High River Town Plan

Adopted by Bylaw 4236/2009
for the Town of High River

High River

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Amended by the
Council of the Town of High River
January 28, 2013 (Bylaw 4347/2013)

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Adopted by the Council of the Town of High River
September 24, 2012 (Bylaw 4337/2012)
Appended to the Town Plan on January 28, 2013 (Bylaw 4347/2013)

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1.0 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The High River Town Plan contains strategic policies that are intended to guide decisions that will affect development of the town in the future.

The **Municipal Government Act** requires the Town of High River to have a "Municipal Development Plan". The Town Plan fulfills this requirement and replaces the previous Municipal Development Plan (MDP) adopted in 1997.

There is recognition that the planet is undergoing significant changes and that all people must find ways of reducing our impact on air, water and natural resources. All communities must play a part in ensuring that we leave our communities better places for future generations. An overarching consideration in the preparation of this Plan has been the strong desire, indeed need, to identify ways that High River can become more sustainable. Sustainability impacts the economy, the environment, governance and social and cultural development. The five pillars of sustainability as referenced in the 2012-2015 Corporate Strategic Plan are as follows:

- **Leadership and Governance** - ensuring local government meets the expectations of citizens in providing community services.
- **Economic** - ensuring the costs of building and maintaining services and infrastructure will be affordable today and for future generations.
- **Social Well Being** - developing a diverse and equitable community with good access to affordable housing, education, health care and public amenities.
- **Recreation and Cultural** - strengthening and supporting development of the arts to better reflect the diversity and breadth of talent in the community.
- **Environment and Infrastructure** - minimizing the impact of the town's future development on our natural resources, re-examining land consumption patterns to achieve maximum efficiencies, and respecting and protecting natural areas.

An important objective of the Plan is that it be a "living" document. Long range strategic plans are too often left on the shelf to gather dust. To be effective and meaningful this Plan will always be a "work in progress", able to be amended and responsive to new ideas and changing trends. To achieve this aim, the Plan will have a coherent program that clearly spells out how all policies will be implemented. Furthermore, the Plan will have a review process that requires Council to examine a "report card" of achievement on an annual basis. By doing this, Council will be able to respond to changes and keep the Plan up-to-date.

In keeping with the aim of the Plan being a living document is the notion that

1.0 Introduction

not everything has to be done at once. Pieces can be added to the Plan over time. Indeed, pieces can also be removed if deemed to be completed or no longer relevant.

At the time the Town Plan was being prepared, a number of external factors were considered to have impact on the town. These included:

The anticipated South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, the Calgary Metropolitan Plan, the MD of Foothills Municipal Development Plan and the Highway 2A Industrial Area Structure Plan and proposed annexation to the town.

The Town Plan as adopted conforms to the Calgary Metropolitan Plan's decision making process, dispute resolution, planning objectives and outlined policies and will pursue growth in alignment with these policies.

Upon the completion of the CMP's Regional Context Statement and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, the Town Plan may be amended to incorporate any required changes.

Because of these external factors, the Plan was undertaken in two stages. The first stage replaces the existing MDP and introduces a broad range of policy initiatives that reflect the character of town that people wish to see in the future. The second stage is a growth management strategy for the town.

The Town Plan is the Town's key strategic document and as such it must play a co-ordinating role. It will be used as a review mechanism for any new initiatives within the town to ensure that proposals are complementary and do not conflict with any existing plans.

The Plan is the result of a process that has included a Steering Committee appointed by Council to provide advice and guidance, consultants, stakeholders, and the general public. The plan preparation process is summarized in Appendix 1.

In reviewing and using this Plan, it is important to recognize that it is the product of evolution. Evolution not only within the Plan preparation process but evolution from plans that have gone before. This Plan incorporates its own evolutionary process more formally by requiring an annual review of progress in implementing the policies contained within it.

2.0 The Plan

2.0 The Plan

The Plan is comprised of four key components:

- A **Community Vision Statement** that expresses how the people of High River would like to see the community develop in the future.
- **Goals** (fifteen in total) that together comprise the vision. If the Community Vision Statement is the title of a book, the goals are the chapters.
- **Objectives** have been identified for each goal and provide direction for the policies.
- **Policies** spell out how the objectives are to be implemented and the actions that will have to be taken.

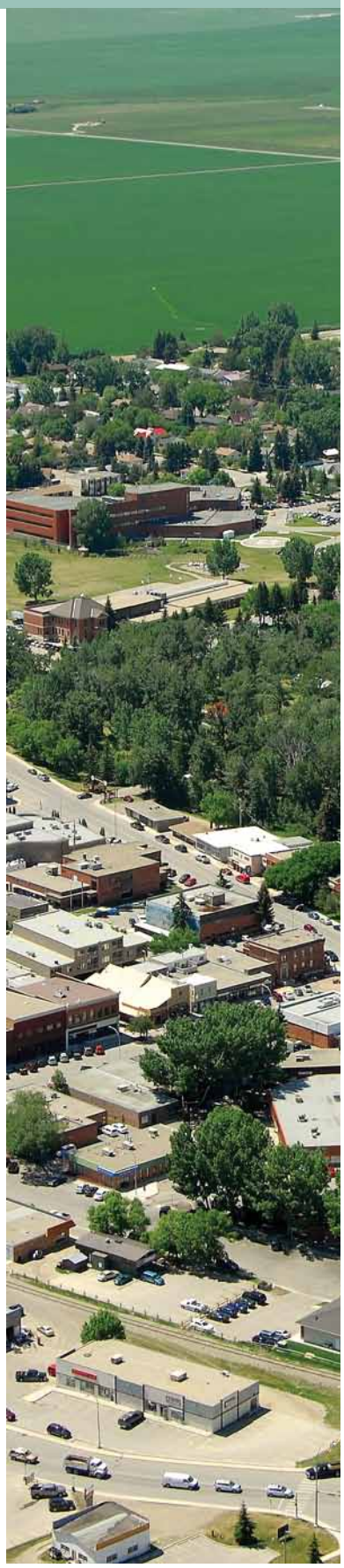
While the policies are the starting point for an ongoing action program, it is important not to lose sight of the hierarchy that has resulted in them. Planning is an iterative process and recycling back to the beginning is critical in assessing the continued relevance of policies and actions. This will take place as part of an annual review process.

It is important to keep in mind that the policies described in this Plan will not necessarily be the only ones that will be used in the future to achieve the goals and objectives of the Plan. The annual review process will provide a mechanism to take advantage of new ideas and opportunities that may emerge in the future.

The following Community Vision Statement has "evolved" as a result of reviewing previous exercises that have involved a strategic look at the Town's future and from public and stakeholder input:

> *"The Town of High River will respect the core values of the Community by maintaining and enhancing its beautiful urban environment; continuing to provide a high quality of life for its citizens; supporting shared community ideals and sustaining the Town's collaborative and entrepreneurial initiatives."*

The Community Vision Statement was the starting point. Through an iterative process goals, objectives and policies were identified and agreed upon. The remainder of this section describes objectives and policies for each of the fifteen goals.



2.1 Regional Communication and Cooperation

2.1 Regional Communication and Cooperation

Goal: Maintain or develop effective working relationships and open lines of communication with all agencies having common interest in, or whose actions have impact on, the town.

OBJECTIVE

2.1.1 Maximize inter-municipal cooperation and effective regional liaison.

Policies

2.1.1.1 Promote or maintain participation on joint committees in the area to serve as effective communication and planning vehicles.

2.1.1.2 Continue to work with neighbouring municipalities, the Calgary Regional Partnership and provincial government departments on land use and transportation related issues.

2.1.1.3 Establish effective working relationships with the teams responsible for implementing the Provincial Land Use Framework, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and the Calgary Metropolitan Plan.

2.1.1.4 Establish effective communication protocols with agencies, organizations, businesses and natural resource industries whose activities can affect the community.

OBJECTIVE

2.1.2 Develop joint Town and M.D. of Foothills policies that deal with issues created by growth and development in both jurisdictions.

Policies

2.1.2.1 In conjunction with the MD of Foothills, participate in the monitoring, review and implementation of the Inter-municipal Development Plan.

2.1.2.2 The existing agreements for fire, recreation and municipal services should be reviewed and updated when deemed necessary.

2.1.2.3 Liaise with the M.D. of Foothills on development proposals that have cross boundary impacts.

OBJECTIVE

2.1.3 Acknowledge pending legislation and associated requirements that will affect planning efforts in High River.

2.1 Regional Communication and Cooperation

Policies

2.1.3.1 Undertake a review of the High River Town Plan that takes into account:

i. The Provincial Land Use Framework and regional planning for the South Saskatchewan region;

ii. The Calgary Metropolitan Plan adopted by the Calgary Regional Partnership;

iii. The updated M.D. of Foothills Municipal Development Plan;

iv. The Highway 2A Industrial Area Structure Plan; and

v. The Tri-Municipal Industrial Strategy (M.D. of Foothills, Town of Okotoks and Town of High River).

2.1.3.2 In conjunction with the M.D. of Foothills, undertake a review of the Intermunicipal Development Plan.

2.2 Participatory Planning

2.2 Participatory Planning

Goal: Involve citizens and stakeholders in planning decisions.

OBJECTIVE

2.2.1 Inspire residents and stakeholders to take an active, positive and participatory role in the Town's planning process.

Policies

2.2.1.1 Provide a community-shared basis of fact and information which citizens can use to form opinion and offer direction.

2.2.1.2 Involve citizens at an early stage in the review and/or assessment of significant development applications and designs.

2.2.1.3 Facilitate the involvement of stakeholders in the formulation of, and response to, community development plans and proposals.

2.2.1.4 Strive to involve young people, seniors and others within the social makeup of the town who might not normally express their views on planning matters.

OBJECTIVE

2.2.2 Ensure effective communication between the public, staff and Council.

Policies

2.2.2.1 Formalize committees to advise Council when appropriate.

2.2.2.2 Implement "user friendly" communication tools outlining development requirements and approval processes.

OBJECTIVE

2.2.3 Establish clearly defined mandates for economic and business agencies funded in whole or in part by Council.

Policies

2.2.3.1 Liaise with the Chamber of Commerce to promote existing member businesses.

2.2.3.2 Work with the Business and Tourism Development Office to retain, expand and attract new businesses.

2.2.3.3 The inventory of High River's marketable assets should be updated as necessary.

2.3 Jobs and the Economy

2.3 Jobs and the Economy

Goal: Uphold a high quality of life for residents by maintaining a balanced economy that promotes greater diversification and builds upon existing strengths found within the community and surrounding natural environment.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.1 By promoting marketing and economic growth strategies, strive to create opportunities so that the local tax burden is shared between business and residential developments equitably.

Policies

2.3.1.1 Examine ways of broadening the property tax base with a minimum contribution of 30% being derived from the commercial/industrial assessment.

2.3.1.2 Encourage the establishment of enterprises in conjunction with the Business and Tourism Strategic Plan which provide a variety of job opportunities for local residents.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.2 Create a welcoming and supportive business environment within the town.

Policies

2.3.2.1 Seek innovative ways to raise awareness of the benefits of living and operating a business in High River.

2.3.2.2 Consider partnerships between the public and private sectors as appropriate.

2.3.2.3 Encourage and promote incubator businesses.

2.3.2.4 Streamline application processes for new businesses and development.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.3 Strengthen the downtown commercial core.

Policies

2.3.3.1 Encourage commercial activities that enhance the downtown core.

2.3.3.2 Support the combined uses of commercial and residential

2.3 Jobs and the Economy

activities in the downtown core.

2.3.3.3 Support the expansion of hours of operation for businesses to better serve the needs of both local residents and tourists.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.4 Use future bus and rail transit as an economic generator.

Policies

2.3.4.1 Develop a high density, mixed-use, transit-oriented development (TOD) node near the Centre Street and 12th Avenue intersection.

2.3.4.2 Develop the TOD node as a mixed use centre.

2.3.4.3 Create a new retail, commercial and cultural district between the downtown and the TOD node along the north-south corridor of the railway tracks that complements the downtown.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.5 Build upon the arts and the natural environment as major sources of new economic opportunities in the town.

Policies

2.3.5.1 Support the creation of an Arts District within, or in close proximity to, the downtown that allows live-work arrangements.

2.3.5.2 Support the location of artists' businesses within an Arts District.

2.3.5.3 Encourage business development based on tourism that integrates ecology, education, heritage, and performing and visual arts.

2.3.5.4 Ensure that the Brand Development Strategy for the town is continuously implemented.

2.3.5.5 Support the development of tourist services and tourist related events.

2.3.5.6 Support the Visitor Information Centre.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.6 Support home-based businesses.

Policies

2.3.6.1 Provide information and guidance to people wanting to establish home based businesses.

2.3 Jobs and the Economy

2.3.6.2 Create a home based business inventory to assist in the decisionmaking process for new businesses.

2.3.6.3 Monitor all home based businesses to ensure that they continue to be compatible with a residential environment.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.7 Build upon the town's geographic location and existing resources as economic generators.

Policies

2.3.7.1 Encourage the establishment of post-secondary education facilities in the most appropriate locations.

2.3.7.2 Encourage the development of health care facilities.

2.3.7.3 Encourage the development of the airport as a catalyst for creating new jobs within the town.

2.3.7.4 Encourage the establishment of satellite corporate offices from Calgary.

2.3.7.5 Build upon the town's position as a service centre for the surrounding area.

OBJECTIVE

2.3.8 Encourage new commercial and industrial activities that respect existing land uses and the natural environment while fostering economic development and diversification for the town.

Policies

2.3.8.1 Actively recruit new "high tech", and "green" commercial and industrial ventures to locate within High River.

2.3.8.2 Develop commercial zoning with clear development standards.

2.3.8.3 Develop industrial zoning with clear development standards.

2.4 People and Housing

2.4 People and Housing

Goal: Build upon the existing residential base of the town to provide a diverse range of quality housing to accommodate the varied socio-economic and demographic make-up of the community while implementing effective community design.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.1 Create a mix of housing types.

Policies

2.4.1.1 Encourage residential units above main-floor commercial development in the downtown core.

2.4.1.2 Encourage a mix of housing types and forms that are integrated within all new residential neighbourhoods.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.2 Plan for the inclusion of non-residential land uses in residential areas.

Policies

2.4.2.1 The design of new neighbourhoods shall be encouraged to include compatible non-residential uses, such as small local commercial services, home based businesses and institutional uses that serve the needs of area residents, to help create neighbourhood identity and bring basic services closer to residents.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.3 Plan for an accessible community.

Policies

2.4.3.1 Maximize the opportunities for people with physical challenges to be full and active members of the community.

2.4.3.2 Ensure that pedestrian access and adequate well located parking and ease of use is a priority design component within all development and redevelopment proposals. Create development standards and guidelines to support this requirement.

2.4.3.3 Increase transportation choices to and from, and walkability within, the town.

2.4.3.4 Encourage the provision of accessible housing forms to accommodate the physically challenged.

2.4.3.5 Ensure the Town is proactive in its ability to respond to Provincial and

2.4 People and Housing

Federal funding opportunities for housing by such means as identifying appropriate sites and undertaking amendments to the Land Use Bylaw.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.4 Preserve and enhance the integrity of residential character and feel within existing and new residential areas and require neighbourhoods that are designed on the principles of social, cultural, environmental and economic sustainability.

Policies

2.4.4.1 The Town will encourage infill residential and commercial development on vacant or underutilized parcels of land in established neighbourhoods, provided consideration is given to:

i. Compatibility in height, scale and design of adjacent buildings in the area;

ii. Continuity with nearby streetscapes and lot patterns;

iii. Compatibility with surrounding land uses;

iv. Appropriate landscaping, provision of parking/loading, and preservation of existing vegetation;

v. Integration and preservation of buildings considered to have historical and /or architectural significance; and

vi. Capacity of municipal utilities and infrastructure.

2.4.4.2 Collaborate with the Calgary Regional Partnership in developing guidelines to be used by the public, developers and staff in designing and analysing infill housing projects.

2.4.4.3 Require community and building design that promotes walkability and interaction between neighbours.

2.4.4.4 Prepare buffering standards to respect privacy between neighbours and conflicting land uses.

2.4.4.5 Encourage variation in building design and/or façade treatments within new residential subdivisions.

2.4.4.6 Pedestrian sidewalks and pathways must be extended to each new community and employment area to ensure that a contiguous system is maintained.

2.4.4.7 Provide developers with a development checklist to ensure quality design and clarification of the Town's expectations.

2.4.4.8 Develop urban and landscape design standards for multifamily

2.4 People and Housing

housing to encourage a variety of built form and integration with other types of housing.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.5 Promote the creation of affordable housing.

Policies

2.4.5.1 Collaborate with the provincial government to fulfill its mandate with respect to the provision of affordable housing in High River.

2.4.5.2 The Town will partner with private, public and non-profit organizations in the creation of affordable housing.

2.4.5.3 Where appropriate, allow for:

i. New multifamily units; and

ii. Secondary suites on lots with single detached dwellings.

2.4.5.4 Give appropriate consideration to innovative housing options as a way of accommodating a variety of housing needs, incomes and lifestyles.

2.4.5.5 Allow creative approaches to achieving affordable housing options.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.6 Encourage higher density residential development.

Policies

2.4.6.1 Identify areas and criteria to accommodate increased density and height.

2.4.6.2 Develop design standards, and incorporate them into the Land Use Bylaw, for high density residential development to ensure aesthetic quality and to create the effective transitions to adjacent areas.

OBJECTIVE

2.4.7 Provide for quality seniors' housing development

Policies

2.4.7.1 Support the development of assisted-living housing developments in new and existing neighbourhoods.

2.4.7.2 Encourage the development of a shuttle service linking seniors' housing to shopping, health and social facilities within the region.

2.4.7.3 Require the provision of on-site amenities within seniors' housing proposals such as indoor and outdoor meeting spaces, and recreation, retail and health facilities.

2.5 Mobility

2.5 Mobility

Goal: Plan for a comprehensive and effective transportation system focused on safety, availability, accessibility and affordability for all residents and visitors.

OBJECTIVE

2.5.1 Provide a safe and efficient transportation network, which includes the coordination and construction of safe and efficient roads, bicycling and pedestrian facilities.

Policies

2.5.1.1 Undertake a comprehensive multi-modal transportation study, which identifies policies and standards related to the movement of private and commercial vehicles, bicycling and walking.

2.5.1.2 Establish "character areas" along the frontages of the Highway 2A/12 Avenue corridor and define vehicular and pedestrian accesses and crossings that are appropriate to each character area.

2.5.1.3 The preferred new neighbourhood road design will be based on the town's historical grid and lane pattern.

2.5.1.4 Review existing standards of access to individual sites and neighbourhoods for emergency vehicles.

2.5.1.5 Review existing road and lane standards, along with their associated boulevard tree planting and landscaping requirements.

2.5.1.6 Review road standards with a view to incorporating bicycle lanes in appropriate locations.

2.5.1.7 Review the parking and loading standards in the Land Use Bylaw to determine if they meet current expectations and amend the Bylaw if appropriate.

2.5.1.8 Prioritize parking for the physically challenged, seniors and parents with small children.

2.5.1.9 Encourage improvement and expansion of the existing airport.

2.5.1.10 A traffic and parking impact assessment for major redesignation and development permit applications may be submitted as required by the Approving Authority.

2.5.1.11 Establish a process for reviewing signage in road rights-of-way.

2.5.1.12 Develop a program for purchasing and operating more fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly Town-owned vehicles.

2.5 Mobility

OBJECTIVE

2.5.2 Provide for pedestrian and alternative transportation modes.

Policies

2.5.2.1 Research innovative approaches and working models implemented by other communities to identify alternative transportation modes.

2.5.2.2 Provide safe pedestrian pathways and sidewalks that facilitate access to parks, natural features, employment zones and provide connectivity between neighbourhoods.

2.5.2.3 Provide for the use and storage/parking of bikes, motorcycles, scooters, motorized wheelchairs, and other alternatives to the automobile in all new commercial, industrial and institutional developments.

2.5.2.4 Participate with the Calgary Regional Partnership in the establishment and promotion of a commuter transit service to Calgary.

2.5.2.5 Encourage the establishment of a transit service with a regular route and schedule in the town and between High River and Okotoks.

2.5.2.6 Participate with the M.D. of Foothills in the establishment of a regional pathway system.

2.5.2.7 Undertake a study of the need and opportunities for the establishment of a High River "in-town" transit service and develop a strategy for implementing this transit service when the demand/need reaches an appropriate threshold.

2.5.2.8 Prepare guidelines for ensuring that pathways, sidewalks and road crossings take into account those who are mobility-challenged.

2.5.2.9 Explore the possibility of a pedestrian bridge across the Highwood River linking the northwest and south west areas.

2.5.2.10 In conjunction with regional partners, support future regional transit services and facilities that promote travel by means other than single occupant vehicles.

OBJECTIVE

2.5.3 The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) right-of-way and rail line should be considered for future commuter transportation facilities.

Policies

2.5.3.1 Encourage the protection of the CPR corridor for future transportation options within the town.

2.6 Community Support Services

2.6 Community Support Services

Goal: Establish a strong system of community support services which can reasonably be provided within the financial means of the Town.

OBJECTIVE

2.6.1 Enhance the provision and maintenance of services and facilities oriented toward seniors and families.

Policies

2.6.1.1 Create an inventory of existing and required community support services.

2.6.1.2 Provide a variety of recreation opportunities for residents.

2.6.1.3 When possible, support comprehensive, diverse and quality childcare programs for the community.

2.6.1.4 Support the development of new medical centres to serve the increased population base of the town.

2.6.1.5 Encourage the flexible use of space within community support service buildings.

2.6.1.6 Ensure community support services expand in relation to population increases, realizing that with population growth there will also be an increase in diversity to include more newcomers to Canada, young families, seniors, youth, adults, and those economically at risk.

2.6.1.7 The Town should strive to be proactive in responding to provincial and federal funding opportunities for community support services.

OBJECTIVE

2.6.2 Support the development of social gathering spaces and social service facilities to meet the needs of the community in appropriate and accessible locations.

Policies

2.6.2.1 The Town shall encourage building forms, site layouts and neighbourhood designs that facilitate social interaction. This includes such concepts as pedestrian friendly streetscapes and formal and informal gathering spaces.

2.6.2.2 Undertake the development of the Charles Clark Park in accordance with the approved concept plan.

2.7 Emergency and Protective Services

2.7 Emergency and Protective Services

Goal: Provide facilities and services to ensure a high standard of safety for the community.

OBJECTIVE

2.7.1 Collaborate with adjacent municipalities and agencies in the provision of emergency and protective services.

Policies

2.7.1.1 Work with the M.D. of Foothills and the Town of Okotoks to create a partnership agreement for the management and delivery of fire services that respect local autonomy and facilitate regional co-operation and sharing of services.

2.7.1.2 Partner with the M.D. of Foothills and the Town of Okotoks in exploring opportunities for regional protective services facilities.

2.7.1.3 Liaise with the RCMP and Alberta Health Services in the delivery of police and ambulance services.

OBJECTIVE

2.7.2 Maintain an Emergency Management Plan.

Policies

2.7.2.1 Review the existing Emergency Management Plan annually and update it as required.

2.7.2.2 Ensure that the Emergency Operating Centre is maintained in an appropriate state of readiness.

OBJECTIVE

2.7.3 Maintain an up-to-date Fire Department Master Plan for the provision of fire services in the Town.

Policies

2.7.3.1 The existing Fire Department Master Plan for fire services should be reviewed and updated as required.

2.7.3.2 Expand the existing program relating to training and operational standards with a view to creating and maintaining an appropriate number of certified and trained firefighters.

2.7.3.3 Establish thresholds of service provision that relate to stages of the town's growth and budget for the expanded services at the

2.7 Emergency and Protective Services

appropriate time.

2.7.3.4 Review the need for enhanced fire services on the north side of the Highwood River.

2.7.3.5 Establish and implement a program for fire prevention awareness education.

2.7.3.6 Establish a program for undertaking and implementing formal pre-emergency plans.

OBJECTIVE

2.7.4 Ensure development in the town is built to a standard that optimizes public safety.

Policies

2.7.4.1 Establish thresholds for expansion of fire services that relate to future growth levels of the town and ensure the Town's capital budget reflects these service increases at the appropriate time.

2.7.4.2 Encourage the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in site planning for private and public properties and neighbourhood design, as a means of enhancing security and safety in the community.

2.7.4.3 Ensure that all new buildings meet or exceed the standards established in the Alberta Building Code.

2.7.4.4 Enforce the Land Use Bylaw and other bylaws relating to the use of land and buildings.

2.7.4.5 Continue to provide input and guidance on applications for new developments in relation to fire safety and prevention.

2.7.4.6 Liaise with the RCMP to work with community groups on safety awareness.

2.8 Education

2.8 Education

Goal: Work closely with the school divisions and provide for quality and convenient school facilities for the student population in the area.

OBJECTIVE

2.8.1 Plan for required schools and associated facilities.

Policies

2.8.1.1 Co-ordinate with the school boards and community organizations in preparing a Joint Use Agreement for allocating space in all future registered reserve areas for school, recreational and community use.

2.8.1.2 Land for school sites should be of a size to accommodate related school facilities.

2.8.1.3 Municipal reserve sites dedicated at the time of subdivision will be registered as MR lots and, when needed by a school authority, such lots may be subdivided and designated as School Reserve (SR) or Municipal and School Reserve (MSR).

2.8.1.4 Site new schools within easy, safe walking/biking distances to neighbourhoods and bus access routes.

2.8.1.5 Develop school facilities consistent with the Recreation, Parks and Culture Master Plan in order to capitalize on providing recreation amenities for both students and the neighbouring residents.

2.8.1.6 Plan for the addition of educational facilities as soon as a school's enrolment reaches 75% of its enrolment capacity.

OBJECTIVE

2.8.2 Maximize the use of existing school facilities.

Policies

2.8.2.1 Within a Joint Use Agreement, develop general and specific criteria for the use of existing school facilities and playing fields for community recreation.

2.8.2.2 Utilize existing school facilities consistent with the Recreation, Parks and Culture Master Plan in order to capitalize on providing recreation amenities for both students and the neighbouring residents.

2.8 Education

2.8.2.3 Encourage use of school facilities by the community whenever appropriate.

OBJECTIVE

2.8.2 Plan for the provision of post-secondary education facilities.

Policies

2.8.2.1 Encourage facilities to be provided for a range of post-secondary education opportunities, such as commercial schools, satellite/ remote university campuses.

2.9 Downtown and Centre Street

2.9 Downtown and Centre Street

Goal: Encourage the continued growth and intensification of the downtown area as a vibrant mixed use centre that is the focal point for the community and is an attractive place to shop, work, live and play.

OBJECTIVE

2.9.1 Promote and reinforce the revitalization of the downtown core as a business, administrative and culture centre, while preserving and enhancing the integrity of commercial character.

Policies

2.9.1.1 Prepare an Area Redevelopment Plan for the downtown area and key connecting transportation corridors, including form and character guidelines and development standards to help preserve the character while promoting revitalization of the area.

2.9.1.2 Support the on-going revitalization of the downtown core as the heart and centre of the town and as the primary area for the highest level of administrative, retail, office, institutional, and cultural and entertainment facilities.

2.9.1.3 Support the renewal, expansion and ongoing maintenance of town murals.

2.9.1.4 Encourage a dynamic street life by creating mixed use developments which include residential development in a variety of forms.

2.9.1.5 Provide for large and small civic gathering areas within and near the downtown area.

2.9.1.6 Explore the possibility of establishing the downtown core as a Business Revitalization Zone.

2.9.1.7 Prepare a strategy for managing parking in the downtown area.

OBJECTIVE

2.9.2 Promote and encourage higher-density residential development in or near the downtown.

Policies

2.9.2.1 Wherever possible, support the development of higher density housing in or near the downtown area, where appropriate.

2.9.2.2 Promote opportunities for infill and intensification within the

2.9 Downtown and Centre Street

downtown area in order to facilitate a mixed use and compact urban form, utilize existing infrastructure efficiently and increase the range of services and amenities available to residents and visitors in the downtown area.

OBJECTIVE

2.9.3 Encourage high quality commercial development and the revitalization of older commercial properties in the downtown area and on Centre Street.

Policies

2.9.3.1 Encourage the revitalization and adaptive re-use of existing, underutilized or vacant commercial properties.

2.9.3.2 New development and major redevelopments in the downtown area and on Centre Street will be required to use pedestrian oriented building and site design rather than vehicle oriented designs wherever possible.

2.10 Commercial Development

2.10 Commercial Development

Goal: To support a vibrant commercial sector that services both local residents and the regional market.

OBJECTIVE

2.10.1 Identify locations and policies for long term commercial development.

Policies

2.10.1.1 Direct future commercial development to the areas conceptually shown for commercial uses on the Land Use Concept Map.

OBJECTIVE

2.10.2 Improve the quality and aesthetics of commercial development.

Policies

2.10.2.1 Opportunities for intensification of land use, mixed use development and improvements to make the 12th Avenue corridor more pedestrian friendly shall be explored.

2.10.2.2 Ensure, through performance standards contained in the Land Use Bylaw, that landscaping, building placement, building and form and architectural treatment of commercial development provides a high quality visual appearance.

2.10.2.3 Commercial developments shall provide for safe and convenient on-site vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian movement.

