents who use the trail system use it for bicycling

#### In-Line Skating/Skate Boarding / Roller-Skiing

Small-wheeled recreation is only possible on paved surfaces in urban areas where they may share designated lanes with bicyclists.

#### Equestrian Activities

Horseback riding is possible and desirable in rural areas. Conflicts with other users, especially bicyclists and dog walkers, are likely for shared trails and thus the activity should be directed to specific, dedicated areas. These trails can be steep and narrow and should be unpaved. Access to staging areas with adequate space for parking stock trailers is important for equestrian based trails.

#### Snowshoeing

Snowshoeing could occur on any trail used for walking / hiking / running and may, or may not, require snow clearing.



### Cross-Country Skiing

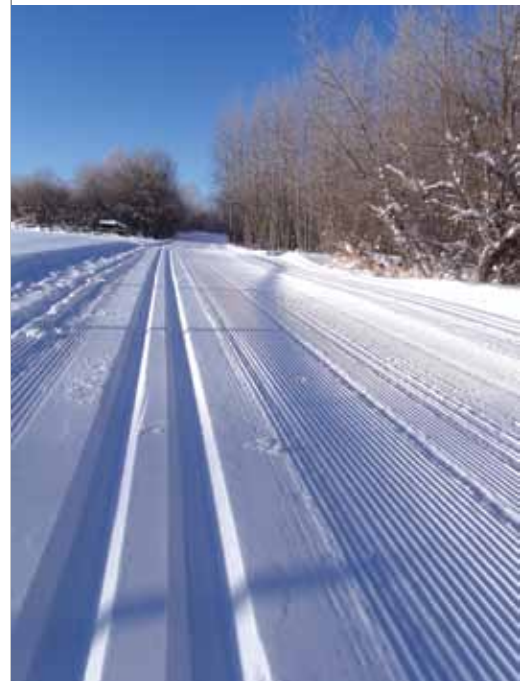
Trails to accommodate cross country skiing should be designed to offer an enjoyable skiing experience while avoiding hazards such as sharp corners and trees. Lines-of-sight are also important, as is the flow of the trail. High-use cross country ski trails should have a trail clearing width of 5.0 to 7.0 metres to accommodate classic and skate ski techniques and two way skiing. This will also allow grooming equipment (Pisten Bully) to safely and effectively access and maintain the trails. Due to the nature of the trails requiring a high frequency of grooming, and with high-use, trails should be solely dedicated for cross country ski use in the winter where possible.

### Motorized Off Highway Vehicle Trail Use (If Desired)

According to the Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Act, "off highway vehicle" means any motorized vehicle designated for cross-country travel on land, water, snow, ice, marsh or swamp land or on other natural terrain (not including motor boats), Off highway vehicles include:

- 4-wheel drive or low pressure tire vehicles
- motor cycles and related 2-wheel vehicles
- amphibious machines
- all terrain vehicles
- miniature motor vehicles
- snow vehicles
- mini-bikes
- any other means of transportation that is propelled by any power other than muscular power or wind

The use of off highway vehicles as defined above, as well as electric scooters, pocket-bikes, golf carts, motorized skateboards, go-carts and Segways, is currently prohibited in the County on County owned lands but is allowed on Crown lands and water bodies within County boundaries. If the use of off highway vehicles is permitted in the future, to any degree, trail design must accommodate such use.



## Stakeholder Input:

- 60% of household survey respondents consider the use of Segways appropriate on the existing trails system
- 18% of household survey respondents consider the use of golf carts appropriate on the existing trails system
- 46% of household survey respondents believe that off highway vehicles should not be allowed on County owned lands while 46% believed the activity should be allowed with some restrictions and 7% felt it should be allowed in a general sense
- of the household survey respondents, the variation of responses between rural and urban responses to the off highway vehicles questions were not notable
- more specifically in regards to snowmobile use (as a subset of off highway vehicles), 34% of household survey respondents believe that snowmobiles should not be allowed on County owned lands while 56% believed the activity should be allowed with some restrictions and 9% felt it should be allowed in a general sense
- 46% of group survey respondents believe that off highway vehicles should be allowed in general on County owned lands, 12% felt that the activity should not be allowed on County owned lands and 42% believed the activity should be allowed with some restrictions
- more specifically in regards to snowmobile use (as a subset of off highway vehicles), 54% of group survey respondents believe that snowmobiles should be allowed in general on County owned lands, 8% felt that the activity should not be allowed on County owned lands and 38% believed the activity should be allowed with some restrictions



## amenities

### Trail Amenities

#### Signage

Signage is the most common amenity found on County trails. Signage could include:

- Directional / locational signs indicating destinations and trail names
- Informational signs designating types of uses, skill level and permitted activities
- Warning signs for hazards, private property or environmentally sensitive areas
- Location signs such as kilometre posts (perhaps at 100 m intervals) and/or "distance to" signs along the trail to mark progress along the trail and provide coordinates for emergency situations and maintenance/policing activities
  - \*All trails should also be named or have number and/or letter designations for orientation and way-finding. GPS coordinates could also be used in providing way-finding and location
- Interpretive signs for natural/cultural/historical points of interest
  - \*Signage standards can be found in Strathcona County's Open Space Design Standards ([http://www.strathcona.ab.ca/departments/Engineering\\_and\\_Environmental\\_Planning/open-space-development-standar.aspx](http://www.strathcona.ab.ca/departments/Engineering_and_Environmental_Planning/open-space-development-standar.aspx))



#### Constructed Edges/Drainage Works

Controlling the flow of runoff is critical to preserving trail integrity, reducing maintenance requirements and minimizing environmental impact. Drainage control can include waterbars (preferably of flexible rubber for universal access), ditches, drainage dips, slopes reinforced with rip-rap, geo-textiles and / or retaining walls.

#### Root Barriers

Root barriers installed on trail edges in the vicinity of trees (especially poplar and aspen) help preserve the integrity of the trail surface and therefore reduce required maintenance (root intrusions) and liability exposure.





### **Bridges/Culverts/Boardwalks/Stepping Stones**

Providing trail access over creeks or wet areas can greatly extend the season of use for a trail and also reduce environmental impacts.



### **Steps/Guard Rails/Handrails**

Handrails should be provided at hazardous locations, where universal access is needed or where maximum desirable slopes must be exceeded. Railings should be 1065 mm high and free of protrusions.



### **Benches/Canopies/Overlooks**

Benches can be provided at standard intervals or as needed dictated by the trail type, terrain and the level of use. Benches are useful especially for developed and semi-developed trails at trailheads and rest areas within a trail loop. Canopies can protect signage as provide temporary shelter for trail users. Scenic overlooks or viewing platforms (with or without railings) can protect sensitive environmental features and/or enhance safety at hazardous locations such as escarpments.



### **Lighting**

Lighting of trails permits extended day time use of trails but has significant capital and operating costs and thus should only be included where feasible and where required due to safety concerns. Lighting also expands four season use of the trail system



### **Trailhead Amenities**

Trailheads are important elements within the County's trail system as they provide access to the trail system. The following considerations are important in planning and maintaining trailheads.



### Parking

Parking (including bike racks) is a primary element to a properly planned trailhead. The more use a trail achieves, especially in rural areas, the more parking required. Rural trail users, such as equestrian users, require parking areas large enough to accommodate stock trailers and trucks.

### Toilets and Water

Washrooms at trailheads are important to improving trail user experiences. Facilities with water are preferred, but have high construction and maintenance costs and need to be heated in winter. In rural areas, washroom facilities are likely to be feasible only at high-use, supervised sites like the Strathcona Wilderness Centre. Water for horses is also a desired amenity where feasible.