2.10.2.4 Where necessary, adequate buffering between commercial and nearby existing or future residential areas shall be provided to minimize noise, traffic, light and visual impacts.

2.11 Industrial Development

2.11 Industrial Development

Goal: To ensure that there is sufficient serviced industrial land available to attract and accommodate a wide range of industrial development in the future.

OBJECTIVE

2.11.1 Maintain an adequate supply of serviced industrial lots.

Policies

2.11.1.1 Direct future industrial development to the areas conceptually shown for industrial uses on the Land Use Concept Map.

2.11.1.2 Ensure that there is an adequate inventory of serviced industrial sites of various lot sizes and type (light and general) to meet the needs of business and industry.

OBJECTIVE

2.11.2 Avoid conflict between industrial uses and other land uses.

Policies

2.11.2.1 Through amendments to the Land Use Bylaw, ensure that adequate separation distances and transition between industrial and non-industrial uses are maintained in locating any industry that may create land use conflicts with regard to traffic, noise, dust, vibration, smoke, and odour or pose safety and risk management issues.

2.11.2.2 Provide in the Land Use Bylaw development standards for industrial sites including building placement and design, landscaping and screening of storage and parking areas, signage and intensity of development, while recognizing the industrial nature of these areas.

OBJECTIVE

2.11.3 Attract a broad range of sustainable industrial development to the town.

Policies

2.11.3.1 Encourage the development of more innovative, creative and environmentally friendly industrial employment centre concepts such as business parks, "high tech" campuses and research parks.

2.11.3.2 Ensure that industrial areas are planned so as to have direct access to truck routes and highways to the greatest extent possible.

2.12 Community Character and Public Spaces

2.12 Community Character and Public Spaces

Goal: Promote the town of High River as a historic community with an identity and a sense of community worthy of preserving and enhancing.

OBJECTIVE

2.12.1 Encourage a high quality of development that is sensitive to the historical character of the town.

Policies

2.12.1.1 Require and facilitate the preparation of Area Structure Plans for undeveloped areas and prepare Area Redevelopment Plans for appropriate parts of the existing town as required.

2.12.1.2 Encourage infill development to occur within the residential and commercial sectors of the town.

2.12.1.3 When preparing an Area Redevelopment Plan, ensure that the ARP includes specific guidelines for sub-areas within the plan area that recognize and protect their unique characteristics.

OBJECTIVE

2.12.2 Encourage the conservation and retention of buildings and sites of historical or architectural significance.

Policies

2.12.2.1 Prepare a Historic Management Plan that identifies historic sites and buildings and outlines methods of ensuring their continued viability and conservation.

2.12.2.2 Maintain a register of historically, architecturally and culturally significant properties and identify opportunities to protect properties by way of municipal or provincial historic designation.

2.12.2.3 The incorporation of historical districts into the Land Use Bylaw as a means of encouraging preservation may be examined in the future.

2.12.2.4 Cooperate with other orders of government, private agencies and individuals in the preservation of historic sites.

2.12.2.5 Wherever possible, the Town should facilitate the adaptive re-use of historic buildings in order to preserve the identity and history of High River's built environment, and demonstrate a commitment to sustainable building techniques.

2.12 Community Character and Public Spaces

2.12.2.6 Promote community awareness about the importance and value to the community of historic preservation.

OBJECTIVE

2.12.3 Ensure new development is compatible with historic properties and sites.

Policies

2.12.3.1 Amend the Land Use Bylaw to require development and signage proposals which complement the design, character, or appearance of historic buildings.

OBJECTIVE

2.12.4 Create a sense of place and arrival for High River.

Policies

2.12.4.1 In conjunction with the M.D. of Foothills, prepare Gateway Plans for major entry points to the town, starting with Highway 2A and 12th Avenue SE, to provide clear entrances and exits for the town and show a defined differentiation from the rural to urban context.

OBJECTIVE

2.12.5 Continue to make provision for accessible public parks, recreation areas and facilities that meet the growing and changing needs of the community.

Policies

2.12.5.1 The provided direction in the Recreation, Parks and Culture Master Plan may be considered when developing future strategic recreation documents for the Town.

2.12.5.2 Council may examine the need to prepare a new recreation, parks and culture master plan.

2.12.5.3 Work towards implementation of the policies in the Open Space Plan Implementation Report as adopted by Council.

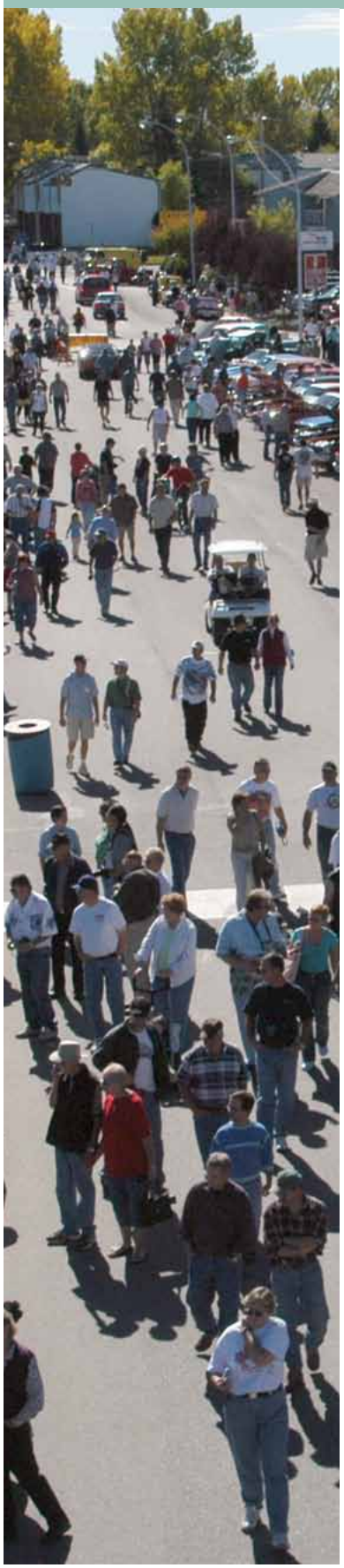
2.12.5.4 Continue to work with the High River and District Recreation Board in the ongoing evaluation of existing facilities in order to:

i. Ensure they continue to meet the needs of residents; and,

ii. Identify the need for new facilities and services.

2.12.5.5 New development should provide a diversity of recreational

2.12 Community Character and Public Spaces



opportunities on open space lands while preserving significant natural features.

2.12.5.6 As new areas are planned the Town shall ensure the design of the parks and open space system provides pathways linking major open spaces, neighbourhoods and linear corridors.

2.12.5.7 Provide a combination of active and passive parks in the community with a wide range of amenities for residents to promote the benefits of active lifestyles.

2.12.5.8 The Town should work toward providing a combination of parks and open space amenities that promote healthy living and social wellbeing.

2.12.5.9 Prepare a master plan for the future development of the parks and Happy Trails pathway systems.

2.12.5.10 Develop an outreach program seeking donations and funds to assist in developing, implementing and maintaining open spaces and parks.

2.12.5.11 Require that ten percent of the gross developable area of land to be subdivided be provided as Municipal Reserve (MR) to be used for public parkland, trails, recreational and school land uses. Such Municipal Reserve can be in the form of land, a monetary equivalent or a combination thereof.

2.12.5.12 An additional five percent of the land being subdivided may be required as Municipal Reserve (MR) land where the residential density exceeds 30 units per hectare.

2.12.5.13 The location and distribution of municipal reserve land will be determined in an Area Structure Plan, or plan of subdivision, and will take into account the following general priorities:

i. Guided priorities in the 2012-2015 Corporate Strategic Plan.

ii. Town-wide requirements for school sites and maintained parkland;

iii. Local neighbourhood requirements for maintained parkland;

iv. Requirements for linear parks and trails where alternative rights-of-way for key trail links are not available;

v. Protection of environmentally sensitive areas; and,

vi. Town-wide and regional requirements for athletic parks,

2.12 Community Character and Public Spaces

arenas, festival sites, and other recreational facilities.

2.12.5.14 Review, and modify as necessary, the landscaping standards in the Land Use Bylaw.

OBJECTIVE

2.12.6 Encourage sharing and multiple-use of parks and open space areas among a variety of user groups and activities.

Policies

2.12.6.1 When planning parks and outdoor public spaces, investigate opportunities to create and include performance/display space or activity space for arts and culture events.

2.12.6.2 In conjunction with streetscapes and other public realm areas, parks and open space shall be designed to create opportunities for area residents to gather and interact wherever possible.

2.13 The Natural Environment

2.13 The Natural Environment

Goal: Protect and enhance the integrity of the natural environment while preserving the associated recreation opportunities and respecting the natural constraints.

OBJECTIVE

2.13.1 Enhance environmental awareness and promote a sense of community stewardship that serves to protect and restore the environment.

Policies

2.13.1.1 Work in conjunction with regional agencies and the M.D. of Foothills to identify and enhance regional environmental features.

2.13.1.2 Encourage the formation, education and ongoing participation of committees to advise Council on environmental and recreational issues.

2.13.1.3 Work in conjunction with the local media, schools and community groups to promote awareness and protection of the natural environment.

2.13.1.4 Promote awareness of environmental issues that impact the natural environment, related to water quality, water supply and demand, water conservation, air quality, waste management, brownfield remediation, important habitat, reduced pesticide use, and reduced urban sprawl.

2.13.1.5 Encourage future development to consider sustainable approaches where possible to ensure that air quality is not adversely affected.

2.13.1.6 Collaborate with regional partners, member municipalities and the province in investigating, developing and implementing a regional greenhouse gas and climate change strategy.

OBJECTIVE

2.13.2 Preserve and protect sensitive and critical natural areas and resources.

Policies

2.13.2.1 Through the Area Structure Plan and subdivision processes, require that lands considered environmentally sensitive be dedicated as Environmental Reserve.

2.13.2.2 Appropriate levels of public access and protection will be

provided for any environmentally sensitive land adjacent to the Highwood and Little Bow rivers that are proposed for subdivision, using the tools provided for in the Municipal Government Act.

2.13.2.3 Lands dedicated as Environmental Reserve shall remain in their natural state and/or be used as part of the public trail system where necessary to ensure a continuous, integrated trail system.

2.13.2.4 Complete an inventory including urban trees, wetlands, riparian areas, habitats and biodiversity, to establish ecological networks that benefit the Town and the region as a whole.

2.13.2.5 Develop guidelines for development within or adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas.

2.13.2.6 Ensure that the provisions of the Water Conservation Bylaw, and any subsequent legislation dealing with water conservation, are complied with.

2.13.2.7 Undertake a physical assessment of the banks of the Highwood and Little Bow Rivers and, in conjunction with the provincial government, propose improvements as may be necessary or desirable to improve public access, stabilize river banks and enhance the natural habitat.

2.13.2.8 Create opportunities to provide increased public access to waterways in the town such as through extensions of the Happy Trails system.

2.13.2.9 Wetlands should be managed on a basis of "No Net Loss" in compliance with provincial regulations, once the feature is determined and recognized by Alberta Environment, to ensure their long-term sustainability.

2.13.2.10 Natural amenities and scenic corridors (including landforms, vegetation and major view sheds) that contribute to the ecosystem and natural visual quality within the High River area should be preserved and protected.

OBJECTIVE

2.13.3 Promote environmental sustainability principles in land use planning decisions and development practices.

Policies

2.13.3.1 Ensure that planning and efforts to conserve natural features in and around High River are initiated well in advance of urban

2.13 The Natural Environment

expansion or development of the surrounding lands.

2.13.3.2 Investigate the possible use of such tools as land purchase, land swaps, leasing and conservation agreements or easements as a means of conserving natural features both within and in the areas surrounding High River.

2.13.3.3 The existing natural features should be incorporated as part of the overall infrastructure systems. This may include using existing wetlands as storm water management facilities wherever possible and planting trees and shrubs along major roads and within industrial areas to improve air quality.

2.13.3.4 Prepare and implement a Sustainability Plan prescribing measures the Town will adopt to use resources more sustainably and including a public outreach program aimed at encouraging others to do the same.

2.13.3.5 Low impact development strategies and storm water best management practices may be incorporated in all new developments to best manage storm water run-off.

2.13.3.6 Develop a program that encourages xeriscaping of both public and private landscaped areas.

2.13.3.7 In conjunction with the anticipated South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, High River will actively participate and work with the Calgary Regional Partnership and the province on the development and implementation of an integrated approach for managing watershed.

2.13.3.8 In conjunction with local interest groups, promote, support and encourage waste diversion and recycling programs to reduce solid waste disposal in High River.

OBJECTIVES

2.13.4 Effectively manage development that is located within or adjacent to hazardous areas.

Policies

2.13.4.1 Complete an inventory of hazardous lands and facilities.

2.13.4.2 Develop effective guidelines for development occurring within or adjacent to lands recognized as being hazardous.

2.13.4.3 Prepare a land use "overlay" and rules for inclusion in the Land Use Bylaw for the designation of land within the flood way and flood fringe areas of the Highwood and Little Bow Rivers.

2.13 The Natural Environment

2.13.4.4 In conjunction with the MD of Foothills and the Provincial government, implement the policies adopted as part of the Highwood River Flood Management Master Plan.

2.13.4.5 Where there is reason to believe that there is a possibility of site contamination by virtue of previous land use, physical site evidence, geographic location, civic databases, landowner disclosure or other sources of information, require the applicant for a land use redesignation or a development permit which involves a significant change of use or construction, to provide an Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) according to guidelines developed by the Canadian Standards Association. The ESA shall be prepared by a qualified engineering or environmental firm. A phased approach for investigating site contamination should include:

i. Phase 1: Screening

ii. Phase 2: Investigation

iii. Phase 3: Remediation and Risk Management

OBJECTIVE

2.13.5 Protect and enhance existing trees.

Policies

2.13.5.1 Prepare an inventory of trees on both public and private lands and a strategy for protecting trees deemed to be an important resource.

2.13.5.2 Ensure that the annual tree planting program is continuously implemented to enhance the existing urban forest.

2.13.5.3 Establish a program to encourage public donation for planting "memorial" trees.

2.14 The Cultural Environment

2.14 The Cultural Environment

Goal: Celebrate our heritage and build upon the performing and visual arts both as a reflection of our community and as a major source of economic opportunity.

OBJECTIVE

2.14.1 Build upon the existing core economy with the visual and performing arts that reflect the vibrant artist community within High River.

Policies

2.14.1.1 Work with the appropriate agencies to prepare and implement an Arts and Culture Master Plan.

2.14.1.2 Encourage public art in association with public realm areas identified for enhancement.

2.14.1.3 Identify ways of encouraging the film industry to use High River as a base for film production.

2.14.1.4 Support expansion of the visual and performing arts and provide programs to encourage new artists.

OBJECTIVE

2.14.2 Foster, enable and promote local cultural activities and facilities to help generate a sense of pride and local identity for residents.

Policies

2.14.2.1 Support local cultural groups through organizational and other resources as appropriate.

2.14.2.2 Encourage local service and interest groups to use public buildings and open space for events.

2.14.2.3 Support community improvements undertaken by appropriate interest groups.

2.14.2.4 Celebrate the "Western Culture" and agricultural history of High River through education, promotion and community events.

2.15 The Future Growth and Development

2.15 The Future Growth and Development

Goal: Ensure future growth and development takes place in a sustainable manner.

OBJECTIVE

2.15.1 Ensure that an appropriate supply of land and infrastructure is available to accommodate future growth of the town.

Policies

2.15.1.1 Encourage growth to take place in locations that makes best use of existing or new infrastructure.

2.15.1.2 Amend existing statutory and non-statutory plans as appropriate to accord with the Growth Management Plan.

2.15.1.3 In conjunction with the M.D. of Foothills and landowners, prepare a strategy for annexing lands to the town and applications for annexation to the Municipal Government Board.

2.15.1.4 The Town should strive to provide a minimum of 5 years of serviced land and 25 years of unserviced land available for residential, institutional, commercial and industrial development in the town.

2.15.1.5 Review opportunities to promote the development of "brownfield" sites within the town.

OBJECTIVE

2.15.2 Ensure infrastructure is managed efficiently.

Policies

2.15.2.1 Develop a long-term and short-term capital works program to implement the Growth Management Plan.

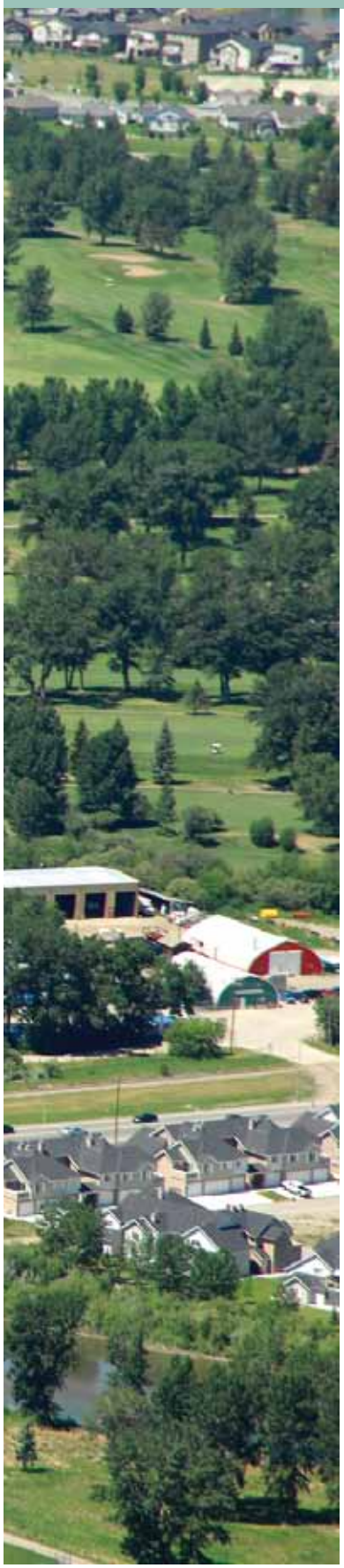
2.15.2.2 Continue to evaluate the Town's existing water and sewer systems to ensure they operate efficiently and sustainably.

2.15.2.3 Initiate and participate in joint capital projects with neighbouring municipalities and the provincial government for the provision of cost-effective and environmentally sustainable municipal services, transportation systems and institutional facilities.

OBJECTIVE

2.15.3 Encourage new development that conforms to the historical town character.

2.15 The Future Growth and Development



Policies

2.15.3.1 Prepare statements that clarify what the town's character is and guidelines to be used in judging new development proposals and incorporate these guidelines in statutory and non-statutory policy documents as appropriate.

OBJECTIVE

2.15.4 Ensure the availability of services to meet existing and future community needs in a cost effective and environmentally sustainable manner.

Policies

2.15.4.1 Develop a long term and short term capital works program to implement the Growth Management Plan.

2.15.4.2 Continue to have the Town's existing water and sewer systems periodically evaluated by the appropriate public agencies to ensure they operate in an environmentally sustainable manner.

2.15.4.3 Demonstrate due consideration of conservation and demand management when designing water, sewer and drainage infrastructure.

2.15.4.4 Ensure water quality is taken into account in designing town water retention facilities.

2.15.4.5 Initiate and participate in joint capital projects with neighbouring municipalities and other levels of senior government for the provision of cost-effective and environmentally sustainable municipal services, transportation systems and institutional facilities.

2.15.4.6 Review the adopted standards of new infrastructure to determine if those standards are sustainable.

2.15.4.7 Review existing solid waste management practices and identify ways of managing the waste stream in a more environmentally sustainable way.

2.15.4.8 In conjunction with the Calgary Metropolitan Plan, support the provision of regional servicing and infrastructure for regional land use strategies, as identified in the Plan.

OBJECTIVES

2.15.5 Ensure that new developments pay an equitable share of servicing costs.

2.15 The Future Growth and Development

Policies

2.15.5.1 To reduce the impact on the property tax base, secure additional funding for infrastructure from alternatives sources, including but not limited to municipal levies, grants, and commercial/industrial tax revenues.

2.15.5.2 Review on a regular basis the Off Site Levy Bylaw used to assist the Town in paying the capital costs of providing or upgrading water, sewer, drainage systems, roads and open spaces/parks to determine if the cost sharing arrangements continue to be appropriate.

2.15.5.3 Undertake a study and make recommendations on the appropriateness of redevelopment levies for redevelopment within the existing town to contribute to the cost of upgrading infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES

2.15.6 Achieve energy conservation through effective building and site design and operational practices.

Policies

2.15.6.1 Encourage the inclusion of energy efficiency and conservation measures in the design of subdivisions and development through the application of effective development standards.

2.15.6.2 Establish comprehensive and detailed green building and site design standards.

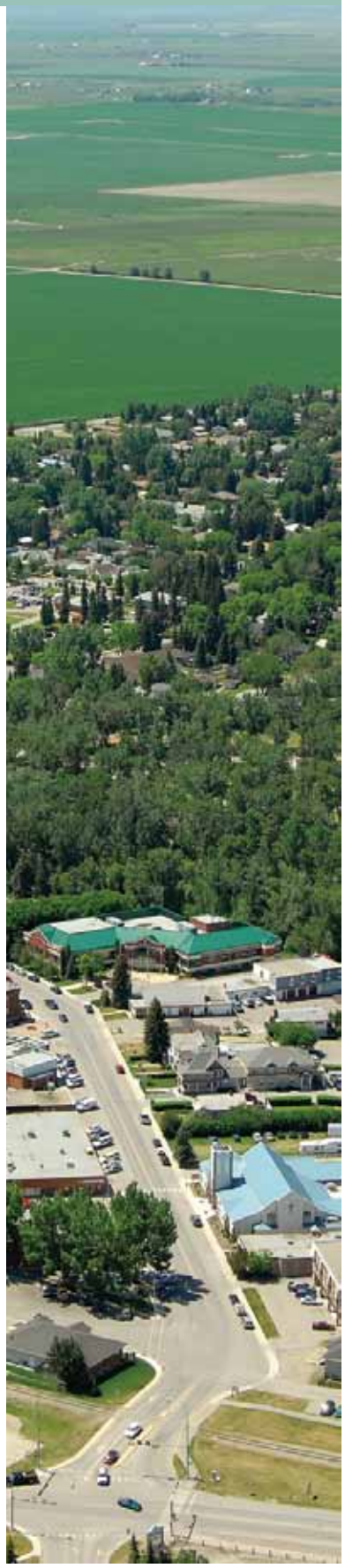
2.15.6.3 Explore and, where feasible, implement programs and policies intended to increase sustainable building practices throughout High River. As part of this effort, the Town, when constructing new town buildings, should demonstrate leadership in sustainable practices and strive to achieve the minimum standards of appropriate sustainable building rating systems.

2.15.6.4 Encourage developers and builders to seek ratings in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, "Built-Green" or other appropriate initiatives that incorporate such measures as:

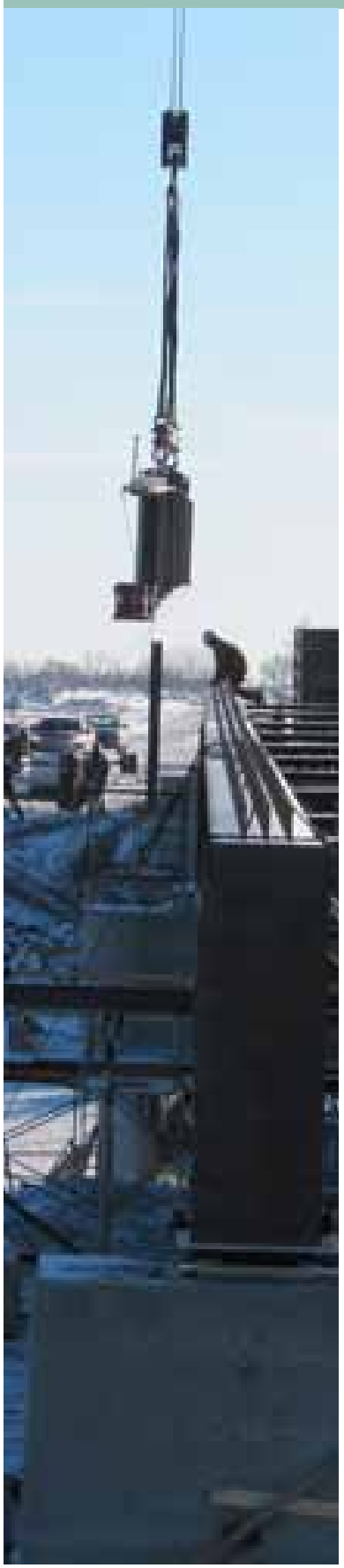
i. Minimizing storm water volumes through the installation of roof top gardens or on-site cisterns;

ii. Installing water saving plumbing fixtures;

iii. Using water efficient landscaping;



2.15 The Future Growth and Development



iv. Increasing energy performance through reduction in demand, harvesting site energy and efficient building design;

v. Reducing waste by extending the life of existing buildings and using local and recycled building materials;

vi. Installing permeable hard surfaces;

vii. Improving indoor environmental quality through efficient heating and ventilation; and

viii. Reducing light pollution and energy costs by installing outdoor lights that are designed to minimize escape of light to the sky or beyond the site.

OBJECTIVE

2.15.7 Ensure the impact of urban uses on agricultural operations is minimized.

Policies

2.15.7.1 Respect and support existing agricultural operations that are located within the town boundary until such time that those lands are required for urban growth purposes.

2.15.7.2 All land in agricultural use within the present town boundary and within any land annexed to the town in the future that is in agricultural use shall be designated "Urban Reserve" in the Land Use Bylaw.

2.15.7.3 Any development proposal adjacent to an existing agricultural operation shall incorporate buffering.

3.0 Implementation

3.0 Implementation

The High River Plan will only achieve the goals and objectives described in it if the policies are effectively implemented. The Plan's implementation program is intended to provide the means to do that. The program will change over time as policies are implemented and as new ways to address policies are discovered.

Goal: To promote the implementation and use of the High River Town Plan.

OBJECTIVES

3.1.1 Ensure the Plan is consistent with other statutory and non-statutory plans.

3.1.2 Ensure the Plan is implemented.

3.1.3 Ensure the Plan is reviewed on a periodic basis.

3.1.4 Provide guidance on interpreting and applying the Plan's policies.

3.1.5 Promote awareness of the Plan's policies by stakeholders and the general public.

Policies

3.2.1 Strive to ensure all town's statutory and non-statutory plans are consistent with other provincial and regional government agencies planningdocuments.

3.2.2 Prepare an implementation program indicating how every policy in the Plan will be implemented.

3.2.3 Maintain an annual review of the implementation program and alignment of Corporate Strategic Plan's priorities.

3.2.4 Periodic review of the Town Plan and amendments may be undertaken when deemed necessary.

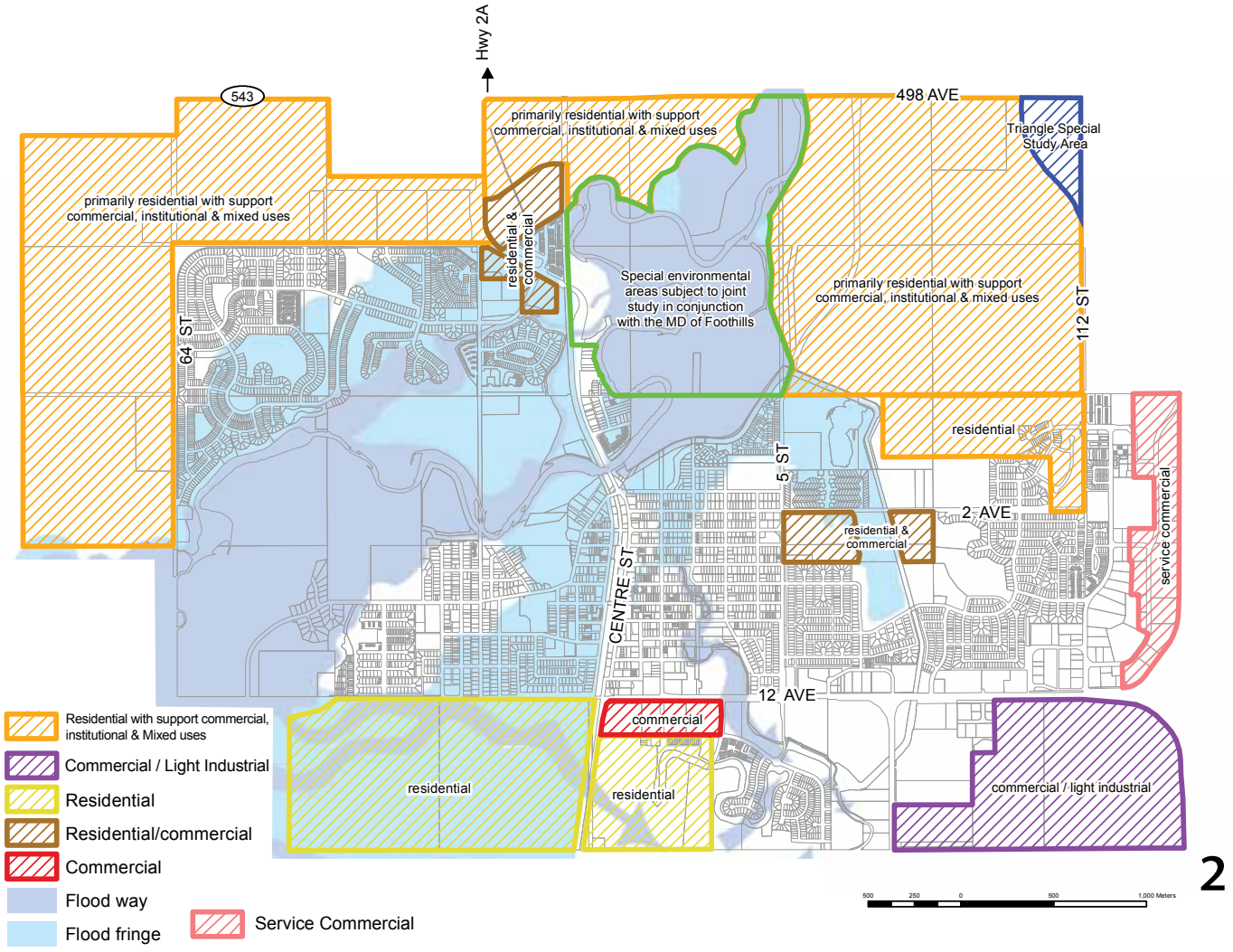
3.2.5 Develop administrative procedures to ensure the Plan is taken into account in any strategic decision taken by the Town.