### Refuse/Recycling Containers

In urban areas refuse and recycling containers (for bottles and cans) must be provided. As an alternative to being provided at set intervals, refuse containers can be placed as needed, determined by the trail type, location and level of use. In rural areas there is a much higher maintenance burden in emptying isolated containers, which may also attract animals. Containers should be provided at the most heavily utilized staging areas and should accompany benches where possible.

### Gates and Bollards

Gates, or removable bollards, should be used to keep vehicles (other than maintenance and emergency vehicles) off the trails. They should, however, not prevent access by wheelchairs (915 mm width), bicycles, walkers, bikes with trailers, or strollers.

### Signage

Signage specific to trailheads should include trail information (trail length and level difficulty) as well as a map of the trail / area to familiarize users and emergency contact numbers.



## maintenance

Maintenance is critical to the success of a trail system. Diligent maintenance preserves capital investment, minimizes liability exposure and allows for an enjoyable user experience. The amount of maintenance required can be reduced by proper trail design (including careful alignment to control rainwater runoff and erosion).

### *Type of Maintenance*

The type of trail maintenance differs based on the type of trail, geographic area and season of use. Maintenance during the spring, summer and fall is significantly different than maintenance requirements during the winter.

Spring, summer and fall maintenance includes mowing turf and weeds, collection of material from refuse and recycling containers, picking up litter and repairing of trail surfaces including washouts and slope management. Safety issues such as major washouts, tripping hazards, fallen trees and broken, overhanging branches, should be dealt with (but are not currently adequately budgeted for).

Winter maintenance includes snow removal from walking and cycling trails, especially those used for active transportation. Preparing trails for winter use by removing windfall and mowing tall grass/weeds enhances the trails for skiing and snowshoeing.

As per the Winter Maintenance Policy in the Strathcona County Municipal Policy Handbook for the Urban Service Area, "Priority 2 roadways (arterial roads) will be plowed within 12 hours following a 5 to 7 cm snow accumulation and following completion of the most recent Priority 1 (major arterial roadways, major industrial roadways and transit drop zones) clearing; and school drop-off zones plowed within 72 hours of a 5 to 7 cm snow accumulation."

Sidewalks & Trails – hard surfaced: "Sidewalk plowing will commence immediately after Priority 2 Urban Service Area roads are cleared and will progress from sidewalks adjacent to major thoroughfares to public lands, schools and recreation sites. Clearing will normally be completed within eight (8) days." This precedes clearing of Priority 3 (collector roadways and public transit routes) and Priority 4 (local residential roadways.)



According to Strathcona County Transportation and Agriculture Services' website, "the trails in Sherwood Park are cleared after Priority 2 streets and school drop-off zones." There is no policy for clearing rural trails.

Prudent trail design and construction can reduce maintenance requirements. A properly prepared base, root barriers or geo-textile (where appropriate) and effective handling of drainage will result in a reduced need for trail surface repairs.

### ***Level of Maintenance***

The level of maintenance on County trails varies based on the location, classification and level of use for trails within the system. Generally speaking, trail maintenance includes the following:

- Checking for structural integrity of trail features, such as bridges, steps and railings and repairing any damage;
- Keeping the tread surface free of obstacles or hazards, such as downed trees or limbs, roots, landslides and loose rock;
- Maintaining drainage by clearing drainage channels, ditches and culverts, maintaining the outslope of the trail bed, cleaning drainage dips and water bars;
- Cutting vegetation from the cleared passageway; and
- Maintaining the trail surface including; restoring sloped or crowned surfaces to facilitate drainage, restoring the trail width to original design; filling cracks, ruts, holes and depressions; restoring raised approaches to bridges; and, re-compacting loose surfaces

### **High**

The highest level of maintenance would be delivered on the most heavily utilized primary and secondary trails in Intensive Urban areas, the Urban Fringe, and select portions of the intensive Rural Area. Winter snow removal would be included.

### **Medium**

Medium level maintenance is appropriate for trails achieving lower utilization in urban or urbanizing areas and the most heavily utilized trails in rural areas. Snow removal would be limited.

**Low**

The lowest level of maintenance includes weed control and removal of safety hazards such as fallen trees and broken, overhanging branches. There would be no snow removal.

**Minimal**

The least used trails in rural areas would have minimal maintenance.

### trails system summary matrix

The Trails System Summary Matrix on the following page summarizes different categorization and associated design and maintenance targets for trails management in the County. This matrix is a general guideline only and certain trails developed primarily for specific / dedicated uses may have special requirements.

Trails Matrix

Urban ← → Rural

Location/Level of Use	Intensive Urban within Sherwood Park	Urban Fringe Urbanizing areas adjacent to Sherwood Park	Intensive Rural Heavily utilized recreation areas, major trail corridors and hamlets	Dispersed Rural Lightly used areas with regional trails passing through & minor connections
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Trail Classifications (General guidelines only – special trails with high levels of use may have different specifications.)				
Primary	<b>Developed:</b> Smooth paved surface on prepared base, 3m wide (paved) with 3.3m base, 4m cleared width x 3.2m height*, slopes 5–10% max			
Secondary	<b>Semi-Developed:</b> Smooth compacted surface (2.4m if paved) on a prepared base, 2.7m wide, cleared width 3m x 3.5m height* (can be upgraded at a later date), slopes 15-20% max			
Tertiary	<b>Undeveloped:</b> Un-surfaced soil, turf, 1–1.5m wide, cleared width 1.5–2.0m x 3.5m height*, slopes 30% max			

\* Cleared height above ground—assumes 20 cm average snow depth

Amenities				
Primary	Pedestrian bridges/culverts (if needed), refuse/recycling containers		Ped. bridges/culverts (if needed), boardwalks,	Ped. bridges/culverts (if needed), signage
Secondary	Signage	Signage	trailhead parking & toilets, signage r/r containers	Signage
Tertiary				

Maintenance:				
<b>Spring/Summer/Fall</b> Collect refuse/recycling/litter, repair or service trail surfaces and amenities, mow turf and weeds.				
Primary	High	High	Medium	Low
Secondary	High	Medium	Low	Low
Tertiary	Medium	Low	Low	Minimal
<b>Winter</b> Collect refuse/recycling, snow removal, emergency repair for amenities.				
Primary	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Secondary	Medium	Low	Low	Minimal
Tertiary	Low	Low	Minimal	Minimal

Type of Use				
Walk/Hike/Run	•	•	•	•
Bicycle:				
-on road w/ signs only	•	•	•	•
-on road w/ bike lanes	•	•	•	•
-trail touring	•	•	•	•
-mountain biking		(specified areas)	(specified areas)	•
In-line Skate and Skateboard	•	•	•	
Equestrian Use			(specified areas)	•
Cross Country Ski/Snowshoe	(specified areas)	(specified areas)	•	•
Active Transportation	•	•	•	

# future trails project prioritization

Although there is no formal list of projects resulting from this Trails Strategy, the following prioritization matrix is meant to help decision makers choose where funding dedicated to trails development is best allocated.

## prioritization matrix

Strathcona County has a myriad of investment requirements beyond recreation and trails, which in many cases take precedent over recreation and trail projects. Therefore, when funding is made available to recreation and more specifically trails, a decision making tool to assess project priority is important to ensuring optimal use of "trail" funding.

The following prioritization system for assessing trail based projects in the context of limited funds will help County decision makers in contemplating priority projects (now and in the future). Where available, pertinent stakeholder input is provided in shaded boxes.

### **Prioritization Criteria**

Criteria for assessing and prioritizing trail based projects include:

- **Internal connectivity**

Linkages to established networks and existing resources within the County

Stakeholder Input:

- 91% of household survey respondents felt that connectivity should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization

- **Improved safety**

Improving safety on existing trail system and / or avoiding safety concerns where trails do not exist

## Stakeholder Input:

- 88% of household survey respondents felt that improved safety should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization

- **Promoting active transportation**

Creating linkages in areas where active transportation opportunities are enhanced

- Land ownership (County owned)  
If proposed project does not occur on County lands, securing land can be costly and difficult

## Stakeholder Input:

- 85% of household survey respondents felt that land ownership should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization

- **Partnership opportunities**

Partnerships with groups or external organizations in raising construction capital and / or ongoing stewardship

## Stakeholder Input:

- 93% of household survey respondents felt that potential partnerships should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization

- **Cost based (capital and operating)**

Costs of trail development must be assessed in relation to other projects

## Stakeholder Input:

- 95% of household survey respondents felt that costs should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization



- **Introduction of new trail activities**

Provision of trail activities / types that do not currently exist in the County

Stakeholder Input:

- 78% of household survey respondents felt that introducing new activities should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization

- **Balance of activity throughout County**

Ensuring that all residents have access to trails, including a rural / urban balance

Stakeholder Input:

- 94% of household survey respondents felt that ensuring access for all should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization

- **Majority impact**

Ensuring multi-use of system and impacting the most residents possible with investment

Stakeholder Input:

- 91% of household survey respondents felt that ensuring multiple uses should be important (moderate or high) in future trail project prioritization

- **Environmental impact**

Ensuring that design minimizes environmental impact and promoting linkages where environmental disruption can be avoided

- **External connectivity**

Ensuring that connection between County residents and resources can be achieved with external resources

- **Avoidance of conflict**

Ensuring minimal impact on non-trail users and designing trails to avoid conflicts between users and landowners as well as different types of trail users

### ***Criteria Weighting***

The aforementioned criteria have been labelled either “very” or “somewhat important” through the needs assessment process. Those criteria labelled “very important” will be assigned an overall weighting of 10 points whereas those listed as “somewhat important” will be assigned an overall weighting of 5 points. Further to the overall weighting given to each category, the following chart outlines variables / question for each criteria ultimately leading to a score for each potential project.

The implementation of the system is dependent upon having a trusted, multi-faceted team assess projects using the following criteria (such as the project steering committee for this Trails Strategy). Once the team has assessed all projects on an independent basis, results would be compiled and a ranking will be apparent.

All the questions should be answered “yes” or “no” with all questions answered “yes” achieving full point allotments as outlined and all question answered “no” achieving zero points.

It is imperative that all projects listed in the current project roster (dynamic over time) are presented in a way that all criteria can be assessed (complete information must exist for all potential projects).

Criteria	Total Score	Scoring Metrics
Internal connectivity	x/10	Will the project enable linkage, through new development or enhancement of existing trails, to existing trail loops or major County resources? (5 points) Are linkages created where no other are available? (5 points)
Improved safety	x/10	Will the project decrease the number of safety incidents reported at the project site? (5 points) Will the project decrease the number of safety incidents at other sites throughout the trail system? (5 points)
Land ownership (County owned)	x/10	Is the project site owned by the County? (10 points)
Partnership opportunities	x/10	Do partnership opportunities exist for capital development? (5 points) Do partnerships opportunities exist for ongoing operations and maintenance? (5 points)
Cost based (capital and operating)	x/10	Of the current list of potential projects, is the expected capital cost lower than the average project value? (5 points) Of the current list of potential projects, are the expected operational costs lower than, or equal to existing investment guidelines? (5 points)
Promoting active transportation	x/10	Will the project enhance existing active transportation routes? (5 points) Will the project provide new active transportation routes? (5 points)
Introduction of new trail activities	x/5	Does the proposed project provide for a new recreational or active transportation pursuit (not already offered in the County)? (5 points)
Balance of activity throughout County	x/5	Given the current inventory of rural and urban trails in the County, does the project promote equitable provision levels between the two (based on per capita provision ratios)? (2.5 points) Given the current inventory of existing trails and associated uses accommodated in the County, does the project promote balance between trail system uses? (2.5 points)
Majority impact	x/5	In relation to the current list of potential projects, does the project impact more residents than the median expected resident impact? (5 points)
Environmental impact	x/5	Does the project avoid disruption of the natural environment? (5 points)
External connectivity	x/5	Does the project allow for resident access of regional (external to the County) resources? (5 points)
Avoidance of conflict	x/5	Does the project incorporate all feasible measures to avoid landowner-user conflicts? (2.5 points) Does the project incorporate all feasible measures to avoid user-user conflicts? (2.5 points)

# trails effectiveness

Measuring trails effectiveness can be accomplished by assessing trail provision through the following performance criteria and conflict mitigation strategies.

## performance criteria

Measuring the performance of effectiveness of the County trails system is important in understanding the importance of trails in the municipality, ensuring opportunity for continual improvement and in justifying future investment. Through the needs assessment process a number of performance measurement criteria were identified:

Where available, relevant stakeholder input is presented.

Criteria	Scoring	Discussion
Trails inventory	Total km of trails per capita	<p>A thorough, accurate, and ongoing trails inventory is important for benchmarking progress in overall trail development and in comparing trail provision in the County to other municipalities.</p> <p>An accurate inventory and associated mapping will also be important elements to communicating with residents and visitors about trail based recreation and active transportation opportunities.</p>
User counts	Total users per capita	<p>Number of users will be key in demonstrating overall trail use and understanding “pressure points” throughout the system.</p> <p>Total users can be measured through trail count systems which would provide useful information about overall use and trail system “pressure points”.</p> <p>Stakeholder Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>46% of group survey respondents felt that user counts (number of users) is an important consideration in assessing trails effectiveness</li> </ul>

Criteria	Scoring	Discussion
Safety	<p>Total incidents reported</p> <p>Total incidents requiring formal response</p>	<p>The number of incidents that are reported by residents to County staff should be tracked and benchmarked chronologically.</p> <p>The number of incidents requiring formal response by police and/or emergency services will identify serious safety concerns on the trails system.</p> <p>Stakeholder Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 56% of group survey respondents felt that the number of reported safety incidents is an important consideration in assessing trails effectiveness.</li> </ul>
Physical state	Maintenance guidelines	<p>The consistency of footing and associated deterioration of surfacing should be tracked and measured through maintenance guidelines (as is already the case).</p> <p>Spot inspections and a 3 yr inventory and surface condition assessment program facilitated by County staff or users would allow for implementation.</p> <p>Stakeholder Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 46% of group survey respondents felt that consistency of trails surface is an important consideration in assessing trails effectiveness while 36% stated that the aesthetics of the trails system is an important determinant of effectiveness</li> </ul>
Satisfaction surveys	Web and/or intercept surveys	<p>Feedback from users should be tracked on an annual basis through web surveys and/or intercept surveys conducted by County staff.</p> <p>Potential assessment criteria would include satisfaction with the quality and quantity of trails, as well as overall trail use experience.</p> <p>Origin of users could be measured through user engagement to gauge non-local spending / economic impacts of trail provision.</p> <p>Feedback from non-users could be collected as opportunities to “piggy back” larger consultation programs are made available.</p> <p>Stakeholder Input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 65% of group survey respondents felt that user satisfaction is an important consideration in assessing trails effectiveness</li> <li>• 26% of group survey respondents felt that user origin (residency: local or non-local) is an important consideration in assessing trails effectiveness</li> </ul>

### *Performance Measurement Implementation*

**In order to implement performance measurement for trails, resources including increased staff would be required to set up surveys, manage inventory, visit sites and collect data.**

Some of this is already occurring since inventory is currently being completed by County departments. As well, Recreation Parks and Culture are currently acting as a point of contact in the case of user dissatisfaction or safety concerns. **However, a single source for “trails performance measurement” should be designated in the County.** Once resources are secured and staff is put in place, annual (at a minimum) data collection should occur in the areas outlined above with associated reporting outlining chronological progress and trending.