3.2.6 Monitor programs and decisions of outside agencies that may affect the Town for consistency with the Plan.

4.0 Land Use Concept

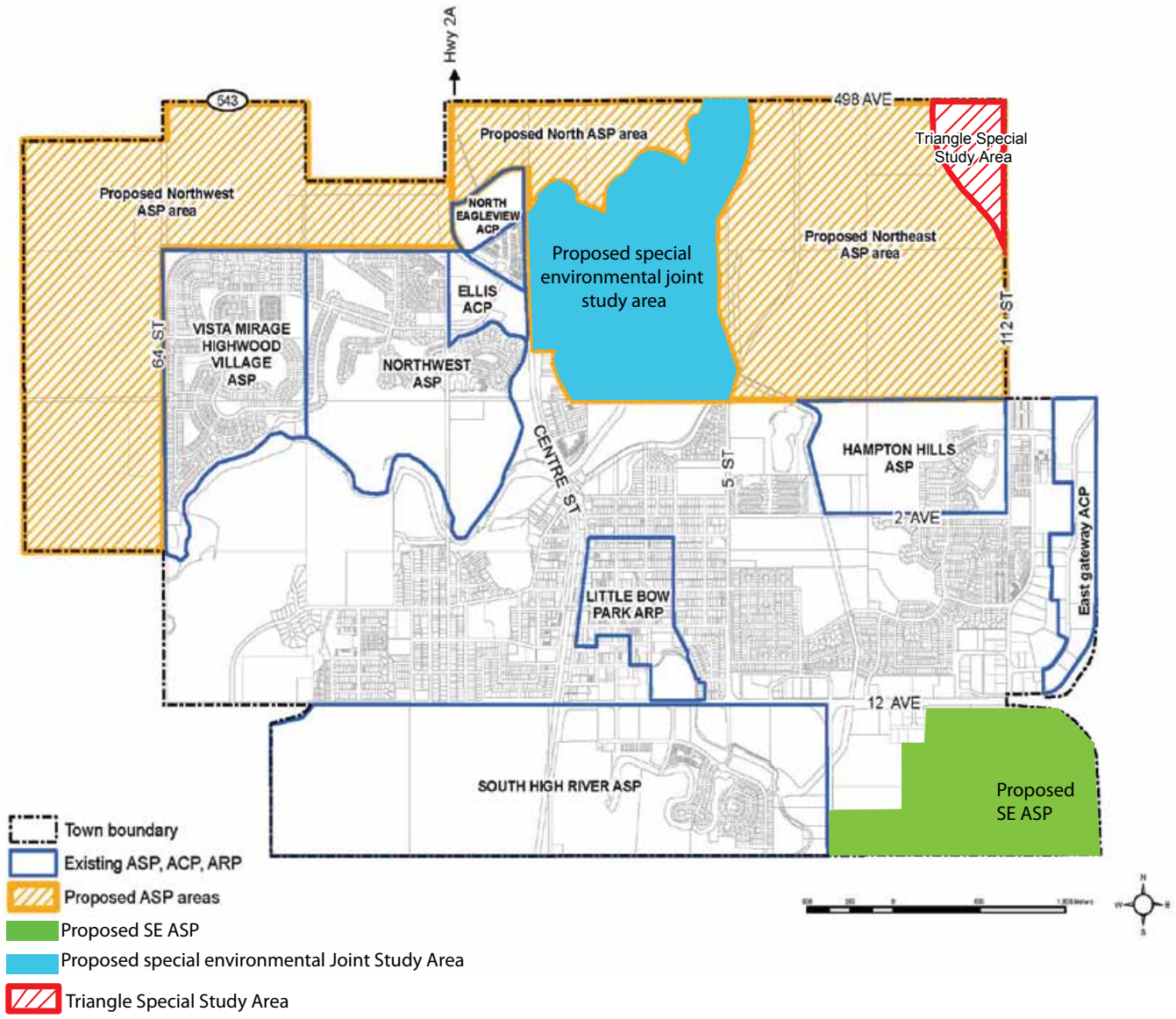
The land use concept map (Figure 1) illustrates broad land uses and provides a framework for decision making. While the Town Plan sets out the general vision and patterns for future land use and development, the Land Use Bylaw determines specific uses and the conditions under which the land can be developed for each site. Figure 2 illustrates existing and proposed plans.

Figure 1 –Land Use Concept



4.0 Land Use Concept

Figure 2- Existing and Proposed Plans



Appendix
5.1 The Plan Preparation Process

5.0 Appendices

Appendix 5.1: The Plan Preparation Process

The Municipal Government Act requires that every municipality with more than 3500 population prepare a Municipal Development Plan (MDP). The Act also sets out what a MDP must contain as well as a list of matters that are optional.

The MDP in the form of this updated version is a significantly different document to the previous MDP both in terms of its content and in its approach to implementation. It is being called the High River Town Plan to acknowledge the difference and to help move towards a more user-friendly tool.

The Town's existing Municipal Development Plan was approved in 1997 and was specifically written for a ten year period. Council approved in the 2008 budget a program to undertake an update of the MDP. The process started with the appointment of consultants to undertake the plan preparation and a Steering Committee to advise staff managing the process.

The Steering Committee was appointed by Council in January 2008 and comprises the following individuals: Dan Campbell (Chairman), Penny Dieter, Doug Gardner, David Meszaros, Steven Muth, Jim Patten (resigned March 2008), Ryan Payne, Bob Pike, Joanne Van Donzel and Councilors Don Moore and Al Gillis.

The Committee used two key documents as a starting point: the 1997 MDP and the "20-Year Growth Vision" prepared in 2006 by consultants following an extensive public participation process. The Steering Committee held a series of meetings and workshops between February and June 2008. This stage of the work was summarized in the consultants report entitled: "Municipal Development Plan Background Report", June 2008.

The first stage of the work identified a draft "Community Mission Statement", together with seven key principles and associated mission statements. The draft Community Mission Statement is:

"The Town of High River will respect the core values of the community by maintaining and enhancing its beautiful urban environment; continuing to provide a high quality of life for its citizens; supporting shared community ideals and sustaining the town's collaborative and entrepreneurial initiatives".

The seven key principles are:

i. Jobs and the economy.

ii. People and housing.

iii. Transportation.

iv. Community services.

v. Community character and public spaces.

vi. The natural and cultural environment.

vii. Future growth and land use.

The second stage of the plan preparation process used the seven key principles as a starting point. Consultants were tasked with taking the principles and identifying goals, objectives and policies that would translate these principles into actions. This was accomplished through a series of public workshops held in November 2008.

The results of this stage resulted in eleven goals and accompanying objectives and policies being identified. The Steering Committee was re-engaged at this point and as result of its input and staff discussions this was expanded to fifteen goals, objectives and policies. Based on this platform, staff melded relevant parts of the existing MDP into the first draft of the proposed Town Plan.

The draft Plan was the subject of a presentation and discussion at the Town's Management Committee, Council's Committee of the Whole and a public Open House held on 29 April 2009. The Plan was re-drafted to take into account comments made at these forums.

First reading of the bylaw to adopt the Plan took place on June 8, 2009, and the Public Hearing was held on July 20, 2009. Some minor changes were made as a result of the public input, and the final stage of the process was achieved on August 17, 2009, when Council gave Second and Third Readings to the Bylaw and adopted the Town Plan. The Town Plan rescinds the former MDP of 1997, and is deemed to be the Town's new statutory MDP.

As described in Section 1, an important part of the new Plan is the process that will ensure that it is used and kept up-to-date. Two key parts of this approach are an implementation program and an annual review process.

The Plan has a policy that requires that Council review the Plan on an annual basis and make changes as deemed necessary. This will ensure that the Plan is kept in focus and used as a tool to guide ongoing strategic decisions. It will allow Council to take account of the latest information available and respond to changing events.

An implementation program has been developed and is updated on an annual basis.

Appendix
5.2 Statutory Plans

Appendix 5.2: Statutory Plans

While the Town Plan is the Town's overarching strategic planning document that establishes key policies, there are many documents that are needed in order to spell out the detail of how these policies will be implemented. Some of these documents are statutory and some are non-statutory.

The difference between statutory and non-statutory plans is in their legal status. Statutory plans must be complied with while non-statutory plans are advisory in nature and provide guidelines or standards to be followed. While Council adopt both types of plan, statutory plans are adopted by bylaw and non-statutory plans are adopted by resolution.

One of the tasks that will be part of the Implementation Program is the review of existing statutory and non-statutory plans to identify any conflict with the Town Plan and proposing changes to reconcile the conflict. In relation to statutory plans, conflict must be reconciled. For non-statutory plans, while it is not mandatory to reconcile conflict, it may be advisable so as to avoid any confusion. Decisions on whether to propose any changes to non-statutory documents will be made during the Implementation Program.

The Town's existing statutory plans are listed in this Appendix, together with a brief description of what the documents contain.

Intermunicipal Development Plan (May 2012).

This plan was adopted by the Town of High River and the M.D. of Foothills and relates to land roughly within one mile of the 2012 town boundary. The Plan in an expression of mutual interest in the area and sets out generalized land uses and a process for mutual consultation of proposals within the area or within the Town close to the boundary.

Land Use Bylaw (Bylaw 3960/99)

The Municipal Government Act requires every municipality to prepare a land use bylaw and High River's Land Use Bylaw is one of Council's key planning tools for guiding and controlling development in the town. It sets out how land use and development is managed. The Bylaw has two components: a document that gives details of applications that are required and how they are processed, and, a map of the town that assigns a land use "district" to every parcel of land in the town. A land use bylaw must be consistent with other statutory documents.

Area Structure Plans

These plans are developed for new communities and outline future uses, major infrastructure requirements, population densities anticipated and phasing of development. Other matters can be included depending on the nature of the

area. The following Area Structure Plans have been approved:

- North West Area Structure Plan (Bylaw 3567/86). This plan relates to the north west sector of town north of the golf course/Highwood River and west of Highway 2A.
- Hampton Hills Area Structure Plan (Bylaw 4163/2007). This plan relates to the area east of the Little Bow Canal, north of 2nd Avenue SE, south of the town boundary and west of 20th Street E.
- South High River Area Structure Plan (Bylaw 4145/2006). This plan relates to the area south of 12th Avenue, east of 72nd Street E. and west of 10th Street SE.
- Vista Mirage-Highwood Village Area Structure Plan (Bylaw 3980/2000). This plan relates to a portion of the area covered by the North West Area Structure Plan and provides more detail of the western part of the plan area.

Area Redevelopment Plans

These plans relate to areas of the existing built-up area of the town and outline changes proposed in the community in terms of land uses, physical improvements and infrastructure upgrades. The following Area Redevelopment Plan has been approved:

- Little Bow Park Area Redevelopment Plan (Bylaw 3495/84). This plan relates to the area between Centre Street and 3rd Street SE and between 3rd and 12th Avenues SE.

Appendix
5.3

Growth Management Strategy

September 24, 2012
Town of High River

High River

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1 Executive Summary

This Growth Management Strategy (GMS) is an essential component of the Town Plan and identifies a recommended growth management and land use framework for High River. This Strategy is comprised of the necessary background research and analysis to ensure that the Town Plan is consistent with provincial and regional policy direction, and reflective of the local town context.

Strong growth management policies are key to ensuring the efficient use of land and infrastructure. Recommendations for growth areas are based on a number of factors, including the 2010/2011 North Annexation Agreement between the Town of High River and the MD of Foothills, available development opportunities within the town boundaries, and availability of infrastructure.

The policies in this document support the creation of "complete communities", which meet the town's immediate and future needs by providing access to a full range and mix of housing, jobs, commercial opportunities, a range of community services and facilities, recreational and open space options, and convenient transportation choices.

The draft GMS defines how and where the town's anticipated growth will be accommodated over the next 30-year planning horizon. The majority of residential growth is anticipated to occur in the newly annexed lands, in the north end of the town, and, in the southwest of the town, provided that the Flood Management Master Plan supports such development.

Employment growth will occur throughout the town focusing on the downtown core and 12th Avenue corridor, but with more opportunities anticipated within the planned commercial/mixed-use nodes in the new communities in the annexation area and within the Highway 2A industrial corridor, as identified in the Highway 2A Industrial Area Structure Plan.

The GMS also encourages building at a higher density with the objective of gradually achieving a minimum of 8.0 units per gross acre over the next 30 years, as required by the Calgary Metropolitan Plan. This can be achieved through the implementation phase by developing and adopting Area Structure Plans, Neighbourhood Outline Plans and the associated required land use amendments.

2 Introduction

As part of the process to review the Town's former Municipal Development Plan (MDP) it was determined that a two part review process would be undertaken. The first part would review the long term vision and strategy policy component of the plan, and the second would focus on the growth component.

The GMS provides a long-term framework for planning where, when and how future residential and employment growth can be accommodated within the town, to ensure that growth contributes positively to the quality of life of our community and reflects the values, aspirations and priorities of the residents of High River by adopting the best practices in growth management.

The GMS seeks to facilitate creating communities that are unique and distinguishable from other more conventional neighbourhoods by introducing the grid based street layout that was used in the older areas of High River. The intent is to provide environments that encourage, rather than discourage, social and community interaction.

The resulting GMS, presented herein, will serve as a key building block for the updated Town Plan, which in turn will assist Council and administration in making sound land-use decisions on future development proposals.

2.1 Purpose

The general purpose of the GMS is to provide the Town with an achievable plan for growth that will serve to direct the physical, social, and economic development of the north annexation area and the undeveloped lands within the pre-annexation town boundaries.

The GMS provides recommendations for growth patterns and associated land uses. In doing so, it incorporates community and stakeholder input, feedback, objectives and a professional evaluation of alternatives for land use configuration.

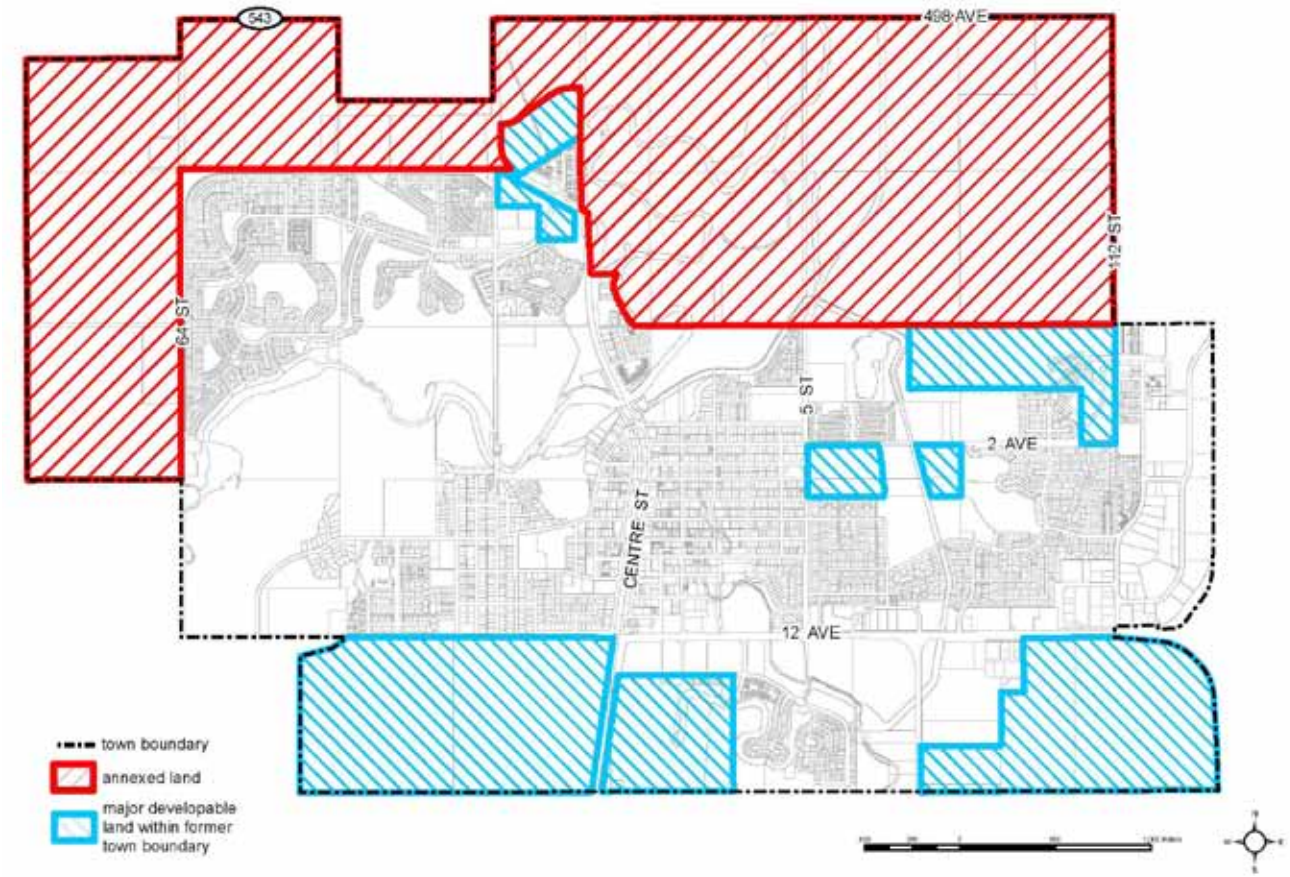
The plan balances community needs and market demand for residential and commercial lands with the current planning framework and Council's vision for the integration of the annexation area into the community as a whole. To accomplish this, the following objectives for preparaing the GMS were developed:

- To provide an overview of the growth trends, challenges, and opportunities facing the development of the north annexation area and the undeveloped land within the town boundaries;
- To assess the ability of the Town to respond to these demands in the long-term, in the context of providing opportunities for all transportation modes, including transit, as well as water and waste water management services, and community facilities;
- To provide a comprehensive strategy that will allow the Town to accomplish its community goals in a cost-effective manner;
- To communicate with town residents, businesses, agencies and community groups to obtain direction on growth and growth related issues; and
- To analyze the demand and supply for land suitable for residential, commercial, industrial and associated urban purposes.

2.2 Scope

As part of the process to determine where annexation should take place, the Town in conjunction with MD of Foothills, undertook an extensive analysis of potential future growth areas around the town boundary. This resulted in the annexation of January 1st, 2012 and in the Annexation Application[1] submitted to the provincial government it was proposed that the lands to be annexed, together with undeveloped areas within the town, provide sufficient land for growth of the town for the next 30 years. These lands form the plan area for the GMS and are indicated in Figure 1.

Fgure 1 - GMS Plan Area



2.3 The Process

To ensure it is fully comprehensive, the GMS involved a multi-disciplinary team of planners, architects, engineers, elected officials and other professionals working collaboratively. Work on the GMS was developed between September 2011 and June 2012. It was based on a review of available data, policies, and relevant bylaws and a review of best practices to identify new and innovative strategies used by other communities. Best practices were used to develop the growth management strategy for the town.

2.4 Public Consultation

Public consultation gives residents and stakeholders a voice in the planning of new areas. The public open house format is often used by planning professionals to provide information about a project and gather insight and feedback from the community. Typically, a public meeting will only be held after the finalized plan has been proposed. As this process is initiated towards the end of the overall planning process, it allows residents to voice their concerns based on the final draft of a proposal, but does not actively involve them in the development and creation of the plan.

In this GMS process, it was determined that incorporation of residents' knowledge from the beginning of the planning process was most important. This type of public consultation is proactive rather than reactive, and allows the community to have a role in the development of the GMS from the start through to the conclusion of the planning process.

To ensure that the GMS was completed with adequate consultation among all key stakeholders and to obtain comprehensive public input, the consultation process employed a variety of active and passive information and input methods, consisting of four open houses, conducting stakeholder interviews, and giving presentations to various stakeholders (see Figure 2).

Throughout the public consultation process, social media was used to explore its communication value, and to engage a broader cross-section of the community. A Facebook page named "High River, Our Community our Future" was established which facilitated online community engagement and generated valuable discussions.

The consultation process was divided into five phases (see Figure 2). The pre-consultation phase introduced the community to the project and covered meetings with the Town staff, Town Council, members of the development industry, grade 10, 11 and 12 classes at the Highwood High School and Notre Dame Collegiate, and the general public. This phase generated interest in the GMS process, stimulated discussions on key priorities that are included in the GMS, and raised awareness among stakeholders on provincial and regional trends and important growth management related issues.

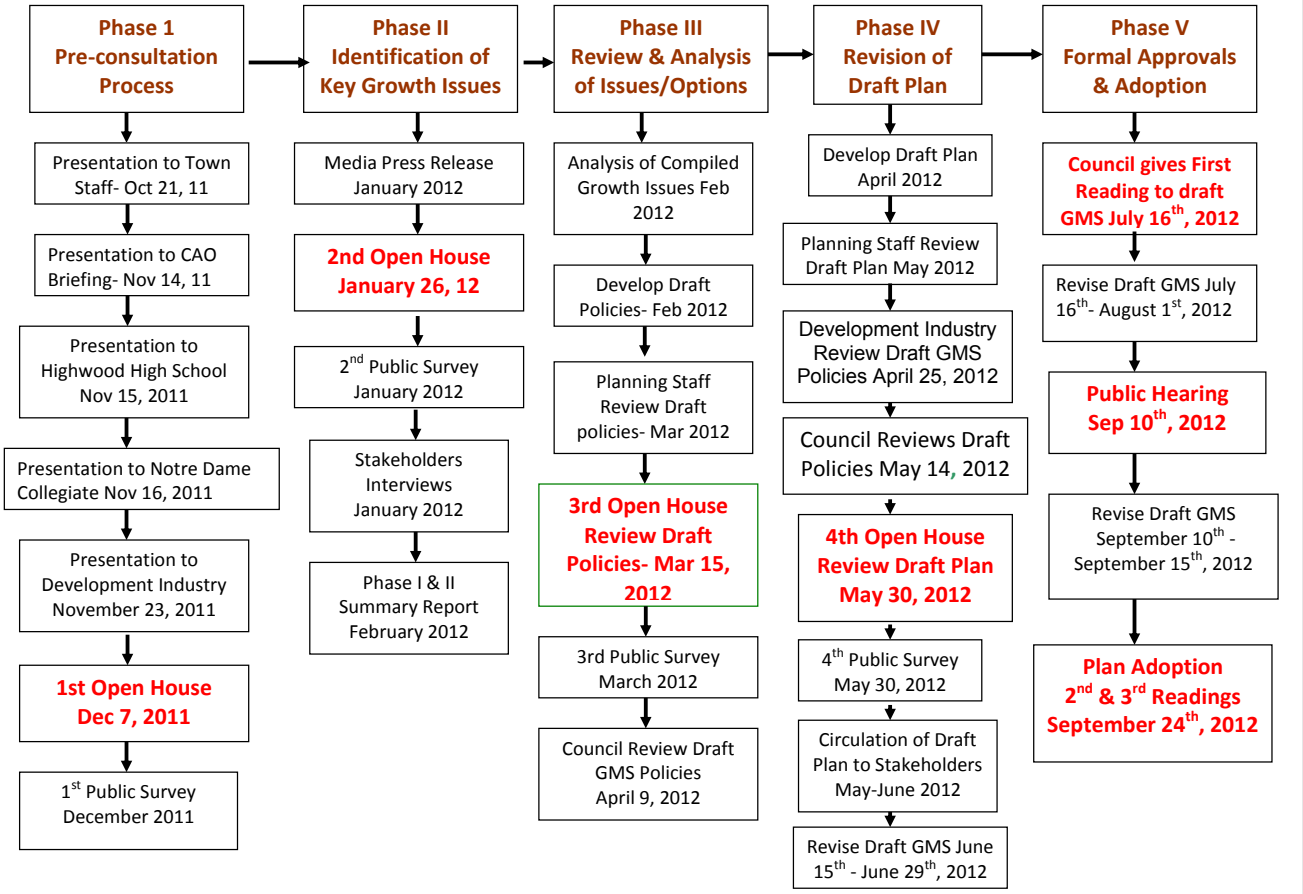
The second phase included meetings with the general public and one on one stakeholder interviews. In this stage, the GMS project was formally launched. It outlined the GMS process, its purpose, the issues and areas of focus and the importance of public involvement. In addition, it allowed the project team to obtain the vision of stakeholders in regards to the subject study area.

The third stage focused on a review and analysis of growth and the growth related issues identified in phase two. The information gathered was then used to confirm the key growth management issues and develop the preferred growth option. The draft GMS policies were prepared and presented to the public in this phase.

During phase four, an open house displayed outlines of the draft GMS including the policy section, and provided an opportunity for the community members to review the full document and give more focused feedback about what they liked and disliked in the draft GMS.

The last phase of the consultation process was used to make final revisions to the draft GMS, based on feedback received from the community and various stakeholders. It includes presenting the final draft GMS in the form of a bylaw to town Council for review and approval.

Figure 2- Public Consultation Flow Chart



2.5 Goals

The GMS comprises seven overarching goals that apply to managing growth and development within the town. These goals align with provincial, regional and intermunicipal land use policies and are adapted for the town context. They are as follows:

- To create vibrant, compact, walkable and complete communities within High River;
- To encourage sensitive intensification of development within existing built-up areas;
- To protect the natural environment and resources;
- To build at higher density where possible to reduce sprawl and to use infrastructure more efficiently;
- To support the local economy by addressing the population growth and employment forecast for the future, and create opportunities to increase the commercial and industrial component of the tax base;
- To maintain and develop a strong sense of community; and
- To work towards sustainable development, including conserving water resources and utilizing green energy.

2.6 About this document

The GMS covers a broad range of issues concerning future growth and the document is divided into 31 sections. The policies are included throughout the document within the appropriate text that discusses them. For convenience all the policies are listed in Appendix A.

- Section 1 provides an executive summary for the GMS.
- Section 2 contains the introduction, purpose, scope, goals and the public consultation process history.
- Sections 3, 4 and 5 provide background on existing policies contained in provincial and municipal documents that have been an important input to the GMS.
- Sections 6 and 7 provide background research on the population growth to be planned for and the anticipated needs relative to land and services.
- Sections 8 and 9 discuss constraints and opportunities relative to land and infrastructure.
- Sections 10 – 29 provide details of the various components of the GMS.
- Sections 30 and 31 outline the implementation and amendment process for the GMS.

3 The Alberta Planning Context: Provincial and Regional Policies

The province and the entire Calgary region are experiencing steady economic and population growth, and as a result, a number of provincial and regional initiatives have been undertaken, each with significant potential implications on High River. Therefore, it is important that High River considers growth and development decisions within a greater provincial and regional context.

3.1 Alberta Land Stewardship Act

In 2008, the Province established the *Alberta Land-Use Framework* (ALUF)[2], which provides provincial policy direction and guidelines for land use decisions in the province. The ALUF requires that "Smart Growth" principles be used to promote efficient and sustainable use of land.

The province enacted the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* (ALSA)[3] in October 2010 to implement the LUF by creating a regional planning process. This provincial Act provides for a new system of regional planning based on river basins. Accordingly, the province has been divided into seven regions and the Act requires that plans be prepared for each region. These regional plans will indicate how each region can become more sustainable in the future from an economic, environmental and social point-of-view. The plans look to a long-term future (over 50 years) and will provide a context for land-use decision-making within the region.

The South Saskatchewan Region is one of the seven regions created by ALSA and High River falls within that region. The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) is under preparation and will:

- Be the statutory policy document for the South Saskatchewan region.
- Have a planning horizon of at least 50 years.
- Identify areas with high value for conservation, agriculture, recreation or industrial development to better co-ordinate activity on the landscape.
- Address the effective management of resources such as minerals, forestry and water.
- Authorize preparation of sub-regional plans, such as the Calgary Metropolitan Plan (CMP).

The adoption of the SSRP will have the following implications on member municipalities:

- All municipal planning documents must align with the goals and objectives of the SSRP.
- The SSRP will come into force on its date of adoption.

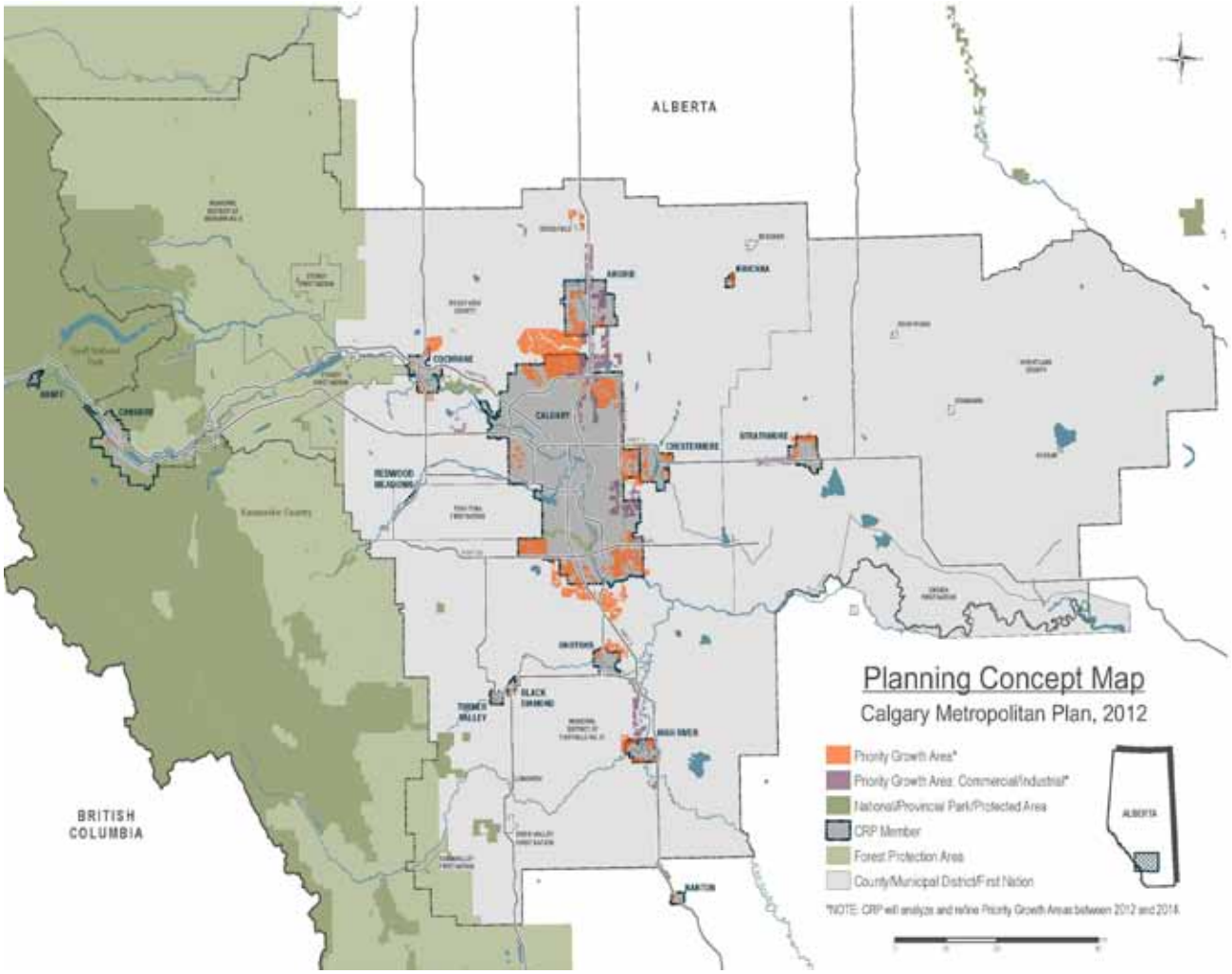
3.2 Calgary Metropolitan Plan

The Calgary Metropolitan Plan (CMP)[5] is the product of 15 member municipalities in the Calgary sub-region. The CMP is currently before the provincial government for approval and aligns with the provisions of the ALSA and the SSRP under preparation.

One of the CMP's key objectives is to allocate the predicted future population and employment growth in the sub-region in a manner that is more sustainable than in the past. The Plan predicts that High River will grow to a population of 30,000 in 30 years. As a way of reducing the future "environmental footprint" of the sub-region, the

Plan sets two important targets that are critical inputs for the GMS. The first is ensuring that 25% of future growth of High River takes place within the existing built-up area, and the second is achieving overall residential densities in new development areas of 8-10 units per gross acre, up from 5 – 6 units per acre today. Figure 3 illustrates CMP priority growth areas that are eleigible for regional servicing to Calgary Regional Partnership members.

Figure 3 – Calgary Metropolitan Plan- Planning Concept

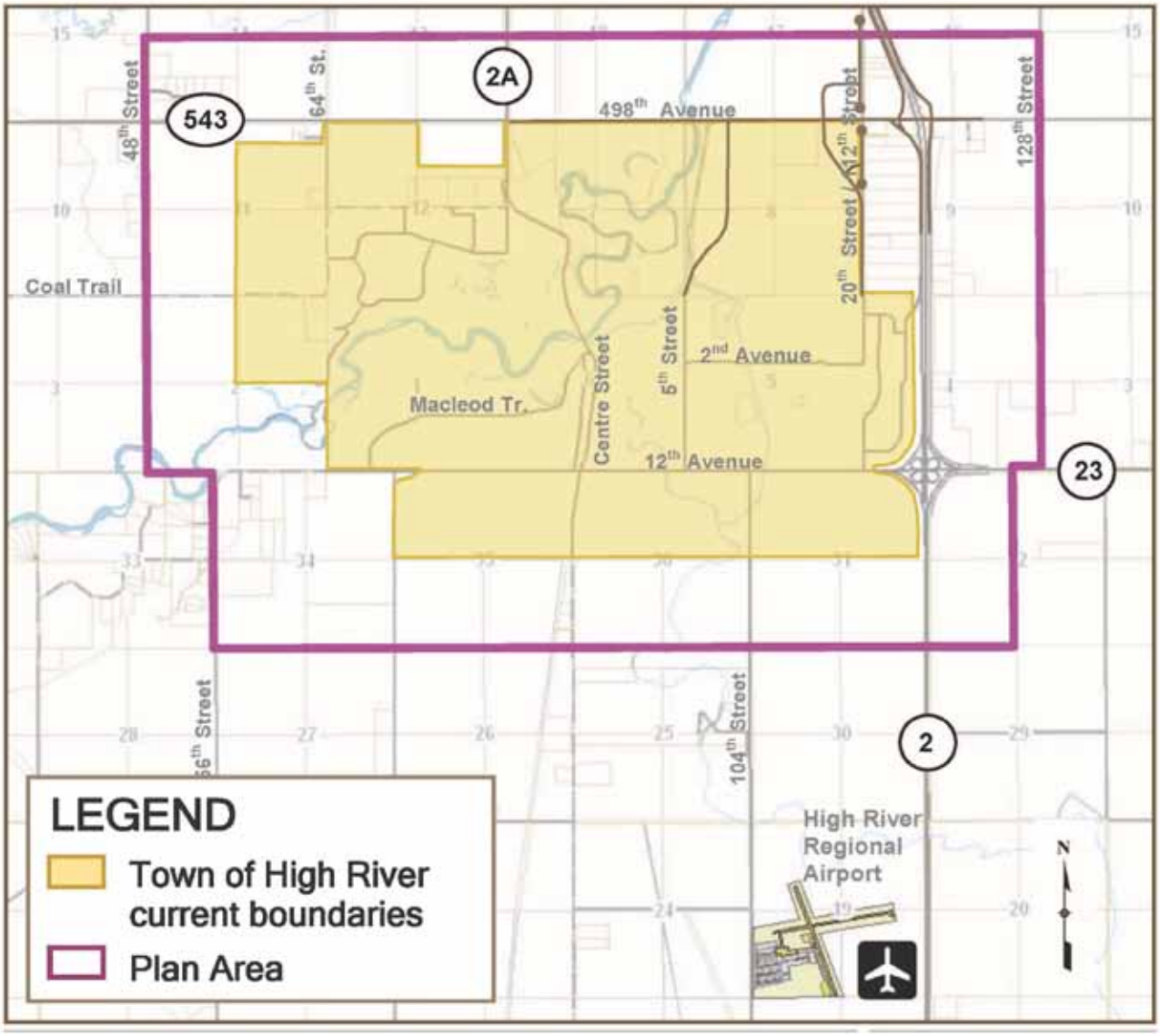


3.3 Intermunicipal Development Plan

Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDP)[6] are prepared by adjoining municipalities to plan for boundary areas of mutual interests. The new IDP for the Town of High River and the MD of Foothills was jointly adopted by both municipal councils in May 2012. The IDP provides a land use vision and creates a framework for cooperation to coordinate growth, economic development, transportation and environmental management. The IDP contains maps that indicate areas suitable for future urban growth of the town, and it provides for the annexation of these lands when both municipalities deem it necessary.

The GMS builds upon the intermunicipal cooperation that has been established in the 2012 IDP.

Figure 4 - IDP Plan Area



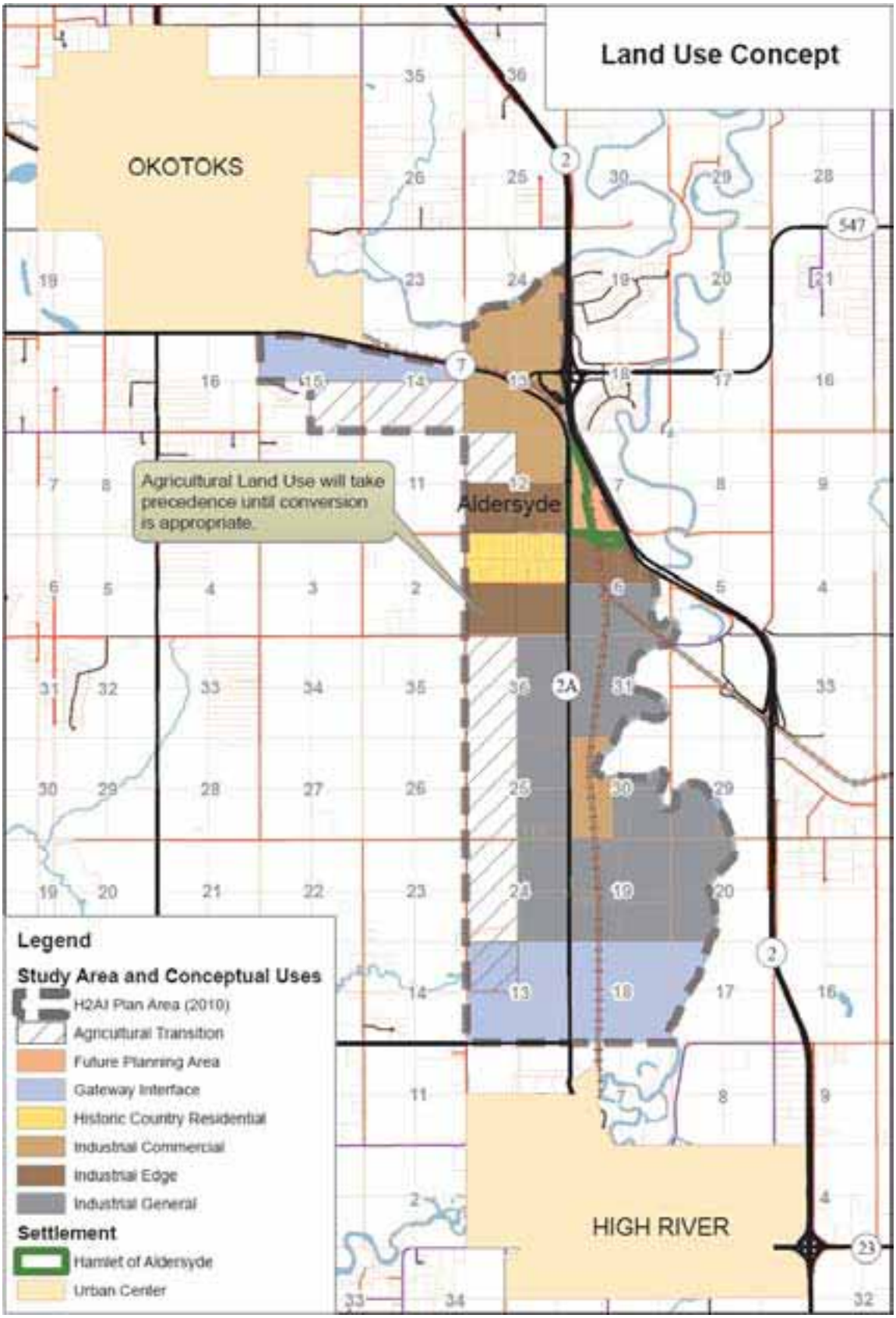
3.4 M.D. of Foothills Municipal Development Plan

The Town of High River and the MD of Foothills share many values, such as using land more efficiently and protecting agriculture and environmentally or culturally significant areas from development, and, making development decisions that consider the environment, economics and social implications.

An important implementation tool for the Municipal Development Plan has been the Highway 2A Industrial Area Structure Plan (H2AIASP)[8] which encompasses an expanded area of land on the west and east sides of the Highway 2A corridor north of Highway 543, between High River and Aldersyde (see Figure 5). The primary focus of the H2AIASP is to provide opportunities for a variety of industrial and commercial development options along the Highway 2A corridor. This corridor will act as a regional industrial corridor and business hub which will benefit surrounding communities by providing opportunities for co-location of complementary industry, which in turn will provide the Highway 2A sub-region with enhanced prospects for investment and employment opportunities. The close proximity of the Highway 2A corridor to the annexation area provides the opportunity to focus on planning for residential and mixed use development options that are not industrial related, and capitalize on the future employment opportunities that may be generated.

Since the south section of the Highway 2A corridor is located within the "Gateway Interface" area adjacent to High River, the proposed policies will ensure that the character of the corridor and its urban form is upheld and enhanced through the development of a distinctive and inviting gateway into High River.

Figure 5- Highway 2A Industrial Area Structure Plan- Land Use Concept



4 High River Local Context: Defining Direction

A number of plans and studies have been undertaken that have provided input and direction to the GMS including the following:

4.1 High River Town Plan

As required by the *Municipal Government Act,* the Municipal Development Plan (Town Plan)[9] is the key planning document for the Town of High River. The Town Plan, was adopted in 2009, and provides a broad policy framework for future land uses for all areas within High River, as well as for the provision of municipal services. An important theme of the Town Plan is sustainable growth management, which warranted the development of this Growth Management Strategy as part two of the Town Plan. The Town Plan outlines different policies that are directly related to the GMS and future growth within the town.

The GMS relates to both the newly annexed areas as well as the undeveloped lands within the existing built-up area. On the other hand, the Town Plan policies relate to all areas of the town.

Key policies that relate particularly to the newly annexed land are listed below:

- Encourage a mix of housing types and forms that are integrated within all new residential neighbourhoods.
- Establish a minimum density that all new residential areas must achieve, and implement this through new and revised Area Structure Plans.
- The design of new neighbourhoods shall be encouraged to include compatible non-residential uses, such as small local commercial services, home based businesses and public uses that serve the needs of area residents, to help create neighbourhood identity and bring basic services closer to residents.
- Require community and building design that promotes walkability and interaction between neighbours.
- Pedestrian sidewalks and pathways must be extended to each new community and employment area to ensure that a contiguous system is maintained.
- Provide safe pedestrian pathways and sidewalks that facilitate access to parks, natural features, employment zones and provide connectivity between neighbourhoods.
- Encourage road patterns for new development that respect and reflect the historical grid and lane road patterns.
- Review existing road and lane standards, along with their associated boulevard tree planting and landscaping requirements.
- The Town shall encourage building forms, site layouts and neighbourhood designs that facilitate social interaction. This includes such concepts as pedestrian friendly streetscapes and formal and informal gathering spaces.
- Locate new schools within easy, safe walking/biking distances to neighbourhoods and bus access routes.
- Wherever possible, the Town should facilitate the adaptive re-use of historic buildings in order to

preserve the identity and history of High River's built environment, and demonstrate a commitment to sustainable building techniques.

- As new areas are planned the Town shall ensure the design of the parks and open space system provides pathways linking major open spaces, neighbourhoods and linear corridors.
- Create opportunities to provide increased public access to waterways in the town such as through extensions of the Happy Trails system.
- Ensure that planning efforts to conserve natural features in and around High River are initiated well in advance of urban expansion or development of the surrounding lands.
- Respect and support existing agricultural operations that are located within the town boundary until such time as those are required for urban growth purposes.

4.2 High River Infrastructure Master Plan

The Infrastructure Master Plan (IMP)[10] was completed by ISL Engineering Limited, for the Town of High River in 2011. The intent of the IMP was to review long term infrastructure needs of the town growing to a population of approximately 50,000. The study focused on the following tasks:

- To inventory and analyze the existing Town infrastructure under existing conditions.
- To determine what, if any, upgrades are needed for the existing Town infrastructure to meet present Town needs.
- To determining what upgrades are needed to allow for future growth to occur.
- To develop plans for future growth. Location and timing of development can be coordinated with the availability of adequate infrastructure.

The IMP provides valuable information on how road and utility infrastructure can be provided to the annexation area.

4.3 High River Growth and Environmental Survey

In 2009, the Town of High River retained Dillon Consulting Limited to complete a Growth and Environmental Survey[11]. The purpose of the study was to provide the Town with recommendations on the most suitable locations for future development that would minimize conflict with existing land uses and man-made features, protect development from destructive natural processes and ensure that the natural environment and water quality were not negatively impacted. The survey focused on lands extending 2 miles (3.2 km) out from the old town boundaries, and includes the annexed area.

The study explained that, when future development begins to encroach on the surrounding environment, and without proper planning, the conditions that communities value, such as water quality, natural areas, and wildlife habitat may become compromised. Based on the results of an evaluation of a range of environmental factors the study identified areas with high development potential, and other areas where further study should be completed before development occurs.

Three types of additional studies have been recommended for certain areas within the survey area, to be conducted before development can occur. These studies are:

- Environmental Assessment to analyze sensitive vegetation and wildlife corridors.
- Heritage Resources Impact Assessment to review the potential historical resources.
- Further flooding analysis in certain areas to evaluate the risk of flooding.

The GMS considers existing land uses and man-made and natural constraints and incorporates policies to ensure that new developments are protected from destructive natural processes, such as flooding and erosion. The GMS requires that the additional studies as itemized above be conducted as part of preparing future area structure plans.

4.4 High River Open Space Plan

In order to preserve the character and quality of the town and town life in the face of future changes in High River's urban structure, an Open Space Study[12] was commissioned in 2003 to provide principles and guidelines for town development that would recognize the importance of parks, streets and open spaces.

The Plan re-focuses priorities and emphasises the public realm as the most important infrastructure element in town.

The Town of High River Open Space Plan was based on several key principles:

- The Highwood River Valley and the Little Bow River are high quality amenities and ecological corridors, and should be considered as the key organizing elements in the Open Space Plan.
- The open space system should contribute to a high degree of livability, and should be a continuous, walkable network of streets and spaces.
- The fine grain of urban form found in the town core provides a model for new development. Block sizes should be small, streets should be continuous, lanes should be provided, and public open spaces should be linked and easily accessed by all modes of transportation, not just private vehicles.
- Street layout and design is an integral part of the Open Space Plan. Ideally, streets should include sidewalks, boulevards and public street trees on both sides. Street width should conform to the narrowest acceptable width, in order to increase human comfort and use.
- A variety of parks and open spaces should be provided in new developments.

The GMS policies regarding the provision of public open space are built upon the Open Space Plan's key principles.

4.5 High River Recreation, Parks and Culture Master Plan

Leisure programs and services have a paramount and growing role in our community. The Town retained Paul Conard & Associates Ltd. to prepare a Recreation, Parks and Culture Master Plan (RPCMP)[13] in 2007, to measure the viability and feasibility of developing and operating major recreation, park and culture facilities that will accommodate future leisure programs and demands by High River residents and community organizations.

Through the public consultation process, residents indicated that both indoor and outdoor facilities are important to their overall quality of life and can contribute significantly to the economic development and growth within the region.

In order to plan and prioritize future community program and facility development, the RPCMP contains the following recommendations that are related to the GMS:

- Future outdoor facilities to be developed should include spaces for formal and informal outdoor recreation activities that also consider active and passive activities.
- Natural environment/wetland areas and wildlife corridors should be protected to sustain healthy ecosystems for plants, animals, birds and other creatures.
- Future consideration should be given to integrate natural areas, active park spaces and linked recreation corridors with neighbourhoods, existing and future community facilities, the downtown core and schools.
- The Town needs to consider providing future field house facilities and spaces that can accommodate fitness/wellness activities along with formal and informal recreation activities.

4.6 High River MetroQuest Online

MetroQuest Online (MQ)[14] is an interactive planning support tool that evaluates alternative growth future scenarios, shows the potential long-term impacts of the planning decisions we make today, and facilitates the creation of a sustainable community vision. The Town engaged Envision Sustainability Tools Inc. to develop a process for High River via a series of public workshops in 2010, designed to collect input from residents about their choices and preferences for planning High River's future. The major community priorities include:

- Build walkable neighbourhoods;
- Improve air quality by reducing the overall environmental footprint of the town;
- Focus investment on strategies that encourage the use of alternatives such as walking, biking, transit and carpooling;
- Focus on the development of more compact housing that provides lower maintenance housing options and provides easier access to areas likely to have transit service in the future.

4.7 Urban Development Potential in High River

In 2009, the Town of High River commissioned Coriolis Consulting Corp. to complete an Urban Development Potential Study[15] in High River, with the purpose of understanding how much urban development might occur and what this potential growth might mean for future land use patterns. The study examined future residential, commercial and industrial land uses based on past trends and rates of growth and on predicted future population growth. The GMS has used the Coriolis recommendations when crafting future land use opportunities within High River.

4.8 Town of High River Growth Study 2007- 2057

In 2007, the Town commissioned Brown and Associates Planning Group to complete a Growth Study[16], to review the future growth of the town. The study suggested that the town had less than 12 years of land for future growth at the current rate of growth and provided a significant input into the annexation process. It also provided valuable information on future land needs and potential direction of growth.

4.9 Flood Management Master Plan

A Flood Management Master Plan[17] is currently being undertaken with the support of the Town of High River and the MD of Foothills. Both municipalities retained the services of Worley Parsons Limited to complete a comprehensive review of the flood risk areas of the Highwood River from Women's Coulee to Aldersyde and develop a plan that addresses flooding in the area and the infrastructure and safety concerns.

The 2012 Intermunicipal Development Plan clearly documents that the Town and the MD of Foothills have agreed that the extent of the Highwood River floodplain area will reflect the most recent mutually accepted flood mapping data and may need to be amended from time to time.

The GMS acknowledges that the Highwood River floodplain indicated in Figure 9 may need to be amended when the Flood Management Master Plan is complete. This could have implications for areas in the south west and north within the plan area.

5 Annexation

The Town Plan contains a policy (2.15.1.5) that requires, "In conjunction with the MD of Foothills and landowners, prepare a strategy for annexing lands to the town and applications for annexation to the Municipal Government Board".

Following the adoption of the Town Plan in 2009, the Town and the MD of Foothills established a joint process to analyze the options for annexing land to the town. Various studies were undertaken including: the time scale for growth, the future population growth, the amount of undeveloped land within the town boundary, the amount of additional land needed, and, physical constraints to growth.

It was determined that a 30 year time frame should be used for projection purposes and based upon population growth projections of the Calgary Regional Partnership, a High River population of 30,000 in 30 years time should be the target. Based on a survey of undeveloped land within the town, it was estimated that approximately 1,420 acres of land would need to be added to the town to accommodate the 30 year population.

The Intermunicipal Development Plan in place at the time (adopted in 2000) identified land for future expansion. Some of the land in the south had already been annexed to the town in 2002. The remainder, to the north and north west of the town boundary, contained approximately 1,769 acres (716 hectares) of which it was determined that about 1,422 acres (575.462 hectares) are potentially developable. This land then became the subject of the "North Annexation Application" (see Figure 1 -GMS Plan Area).

In justifying the case for annexation before the Municipal Government Board, it was argued that most of the developable land would be used for residential purposes with some support commercial uses. The annexation application was approved by the provincial government in December 2011 and became effective on January 1st, 2012.

In reviewing the terms of reference for the GMS it was concluded that the decision on where future growth within a 30 year time frame should take place had been made as part of the annexation process and that there was no need to analyze other alternatives. Therefore the focus for the GMS would be on the character of future development of the annexation area and the infrastructure and community services that would be required.

6 Population, Employment and Housing Projections

This section will address projections for population, employment and housing for High River over the next 30 years.

Any plan for the future is based on assumptions that past trends will continue into the future in a predicted way. However, forecasts of future population and where that population lives and works are at best educated guesses, which is why it is vital that any plans are flexible enough to respond to any unforeseen events. The GMS is a plan that will change as our knowledge of future trends changes. The GMS is considered to be a "work in progress" and Section 30 of the GMS outlines how the strategy will be implemented and kept up to date.

The GMS is rooted in the assumption that population will continue to grow over the long term, fuelled by a buoyant economy. However, the GMS acknowledges that the rate of growth will respond to short term economic fluctuations. It therefore focuses on total numbers of people, jobs and houses, rather than specific time periods within which targets would be reached. While the GMS makes reference to a time horizon of 30 years, this is mainly for statistical generation purposes and is not a critical time frame. What is more critical is the number of people, jobs and houses that will end up being accommodated in the GMS plan area, whatever the time period.

In preparing the Calgary Metropolitan Plan, the Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP) undertook an in-depth study of future population, employment and housing for the whole Calgary region for the plan period (to 2076).[18] Some of the findings that are relevant to growth of the High River area follow.

6.1 Population and Demographics Analysis

High River's strategic location and diverse economic opportunities have contributed to the community's long-term population growth. The town's population has grown steadily since its incorporation to a population of 12,920 in 2011(federal census). The variability of High River's population growth is indicated in Table 1.

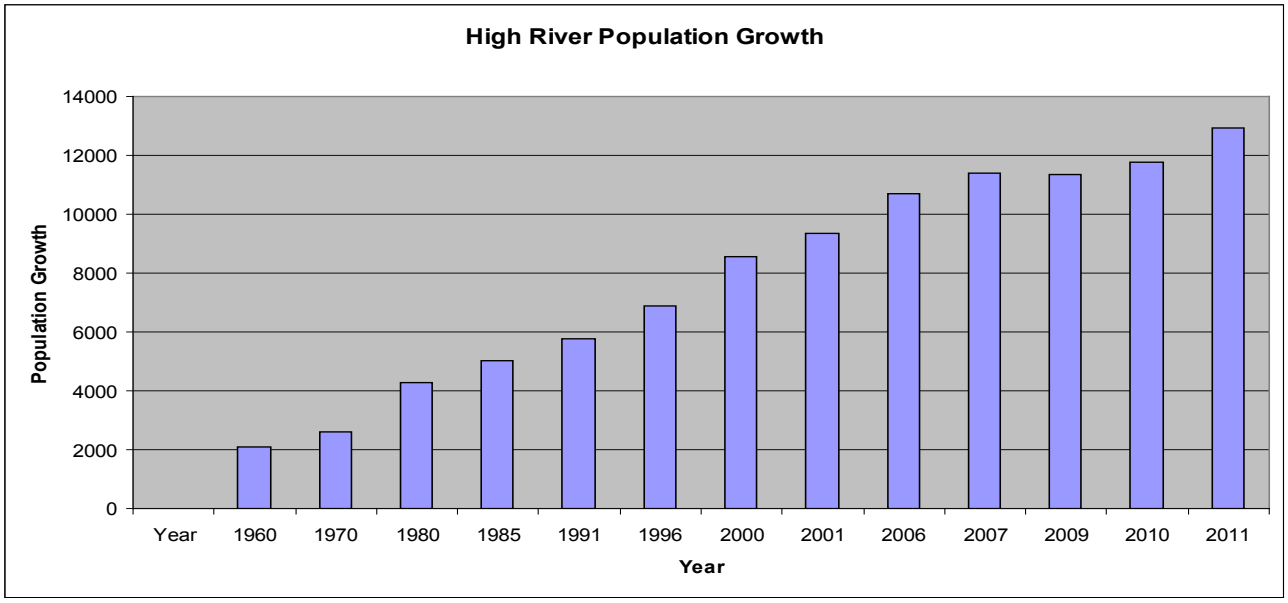
Barring a dramatic change affecting High River's long term economic situation, one may expect annual growth rates to fluctuate in a similar manner. On average, High River's population has increased by 4% annually between 1960 and 2011, and it is assumed that this growth rate will continue over the next 30 years.

Table - 1 High River Population Growth 1960-2011

Census Year	Population Growth	% Change Between Census Years	Annual Percentage Change
1960*	2102	-	-
1970*	2,621	25	2.5
1980*	4,281	63	6.3
1985*	5,009	17	3.4
1991**	6,269	25	4.2
1996**	7,359	17.4	4.6
2000*	8,554	16.2	4.1
2001**	9,345	9.2	9.2
2006**	10,716	14.7	2.9
2007*	11,400	6.4	6.4
2009*	11,346	-0.5	-0.5
2010*	11,783	4	4.0
2011**	12,920	9.8	9.8

Source: * Municipal census, Town of High River[19] ** Federal Census[20]

Figure 6- High River Population Growth



According to the most recent available Statistics Canada census data, people under the age of 20 represented 21 percent of High River population in 2001 and 26 percent in 2006. People between the ages of 20 to 44 years represented 32 percent and 30 percent respectively during the same period. Those between the ages of 45 and 64 years represented 24 percent in 2001 and 26 percent in 2006. The proportion of residents aged 65 and over was 16% and 17.4% during the same period. This percentage of the senior segment of our population was higher than the provincial percentage during the same period in 2001 and 2006, which was 10.4 percent and 10.7 percent respectively. The median age of the population in High River in 2001 and 2006 was 38.4 and 40.7, while it was 35.0 and 36.0 for the province during the same period, which is comparatively higher than in Alberta. This trend is expected to continue for the majority of this study horizon.