## conflict mitigation

Trail user and landowner conflicts exist on the County trails system today. As use increases and the size and/or scope of the trail system expands, the opportunity for conflict to occur will only increase. That being said, there are a number of conflict mitigation strategies that have been identified throughout this process. It is important to note that although these strategies will not eliminate conflicts throughout the trail system, it is very possible that they will minimize existing and future occurrences.

### *Common Themes*

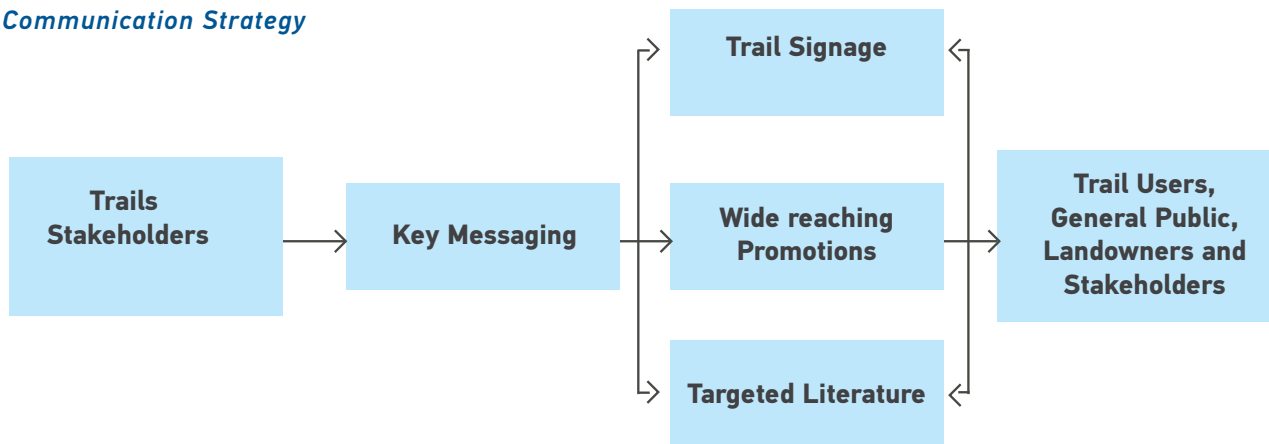
There are some common themes identified for both user vs user and user vs landowner conflicts. The most commonly mentioned strategy for mitigating trail conflicts deals with education. Educating all stakeholders (users of trails, adjacent landowners, service / program delivery agents, internal County administrators) on trail regulations, etiquette and proper trail use would lead to reduced conflict on the trail system.

As the nature of trails use is primarily spontaneous and independent, there is limited opportunity for trail supervision or monitoring by County staff. That being said, the rules and regulations for trail use must be commonly understood by all trail users and thus must be communicated through signage, wide reaching promotion and targeted literature distributed through common channels directed at trail users. For instance, targeted literature could be distributed at local retailers selling trail equipment (bikes, shoes, etc.), at trail heads and at recreation centres.

Reaching trail users and stakeholders with key messages is very important in reducing conflicts but is highly dependent on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the key messaging itself. Therefore the key messaging needs to be developed with an understanding of the issues on the trail system from a variety of different perspectives. For this reason, the development of the key messages as well as the strategies for delivering them should be formulated by a group of multi-disciplinary trails experts.

Key messaging should include, at a minimum, an outline of the following:

- trail mapping / inventory (updated annually);
- trail user statistics (where available);
- trail user etiquette / regulations for each trail classification and for specific sites (if applicable);
- trail user respect of adjacent private landowners;
- the benefits of trails (both recreation and active transportation uses);
- trail user interaction practices (bikes and walkers, bikes and cars, etc...); and
- trail user stewardship (distributed authority or reporting).

**Trails Communication Strategy****Specific to Landowner/User and User/User**

Conflict mitigation more specific to observed trails issues between landowners and trails users includes the following:

- planning and designing buffers (space, trees and topography, structures) as part of development requirements for trail provision (in new areas) and enhancements strategies (in existing areas) for privacy and security; and
- educating prospective landowners, prior to purchase, of the dynamics associated with land ownership adjacent trails. This could include developing an awareness package, in conjunction with the development industry, outlining the benefits (land value, accessibility) and costs (potential lack of privacy) and distribution to prospective land owners prior to purchase.

Conflict mitigation more specific to observed trails issues between trail users includes the following:

- signage (site specific) and education (trails communications) regarding trails etiquette should continue to be offered throughout the trail system as well as targeted distribution points (as identified by trail advisors). Trail user stewardship and education will ultimately lead to self-policing which will complement existing policing measures (perhaps with distributed authoritative power or more likely through a simplified reporting process) as supervision and monitoring of the trail system is not feasible;
- planning and designing trails for multi-use including trail widths to allow for multi-use, line painting, surfacing conducive to permitted uses only and grading conducive to permitted uses only; and
- controlling trail use by type may be necessary as some activities cannot occur simultaneously. For example, trails usage could be controlled by allowing certain activities during certain seasons only, with a minimum acceptable snow depth of 15 to 30 cm and / or during specified times throughout the day.



# off-highway vehicle strategy

## current context

The current Strathcona County bylaw dealing with off-highway vehicle (OHV) use is Bylaw 13-2011. This bylaw defines off highway vehicle use as “any motorized mode of transportation built for cross-country travel on land, water, snow, ice or marsh or swamp or on other natural terrain.” (page 7) The bylaw states that off highway vehicle use may be allowed on County lands through a application process and under certain guidelines and regulations (schedule E, page 40). Use of OHV’s beyond these instances of permitted use through approved application is pursuant to the Off-Highway Vehicle Act (Province of Alberta 1980). As the Act does not allow public use of OHV vehicles on municipal lands, **the activity is not permitted on lands owned by the County.**



**In 2011 residents of and visitors to the County can ride off-highway vehicles on crown lands** located throughout the County (as the activity is permitted by the Province of Alberta on crown lands and governed by Off-Highway Vehicle Act) and on water bodies throughout the County (regulated by the federal government).

Currently, the County receives complaints about OHV on County lands, on crown lands and on private lands (trespassing) despite disallowing the activity and trying to eliminate the activity in the County. Public funds are expended to police OHV use and convictions (and associated fines) occur.

In order to compare current policy in Strathcona County within the context of the broader region, the OHV policies of other rural municipalities in proximity to the County were reviewed. Of the other municipalities reviewed (Beaver County, Sturgeon County, Leduc County, Parkland County) all allow the activity to occur on County owned lands pursuant to a number of regulations. Anecdotally, these other municipalities still report issues between landowners and OHV users as well as issues between OHV users and other trails users.

There are other jurisdictions in Canada, such as the Province of Ontario, where Off Highway Vehicles use is more widely accepted (in the case of Ontario, OHV do not include snowmobiles and there is separate legislation for each). It was mentioned by a number of stakeholders throughout the planning process that this widespread acceptance will ultimately occur in Alberta however the evolution of the activity is dependent upon leadership by the Province as well as more widespread buy-in from the general public accepting the recreational activity as a public good.

## options

Moving forward, the County has three options:

1. To allow OHV activity to occur on County owned land, in general<sup>1</sup>.
2. To allow OHV activity to occur with regulations regarding seasonal use, OHV type and / or a specific strategic locations throughout the County.
3. To continue to disallow OHV activity to occur on County owned lands.

Each of the above noted strategies would have implications and, with the exception of the third option, would require collaborative planning with OHV stakeholders, private landowners, other trail users and key stakeholders. The following chart outlines potential County courses of action and associated costs and benefits.

It is recommended that the County pursue **Option#2**, allowing OHV use on County lands in restricted areas during specific times of the year. The County should work with landowners and potential OHV users in establishing strategically located corridors, and allow OHV use through these corridors. This approach would primarily allow OHV users to travel throughout the County to other trails and areas in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> As is the case in other municipalities reviewed

**Potential OHV Strategies**

**\* Recommended Approach**

<p><b>Allow OHV activity to occur (In general)</b></p>	<p><b>Allow OHV activity to occur (With restrictions)</b></p>	<p><b>Disallow OHV activity to occur</b></p>
<p><b>Benefits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing another recreation activity to occur</li> <li>• Lower dissatisfaction among residents who participate in OHV activity</li> <li>• Potential for economic development associated with the activity to occur</li> <li>• Potential activity for rural trail system</li> <li>• Potential partnerships in delivery</li> </ul>	<p><b>Benefits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing another recreation activity to occur</li> <li>• Lower dissatisfaction among residents who participate in OHV activity</li> <li>• Potential for economic development associated with the activity to occur</li> <li>• Potential activity for rural trail system</li> <li>• Potential partnerships in delivery</li> </ul>	<p><b>Benefits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest possible satisfaction amongst private land owners and opponents of OHV use</li> <li>• Avoidance of infrastructure costs related to activity (planning, land acquisitions, construction and maintenance) *If applicable</li> </ul>
<p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher dissatisfaction amongst private landowners and opponents of OHV use in rural areas</li> <li>• Policing</li> <li>• Related infrastructure expense (planning, land acquisitions, construction and maintenance) * If applicable</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher dissatisfaction amongst private landowners in rural areas</li> <li>• Policing</li> <li>• Planning and acquiring strategic linkages</li> <li>• Related infrastructure expenses (Planning, land acquisitions, construction and maintenance) * If applicable</li> </ul>	<p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued dissatisfaction of residents who participate in OHV activity</li> <li>• Policing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stakeholder Input:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7% of household survey respondents and 46% of group survey respondents felt that OHV use should be allowed on County lands in a general sense</li> <li>• 9% of household survey respondents felt that snowmobile use only (not including other off highway vehicles) should be allowed on County lands in a general sense</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stakeholder Input:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 46% of household survey respondents and 38% of group survey respondents felt that OHV use should be allowed on County lands with restrictions</li> <li>• 56% of household survey respondents felt that snowmobile use only (not including other off highway vehicles) should be allowed on County lands with restrictions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stakeholder Input:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 46% of household survey respondents felt that OHV use should continue to not be allowed on County lands</li> <li>• 34% of household survey respondents felt that snowmobile use should not be allowed on County lands in a general sense</li> </ul>
<p><b>Likely implications of implementation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated dissatisfaction of private landowners and opponents of OHV use</li> <li>• Requests from OHV users for the County to become more involved in OHV trail planning, acquisitions and provision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Likely implications of implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated dissatisfaction of private landowners and opponents of OHV use</li> <li>• Requests from OHV users for the County to become more involved in OHV trail planning, acquisition and provision</li> </ul>	<p><b>Likely implications of implementation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued, but not heightened, dissatisfaction of private landowners and opponents of OHV use</li> <li>• Continued requests from OHV users for the County to allow the activity to occur</li> </ul>

# funding and partnering

## operation and maintenance

Trails are currently planned and provided by the County through the following departments.

1. Transportation and Agriculture Services (TAS) are responsible for the majority of trail maintenance in urban areas (Sherwood Park) including snow removal.
2. Recreation, Parks and Culture (RPC) are responsible for trail based programming as well as limited maintenance and surface maintenance in urban areas (beyond base level) and complete responsibility for rural trails (typically aggregate).
3. Planning and Development Services (PDS) and Capital Planning and Construction (CPC) are responsible for the planning and design, and in some instances, construction of trail development.

Current maintenance guidelines for trails during winter are snow removal in Sherwood Park, within 8 days of a snowfall (by TAS); maintenance is conducted based on a prioritized route. During the summer months, trails are swept once per season by TAS (spring) and once per week by RPC in areas where debris is accumulated. In higher traffic areas where debris accumulates at a rate for which a one week interval is not sufficient, RPC provide “beyond base level” surface maintenance. RPC is also responsible for maintenance of existing trails in rural subdivisions which is typically granular / aggregate and thus has a different maintenance requirement than do asphalt trails. RPC also maintains the trails at the Strathcona Centre year round.

When trails are planned, all pertinent departments are consulted (including RPC, TAS and others) and the non-developer implemented trails are managed by CPC.

Although an audit of the effectiveness or appropriateness of existing service guidelines and trails maintenance is beyond the scope of the strategy, observations regarding trail maintenance investment by the

County is summarized as follows:

- **capital investment** by the County in trails has equated to approximately \$500,000 since 2006. This equates to an average of \$100,000 per year and does not include trails created during the development process which equates to more significant investment;
- in comparison, \$207,000,000<sup>1</sup> has been spent on roadway development since 2006, \$6,100,000 has been spent on park development and \$40,000,000 has been spent on recreation and culture indoor facility development;
- ongoing **annual operations and maintenance** investment in existing trails is explained in the following chart

Department	Annual Budget	Description
TAS	\$350,000	Surface maintenance (all seasons) and maintenance of trail amenities
RPC	\$15,000 *(\$3,000 for granular)	Surface maintenance and maintenance of trail amenities Maintenance of trails in rural subdivisions (aggregate)
Total	\$365,000	

Ongoing operations and maintenance budgets are approximately \$4.14 per linear meter<sup>2</sup> for asphalt trails and \$0.20 per linear meter<sup>3</sup> of granular/brick/stone trails. Administrative estimates suggest more appropriate operations and maintenance budgets should be set at \$5.00 per linear meter for asphalt and \$7.00 per linear meter for aggregate / granular trails. This would represent an immediate increase in existing budget amounts and would also have to be increased on an annual basis in regards to inflation (existing trails) as new budget allotments for new trails are added to the inventory.

**Increased annual operations and maintenance budgets as outlined above would enable appropriate maintenance levels to be achieved on existing and new trails.**

<sup>1</sup> Including traffic lights

<sup>2</sup> Assuming 88km of asphalt trails.

<sup>3</sup> Assuming 15km of granular/brick/stone trails.

As can be determined, investment in trails in the County is much lower than others aspects of both transportation and recreation services currently provided by the County. Trails are a high priority of residents and are proven to impact quality of life for all ages. In some cases, trails are more popular and effective in promoting physical activity and creating healthy recreation opportunities than many other elements of infrastructure intended for similar purposes and offered by the County. **Increased capital investment in trails would lead to improved community wellness and overall quality of life.**

Life cycle budgeting for trails is becoming increasingly important as it is required to sustain existing service levels. When usage levels increase, life cycle budgets must also increase. Since a main goal of this strategy, as well as the County in general, is to increase participation, life cycle budgeting will be key to sustaining existing participation while accommodating new users and uses. Expected life cycle of trails should be similar to those of roadways (20 years).