The same Census data reveals that the town's population segments under the age of 20, between the ages of 45 and 64 and the senior population (65+) have increased in number, while the number of people between the age of 20 and 44 has decreased.

Although these three population segments increased during the last 10 years, people under the age of 44 seemed to be the dominant group representing 53% in 2001 and 56 percent in 2006 which is higher than the senior population in High River. Although, the percentage of people under the age of 44 is higher than the senior population, the senior demographic has been increasing during the same period. This indicates that overall, High River continues to retain its younger groups and attract the senior demographic at the same time, which illustrates that High River is a community of all ages. The increasing proportion of older residents has implications for provision of appropriate housing, transit, health care, recreation and other services. Thus, the planning process in High River should focus on building communities that provide housing opportunities and community services which cater equally to people of all ages.

6.2 Population Growth Projections

As part of the preparation of the Town Plan, Council (April 13th, 2009) approved the use of the CRP's population projections for future planning of High River. The CRP population forecast identified the following:

- Birth rates in the region will continue to decline but level out at 1.7 children per female.
- Mortality rates will continue to decline at a rate of a 1.0 year gain per decade for females and 1.4 for males.
- Long term regional population will continue to grow, increasingly due to in-migration, but at a slower rate.
- The most significant change in population is the projected growth of the over-65 age group. It will grow at four times the rate of the 15-64 age group.

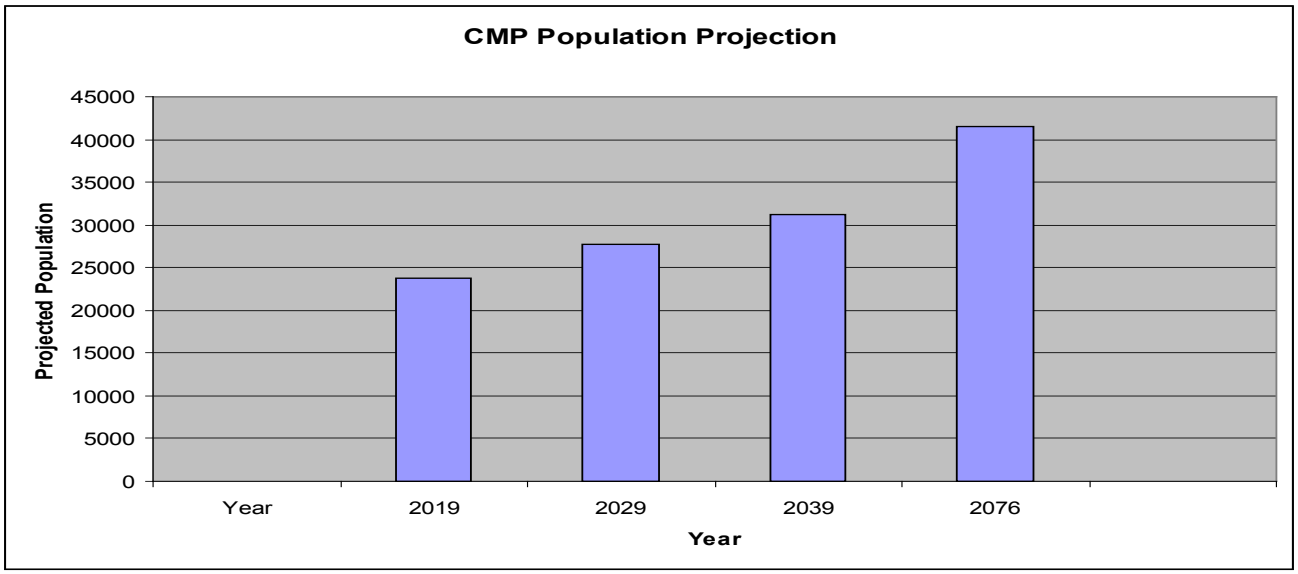
The future population forecast resulting from the CRP study is illustrated in table and Figure 7 below:

Table - 2 Calgary Regional Partnership Population Projections for High River

Year	Projected Population
2019	23,737
2029	27,680
2039	31,138
2076	41,542

Figure- 7 – Calgary Regional Partnership Population Projections for High River

As part of the process that resulted in the 2010/2011 North Annexation Application, the CRP's projection of 31,138 in 2039 was used as the basis for justifying the amount of land that would be required to accommodate future population growth.



6.3 Employment Projections

As the population ages over time, this will result in a proportionately slower growth of the labour force despite a continued increase in the male and female job participation rate.

The CRP study does not analyze the employment levels in each municipality but projections for employment across the region suggest that of the new jobs that will be created as follows:

Forty percent (40%) will be in management, business services, and natural and applied sciences group. These jobs result in demand for commercial real estate;

Twenty three percent (23%) will be in sales and services resulting in demand for commercial/retail real estate;

Twenty one percent (21%) will be in health care, social, cultural and government services resulting in demand for commercial/institutional real estate; and

The remaining 16% are occupations with low demand for land uses such as transportation and construction.

In terms of employment, the total for the region is predicted to be 55% of the total population in 2039. Applying this ratio to High River's forecast 2039 population means that the town's total will be 17,125.

6.4 Housing Projections

In relation to forecasts for housing demand the CRP study takes into account:

- Aging population;
- Occupancy characteristics; and
- Icreasing costs of land.

It was determined that future demand for housing will result in a 14% increase over the population growth due to a continuing trend of increase in the household formation rate.

In predicting changes in the housing stock, the CRP study assumed two scenarios:

- That present trends in housing mix and patterns of growth would continue.
- That there would be significant shift towards higher densities.

For each of these scenarios the prediction for the required housing stock is:

- Under the present trend scenario:
  - New single detached dwellings: 101% increase (total stock would decrease from 60% to 50%)
  - Other ground-oriented dwellings (such as duplexes, townhouses, etc): 193% increase (total stock increase from 20 to 22%)
  - Apartments 276% increase (total stock increase from 20% to 28%)
- Under the higher density scenario:

- Single detached dwellings: 61% increase (stock decrease from 60% to 38%);
- Other ground oriented dwellings: 237% increase (stock increase from 20 to 25%); and
- Apartments 356% increase: (stock increase from 20 to 37%).

It should be noted that the CMP advocates the higher density scenario be pursued.

It is important to gain a rough idea of the amount of land that the 30 year projected population would require and to relate that to land availability.

Using 2009 as the base year, the forecast growth in High River's population by 2039 is 19,000. The CMP requires that 25% of future growth take place within existing built up areas and making an assumption that objective will be reached by 2039 then about 14,000 people will need to be accommodated within the annexation area.

7 Demand and Supply of Land

The Coriolis study examined future population and employment and generates information about the potential demand for residential, commercial and industrial land uses over the 20 year period 2009-2029. Key findings of this study are as follows.

7.1 Residential Development

The Town has pursued a policy of ensuring that there is enough land within the town boundary to provide for future development for about 30 years. The impetus for the 2011 annexation application was to boost the town's land base back up to 30 years (it had decreased to an estimated 12 years).

The 2010/2011 annexation application contains a justification that the annexation area, together with development on undeveloped land within the town, would provide, at historic rates of growth, for over 30 year's growth of the town.

As mentioned above, the time table to reach particular growth targets is not critical. What is critical is how those growth targets are implemented along with the form and character of new development.

A key component of the GMS is laying the framework for the future use of land both within the annexation area and within the existing built-up area of the town. An assumption built into the GMS is the adherence to the density policies in the Calgary Metropolitan Plan. The intent of these policies is to reduce the total "footprint" of new development. Adding more development into existing urban areas where the footprrint has already been imprinted and where services and infrastructure are already available is important. Of equal importance is ensuring that new development on "greenfield" sites are built at higher densities. Higher densities not only ensure more efficient use of land but also reduce costs relating to constructing and maintaining infrastructure.

The CMP target of eight (8) units per gross acre for new residential development (with a split of 35% single detached to 65% multi-family units) in the annexation area is being taken as a given in the GMS. Also an average household occupancy rate of 2.2 persons per unit over the plan period is being used resulting a land demand of approximately 800 acres (324 hectares)to accommodate the projection 14, 000 population in the annexation area.

7.2 Commercial Development

High River has a "regional" catchment population that depends on High River for local needs and is equivalent to about 25% of the High River population. In the 2006 census, this added 2,695 to the resident population of 10,944 for a total catchment population of 13,639.

The proportion of catchment population relying on High River is expected to fall in the future as the Okotoks "regional" population expands. It is expected to decline from 25% to about 16% of the High River population in 2029 and beyond. This would result in an increase in the forecast catchment population of the town from 31,138 to 36,120 in 2039.

The existing total commercial floor space in High River (2008) is approximately 773,000 sq. ft (71, 814 m^2) comprising:

Table - 3 Existing Commercial Floorspace

Item	Floorspace in Square Feet (sq.feet)
Retail/Service	366,000 sq.ft (34, 002 m^2)
Office	241,000 sq.ft (22, 389 m^2)
Hotel/Motel	167,000 sq.ft (15, 515 m^2)

The Coriolis study suggests that High River has a slightly higher ratio of retail/service floorspace than might be expected in a town of its size. At present the ratio is 27 sq.ft (2.5 m^2) per person. This is expected to decline and level out at around 22.5 sq.ft per (2.1 m^2) person by 2039 (as the regional draw of Okotoks increases). Over a 30 year period the retail/service floorspace is predicted to grow by 444,000 sq.ft (41, 249 m^2) to a total of 810,000 sq.ft (75, 251 m^2).

High River functions as a small regional business centre with an average office floorspace ratio of 18 sq.ft (1.7 m^2) per person. Assuming the business centre role continues, the forecast amount of new office space in 2039 is 407,000 sq.ft (37, 811 m^2) for a total of 648,000 sq.ft (60,201 m^2).

Hotel/motel development within the town boundary is difficult to predict because of influences of other places in the region and of the attraction of the Highway 2 and 2A corridors. However, with a tripling of the population over 30 years, it can reasonably be assumed that there will be a tripling of hotel/motel space in the High River area. The study suggests that a significant amount of this is likely to be in the form of small boutique type developments.

The amount of commercial floorspace predicted for the next 30 years relates to the whole town. It is important to get an idea of the proportion of this floorspace that should be accommodated in the annexation area. The Coriolis study provides information on the amount of the existing floorspace that lies within the "greater downtown" area as opposed to the rest of the existing town. The current ratios for downtown to non-downtown areas are as follows:

Table - 4 Downtown/ Non-downtown Commercial Floorspace

Item	Current Floorspace Ratio
Retail/Service	70/30%
Office	76/24%
Hotel/Motel	10/90%

As there is significant space that can still be developed in the downtown area, it is reasonable to assume that the above ratios could continue into the future. That being the case, the following growth in floor space could be assigned to the whole annexation area:

Table - 5 Approximate Commercial Floorspace for Annexation Area

Item	Floorspace Area
Retail/Service	133,000 sq.ft (12, 356 m^2)
Office	97,500 sq.ft(9, 058. m^2)
Hotel/Motel	25,000 sq.ft(2, 322 m^2)

The numbers identified in Table 5 should only be used to provide general guidance when evaluating the scale of future neighbourhood commercial centres. It will be a requirement of future ASP's to demonstrate that the amount of commercial floorspace being provided is supported by the local community.

7.3 Industrial Development

In terms of industrial land, because of the proximity to the Highway 2A industrial corridor north of the town and the 129 acres (52 hectares) of designated industrial lands located in the southeast corner of the town, the Coriolis study concluded that the town has sufficient industrial land at present to last through the 30 year forecast period.

The GMS recognizes the needs and importance of industrial lands, however, because of the recommendation of the Coriolis study and to be consistent with the North Annexation Agreement which was based on the understanding that the annexed lands would be primarily used for residential development, the GMS is not advocating additional industrial land be allocated in the annexation area. Instead, the focus should be on exploring all potential opportunities to facilitate marketing the existing industrial lands within the town, and specifically the industrial lands located in the southeast of the town.

Policies

7.3.1 Land for future industrial development in High River will be focused on the south east area. New industrial development in the annexation area will be discouraged.

7.4 Supply of Land

The total area within the annexed lands is 1,769 acres (716 hectares) and of this the annexation application acknowledged that approximately 347 acres (140 hectares) were undevelopable being in the floodplain areas of the Highwood River. It was determined as part of the annexation application that the remaining of 1,422 acres (575.462 hectares) are potentially developable.

The town has 715~ acres of major undeveloped land within its former town boundary. This includes the following areas (see Figure 8).

Area 1: 15.8~ acres (6.4 hectares) is located in the north central part of High River. It is bounded by Highway 2A and the railway tracks to the east, annexation area to the north and commercial/residential to the south. This land is included in the North Eagleview Area Concept Plan and is currently designated for residential and commercial development.

Area 2: 29~ acres (11.8 hectares) on the southwest of Highway 2A, included in the Ellis Area Concept Plan. These lands are designated for residential and commercial development.

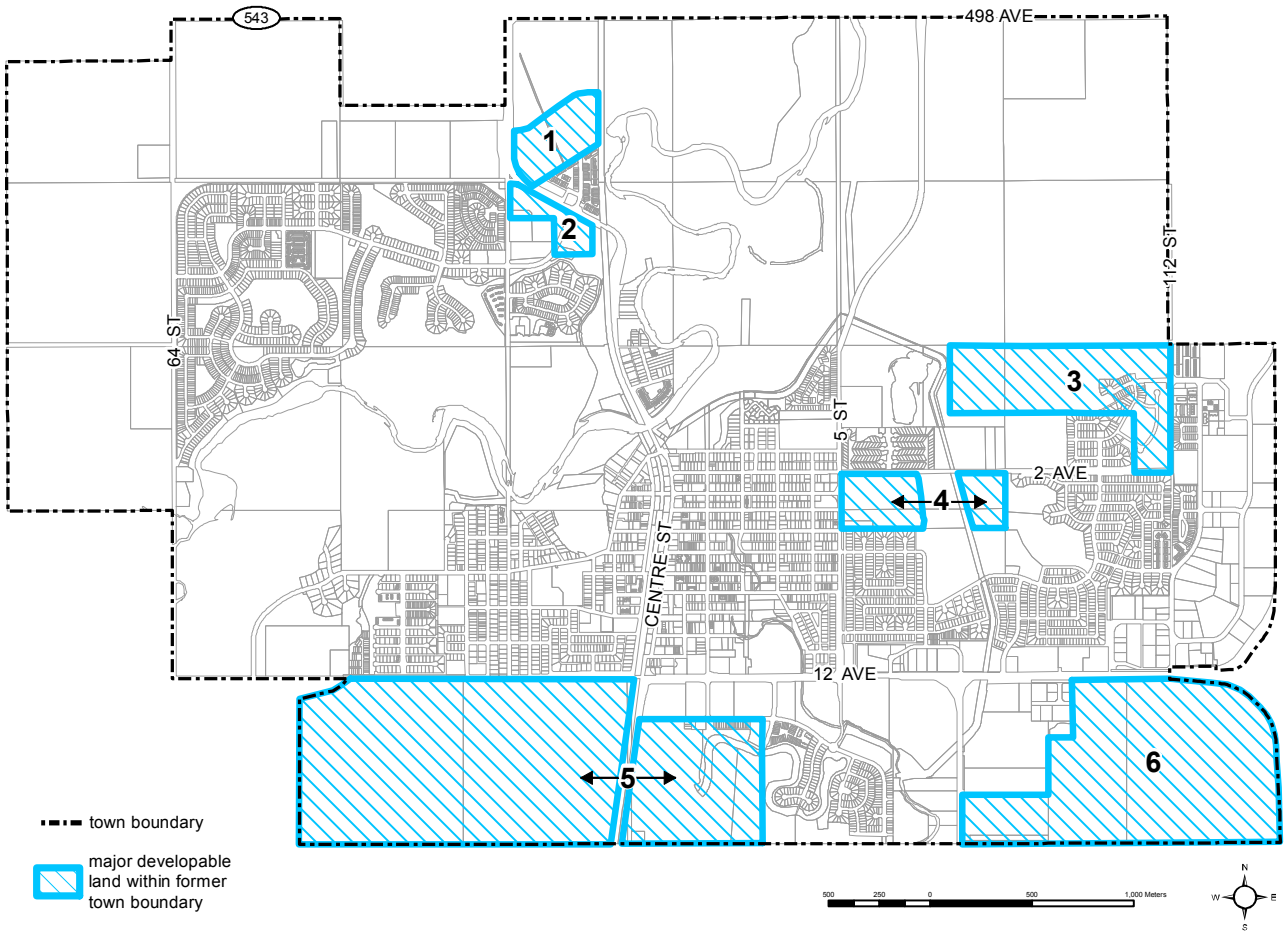
Area 3: 101.6~ acres (41 hectares) in the Hampton Hills area, located in the northeast, abutting the town's former north boundary. The area is included in the Hamptons Area Structure Plan and has been designated for residential development.

Area 4: 39~ acres (16 hectares) located immediately east of 5th Street S.E and south of 2nd Avenue S.E. There has not been any plan completed for this land. The potential future use is residential with some opportunity for mixed use; but the developability of these lands is dependant upon the recommendations of the Flood Management Master Plan which is currently being prepared.

Area 5: 413~ acres (167 hectares) in two parcels, located south of 12th Avenue S.W and 12th Avenue S.E, dissected by Centre Street S. The western boundary is 72nd Street E. There is an Area Structure Plan in place (South High River ASP) for these lands. While lands are proposed for future development in the ASP, they are prone to flooding and the developability of that part west of Centre Street is dependant upon the recommendations of the Flood Management Master Plan which is currently being prepared.

Area 6: 232~ acres (94 hectares) located south of 12th Avenue S and immediately west of Highway 2. These lands were designated for light industrial development, along with frontage commercial development in the former Municipal Development Plan and that designation is carried forward in the GMS.

Figure 8- Major Undeveloped Land within the Former Town Boundary



8 Land Inventory and Analysis

Planning and land use decisions are supported by up-to-date and accurate information on the suitability of land for various uses and on trends in land use. The Dillon Study (2009) provided a substantial body of this information.

Based on the Dillon Study, the North Annexation Agreement between the Town of High River and the MD of Foothills, indicates unconstrained land for potential development within the annexation area of 1,422 acres (575 hectares). This leaves 347 acres (140 hectares) of land located within the floodplain zone which is constrained for development. The topography of the developable portion of the annexation area is fairly uniform and flat.

Areas of slopes greater than 15% are generally considered 'undevelopable' as such areas pose difficulty in construction and management. The Dillon study established that no significant areas of slope constraints exist in the annexed area other than lands located within the flood-risk areas. Therefore, slopes do not pose any constraints for future development of the annexed areas.

8.1 Potential Development Constraints

While 1422 acres (575 hectares) are potentially developable within the annexation area, a wide range of factors may constrain development potential, including environmental conditions, legislative requirements, infrastructure, existing land uses, and development patterns.

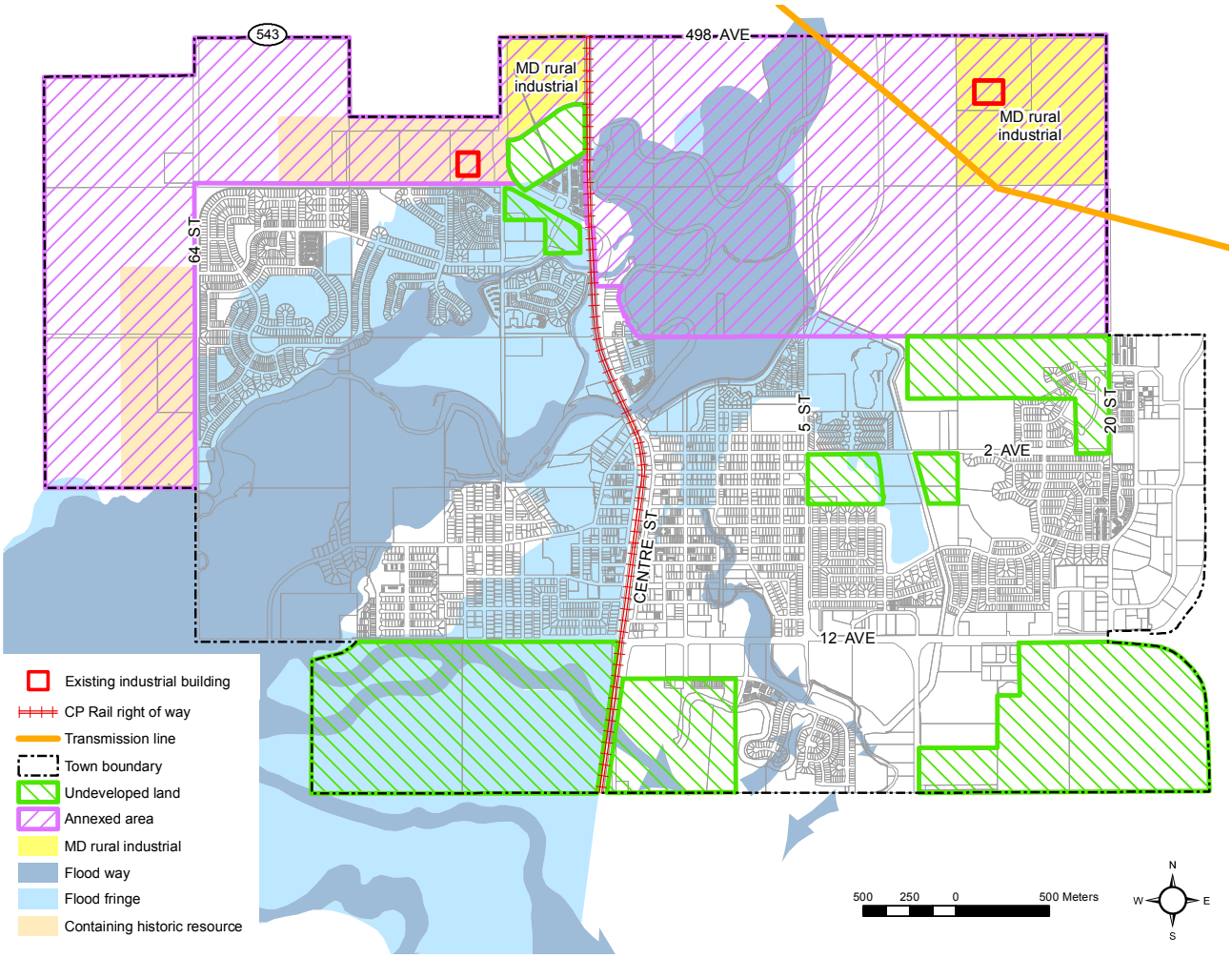
The GMS acknowledges the environmental conditions associated within the Highwood River. The floodplain area has been designated as Special Environmental Area in the 2012 Intermunicipal Development Plan and both the Town and the MD of Foothills have expressed a commitment to protecting and preserving its integrity. The GMS has identified this area to be the subject of a joint study between the Town and the MD of Foothills.

As previously referenced, the Town and the MD of Foothills are undertaking an FMMP to create updated flood mapping for the entire town and the IDP area. This will also include the north annexation area. This study may result in boundary of the river floodplain being refined.

Major infrastructure such as highways, railways, electric power facilities, oil and gas facilities, and landfills may also constrain development due to the negative impacts they can cause (e.g., noise or odour). In some cases, development setbacks to mitigate such impacts are required by provincial legislation or by municipal bylaws. These constraints have been taken into account in the GMS.

Figure 9- Development Constraints

Figure 9 illustrates development constraints and opportunities within the plan area that might affect future development.



The existing man-made features within the plan area that pose development constraints are:

8.1.1 Electricity Transmission Line

There is an existing 240kv transmission line traversing the plan area, which runs northwest-southeast through the northeast section of the annexed lands (see Figure 9). The existence of this transmission corridor running diagonally across the future residential communities within the plan area poses a constraint to future development.

As the existing line is projected to be decommissioned in the future, theTown has officially requested the service provider (Altalink) to remove the line so the Town can better address the planning issues within the north east area.

If its determined that the transmission line must be retained, a transmission corridor right-of-way will be protected.

Policy

8.1.1.1 The GMS advocates the removal/relocation of the existing overhead transmission line in the NE part of the annexation area, and supports all endeavours in this regard. If the transmission line has to be retained the Area Structure Plan for the area shall ensure that an adequate right-of-way is protected.

8.1.2 Abandoned CPR Line

A portion of an abandoned CPR line runs through the plan area east of Centre Street and crosses 498 Avenue to the north of the plan area. This CPR line right-of-way poses a constraint for future development. The abandoned right-of-way is for sale and the Town has been exploring opportunities to acquire some or all of it, from 498th Avenue south to 12th Avenue. If the Town's effort in this regard results in acquisition of the CPR land, it would provide opportunity to examine potential future uses for the right-of-way. In the interim, the GMS protects the right-of-way and proposes it to be used as part of the Happy Trails system.

Policy

8.1.2.1 The long term use of the abandoned CPR right-of-way south of Highway 543/498 Avenue will be determined as part of a study of the whole length of unused track and for that part within the annexation area, the results shall be incorporated into the Area Structure Plan for the area. In the interim the right-of-way should be used as an extension of the Happy Trails system.

8.1.3 Existing Rural Industrial Land Use

Through the annexation process, it was recognized that there are existing industrial land use zones within the plan area. Section 5.1 of the North Annexation Agreement indicates that:

"Land within the Annexation Territory will continue to be governed by the MD's Land Use Bylaw in place as of the effective date of Annexation until such time as Council for the Town redesignates the land use of such land".

In addition, there are two existing industrial buildings, the former "Anna's Cookies" building in the northwest area and the former aircraft hanger in the north east area (see Figure 9). As indicated in section 7.6 of this document, there is sufficient industrial land within the former town boundaries to cater to 30 year's growth of the town. In addition, approximately 9,000 acres (3642.170 hectares) of industrial land exist in the Highway 2A corridor to the north of the plan area. Therefore, the GMS proposes that the existing industrial land be phased out. Studies of the two existing buildings should take place to determine if they have potential for long term use as mixed use buildings. Should either be removed at some future date, the land use of the site should be compatible with surrounding uses.

Policies

8.1.3.1 All existing rural industrial zoning in the annexation area should be phased out.

8.1.3.2 The two existing industrial buildings ("Anna's Cookies" building in the NW area and the former aircraft hanger in the NE area) are allowed to stay and can be used for mixed uses.If either are removed at some future date, the future use of the site shall be compatible with adjacent land uses.

8.2 Existing Road System

The existing road system within the annexation area provides a basic transportation system suitable for providing access to the existing uses. However, it will have to be significantly improved and expanded to serve development of the annexed lands in the future, including:

- Additional connections wherever feasible to the town's existing road system.
- Provision for active transportation system.

The road network for the plan area is intended to establish a road system to adequately service the residential and commercial areas, establish a well-defined access and provide for connections to existing and future developed areas to the south, west and east of the plan area.

8.3 Heritage and Archaeological Resources

The 90 year old airport hanger located in the north east area has been identified as a potential heritage resource. Additional research is required to confirm these preliminary findings and determine whether the site should be considered for listing in the provincial and municipal heritage registers.

The Dillon Study identified two potential archaeological sites within the annexed lands. A Historical Impact Analysis or archaeological assessment will be required as part of the preparation of an ASP to determine the merit of these sites and any measures necessary to protect them.

9 Municipal Infrastructure

A major factor in achieving sustainable development is determining how and where municipal infrastructure should be built. This includes the quality and quantity of potable water, wastewater capacity, stormwater management and the road network.

Provision of servicing development within the plan area will be in accordance with adopted municipal standards and requirements.

It is the intent of the GMS to guide the rate, location and servicing of development, particularly residential and mixed use development, as a means of accommodating growth in a manner that achieves the GMS goals. In particular, the GMS is intended to minimize municipal infrastructure costs for servicing.

The IMP outlines a number of measures in relation to municipal services and infrastructure for the town that directly relate to facilitating future growth within the town and are summarized below.

Policy

9.1 The "Town of High River Infrastructure Master Plan" (August 2011) should be used to guide the provision of future road and utility services.

9.1 Municipal Water System

The Town of High River receives its water supply from a number of shallow groundwater wells, generally located south of the Highwood River within the Town Boundary. Water is pumped via a network of supply mains to the water treatment plant, located just south of the Highwood River, a short distance west of Highway 2A.

9.1.1 Existing Water System

Under existing conditions, the existing water network performs adequately under average day, maximum day, and peak hour conditions in terms of water pressures.

Generally speaking, the existing water network performs adequately for fire flows and there are no major concerns with respect to fire flow within the town of High River. Fire flows appear to exceed 150 litres per second in most of the town, with much of the town having available fire flow exceeding 300 litres per second.