If the County is to broaden the use of the existing trail system to include more of an active transportation role, **there may be a requirement to increase ongoing maintenance investment to evolve trails to a level of maintenance similar to roadways.**

As well, **if the County is to coordinate and provide in some form a rural trail system, ongoing investment would have to be made for operations and maintenance of a rural trail system.** Although the guidelines are different for rural trails than currently afforded to urban trails increased investment will nonetheless be required.

Current annual operation and maintenance investment originates from a combination of operational budgets dedicated to trails as well as discretionary department budgets. It would be advisable to develop a comprehensive, complete trail budget for capital, operations and maintenance. Having an understanding of the total budget allocated to trail development and maintenance would allow for a more thorough understanding of the implications of adding new trails to the system as well as measuring return on public investment. The trail budget would have to be a product of interdepartmental collaboration and would be depicted annually as follows:

	PDS/CPC	TAS	RPC	Developers	Total
Major Capital – New Projects	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	Varies	\$100,000
Major Capital Replacement – Asphalt (developed and semi-developed)	\$0	\$240,000	\$0	n/a	\$240,000
Major Capital Replacement – Granular (semi-developed)	\$0	\$0	\$0	n/a	\$0
Maintenance and rehabilitation – Asphalt (developed and semi-developed)	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	n/a	\$15,000
Maintenance and rehabilitation – Granular (semi-developed)	\$0	\$0	\$0	n/a	\$0
Operations – Asphalt (developed and semi-developed)	\$0	\$350,000	\$12,000	n/a	\$362,000
Operations – Granular (semi-developed)	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	n/a	\$3,000
Total	\$100,000	\$605,000	\$15,000	n/a	

\* indicates current annual investment in trails

## trails partnering framework

Strathcona County currently partners (in some shape or form) with local groups in the provision of recreation amenities including sports fields, trails and indoor facilities. Existing partnerships have proven to be beneficial for both the County and local groups and thus are embraced by all stakeholders. Potential partnership models include; 1) capital funding arrangement, 2) operating and maintenance relationships, or 3) combinations of both. Each type of partnership should achieve the following conditions:

### Conditions for Capital Partnerships:

- group funding assistance should not compromise the quality guidelines accepted for County sponsored trails
- group funding assistance should not be dependent upon excluding public use of trails in question
- group funding assistance should be significant (i.e. no less than 25% of overall project capital cost)

**Conditions for Operating and Maintenance Partnerships:**

- group funding or maintenance assistance / activity should not compromise quality guidelines accepted for County sponsored trails

If the aforementioned conditions are met, there are a number of criteria by which potential partnerships should be assessed in understanding the ability for organizations to partner with the County. Acceptable partnership arrangement conditions are outlined in Strathcona County's Community Partnerships Projects in the Municipal Policy Handbook (SER-009-039). The concept of partnering on future trails projects is also an important consideration to project prioritization as outlined in previous sections of this strategy.

## funding for trails

Funding for trails can come from a variety of sources. In terms of capital project funding, general tax revenue, local improvement bylaws, government grants, group fundraising and/or contributions and sponsorship arrangements can all be viable sources of funding. There is also potential for trail development to "tag along" with roadway development in some instances either through widened roadways (bike lanes) or sidewalks. Operational funding opportunities, however, are not as broad and sources could include along with general tax revenue, user fees / registration fees (typically not charged by municipalities in the case of trails), sponsorship (to a limited capacity) and group stewardship / maintenance (not monetary).

As many trails are integrated components of the overall transportation network in the County that service both recreation and active transportation purposes, they are part of a base level of service that the County provides for its residents. These "base level" trails are primarily offered in urban areas. As they are considered essential to service provision they should have a different funding formula than trails that serve specific recreation interests or that do not form part of a connected network. The following diagram explains.



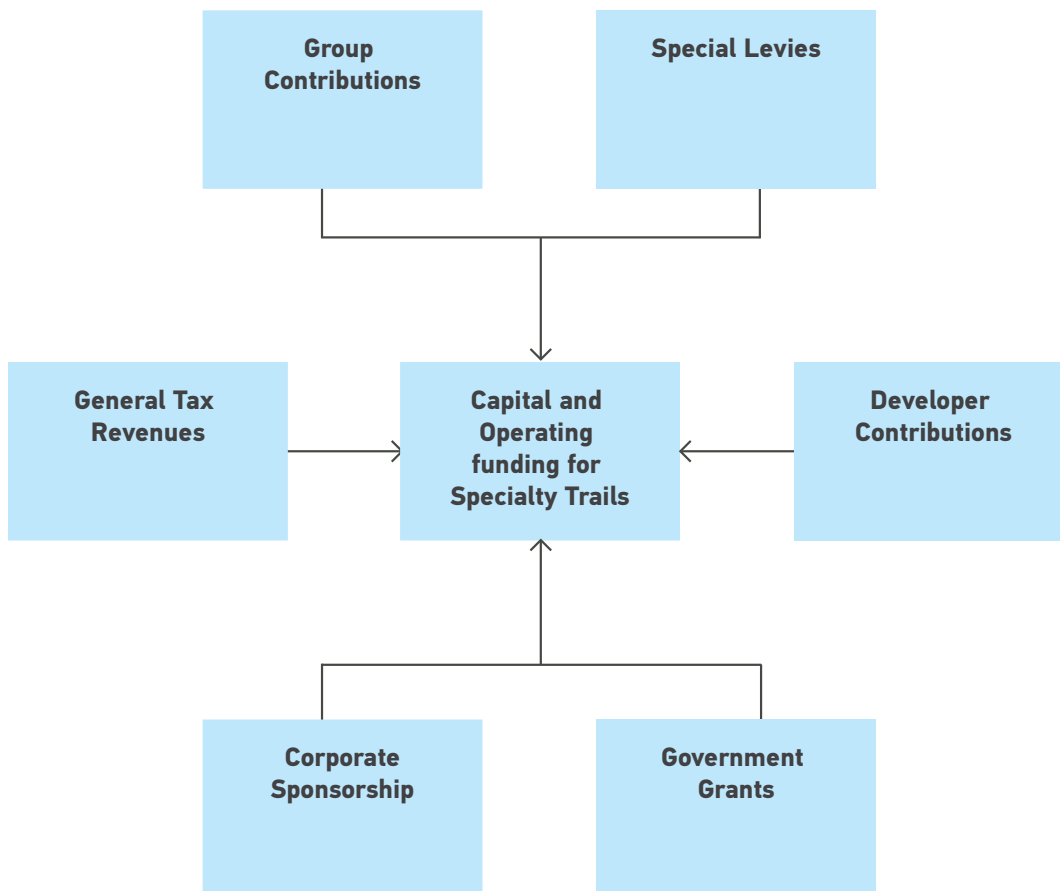
**Funding for “Base Level” Trails**



Typically, capital costs for base level trails developed in new areas are the sole responsibility of the respective developer while capital costs for base level trails in existing areas in the County are the responsibility of the County. Maintenance and operational costs associated with base level trails are the sole responsibility of the County. Cash in lieu can be an option if used to invest in other aspects of the trail system.

Trails that are not considered to be “base level” ultimately do not serve the broad interests of the general public and / or do not serve both a recreation and active transportation purpose. These “specialty” trails, although very important to overall trail provision in the County, must have different funding requirements than the “base level” trails mentioned previously. The following diagram explains.

**Funding for “Specialty” Trails**



Although the funding of specialty trails will be dynamic depending on the project, the following guide should be considered when specialty trail projects are being contemplated and associated funding decisions are made by the County.

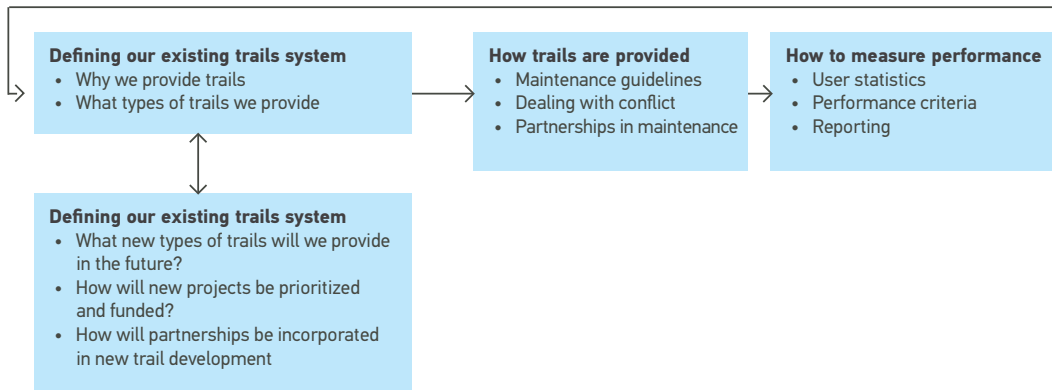
Funding Source for Specialty Trails	% of Project	Considerations
General Tax Revenues	10%-60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of public accessibility</li> <li>• Size of group accommodated</li> </ul>
Group Contributions	25%-50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of control / access granted to the group</li> <li>• Sustainability of funding (if operating)</li> </ul>
Specialty Levies	0%-50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of buy-in from area residents</li> <li>• Scope of project, deviation from base level</li> </ul>
Developer Contributions	50%-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of development credit given</li> <li>• Level of public accessibility</li> </ul>
Corporate Sponsorship	0%-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naming / branding granted or philanthropy</li> </ul>
Government Grants	0%-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability of third party (group or private sector) to lever government grants</li> <li>• Level of public accessibility (for grants attained by the County)</li> </ul>

The aforementioned funding sources should all be explored when the development of specialty trails are considered. It is important to note that the primary financing goal for specialty trails is to minimize the level of general tax revenues required to capitalize and operate / maintain a project.

# summary and overall implementation

The Trails Strategy includes a number of initiatives and recommendations intended to improve the future provision of trails within Strathcona County. The key components of the Strategy include an overall **Vision and Guiding Principles**; a **trails hierarchy** and associated development and maintenance **guidelines**; a **trail project prioritization framework**; a means to **measure trail system** performance; strategies on **reducing trails** user and private landowner **conflicts**; and a **framework for the financing of future trail development and maintenance**.

## *Trails Strategy Intent*



The Trails Strategy provides needed direction and clarity to the questions outlined above. The implementation of the Strategy will ultimately have to be through the actions of a variety of project stakeholders including trail users, private landowners, the general public, County Council and administration and partner groups (where applicable).

Many of the issues and recommendations discussed in the Strategy, such as the County allowing regulated OHV access on County lands and the potential of planning and maintaining a rural trail system, must be addressed through formal Council and/or administrative decision making and thus the recommendations contained herein are not binding. If strategic areas require formalization, each item would have to be brought forward as policy for Council deliberation and decision making. The intent of this Strategy is to assist in this decision making process. The following key initiatives have been formulated throughout the Trails Strategy process.

## vision and principles

The vision for trails in Strathcona County is:

*Rural and urban trails throughout Strathcona County provide for a balance of recreational and active transportation uses and are provided by the County to allow for maximum positive impact to overall quality of life of residents taking into account concerns of all stakeholders.*

The following guiding principles have been integrated into all aspects of the Trails Strategy and will help guide future trails provision in the County.

- trails provide opportunities for recreation pursuits of all ages, thereby increasing community health and well being and improving quality of life;
- trails provide opportunities for active transportation;
- trails are important to the quality of life of both urban and rural Strathcona County residents;
- trails are key components of walkable communities and act as a catalyst for community connectedness. Trails should be inclusive and accessible; and
- trails must be provided through the involvement of all stakeholders.

## hierarchy and guidelines

The County must define the types of trails it currently provides as well as what types of trails it is willing to provide. Ensuring that the trails system can be utilized for both recreation and active transportation requires that trail provision is integrated with overall transportation planning throughout the County. Further contemplation regarding trail provision in the rural areas (e.g. a rural trail system and /or OHV use in the County) has a number of implications that have to be weighed and balanced in order for political decision making to occur. The strategy outlines a hierarchy for trails in the County as well as provides expected implications of rural trail system delivery for future decision making.

## prioritization

Project prioritization is addressed through a weighting system that assesses twelve different criteria for each project and eventually leads to a score that prioritizes identified projects at a given point in time. Although this matrix is not binding, it provides transparent guidance for decision making. **It is important to note that trail projects already approved for funding and construction prior to adoption of the Trails Strategy are not subject to ranking through the prioritization matrix.**

## performance measurement

Measuring the performance of the trails system is important in justifying existing and future investment, providing a continuous improvement to quality of life of residents and visitors and providing useful feedback to trails system delivery agents. The performance measurement outlined herein assesses five key performance criteria of the trails system in a framework that will allow for annual benchmark reporting on the overall effectiveness of this important recreation and transportation amenity.

## education and promotion

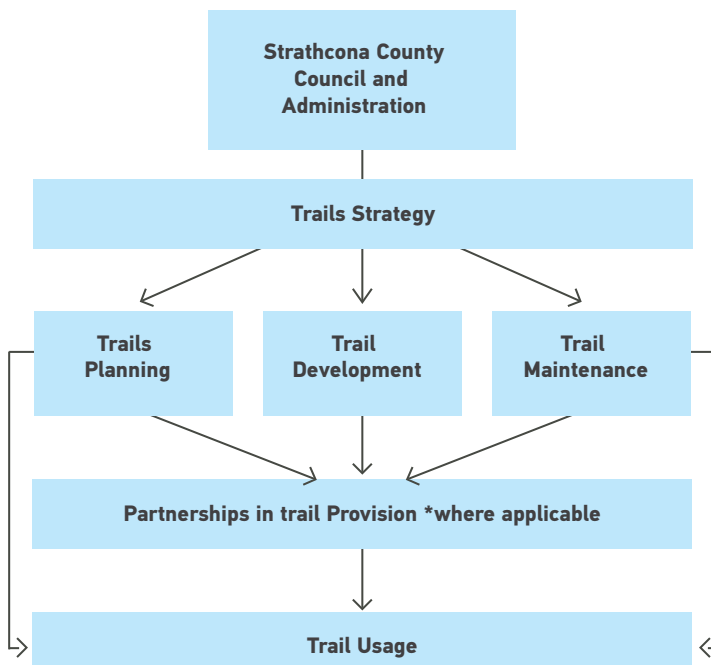
Education and promotion are key considerations for promoting trail use, sharing proper trail etiquette and associated rules and regulations and explaining the benefits that trails afford residents. A trails awareness campaign directed to increasing trail usage, drawing attention to existing trail resources and minimizing trail conflicts should be ongoing and elaborate. Key messaging for this campaign would be implemented by the County Communications Department and associated stakeholders.