The older pipes in the existing system need to be progressively upgraded with newer pipes of a larger diameter. Combining this in a program for road work main frame can significantly reduce costs. The IMP recommended the following measures to be taken to improve the existing system:

- Continue with monitoring of water leakage, and target replacement of existing watermains in areas with high water leakage.
- As part of ongoing road works program, smaller diameter watermains (100/150mm) should be upgraded to 250/300mm watermains to incrementally improve fire flows.
- Continue with planned upgrades to the water treatment plant, including the addition of ultraviolet disinfection, on-site sodium hypochlorite generation, and the implementation of filter to waste provisions.

9.1.2 Future Water System

It has been confirmed that there is an adequate water license in place to service the projected population growth of 30,000 people. The following is a list of key recommendations of the IMP related to water supply that should be followed to facilitate future growth and development:

- Construct a new water servicing system.
- Implement a new northwest pressure zone, which can be achieved by development of a new reservoir/ pumphouse in the northwest.
- Construct a water reservoir in the north west of the plan area.

9.2 Municipal Wastewater System

9.2.1 Existing Wastewater System

The piped wastewater system discharges via the main lift station to the wastewater treatment plant, which is approximately 5 kms north of the Town boundary in the MD of Foothills. From there the treated effluent is discharged southeast over 10 kms to Frank Lake.

The town is divided generally into three wastewater collection service areas:

- Areas north of the Highwood River are serviced via gravity sewers and a number of lift stations and ultimately to the main lift station.
- Areas south of the Highwood River, west of 5th Street SE are serviced, via a combination of gravity sewers, as well as a number of lift stations, ultimately to the main lift station.
- Areas east of 5th Street SE, plus the Montrose area, are serviced via gravity sewers and numerous lift stations to the gravity service along 5th Street SE, then to the main lift station.

The Town's existing wastewater treatment plant is an aerated lagoon system with four cells. The plant uses three air blowers, installed inside a blower building, to supply the required air to the lagoon system.

The current aerated lagoon system is considered one of the best practicable technologies for population less than 20,000.

The IMP noted that there are a number of concerns about future discharge into Frank Lake, including nutrient loading. This would most likely either necessitate more stringent effluent requirements, or potentially an alternative discharge location.

The IMP concluded that the existing wastewater system performs very well under current conditions and does not necessitate any action, other than the adoption of a program of monitoring the sewer under High Country Drive and the sewer from the Montrose forcemain, to ensure that there are no remaining stormwater service connections to the sanitary sewer.

9.2.2 Future Wastewater System

In addressing the future needs of the Town, it is necessary to consider how future development areas will be serviced by the wastewater collection system without causing problems for existing development areas as well as how to deal with topographical constraints within the town.

The wastewater treatment plant will need to be upgraded to provide the capacity to service a population of 30,000. In addition to increasing the capacity of the treatment plant, an additional lift station servicing the north/northeast area would be required. This would be located either east or west of the river, depending on availability of a right-of -way west of the river. The northwest will likely require a lift station to be serviced by gravity to the treatment facility; though the topography may be required a more detailed review of as well as analysis of a long term wastewater network to service additional lands around the town. The IMP also identified the following upgrades to the existing system to allow growth and development to proceed in the future:

Prior to any development taking place in the annexation area, ensure provisions are made to:

- Increase the capacity of the northwest lift station;
- Increase the capacity of the sanitary system along 5th Street SE between 5th Avenue SE and the main lift station;
- Expand the capacity of the existing wastewater treatment plant; and
- Provide for improvement to the efficient discharge into Frank Lake.

9.3 Municipal Storm Water System

9.3.1 Existing Drainage Patterns

Within the town of High River, the stormwater drainage system consists of:

- Gravity driven pipe drainage (i.e. storm sewers and culverts).
- Lift stations and forcemains.
- Surface drainage infrastructure including:
    - Curb and gutter systems.
    - Ditch/ Swale Drainage.

In addition, some drainage in undeveloped or open areas is achieved by uncontrolled overland drainage.

Drainage in most developed newer areas is curb and gutter drainage with collection to storm sewer systems, which discharge to either the Highwood River, the Little Bow Canal, or the Little Bow River. In older parts of town, drainage is a combination of surface drainage along streets to either limited storm sewer pickup locations, or to swales/ditches. Areas immediately adjacent to the Highwood River drain directly overland to the river in some cases.

It is noted that generally speaking, areas in the western part of town (west of 9th Street SE) drain by gravity, while areas in the east require pumping via lift stations for ultimate discharge. Stormwater retention ponds are prevalent in newer areas in the east, south, and northwest.

Although the existing drainage system works well, there are other identified issues that will be addressed during the planning process including river flooding during storm conditions. The Flood Management Master Plan which is currently underway will address flood issues within the town.

9.3.2 Future Drainage Patterns

To develop the newly annexed land and the major undeveloped land in High River, a stormwater drainage system is required to collect and control the increased runoff these areas will generate in a way that minimizes environmental impacts. This is best accomplished by collecting storm water runoff by major storm trunk sewers and conveying it to a storm pond where the release rate can be controlled. Based on Alberta Environment regulations, it is specified that post-development flows released should not exceed pre-development flows.

The IMP recommended that future development should meet the following stormwater design criteria:

- Where external flows enter a development site, the developer should design the stormwater system to ensure that capacity is provided to maintain these flows through the property to the ultimate destination.
- Existing patterns and rate of discharge from the site should be maintained.
- In the event of a parcel containing natural wetlands, these should be preserved to the maximum degree possible as part of the stormwater management system.

9.4 Stormwater Management

Traditionally stormwater management practices in urban areas direct stormwater runoff from pervious and impervious areas to storm sewers, which then discharge to a natural body of water like a river, or, from storm sources directly to the natural body of water.

Stormwater ponds are used to reduce the rate at which water is released during major storm events. Stormwater runoff reaching surface water bodies through a storm sewer system are characterized by increased volumes, duration and flow rates, especially during small storm events. These inputs negatively impact the receiving body of water.

Urbanization results in an increase in impervious ground cover and can cause erosion, increase pollutant loading, degrade receiving water's quality, and adversely impact aquatic habitat. When stormwater is managed effectively, drainage systems can balance the objectives of maximizing drainage efficiency and increase water quality, thereby minimizing adverse environmental impacts.

There are a variety of ways to manage stormwater runoff in urban areas for both water quality and quantity control, including storage facilities such as wet ponds, dry ponds, wetlands, Low Impact Development (LID), and Best Management Practices (BMPs). LID and BMPs can be effective and practical measures to reduce or prevent pollution caused by stormwater. Where possible, LID and BMPs should be utilized to provide treatment prior to water being released into a natural system or a stormwater.

In order to improve water quality and to control runoff from future development, stormwater management facilities (wetlands or wet ponds) should be incorporated in the initial planning stages for any portion of the plan area. These are typically constructed by developers when local areas are developed and should be designed to integrate into the existing storm network.

In order to minimize the number of small stormwater management facilities, it is recommended that larger provision of these facilities should be examined at the ASP level.

In review of the IMP and the best management practices, when designing stormwater management facilities, the following measures should be considered:

- Encourage community planning and design that reduces the overall demand for water and minimizes the extent of impervious surfaces.
- Encourage the design of public and private landscaping that reduces the need for water, xeriscape design or alternatives that promote water conservation.
- Stormwater management facilities should make provision for trails for passive recreational activities.
- Ensure stormwater management issues are considered at the catchment and sub-catchment level, and take into account the need for site specific solutions and incorporate Low Impact Development and Best Management Practices.
- Stormwater management facilities should be landscaped according to the Town's landscape standards.
- All design and installation of stormwater management facilities should be in compliance with Alberta Environment and Water and Town standards.

Policies

9.4.1 Future storm water ponds should provide for passive public recreation and adopt best management practices in methods of construction, including "bio retention".

9.4.2 Use natural features (drainage and vegetation patterns) to increase onsite infiltration and minimize runoff.

9.5 Transportation Network

9.5.1 Existing Network

Transportation network planning for High River has been undertaken in a study[21] prepared by Bunt & Associates in 2006, and accepted by Council in January 2007, and also in a study by ISL Consulting (accepted by Council in October 2011).

High River is presently serviced by a number of highways under the jurisdiction of Alberta Transportation. These are Highway 2A, Highway 2, Highway 543/498th Avenue and Highway 23. The capacity of these roadways is considered adequate for the existing needs of the community, but further growth may necessitate future upgrading.

Alberta Transportation is currently completing a major interchange at the intersection of Highway 2 and Highway 543/498th Avenue. The completion of Highway 543/498th Avenue extension together with the construction of

the interchange will likely increase development pressure in this area. However, during the IDP review process, both the Town and the MD agreed that it is in the best interests of both municipalities to provide industrial traffic a safe and efficient route between Highway 2 and the Highway 2A Industrial Corridor that does not go through the town. The Highway 543 extension along 498th Avenue provides this route.

In order to maintain the efficiency of this route, both municipalities agreed that accesses to it both from the north in the MD and the south in the town should be carefully managed in accordance with Alberta Transportation standards.

The Calgary Metropolitan Plan recommends that member municipalities should "identify and encourage the protection of scenic corridors and major viewsheds." In addition, Section 6.3.4 of the 2012 IDP states that "it was agreed by both municipalities that an access management strategy should be prepared for this area. In addition a set of design guidelines should be developed to preserve the visual character of this gateway area." The proposed joint strategy will review access to Highway 543/498th Avenue, in conjunction with Alberta Transportation standards and the interests of both municipalities.

Policy

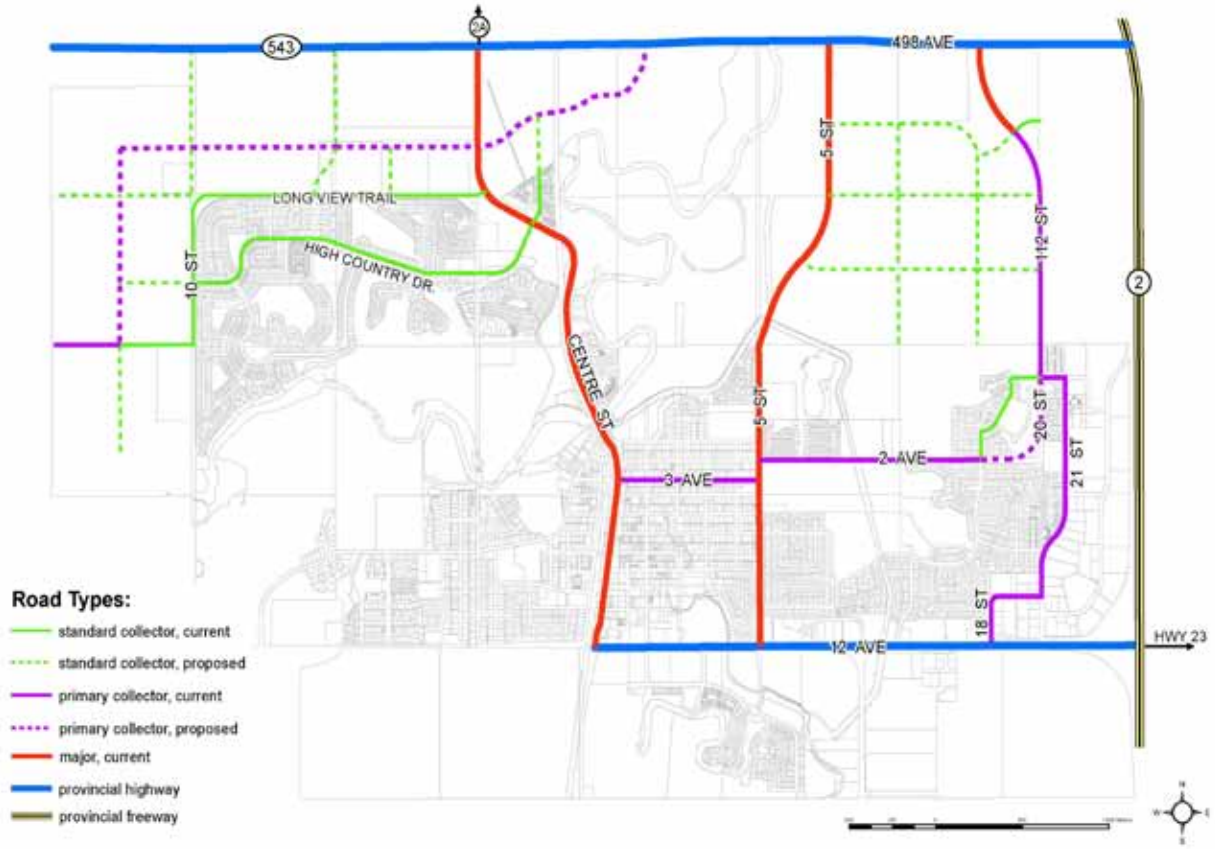
9.5.1. The Highway 543/498 Avenue corridor is considered to be a "scenic corridor." The character of this corridor and views of the mountains should be criteria used to judge the merit of all future development adjacent to south side of the corridor

9.5.2 The Highway 543/498th Avenue shall be the subject of a joint study with the MD of Foothills in accordance with the provisions of the 2012 Intermunicipal Development Plan.

9.5.2 Future Network

On the basis of the macro-level and micro-level analyses summarized in the IMP, a future network plan has been developed for the town. The long-term plan extends the existing network, providing a well-connected network, and is shown on Figure 10.

Figure 10 - Future Transportation Network



The following roads have been identified as standard collectors, primary collectors, major collectorss, and together with the provincial routes provide a well-connected major network for the movement of vehicles and goods throughout High River. This network includes:

- Longview Trail (West of High River to Centre Street)
- 5th Street East (Highway 543 to 12 Avenue South)
- 12th Avenue South (Centre Street to Highway 2)
- 10th Street W (Highway 543 to Highwood River)
- Centre Street (South of 12th Avenue S)
- 10th Street E (South of 12th Avenue S)
- 18th Street E (South of 12th Avenue S)
- 20th Street E (Highway 543 to 2nd Avenue S)

In conclusion, the existing transportation system with recent upgrades including the extension of High Country Drive, twinning of 12th Avenue east of Centre Street and the extension of Highway 543 across the Highwood River, the existing roadway network largely operates well and does not entail any urgent upgrades. The IMP provided the following recommendations for the town's anticipated future growth:

Northwest Growth Area - provide a collector grid centred on Longview Trail as a key east-west access route, parallel to Highway 543. Following the extension of High Country Drive to Centre Street, realign Longview Trail to connect directly to Centre Street at the existing 7th Street intersection. The alignment of Longview Trail and 7th Street should be considered in detail at the ASP level, as the schematic version shown on the proposed network is geometrically awkward. The routing of Longview Trail at the west town limit should be discussed with the M.D. of Foothills.

Northeast Growth Area – provision of at least one additional internal north-south roadway between 5th Street and 20th Street, serving local access and circulation within the anticipated residential communities. In addition, provision of a maximum of three east-west roadway connections between 5th Street and 20th Street (with some extending farther east or west as needed,) so that the need for additional major arterial connections between 5th Street and 20th Street north of 2nd Avenue is avoided. The central route of these three roadways ("North Boulevard") should be protected to provide a "focal point" for the area.

North Growth Area – Provision of a single collector road from the existing intersection of Centre Street and 7th Street NW east to a new intersection with Highway 543/498th Avenue at a location approximately ½ mile east of Highway 2A. As Highway 543/498th Avenue and Centre Street are protected corridors, no additional access points are feasible.

Policies

9.5.2.1 Provision shall be made to protect the rights-of-way of Highway 2A and 5th Street to allow for twinning of the roads in the future.

9.5.2.2 The future transportation network should be as indicated on Figure 10

9.5.2.3 Access points from major roads should be in accordance with Figure 10.

9.5.2.4 Area Structure Plans shall indicate how new development areas will connect to existing developed areas.

9.5.2.5 Neighbourhood Outline Plans shall indicate the methods of traffic calming to be used to reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.

9.5.2.6 The Area Structure Plan for the North West area should consider the location of a future pedestrian bridge over the Highwood River and pedestrian connections to it.

9.5.2.7 Neighbourhood Outline Plans should indicate how alternative transportation could be integrated into new development areas.

9.5.2.8 Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans shall indicate the provisions to be made to accommodate future transit infrastructure.

9.5.2.9 Area Structure Plans shall identify where off-site infrastructure is required to allow the area to be fully developed.

9.5.2.10 All new development must contribute to off-site infrastructure through "off site levies".

9.6 Public Transit In High River

Public transportation provides people with mobility and access to employment, community resources, medical care, and recreational opportunities. It benefits those who choose to ride, as well as those who have no other choice. "Public transit represents a valuable alternative to car use for most city dwellers. But it provides an especially critical link to opportunity for those who have limited choices—including the young, elderly, disabled and lower-income Canadians."[22]

The incorporation of public transportation options and considerations into land use planning can help a community expand business opportunities, reduce sprawl, and create a sense of community through transit-oriented development.

Areas with good public transit systems are economically thriving communities and offer location advantages to businesses and individuals choosing to work or live in them. Public transportation also helps to reduce road congestion and travel times, air pollution, and energy and oil consumption, all of which benefit both riders and non-riders alike.

Currently, there are no scheduled accessible public transit services in High River. High River Shuttle operates a for-profit commuter bus between High River and downtown Calgary in the AM and PM peak periods on weekdays only. In addition, High River's Handi-Bus provides transportation for physically challenged and senior citizens of High River.

In November 2009, the Calgary Regional Partnership Executive Committee approved the Calgary Regional Transit Plan. Objectives of the Calgary Regional Transit Plan is to significantly increase timely and reliable travel options for residents through the development and implementation of regional and local transit services throughout Calgary region. Short term and long term priorities of the Calgary Regional Transit Plan identified the introduction of regional transit service between High River and Calgary as one of the key initial routes in the regional transit strategy[23].

Although the provision of a transit service in High River may not happen in the short term, it is important that our community's growth takes into account the provisions of a range of travel options for current and future residents. The ability to conveniently walk, cycle, drive or take transit to reach daily destinations is important for creating healthy and complete communities. Thus, provision of future transit infrastructure will be addressed at the ASP and NOP stage of planning. This will include an examination of possible bus routes and location of bus stops.

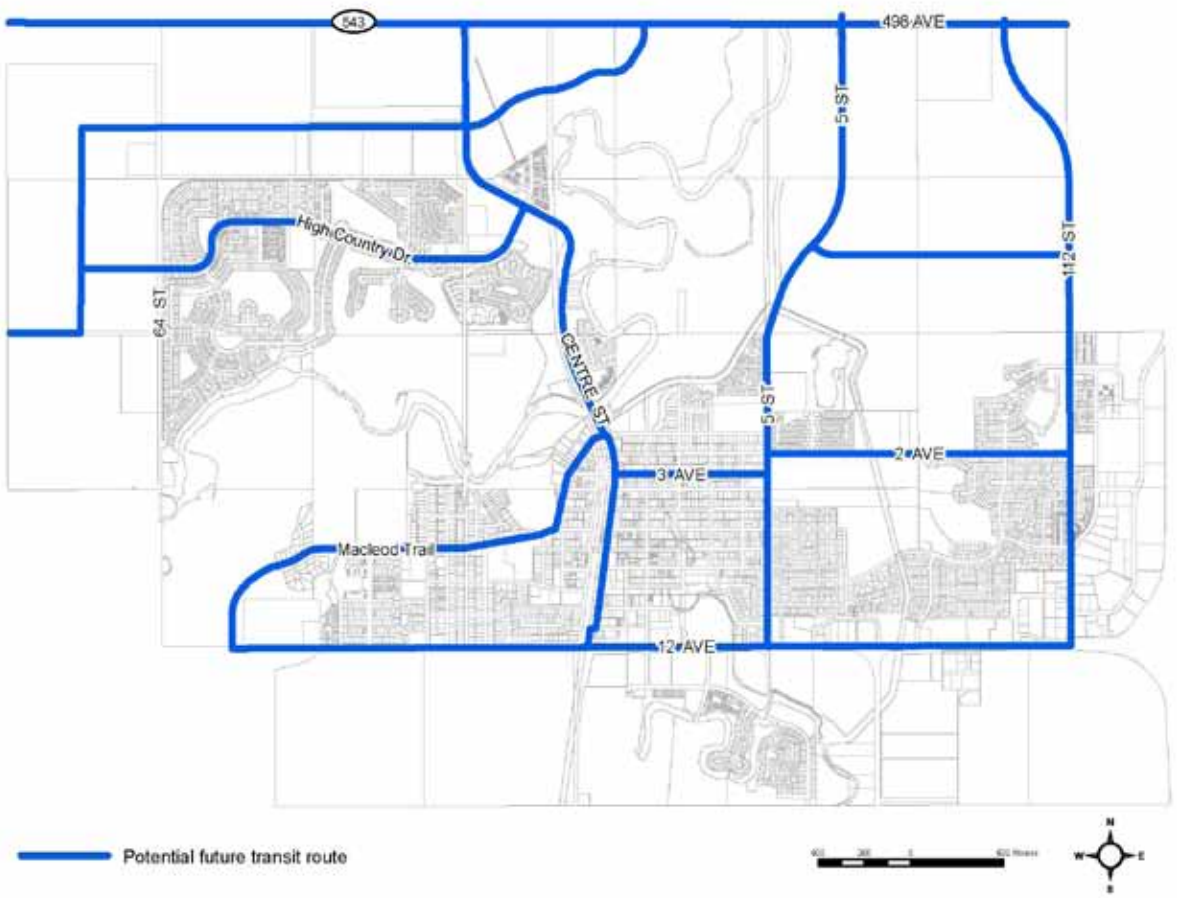
Figure 14 illustrates potential future transit major routes in High River.

Policies

9.6.1 Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans shall indicate the provisions to be made to accommodate future transit infrastructure.

9.6.2 High River will Continue working with the Calgary Regional Partnership on potential regional transit system

Figure 11 – Potential Future Transit Routes Overlay



10 GMS Special Study Areas

The GMS has identified two special study areas that are located within the plan area as illustrated on Figure 12. The first is the "triangle" area, which has been created by the geometry of the junction of 112th Street and Highway 543/498th Avenue and which is detached from the bulk of the northeast portion of the annexation area. In the 2012 Intermunicipal Development Plan, the Town and the MD are committed to completing a joint study of the country residential area adjacent to the eastern boundary of the town. The GMS recognizes the importance of including the 'triangle' area as part of this joint study.

The Town's interest in the triangle special study area is primarily focused on collaboration with the MD of Foothills in planning and development at the Town/MD border, as the country residential area may eventually be annexed by the Town. Joint efforts between the Town and the MD of Foothills to plan land use and services will provide many benefits to both municipalities and residents of the area, including achieving the most compatible land use and transportation network.

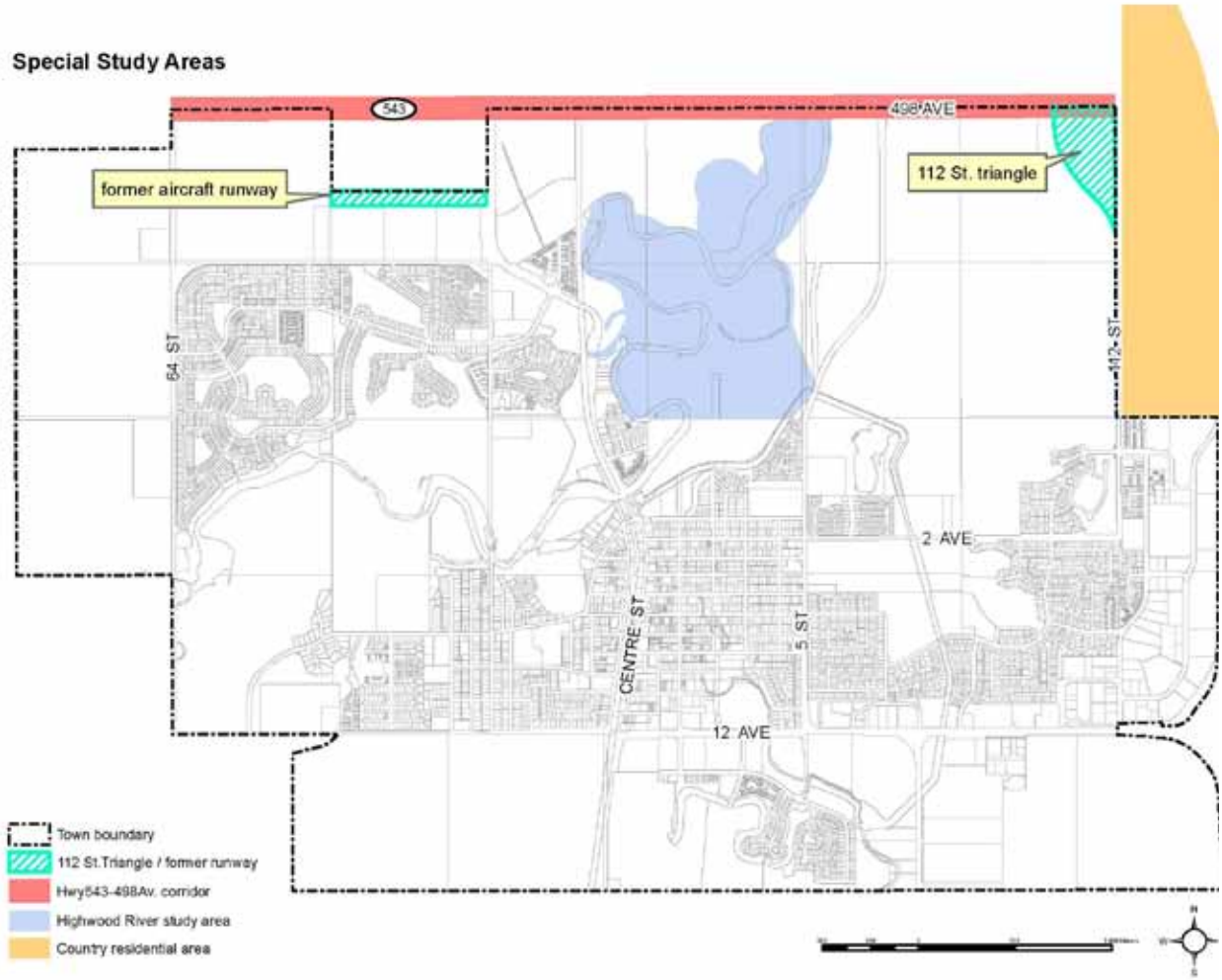
The second special study area identified by the GMS is the strip of land, formerly an airstrip, located south of the Agricultural Society grounds. This land is currently the subject of discussions between the Town and the Agricultural Society as to what future uses should be. The results of those discussions should be incorporated into the future Area Structure Plan for that area.

Policies

10.1 The land owned by the Town of High River adjacent to the south boundary of the Agricultural Grounds shall be the subject of detailed discussion between the town and the Agricultural Society and the results incorporated into a future Area Structure Plan.

10.2 The Town shall participate in a joint study of the country residential area adjacent to the eastern boundary of the town in accordance with the provisions of the Intermunicipal Development Plan. In consultation with the MD of Foothills, the land within the "triangle" formed by Highway 543/498 Avenue, 112th Street and the 112th Street "connector" may be included in this joint study.

Figure 12 – Special Study Areas



11 Cost of Growth

High River, in common with municipalities across the country, is experiencing increasing difficulty in keeping pace with the need to maintain and upgrade services, especially road and utility infrastructure. This in large part is due to the huge increase in development that took place in the 1950s, 60s and 70s coupled with the dramatic increase in car ownership that resulted in suburban developments of relatively low density.

Infrastructure for new development is provided by developers but it is the municipality that takes on the responsibility for ongoing maintenance and replacement. Because of the maintenance and replacement costs associated with the post second world war growth spurt, it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain standards of servicing today. The general public is resistant to increasing property taxes to provide the extra revenue needed and municipalities are having to examine creative ways of providing the necessary funding. While this implies a national and provincial approach to the issue, each municipality has a responsibility for ensuring that new development in the future pays for a fair share of cost and does not onerously burden future generations. This is a balancing act between, on the one hand, accommodating new development and keeping property taxes relatively low, and, on the other hand, not having excessive operating costs in the future.

The mechanism for ensuring that the capital cost of the infrastructure for new development is paid for by developers is the "Subdivision or Development Agreement". These agreements are applied to any new development that requires new infrastructure and is a well established system across the province. Such agreements can also build in contributions to costs that relate to "off-site improvements" necessitated by the development. Examples are the need for traffic signals or a connecting piece of infrastructure linking the development to adjacent areas. This agreement mechanism may offer one opportunity to take long term operating costs into account in short term capital cost decisions but a more detailed examination is out of the scope of this plan to consider and will depend on the outcome of senior government decisions. Having said that, the more that can be done to reduce the actual cost of new development, the better. There are three ways that the GMS is contributing to this.

Firstly, by encouraging higher densities for new development in the future. There have been a number of comprehensive studies undertaken in Alberta and at the national level, that conclude that higher densities save money because more people can be serviced from the same length of roadway or utility line and because higher densities result in less vehicle miles travelled.

Secondly, by encouraging development within the existing built up area, especially in those areas where roads and utilities are either already in place or can be provided relatively easily, takes advantage of those existing services and means correspondingly less infrastructure has to be built in new areas.

Thirdly, encouraging reduced roadway standards could result in less up-front cost as well as less long term operating cost.