## strategy implementation

The Trails Strategy will be implemented by County Council and administration. The roles and responsibilities of other associated stakeholders such as private landowners and trail users will be as stewards of the trail system. As well they may be required to participate in the mechanisms put in place originating from the Strategy such as participating in ongoing feedback mechanisms, performance measurement and fundraising. The following graphic explains:

### *Trails Strategy Implementation*

#### **Trails Strategy Implementation**



It is very important that the Trails Strategy become a reference document for County departments directly responsible for trails planning, development and maintenance as well as departments responsible for land use and policy planning, transit, programming, legislative and legal services, emergency services, bylaw services, etc.

# financial impacts of initiatives

Initiatives and issues uncovered throughout the development of the Trails Strategy that will have ongoing **incremental** annual financial impacts to the County (if implemented) include:

1. Maintenance – immediate increased investment in maintenance of existing trails to more appropriate levels as determined by administration
  - approximately \$180,000 per year
2. Maintenance – 4% annual increased investment in maintenance of existing trails to accommodate inflation and increased budget allotments per lineal meter for newly introduced trails
3. Life cycle – annual budget allotments to reflect an expected ten year life cycle on asphalt and granular trails (developed or semi-developed) and calculated based on existing inventory and current replacement cost (recalculated every three years).
  - approximately \$240,000 per year (2011) \*not including granular
4. Performance measurement – the creation of a single point of contact for trails information and reporting, investment in usage statistics tracking, ongoing user and public consultation and other elements of the strategy requiring human resources.
  - approximately \$75,000 per year (approximately 1 FTE)
5. Rural trails – significant investment in capital and maintenance
  - annual financial implications not applicable until the idea of a rural trail system and associated definition / guideline is agreed to by County decision makers and trails stakeholders.

Although the Strategy does not include a list of capital projects required for the future of the trails system, a number of specific projects were identified throughout the Strategy process. The prioritization matrix included herein will assist in developing a ranked list of projects, as adjudicated by County administration and will ultimately optimize annual capital budget allocations for trail development. It should be noted that current capital budget allotments are much lower than those for other recreation or transportation amenities offered by the County and the list of current potential / unfunded trails projects would not be completed for more than ten years at the average capital injection level experienced over the past 5 years in the County (approximately \$100,000/year).



# trails innovation

Demographic and economic change complemented by social and technological innovation has major implications for the future of Strathcona County trails. Important trends to consider in future trail provision in the County are explained as follows:

## **The population is actively aging.**

The trail system should be laid out with loop options of various lengths. Trail maps and descriptions and distance markers clearly show walking time and level of difficulty.

## **Greater efforts must be made to ensure trails are accessible.**

Surfaces, slopes and details such as flexible water bars and strategic railings should be designed to accommodate access by the disabled. Other measures such as brail added to signs and proximity activated recordings of interpretive messages, nature sounds and location information enhance user experience for the blind.

## **There will be increasing diversity of trail uses moving forward.**

Heavily used trails, especially those in urban areas, should be designed wide enough to accommodate diverse, simultaneous uses and divided by lines and signage to separate pedestrians from wheel-based users such as bicyclists, in-line skaters and skate boarders (non-motorized).

## **Motorized trail uses are becoming more prevalent.**

Continual re-evaluation of permitted trail uses must occur as new potential trail uses surface. Residents have requested that the use of Segways, golf carts and electric scooters be permitted on the trail system. Allowing these uses may lead to user conflict and could set a precedent for other motorized trail uses including other off highway vehicles (electric or gas powered).



### **Liability is becoming a greater concern for all stakeholders.**

Trail provision must consider both the types of uses permitted and the potential hazards to users and landowners. The County should provide trails that have stable, safe surfaces that stand up over time. Inspection and maintenance of trails also needs to be intensified and invested in, with any hazards, such as fallen branches and washed out trail surfaces, dealt with promptly. Liability concerns with rural trail use also must be considered if a rural trail system is developed.

### **Trail lighting for fall and winter use is an option.**

Trail lighting increases seasonal use while enhancing security, but it is financially feasible only for heavily-utilized trails. The introduction of solar powered lights can make lighting of trails more feasible.

### **Information technology is enriching trail user experience.**

Smart phones are capable of scanning 3D bar codes that can download information and maps to the phones. Strathcona County is already using this technology and this use could be expanded to include trail signs at trailheads and interpretive stations.

In Perth, Australia the Hi-tech Heritage Trail uses modern wireless Internet technology to create a heritage trail around the centre of Perth. "Residents and tourists alike are now able to download, free-of-charge, the colourful stories of significant places directly to their Wi-Fi enabled mobile devices in the form of text, audio and still images."

Google Earth Plus (for a fee) expands the free version of Google Earth to enable downloading of track logs and waypoints from a GPS to display the information on mobile devices.



These are just a few examples of how technology is enhancing trail user experience. To maximize trail experiences for recreation, active transportation and interpretive users, the County should implement technological innovation on the trails system (where feasible).

**Cellular phones have greatly enhanced safety and security.**

Mobile phones enable a trail user to make emergency calls in case of injury, illness or personal security concerns. As some mobile phone are GPS enabled and some aren't, there is still a need for some form of way-finding / geographical reference on the trail system potentially using trail names and "mileposts" or signs with GPS coordinates, to allow users to understand their physical location.

**Trail systems enable active transportation.**

This demand for active transportation opportunities will increase with the increasing costs of vehicular transportation, societal realization of the benefits of physical activity and overall concern for the environment heightens. Active transportation can be accommodated by both by a trail system with routes (both separate trails and specialized lanes on roads) to popular commuting destinations as well as the provision of trails to public transit terminals for bi-modal commutes. In order to promote bi-modal commuting further, amenities like bike lockers could be provided at transit terminals and buses may also be equipped to haul bicycles.

**Bicycle sharing systems have been adopted by many communities around the world.**

Bicycle sharing systems can be administered by government, non-profit and private organizations. As such, the sustainability of the programs can be through public subsidy, corporate sponsorship, advertising and / or user fees.



### **Bicycle Police are patrolling in many jurisdictions including Edmonton.**

Growing concern over security is leading to the use of Bicycle Police units, which are well suited to unobtrusively but effectively patrol parks and dense urban areas where patrol cars or motorcycles would be too intrusive or where access is restricted. Although security on Strathcona County's trail system is not yet a problem this may change over time. Bicycle patrol already occurs to some degree on the County trail system.



### **The opportunity for rural and specialized municipalities to plan, maintain and promote Rural Trails' loops is exciting.**

The provision of Rural Trail Loops not only provide a trail amenity for residents of rural areas but also provides the opportunity for urban residents to get exposed to rural areas, features and lifestyles. Rural Trail loops, if planned appropriately, can serve both recreation and transportation functions and can improve quality of life for rural and urban residents alike.

### **Bicycle repair stations**

Some communities have implemented "do it yourself" bicycle repair kiosks along their trail systems. The kiosks provide the tools necessary for minor repairs and could be offered via a fee, free, or through a partnership with local bicycle retailers.



# conclusion

The Strathcona County Trails Strategy is built upon existing County strategic foundations and has been developed through thorough public engagement, prudent background research and expert analysis and opinion. The recommendations and direction outlined in the Strategy was confirmed by groups and residents and the final Strategy has attained majority acceptance throughout the County.

The Strategy will provide guidance for future decision making regarding trails in the County and will provide a forum where all stakeholders will have the ability to raise concerns and praise successes of Strathcona County Trails.



# appendix: country residential area concept plan