Policies

11.1 In formulating Development/Subdivision Agreements to cover on site infrastructure costs of development, appropriate long term operating costs should also be included.

12 Growth Management and Smart Growth Principles

Smart Growth[22] is a term applied to describe a number of principles that address issues surrounding community planning and development. New development projects, as well as infill projects and redevelopment, are certain to continue in the future. Smart Growth is supportive of this growth, but recognizes that future development can have a negative impact on quality of life unless guiding principles that represent the community's values are in place. The issues addressed by Smart Growth principles positively influence the quality of life, the design of new development, economic development, environment, public health, housing, and transportation. These principles work in conjunction with the concept of sustainability, and ensure that fiscal, environmental and social responsibilities are recognized and connected to the development decisions.

The GMS aims at limiting costly urban sprawl, using tax dollars more efficiently and creating more liveable communities. It promotes developments that utilize Smart Growth principles as a foundation to guide development, including the incorporation of the following principles, as identified by Smart Growth Network[22]:

- Mix land uses;
- Create walkable neighbourhoods;
- Direct development towards existing neighbourhoods and communities;
- Take advantage of compact building and neighbourhood design;
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- Provide a variety of transportation choices;
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective; and,
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.

Based on the above-mentioned principles, the GMS envisions a series of mixed use neighbourhoods distributed throughout the plan area. The purpose of the mixed use neighbourhood nodes is to support the development of more complete communities and provide a wider range of housing types and densities, from single family dwellings, duplexes, triplexes to townhousing and apartment buildings. The range of housing forms provided in the plan area will provide opportunities for all ages and stages of a person's life cycle, from starter housing to executive homes to apartments for seniors. This would ensure that people in different family types and income levels would be able to afford a home in the neighbourhood of their choice and also be able to move within the same neighbourhood to different types of housing as their needs change over time. Providing a variety of housing options ensures that a community remains vibrant and inviting to all.

Compact, mixed-use developments with connected streets enable people to work, live and play within convenient walking distance to stores, work, recreation facilities or transit. Data from the National Personal Transportation

Survey showed doubling density decreases the vehicle miles travelled by 38% (Urban Land Institute, 2005). Driving distances are 24% to 50% less in neighbourhoods with a grid layout for streets and mixed uses than in residential neighbourhoods with large blocks and cul-de-sacs (BC Climate Action Toolkit, 2009).

In essence, the concept is to develop a "community of communities", which also includes fostering a sense of place and creating community whereby residents can undertake a wider range of daily activities closer to home, while trips to different destinations can be achieved by walking, cycling, and transit.

In this regard, all new communities should be planned to be complete communities by providing the following:

- A range of housing choices, covering a mix of built form;
- A variety of lot sizes in order to encourage variety in design and sizes of homes;
- Neighbourhood stores and services that can meet the day-to-day needs of residents within walking distance of their homes;
- Infrastructure for a range of transportation choices, including walking, cycling, public transit, and private automobiles;
- Architectural and natural elements that contribute to a local identity and strong sense of place;
- Public spaces, parks and recreation facilities that provide opportunities for residents to participate in cultural events, social gatherings, sports, and outdoor wellness and leisure activities;
- Spaces for community gardens to facilitate social interaction and encourage local food production;
- Local schools, places of worship and community services;
- A connected street, sidewalk and trail network that promotes comfortable, safe and accessible travel;
- Infrastructure and services that are sustainable and cost-efficient over the long term;
- Traffic-calming techniques within residential neighbourhoods;
- Connected walkways, parking lots, greenways, and developments; and
- Reduction of energy consumption by encouraging smaller lots and homes.

Furthermore, the GMS envisions neighbourhood nodes as small scale, mixed use centres that are intended to provideneighbourhood-scale retail shopping, services, and institutional uses in close proximity to housing. The retail scale of the nodes would be of the size to \service only the surrounding residents.

Development patterns impact how people move around. Separating land uses and providing little or no public transportation or safe walking and biking routes fosters greater reliance on motor vehicles. As development becomes more

dispersed, people must drive further to reach their destinations, leading to numerous and longer vehicle trips. Providing sidewalks and cycling facilities encourages people to rely less on their vehicles.

The GMS moves towards creating land use patterns that make non-automobile transportation options viable. This includes designing road widths and parking spaces for actual use. It also means managing the demand for roads by providing required infrastructure design for non-automobile transportation, including bikes, wide sidewalks and future transit infrastructure.

The success of designing and building compact, mixed and complete communities within the plan area should be based on significant contribution from the residents, landowners and stakeholders in High River through a series of meetings, information sessions and workshops.

Smart Growth is a comprehensive approach to how we develop new communities. The incorporation of these principles in the design of new development will result in a sustainable growth approach that balances public interests with private innovation, while promoting long-term sustainability to meet the needs of future generation.

Policies

12.1 All new residential areas should be designed to be compact and walkable.

12.2 A mix of housing choices are to be provided in all new residential areas.

12.3 The average residential density within a Neighbourhood Outline Plan area should be a minimum of 8 units per gross acre.

12.4 Two general residential land uses are to be considered in new areas: low/medium density and high density.

12.5 Secondary suites should be allowed in all new residential areas as a discretionary use.

12.6 Residential development is preferred to be maximum of 400 metres from a neighbourhood centre.

12.7 High density residential areas should be close to neighbourhood centres.

13 Higher Density Residential Development

It is clear that by increasing residential density, many economic, environmental and social benefits can be realised. However, if density is considered in isolation, we risk exacerbating the very problems we are trying to alleviate. Density increase should be carefully considered along with quality design, mixed land use, increased accessibility and greater connectivity.

Areas with higher densities, well-mixed land uses, good accessibility and connected with a variety of transportation options demonstrate less reliance on private cars. These higher density areas allow for greater numbers of people walking, cycling and spending less time commuting. More people walking also means more possibilities for social interaction and fewer opportunities for crime through passive surveillance and more "eyes on the street". In addition, increasing the number of people in an area provides the support many businesses need to survive, as well as creating demand for other community amenities.

Higher density and mixed land use also provides the aging population the opportunity to move from family dwellings to smaller ones in the same neighbourhood. With more people able to comfortably fit within a smaller area, the pressures contributing to sprawl are reduced and environmental benefits can be realized through preservation of natural spaces.

Promoting and accepting higher densities does not spell the extinction of the single family dwelling. Rather it provides a choice to be able to live in such a dwelling in a neighbourhood that also has apartments, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, a school with walking distance, reliable travel options, and greater accessibility for services.

Increasing densities within all forms of development and in specific residential land uses will improve the efficiency of service delivery, transportation and public facilities. In addition, increased densities will reduce the consumption of land required to accommodate future growth.

Key elements needed to make density work include:

- Connected street system - more direct routes, intersection and route options for multiple users.
- Densities located appropriately - higher densities on major roads and around transit and retail nodes.
- Public realm design - streets, parks and civic spaces designed for multiple uses and users.
- Compatible mix uses - shops, restaurants and services close to homes.
- Place parking in alternate locations - on the street, behind the building, underneath or as part of the building.
- Scale, massing, orientation of buildings - building facades engage with the sidewalk and street in front, and frame open spaces alongside.

Newer residential areas in High River have gross residential densities in the range of 5-6 units per gross acre (5-6 units per 0.40 gross hectares). Recognizing the need to maximize development of the annexed and undeveloped lands and ensure economically viable development, the GMS requires that new development should achieve a minimum density of 8 units per gross acre (8 units per 0.40 gross hectares). Applying Smart Growth principles provide guidance to the development industry to ensure design and density are combined to create vibrant and walkable new neighbourhoods.

The actual methods of calculating residential density can be confusing but to ensure future consistency a method of calculation advocated by Calgary Regional Partnership is appended to this document in Appendix B.

14 Intensification

Intensification means an increase in the number of residents and/or jobs in existing neighbourhoods. It is an important pillar of "Smart Growth" principles, as it reduces the future "footprint" of development and the pressure on natural resources at the town's edge, encourages a greater mixing and diversity of land uses, enhances existing businesses, makes more efficient use of existing infrastructure and facilities, and is more affordable for the municipality. Built form and urban design are critical factors in the successful integration of infill or more intensive development into an existing urban context and the achievement of denser, well-designed, pedestrian-scaled neighbourhoods.

The CMP requires that all member municipalities develop and implement, through their Municipal Development Plans (Town Plan) and other planning documents, a strategy and policies to phase in and achieve the overall intensification target of 25% of all new development. This means that a maximum of 75% of new development should be accommodated in new greenfield areas.

The GMS recognizes that the completion of development already approved in existing policy plans on lands within the former town boundary qualify as intensification under the CMP.

Growth should be encouraged in all existing neighbourhoods through intensification and redevelopment provided that it:

- Is in context with the existing neighbourhood;
- Utilizes innovative and creative designs that foster distinctiveness while still respecting the existing character;
- Ensures an appropriate transition between low-density residential areas and more intensive multi-residential or commercial areas;
- Complements the established character of the area and does not create dramatic contrasts in the physical development pattern; and
- Is supported with services and infrastructure.

Policies

14.1 The average density of new residential development should be a minimum of 8 units per gross acre and higher wherever possible.

14.2 All existing statutory plans should be reviewed to assess opportunities to incorporate policies contained in the Growth Management Strategy.

14.3 The land uses of the major undeveloped areas in the pre- 2012 town boundary are anticipated to be as indicated on Figure 15.

14.4 A review should be undertaken to determine a program for upgrades to existing infrastructure.

14.5 A study should be undertaken to determine possible tools that could be used to make intensification more attractive.

15 Road Pattern/Network

Streets are an important component of the network of public spaces, as they are used by all citizens. They provide space for access, recreation and linkages to other neighbourhoods and other parts of the town.

15.1 Modified-grid Street Layout

Traditional neighbourhoods are designed with a grid based street layout. This can be found in some of the older areas in High River, eg. between 9th Street West and 5th Street East. However, the street layout does not necessarily result in a rigid grid system. Street layouts should always respond to local conditions such as topography, water courses, greenways, and the existing street systems of neighbouring areas.

A modified grid street layout uses the combination of "T" streets and the crossroad intersection to produce an opportunity to respond to the natural environment and preserve existing natural features. It creates numerous sites with high visibility that can be used as focal points to terminate a street.

A "T" street creates a termination of the street and provides a site with dramatic visibility for prominent buildings. "T" streets can also be used to slow traffic through neighbourhoods by reducing the length of through-streets and keeping blocks short.

The use of a modified grid pattern for the local road network is important because it will partially mitigate the higher traffic volumes by dispersing traffic from the collectors to the local roads. Additionally, a grid network provides multiple navigation routes which will further reduce traffic volumes on the collector network.

The traffic volumes expected on the collectors will still fall within the Town's standards and the intent is to retain a high level of liveability along these roadways through careful design of the cross sections.

The following are benefits of the modified grid based street network:

- Reduced congestion due to dispersion of traffic on more route alternatives.
- Improved emergency response time because of better connectivity.
- Shorter and more direct walking, transit and cycling distances, increasing the use of these alternative forms of transportation.
- Easier to accommodate higher density developments.
- Creates a solid framework for future re-development.
- Slower and safer vehicle speeds in neighbourhoods due to the shorter block lengths.

Policy

15.1.1 ***New developments should avoid the use of curvilinear road networks that lead to crescents, p-loops and culs-de-sac.***

15.1.2 ***A modified form of the old town grid/lane pattern shall be the basis for the road infrastructure in all new residential areas***

15.1.3 ***Designs for new residential development should feature short blocks, sidewalks on both sides of the roads, rear lanes, narrow widths for travel lanes, boulevard landscaping, and on-street parking.***

15.1.4 ***A modified version of existing roadway standards with reduced asphalt and rights-of-way should be encouraged in new residential areas.***

15.1.5 ***The existing municipal roadway standards shall be revised to incorporate rear lanes, sidewalks on both side of the roads, demarcated parking, bicycle movement, reduced width of streets and traffic calming devices.***

15.2 Rear Lanes

Lanes are an essential part of traditional neighbourhood development that help create pedestrian-friendly street environments and improve the connectivity of a neighbourhood.

The primary purpose of a lane is to access garages, garbage, utilities, etc. It is a special place in the neighbourhood where children learn to ride bikes, where neighbours walk their dogs or stop to chat away from the street in front. It's a safer alternative for walking, cycling or road hockey and is often a semi-public space overlooked by the adjacent residents.

A well-designed and constructed lane provides opportunities for additional housing units facing the lane (Garden Suites), which enhances the sense of community, and contributes to the lane being part of the urban fabric. These additional housing units allow a greater safety factor with more "eyes on the street", allow for increased density and a variety of housing choices. In addition, lanes can also be used to improve area drainage system by offering additional opportunities for stormwater management.

Policy

15.2.1 A rear lane (maximum width of 6.0 metres) should be provided for all new communities to ensure that those communities remain a pedestrian friendly and enhance the safety of the street corridor.

15.3 Complete Streets

A high quality street environment makes for a comfortable, safe, and enjoyable place for residents and visitors. Street environments can also signal activities and welcome users, thereby encouraging lingering, shopping, and engagement. High quality street environments in mixed-used areas are associated with a dynamic economic environment, usually in the form of retail establishments. Elements of quality streets include street furniture such as benches, appropriate lighting, trees and plantings that buffer pedestrians from vehicles, and a consistent interface between buildings and the street.

The GMS promotes the construction, operation and maintenance of a roadway system in a manner that promotes safety for the user and ultimately saves tax dollars. In this regard, roads should be planned and designed as complete streets, accommodating all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, future public transit when appropriate and private vehicles. In addition to any requirements of the municipal servicing standards, the following design elements should be considered for new roadways in new development and when re-designing or re-developing existing roadways:

- provision for the safe and efficient movement of service and emergency vehicles;
- provision for safe on- street bicycle travel;
- optimizing building frontage (i.e. development facing the roadway) to provide a safer and more attractive walking environment for pedestrians;
- spacing of traffic lights that contributes to a safe pedestrian environment;
- access points to residential neighbourhoods that are highly visible;
- treed boulevards between sidewalks and traffic lanes that separate pedestrians from the roadway;
- incorporating traffic calming devices such as speed bumps and 'bumps outs' to enhance pedestrian safety;
- provision of clearly demarcated on-street parking; and
- in commercial areas, reducing mid-block curb cuts for entry/exit of vehicles to parking lots.

Policies

15.3.1 The Town of High River Engineering Standards shall be amended to incorporate the "Complete Streets Standards" which shall include:

- *The right-of-way dimensions for the following street classifications: major, primary collector, standard collector, local and rear lane.*
- *The dimensions of travel lanes and parking/landscaping lanes.*
- *Sidewalks on each side of all roads except rear lanes.*
- *The dimensions for Happy Trails pathways.*
- *The dimensions for those sidewalks that link two sections of the Happy Trails pathway network.*
- *Accommodation of bicycle movement.*
- *Incorporation of traffic calming devices.*

15.3.2 New roadways in all new development in the annexation areas shall follow the "Complete Streets Standards" set out the Town of High River Engineering Standards.

15.3.3 New roadways in new development areas within the pre-2012 town boundary should wherever possible adhere to the "Complete Streets Standards."

15.3.4 The municipal roadway standards should be subject to periodic review and adjusted where necessary as a result of growth, innovations in technology or changes in best management practices.

16 Neighbourhood Commercial Centres

Neighbourhood Commercial Centres (NCCs) are a vital component of a residential community and their location and composition is very important. As with the impetus for walkable communities, the ability to easily meet daily needs and to access services has been a recurring theme throughout the GMS public consultation process.

NCCs are intended to provide for the daily shopping and service needs of nearby residents living in areas within relatively close proximity to the centre. The design and construction of NCCs should fit within the context of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Uses within these centres may include retail stores, food stores, pharmacies, personal services, financial institutions, service oriented office uses (such as insurance, real estate, medical/dental offices, travel services), and/or restaurants. Residential units are encouraged to be built above commercial uses within these buildings. The scale of NCCs should be sized to provide services primarily for residents of the surrounding neighbourhood (considered to be within roughly 400 metre radius.)

The following policies are aimed at encouraging NCCs to be community hubs of activity and vitality, and ensuring that new commercial development primarily serves the areas of new development and do not "bleed" commercial development away from existing commercial corridors, e.x. downtown, 12th Avenue and Centre Street.

Policies

16.1 Neighbourhood Commercial Centres should be designed to provide for the day-to-day retail/ service needs of people living generally within 400 metres.

16.2 The uses that can be included in a Neighbourhood Commercial Centre are encouraged to be: retail/ personal services, mixed uses (including live/work), health care facilities, recreation facilities, day care centres, post offices, open space (playgrounds, pocket parks, etc), libraries, schools, limited office-based employment, emergency and protective service facilities and social service facilities.

16.3 Neighbourhood Commercial Centres should provide pedestrian links to residential areas and the Happy Trails pathway system.

16.4 Neighbourhood Commercial Centres should provide for future transit infrastructure.

16.5 Each Neighbourhood Commercial Centre should be designed with individual flair and character.

16.6 The northwest cell should contain two or three Neighbourhood Commercial Centres, one of which may be large enough to serve the whole area.

16.7 The northeast cell should contain three Neighbourhood Commercial Centres, one of which may be large enough to serve the whole area.

16.8 The north cell should contain one Neighbourhood Commercial Centre.

16.9 No commercial development shall take place adjacent to the south side of Highway 543/498th Avenue or any new access created until the study referred to in Policy 9.5.1.2 has been finalized.

16.10 New commercial development shall primarily be "neighbourhood commercial" (i.e. servicing the adjoining residential area).

17 Urban Fringe Transitioning Development

The urban fringe are those areas located on the edge of the town boundary and beyond the built up lands of the town, although close enough to be subject to future speculative development pressures. Urban fringes are dynamic areas that change with the passage of time. The distinction between urban and rural settlement assumes that layout of a rural area is considerably less dense and characterized by agriculture or similar rural activities. On the other hand, urban areas are characterized by denser residential developments that support manufacturing and service-based industries which make a more intensive use of the land.

Fringe areas are distinctive, with both urban and rural features, which can create the potential for land use conflict.

The newly annexed lands are surrounded by a variety of land uses, including rural and agricultural activities. Developments within the annexed lands located in the north west part of the annexation area (fronting west and east boundaries of the annexation area) should be carefully designed by incorporating appropriate transitioning buffers.

Policies

17.1 Future development in the fringe area of the town should endeavour to protect existing scenic views of the Rocky Mountains.

17.2 The ASP for the north west portion of the annexation area should consider measures ensuring that future development in the fringe areas will gradually transition from urban to a more rural character

18 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for ND

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighbourhood Development (LEED-ND) is a rating system that incorporates best practices and principles of smart growth, new urbanism and green building into a national standard for green neighbourhood design. LEED-ND provides independent third party certification and verification that a development's location and the design principles implemented meet or exceed the high levels of environmentally responsible and sustainable standards. Like other LEED design and construction rating systems, it is a voluntary program designed to evaluate and guide the design and construction of development projects.

Through certification, LEED for Neighbourhood Development recognizes development projects that successfully protect and enhance the overall health and quality of our natural environment and quality of life in new developments. Generally speaking, the rating system encourages the following:

- Preservation of natural areas.
- Higher residential density.
- Smaller parking footprints.
- Promotion of the location and design of neighbourhoods that reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT).
- Creation of neighbourhood patterns and designs that emphasizes vibrant, equitable communities that are walkable and offer mixed-use developments where housing, jobs and services are accessible by multiple transportation options including pedestrian, bike, and public transit
- Promotion of green building and green infrastructure practices that make more efficient use of energy and water and lead to reduction in storm run off.

The GMS encourages the development industry to incorporate the principles of LEED into the design and development of new communities and redeveloped facilities.

Policy

18.1 The design of all new residential communities should attempt to achieve "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighbourhood Design" status.

19 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is an initiative that assists in creating healthy and safe communities through well planned environmental design. It is based on the premise that the design of the physical environment directly affects people's behaviour. It influences the opportunities for crime to occur. CPTED consists of four guiding principles that are used to supplement traditional security (bars, locks, cameras, and fences) by enhancing naturally occurring views or designs. The principles are: natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement, and property/area ownership.

19.1 Natural surveillance

This refers to increasing the perception of risk as would-be offenders fear they may be seen. Seeing and being seen are important aspects of crime deterrence. Natural surveillance guides the placement of physical features such as windows, lighting, and landscaping, which all affect how much can be seen.

19.2 Natural access control

Access control guides the movement of people and/or vehicles entering and leaving a space through the placement of entrances, exits, fences, landscaping, lighting, and other movement control objects (speed bumps). Access control may decrease opportunities for criminal activity by denying criminals easy access to potential targets and increasing the perception of risk for would-be offenders.

19.3 Territorial reinforcement

Physical design can create a sphere of territorial influence that can be perceived by, and may deter, potential offenders. Defined property lines and clear distinctions between private and public spaces are examples of the application of territorial reinforcement. Territorial reinforcement can be created using landscaping, pavement designs, gateway treatments, signs and fences. With proper distinction between public, semiprivate, and private, there is little confusion as to where a person should and should not be. Hence, the increased perception of risk to would-be offenders due to them being 'out of place' in a defined space.

19.4 Ownership/Maintenance

A well maintained home, business, building, or community/public space creates a sense of guardianship and helps deter unwanted/criminal behaviour. Maintenance gives the perception that the area is actively and continuously cared for and that those using the space are present and feel safe, and also cared for, which may deter unwanted criminal behaviour.

Policy

19.1 ***The development industry and the public sector are encouraged to incorporate the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design into the design and development of new communities and redeveloped facilities.***

20 Community Health and Safety (RCMP, Ambulance & Fire Services)

Council is committed to ensuring that the community is adequately protected in the event of an emergency.

The existing fire hall is located on 12th Avenue SE services the town. It also, in conjunction with other municipalities, provides services to areas outside the town. Ideally a fire hall should service an area with a radius of approximatly five kms. Also, the Fire Department Strategic Plan aims to achieve average response time of 10 minutes, 90% of the time for in-town calls.

While present service levels are considered acceptable, with the current fire hall location and road network, the department has been facing challenges in covering some of the existing communities and properties located in the extreme northwest part of the town. A new, preferably two-bay, fire hall will be required to serve the annexation area, and this should be provided in the short term (3-5 years) so as to improve the level of service to the northwest.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) provides protective and emergency services for the Town. Police services will continue to be carried out from its current locations on 12th Avenue SE. However, it is expected that the existing RCMP office will reach its full capacity within the next three to five years. In order for the RCMP to provide sufficient and an efficient services for a population of 30,000, a new facility of similar size to the existing space will be needed in the annexed area.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will be delivered from its current location at 560 9th Avenue SW, but to expand its services to cover a population of 30,000 people, an additional facility will be needed.

Through the stakeholders' consultation processes, it has been confirmed that in order to efficiently service all future communities, a joint facility that provides office and equipment space for the EMS, Fire Services and the RCMP should be provided. All these services agreed that a new joint facility should be located in the annexation area and close to Highway 2A for maximum efficiency.

The existing Town shops are located at 100 3rd Avenue North and 640 7th Street NW. These shops are located in temporary buildings and the sites are undersized. In addition, the Town shop at 100 3rd Avenue North is located in an area prone to flooding. To increase efficiency of operations, it has been determined that at some point in the future a site for a larger Town shop that accommodates all operations, equipment and supplies will be required.

Policies

20.1 The 2012 annexation area is to accommodate a future site for new Town shops and a detailed study may determine an appropriate location.

20.2 The 2012 annexation area is anticipated to be required to accommodate a site for a future two-bay emergency and protective services facility in the vicinity of Highway 2A. A detailed study will assess the future need and an appropriate location.

21 Community Services

Institutional land uses provide amenities that serve the community's social, educational, health, cultural, recreational, and safety needs, and contributes to the community's well-being and quality of life. Institutional land uses are an integral part of the community and should be carefully planned and located to serve the surrounding residents.

The Town has a system of community services which meets the present needs in the community for civic, cultural, recreational and administrative uses. These services are made available for residents and visitors alike. The availability of such services for the present and future needs has direct impact on the quality of life for High River residents. The Town is committed to providing services that address the needs for a variety of lifestyles. This includes the provision of the required space for institutional land uses within the plan area. This may include municipal owned and operated facilities or be privately owned and operated facilities.

Through the consultation process, the need for sites being designated for future public and catholic schools and institutional uses has been established. Both the Foothills School Division and Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools have clearly communicated their interests in securing sites for future schools to be able to provide schooling opportunities for the community and to meet the community's need for the projected population of 30, 000 over the next thirty years.

Currently, Spitzee School has reached 75% of it is capacity and Right Honorable Joe Clark School has reached 68% of its capacity. The provincial standards indicate that when any school reaches 80% of its capacity it has reached its full capacity, and therefore requires additional space.

The GMS has identified the need to provide sites for one public senior high school, one Catholic senior high school, one Catholic elementary junior high school and a four public elementary/junior high schools within the plan area. The actual sites for these schools should be identified at the ASP level and finalized in the NOP.

In order to reduce the "footprint" of future development, the GMS encourages the school divisions to consider sharing facilities, such as open space and gymnasium facilities.

As the GMS encourages the building of complete communities within the annexation area, that meet people's needs for daily living by providing convenient access to local services, it may be appropriate to providing satellite community services such as a library.

As urban areas expand, adjoining agricultural land can be impacted. This needs to be a consideration in the design of new communities. Urban agriculture is becoming more desirable and wherever reasonable this should be allowed for.

Policies

21.1 The construction of future schools should take into account the potential to share indoor and outdoor space with other community facilities.

21.2 Wherever possible future community services should be located in new Neighbourhood Centres.

21.3 Provision should be made for permaculture and traditional gardening activities to co-exist with urban development.

21.4 Provision should be incorporated in Area Structure Plans for urban agriculture (e.g. community gardens).

22 Parks, Open Space, Trails and Natural Features

Parks, recreation and open space contribute significantly to the community's character and quality of life.

Many different factors influence how open spaces and recreation facilities are developed, managed, and protected within the town. The High River "small town" character is an important influence to all aspects of the community including parks and recreation delivery system. These include strategic or policy guidelines that have been developed in community planning documents, residents' perceptions of the community as well as how parks and recreation facilities may contribute to the sustainable future of High River.

The High River Open Space Plan (2009) indicated that the Highwood and the Little Bow Rivers are valuable amenities and ecological corridors, and are considered as the key organizing elements in the Open Space Plan.

The Open Space Plan establishes a strategic vision and values for High River that guide policies, strategies and initiatives for community planning and development. The vision and values focus on maintaining the small town atmosphere and fostering community spirit, encouraging diversity and healthy economic growth, preserving and enhancing the heritage of the community, respecting and protecting the natural environment, advocating social inclusion for all citizens, and fostering safety and security within the community as well as a sense of "ownership" of public space among residents.

Parks have been an integral part of the urban structure of Canadian towns and cities and in Alberta are legislated requirement when subdivision takes place. Parks are normally provided in new communities as part of the 10% municipal reserve dedication. Parks are often designed for particular uses, and include specialized facilities and equipment, although they also accommodate a range of informal activities, including social and ceremonial uses. Parks are important meeting and amenity places. Some are neighbourhood-based, while others serve the whole town.

New residential communities should have sufficient open spaces and parks to meet residents' needs. Determining the location and size of the new parks should occur at the Area Structure Plan stage, and can be finalized in a Neighbourhood Outline Plan.

There are a variety of park and facility categories that will serve to guide planning and development in the plan area, including the following.

22.1 Neighbourhood Parks

Historically, the design of a neighbourhood park catered to elementary-age play as well as informal use by everyone in the immediate community area. The GMS supports the design of neighbourhood parks for local community use and encourages the use of a site design that is flexible enough to adapt as community uses change over time.

Planning of neighbourhood parks should consider the following:

- One component of neighbourhood parks is the provision of play opportunities for elementary-age children. Other components include areas for informal sports, relaxation and decorative areas, youth-oriented facilities, event areas for neighbourhood programming, protection of natural environment zones and opportunities for community-specific developments, such as community gardens, meeting areas for seniors and court facilities (basket ball, tennis, etc).
- Neighbourhood parks should be located in a way that maximizes their neighbourhood catchment area and provides them with sufficient street frontage. They are taken as part of the 10% municipal reserve dedication, and may be located adjacent to environmental reserve, where appropriate.
- A neighbourhood park should be 0.4 to 1 hectare (1 to 2.5 acres) in area.

Policy

22.1.1 Neighbourhood parks should generally be located within 400 metres of residential development.

22.2 Sub-neighbourhood Parks

Sub-neighbourhood parks tend to have a relatively short life span in terms of meeting neighbourhood needs, as these parks are designed, almost exclusively, for preschool children. Most communities cycle through the preschool child boom within seven to ten years of community completion. Generally speaking, these parks eventually require a high ongoing maintenance commitment and tend to be underutilized. These small single-use parks should be discouraged in new community design, and their primary function (e.g. play areas) incorporated into larger multi-use parks. Design solutions that resolve the single-use issue or locations that tie into the greater local open space system should be supported.

Sub-neighbourhood parks should:

- Be located:
  - In smaller neighbourhoods or awkwardly shaped neighbourhoods that are separated from the rest of the community by barriers such as collector streets; or
  - Adjacent to large multi-family developments, or where development is limited due to fragmented ownership.

- Provide play opportunities for children between the ages of zero to five. Other components may include, but are not limited to, areas for relaxation and socialization, landscaping, informal sports areas and pathway linkages.
- Be located in a way that maximizes their neighbourhood catchment area and provides them with sufficient street frontage. They are taken as part of the 10% municipal reserve dedication and may be located adjacent to environmental reserve, where appropriate.
- Be approximately 0.5 acres (0.2 hectares) in area.

22.3 Community Parks

The purpose of a community park is to provide community-level sports and other active and passive recreation opportunities. Community parks (play fields):

- Should be located centrally in each community and in a way that maximizes their neighbourhood catchment area and provides them with sufficient street frontage.
- May include some or all of the components of sub- neighbourhood and neighbourhood parks.

22.4 Linear Parks

The purpose of linear parks is to provide for activities that are generally unstructured in nature. They also provide open space connections within and between communities through a formal pathway network. The linear parks should accommodate a regional pathway or perform a linear recreation function for the community as a whole by providing local or regional pathway links to educational, recreational, and open space features.

Overland drainage features should be contained in linear parks only when they do not diminish the primary recreational and aesthetic function of the park, and do not occupy more than one-quarter of the park's width. Otherwise, the overland drainage feature should be contained in a Public Utility Lot. Utility rights-of-way should not interfere with the recreational, environmental and urban design functions of a linear park.

- Linear parks should have a minimum width of 10 metres.
- Pathways within linear parks are encouraged to be aligned to eliminate or reduce damage to environmentally sensitive areas. The pathways should be set back an appropriate distance from significant habitat areas to allow sufficient buffering from human use to sustain the habitat capabilities of the site.

22.5 Off Leash Parks

An off leash area is a multi-use park or portion of park designated as an area where dogs are allowed off leash, but under full control of their owner, to exercise and play in a clean, safe environment without endangering themselves or disturbing people, property or wildlife. These sites may be fenced or unfenced, or partially fenced.

The preparation of Area Structure Plans should consider providing special areas designated for off leash parks. These parks should be part of the 10% MR dedication.

Policy

22.5.1 A designated area should be dedicated for an off leash dog park in each planning cell.

22.6 Happy Trails

High River's Happy Trails are a major town asset, and a well utilized and valued non-vehicular transportation system. This multiuse trail system provides a diversity of experiences and amenities to the residents of High River, including opportunities for walking, jogging, and cycling. The trails also link many of the other parks and open spaces, and connect many neighbourhoods within High River.

The trails are important in developing a complete community through the promotion of active living and creating an urban environment that decreases our reliance on the automobile and increases human activity.

This environmentally friendly amenity should be expanded into all new development areas, as illustrated in Figure 13. Future trail expansion will need to be planned in conjunction with the development of the road and greenway network within the plan area. This will ensure efficiencies in labour, materials, energy, and costs. Moreover, it will enhance the safety, security, and use of the trail network.

Policies

22.6.1 Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans should provide for extensions of the Happy Trails pathway system as indicated on Figure 13.

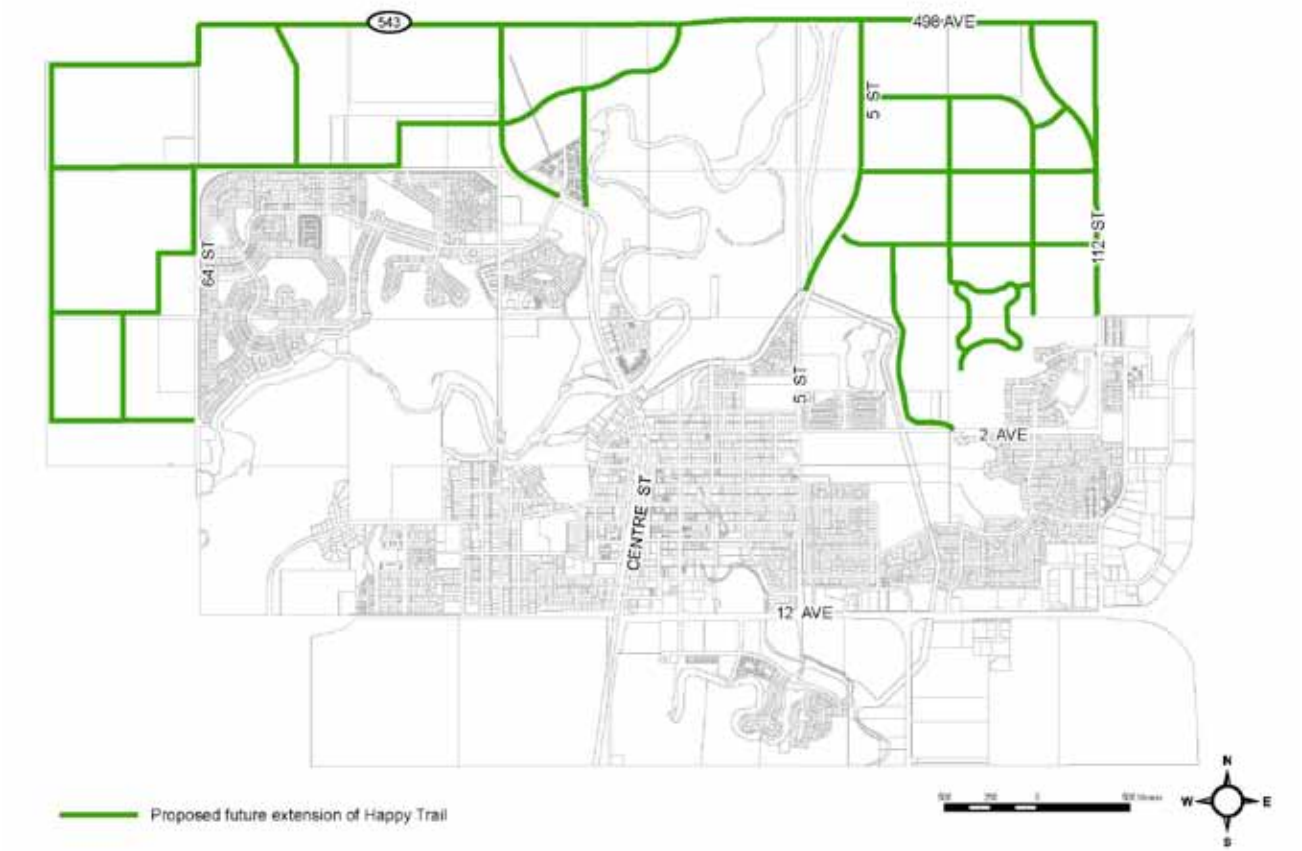
22.6.2 The space required for the extension of the Happy Trails should be part of the MR dedication.

22.6.3 School grounds, parks and natural areas should be linked to the Happy Trails system wherever possible.

22.6.4 The 2012 annexation area is to accommodate a site for a new recreation/leisure centre in the NW planning cell.

22.6.5 Any new community amenities provided by a developer such as landscaping or water features must be self sustaining.

Figure 13 -Happy Trails Network Extension



23 Dedication of Municipal Reserve

Part 17, Divisions 8 and 9 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) identifies different types of reserve land that a municipality can require an owner to provide at the time of the subdivision of a parcel of land.

Reserve land falls into three categories: Environmental Reserve (ER), Public Utility Lots (PUL) and Municipal Reserve. Environmental Reserve only relates to land that is considered to be environmentally sensitive as defined in the MGA: there is no restriction on the total amount that is dedicated as ER. Public Utility Lots relate to areas that have to be set a side to accommodate required public utilities: PUL's may include stormwater ponds, power line easements, etc. Municipal Reserve is required for public services and recreation and can be divided into School Reserve (SR), Municipal and School Reserve (MSR) and Community Service Reserve (CSR).

When proposed ASPs are considered for approval, the Subdivision Authority will require the dedication of 10% of the gross developable area as MR. In subsequent stages of planning the MR dedication may be divided into SR, MSR, CSR reserves. Land dedicated as MR should be of similar quality as the land being developed. Any land that is deemed undevelopable in its natural state or is otherwise more suited as ER may not be accepted as MR. In addition to the 10% reserve dedication and as stated in Section 668 of the MGA and Section 2.12.5.10 of the Town Plan, an additional five percent (5%) of the land being subdivided may be required as MR land where the residential density exceeds 30 units per hectare (12 units per acre).

At the time of the preparation of an ASP, the Town will work with the appropriate school authorities to determine school sites and site requirements.

Policies

23.1 A minimum of 10% of developable land within an area covered by an Area Structure Plan shall be dedicated as Municipal Reserve.

23.2 Any Environmental Reserve or Public Utility Lots will be requirements over and above any Municipal Reserve requirement.

23.3 The location of Municipal Reserve dedication is to be determined on an Area Structure Plan basis and shall take into account the need for schools, parks, appropriate community facilities and extension of the Happy Trails pathway system.

23.4 Wherever possible, uses within Municipal Reserve areas should share space, e.g. joint use by schools and the community of outdoor space.

24 Environmental Management

With increasing pollution and pressure on non-renewable resources, the environment has become a priority for Canadians. Traditionally, policy makers have focussed on technological approaches to reduce pollution, for example requiring more fuel efficient vehicles. However, there is growing recognition that the built environment also has significant impacts, through land consumption and fragmentation, and travel behaviour. Travel behaviour in turn affects air quality and greenhouse gas emission. In addition, development may alter water balance and quality, as runoff from developed areas contains pollutants, such as oil and grease, which are carried from paved surfaces and deposited into rivers and other water courses.

"The built environment directly affects habitat, ecosystems, endangered species, and water quality through consumption, fragmentation, and replacement of natural cover with impervious surfaces". (EPA, 2000)[23]. However, the built environment can be designed to provide significant opportunities to mitigate and improve air and water quality, and preserve natural areas. High River encourages building neighbourhoods that reduces the environmental impacts of development.

Therefore, the GMS acknowledges the importance of reducing the environmental impacts of future growth and development. The incorporation of Smart Growth principles and best practices encourages development patterns that reduce environmental damage including:

- Compact development which reduces land consumption and trip distances.
- Mixing land uses provides shops and services close to home, reducing the need to use automobiles.
- Reducing impervious surfaces, including roads and parking lots, reduces run-off and pollutant loads
- Providing facilities for pedestrians and bicycling including sidewalks, bike lanes and transit, reduces vehicle use.

Policies

24.1 That part of the Highwood River valley contained within the 2012 annexation area as indicated on Map 1 shall be the subject of a joint study with the MD of Foothills in accordance with the provisions of the Intermunicipal Development Plan.

24.2 The results of the Highwood River Flood Management Master Plan, as approved by Council, shall be incorporated as appropriate into the Growth Management Strategy and the Land Use Bylaw.

24.3 An Area Structure Plan should include details of measures to be taken to encourage energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable infrastructure and low impact development.

24.1 Water

Water serves many different purposes ranging from household to agricultural, industrial, business and community. Clean water is essential for life. Using water more efficiently will help reduce costs and support the long-term security of our water supply. Reducing water consumption can help reduce the costs associated with increasing the water related infrastructure needed to serve a growing community.

The town of High River recognizes that water is a scarce and valued resource in this region and support taking appropriate steps to steward it.

Policies

24.1.1 Encourage community and development industry to efficiently use water.

24.1.2 Incorporate water smart principles and practices into Town operations, facilities and policies.

24.1.3 Explore new opportunities to reuse, recycle and consume water.

24.1.4 Incorporate water efficient landscaping practices into the Town's landscape design requirements.

24.2 Energy

Addressing energy use and efficiency is critical to long-term sustainable development. Stable, reliable and affordable energy supplies are important to economic development and overall quality of life.

Producing and consuming energy results in environmental impacts such as increased greenhouse gas emissions, air quality concerns and environmental impacts. High River as a "winter town" faces a number of challenges. It requires energy to heat homes and businesses for a significant portion of the year. As a commuter oriented community, High River residents consume high levels of fuel for transportation purposes.

It is critical for sustainable communities to reduce the overall demand for energy through efficiency measures and to transition towards energy systems supplied by sustainable renewable sources to the greatest extent possible.

The built environment can reduce energy demands by encouraging:

- Building smaller houses and multi-family homes which have smaller footprints. "A two-storey detached home loses 20% more heat than a semi-detached one and 50% more than a middle home in a row of townhouses of the same size with the same heating system, insulation and windows".[24]
- Reducing impervious surfaces, as large asphalt areas contribute to raising local air temperatures and in turn, increase energy demand for summer cooling.
- Development patterns and designs to encourage non-automobile oriented modes of transportation as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Policies

24.2.1 An Area Structure Plan should include details of measures to be taken to encourage energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable infrastructure and low impact development.

24.3 Air Quality

Clean air is something that we all need for good health and the well-being of humans, animals, and plants. However, our atmosphere is being continuously polluted. Poor air quality affects human health as well as other environmental resources such as water, soil, and forests.

Vehicle exhaust is a significant contributor to an air pollution. "Emissions from vehicle travel pose serious threats to ecological and human health. In 1991, air pollution from highways is estimated to have caused between 20,000 and 46,000 cases of chronic respiratory illness. Atmospheric deposition of vehicle pollutants into bodies of water also adversely affects water quality. The economic costs of air pollution in terms of health impact, crop damage, and building and materials damage are significant".(EPA, 2000)[25].

By reducing the number of vehicle miles travelled and encouraging alternative forms of transportation, air pollution could be reduced substantially. Locating stores and services close to homes, and providing wide and continuous sidewalks and cycling paths would encourage people to walk or cycle more, rather than use vehicles, particularly for shorter trips.

24.4 Light Pollution

Light pollution is defined as light that is created from excessive illumination, by unshielded or misaligned light fixtures, and by inefficient lamp sources. Light pollution affects vehicle safety, public health, the environment at large, and budgets. The energy used for lighting, if produced from fossil fuels, contributes to climate change. It also impedes the simple enjoyment of the night sky as more wavelengths are emitted than are visible to the naked eye.

Light pollution is an increasing issue and dark skies initiatives have responded to this by looking at ways of reducing it. The goal of dark skies initiatives is to reduce the percentage of light cast outside spaces actively used by people. Light pollution includes light cast vertically toward the sky as well as horizontally into areas occupied by neighbours and wildlife. The MD of Foothills has adopted the "Dark Sky Bylaw" aimed at regulating, "the type of light source and fixture that is to be installed by any person in the MD, thereby mitigating further light pollution, and reducing existing light pollution, that is shown (in certain instances) to adversely affect astronomical observation, plant and animal cycles, and the safety and health of those persons within the MD."[26] As part of ASP's applicants would be asked to provide information as to how light pollution could be mitigated.

Policy

24.4.1 New development including infrastructure should examine opportunities to adopt with dark skies initiatives.

25 Identification of ASP Planning Cells

Achieving the vision identified in the GMS requires comprehensive planning and analysis. To provide direction and boundaries for future planning initiatives and infrastructure analysis, the annexation area has been divided into four planning "cells". The planning cells represent the basic unit of planning, servicing and development within the annexed area.

Although the preferred approach for the GMS is division of the annexation area into four logical planning cells, there exist opportunities for individual landowners or adjacent landowners to prepare an ASP for a smaller area, if it is approved by the Approving Autority and provided they follow the appropriate procedures of developing and completing an ASP, the subsequent required NOPs and shadow plan for the adjacent areas. The size of each cell is identified in table 6.

Table 6 Size of Proposed Planning Cells

Planning Cells	Area in Hectares *	Area in Acres*
Northwest	261	645
North	61	151
River	142	352
Northeast	252	621
Total Area	**716**	**1769**

*All planning cell areas are approximate and subject to refinement at a more detailed planning stage.

The four planning cells are described as follows and are illustrated on Figure 15:

All annexed lands located west of Highway 2A are considered one ASP planning cell. The property owners of this planning cell have agreed to develop one comprehensive ASP with the support of a professional planning consultant to address all land use development requirements.

Lands located within the floodplain area of the River are considered to be another planning cell. Both the Town and the MD of Foothills are committed to protecting and preserving the integrity of this environmentally significant area. These lands were given special consideration in the 2010/2011 North Annexation Agreement, and the Town and the MD of Foothills identified this area in the 2012 Intermunicipal Development Plan as appropriate for a joint planning initiative. Therefore, the GMS does not require an ASP to be prepared for this cell.

In addition, there is a 20 acre (8 hectare) parcel located within southwest part of the River cell as indicated in green hatches (see Figure 14), which, based on the current flood mapping record, is out of the floodway and above the floodplain. Because of its proximity to the floodway and floodplain areas, the Flood Management Master Plan (FMMP) which is currently being undertaken will provide an enhanced understanding of the recent flood mapping data and its status. Upon the completion of the FMMP and based on its recommendations, if this parcel remains above the floodplain area, the development of the property should not be associated with the completion of the proposed River cell's joint study between the Town and the MD of Foothills. In this situation, the GMS shall be amended to incorporate the updated flood mapping data and provide opportunity for development of this property.

Lands located east of the River cell, west of 112th Street and south of 498th Avenue will be considered the third planning cell. Although there are currently four property owners who own lands within this area, the topography of the area and its location largly contained within three major roads makes it convenient to be looked at as one planning cell.

The remaining lands east of Highway 2A, south of 498th Avenue and west of the River cell comprise the fourth planning cell.

The recommended planning cells are identified to guide the Town as it moves forward with implementation and design of the annexation areas. The cells are intended to be inclusive and the Town encourages developers to develop comprehensive ASPs and NOPs that capture the long-term objectives for the cell that they relate to.

Policies

25.1 The 2012 annexation area should be divided into four planning cells as indicated on Figure15.

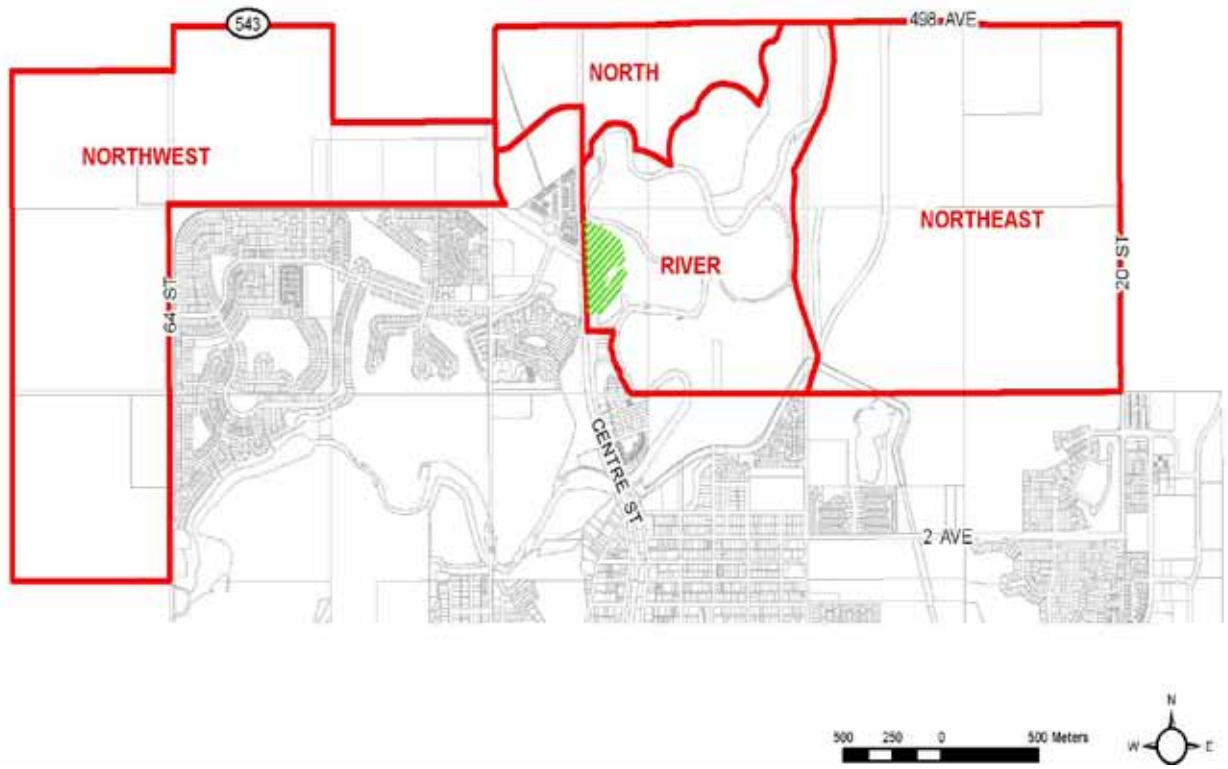
25.2 Each of the planning cells, North West, North and North East, shall be the subject of one or more Area Structure Plans.

25.3 Prior to any rezoning taking place within the 2012 annexation area, an Area Structure Plan and a Neighbourhood Outline Plan must be in place and the content of such plans must follow the ASP/ NOP guidelines.

25.4 An Area Structure Plan shall demonstrate how future development will transition to adjacent areas both outside and inside the town.

25.5 As part of any Area Structure Plan the following studies should be undertaken: an Environmental Overview Assessment or an Environmental Assessment; a Geotechnical Assessment, and a Heritage Resources Impact Assessment.

Figure 14- Planning Cells



25.1 Functions of Planning Cells

It is important that each cell is planned on a comprehensive and coordinated basis and accordingly, land use, servicing and required studies should apply to an entire cell. In order to ensure comprehensive and coordinated planning, a planning cell should serve as the basic unit for planning and development within the annexed area. Landowners within the same planning cell are encouraged to co-operate in the comprehensive formulation of an ASP and other required studies.

Landowners within a planning cell will be provided the opportunity to review and comment on studies and development proposals submitted by another developer for any specific cell that may impact their lands. In addition, at the time of ASPs, NOPs and Land Use amendment applications, the applications, including any supporting information and background studies submitted, will be circulated for review to all landowners within the same planning cell.

25.2 Design of Cells

The comprehensive design of each planning cell will be achieved through the submission of ASPs, NOPs and a Functional Servicing Report in conjunction with land use applications. The servicing plan will demonstrate rights-of-way and detail how services will be financed as part of either the proposed or future development. The submitted plans will need to demonstrate that the entire cell can be developed in a coordinated manner.

In conjunction with the ASPs and NOPs:

- A shadow plan shall be included for any residual lands within the planning cell but outside of the ASP area showing a schematic roadway and potential land use pattern for the residual lands;
- The required shadow plan:
    - Should demonstrate that reasonable and viable design options are retained for the entire cell,
    - Should not have any formal or legal status but rather be used for information purposes only to assist in making a decision on future potential land uses applications.
    - May be revised as necessary through the submission of a subsequent NOPs/land use applications within the planning cell
- Utility servicing plan shall be included for the planning cell showing how the planning cell will be serviced, and the rationale, how the services will be staged over time to an eventual fully serviced area, any required public utility lots, easements or rights-of-way.

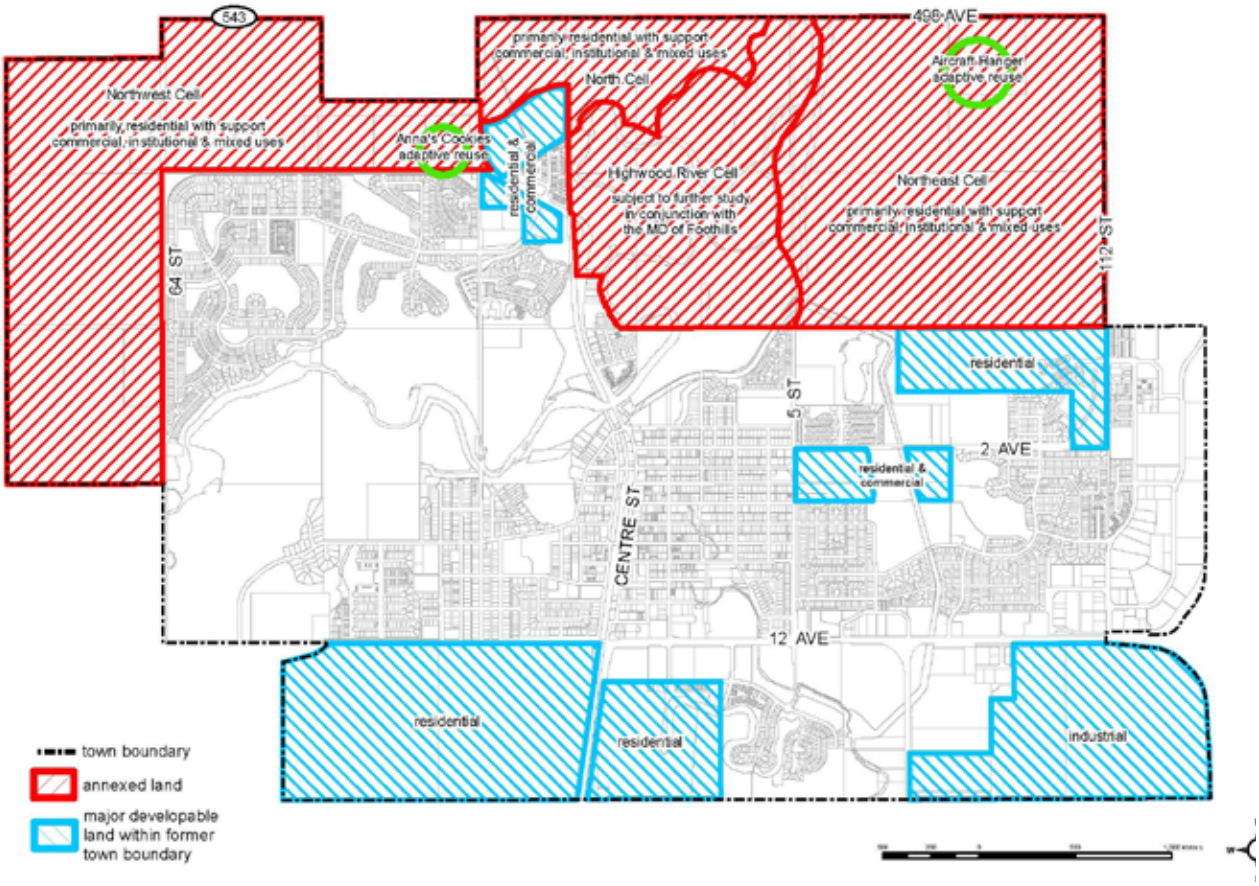
Prior to NOP/land use approval, an applicant may be required to submit further supporting information in order to assist Planning and Development Services and Council in evaluating a proposal in terms of its conformity with the ASP, including the completion of any required studies.

26 Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans

Following adoption of the GMS, more detailed plans will be needed to translate the policy guidance in the GMS into specific action. This is achieved through the mechanism of ASPs and NOPs. These plans are prepared by landowners and facilitate subsequent subdivision and zoning.

The guidelines for the preparation of ASPs and NOPs can be printed from the town's official website or hard copies can be collected from the Town Office.

Figure 15 - Major Land Use Distribution



27 Major Land Use Distribution

Through the comprehensive public consultation process, discussions with private landowners, review of all related studies, and the review of the North Annexation Agreement between the Town of High River and the MD of Foothills, the distribution of major land uses within the annexation areas has been established.

Each of the planning cells presents important opportunities for new developments and uses. The GMS seeks to maximize these opportunities by organizing uses in a manner that responds to the needs of the town while simultaneously respecting the natural and environmental features of each area and strengthening their contribution to future communities.

The underlying assumption as established in the North Annexation Agreement is that the primary use of the annexed land should be for residential development.

In Figure 15 (located on the previous page), areas shaded in red are the recently annexed lands. Areas delineated in blue are the corresponding land uses for the sites that were within the town's former boundary prior to annexation.

The GMS assigns a land use to all planning cells and major areas of undeveloped lands within the former town boundary. Major land uses considered for the annexed areas include residential, commercial, mixed land use and institutional uses. Other uses within undeveloped lands that are within the former town's boundary, and that have been designated with specific uses in the Town Plan, will include residential, commercial and light industrial. Figure 15 illustrates the land uses for the lands included in the GMS.

The mixed land use includes the incorporation of residential and commercial uses located either within the same building and/or in close proximity. In addition, where opportunities exist, the GMS encourages the adaptive reuse of buildings, thereby allowing developers to introduce compatible new uses within existing buildings.

The two existing industrial buildings in the annexation area may be suitable for adaptive re-use in the future.

Policies

27.1 ***The Land Use Bylaw shall be reviewed to ensure that it is aligned with the provisions of the Growth Management Strategy. Such review may include the creation of new or revised land use districts.***

27.2 ***Over the time that applies to the Growth Management Strategy a minimum of 25% of new residential development shall be encouraged to take place within the area contained within the town boundary that existed prior to January 1st, 2012.***

28 Development Sequence

The desired vision for phasing of growth is to direct growth to areas in close proximity to existing infrastructure capacity as the first priority, then to areas where infrastructure services can be readily extended as a second priority, and lastly to areas requiring major infrastructure investment. These priorities for phasing should also take into account the varied land uses and development needs of the community.

ASPs can be developed and serviced independent of each other. However, NOPs should demonstrate that at least 75% of the land uses in one phase is built out before moving into the next phase of the development.

To ensure that future development occurs in an efficient and economical fashion, development phasing should consider:

- Logical extension of servicing and infrastructure requirements;
- Local market conditions; and
- Providing a mix of land uses for end users.

Policies

28.1 Each ASP and NOP shall indicate the proposed phasing of future development and the timing of the provisions of infrastructure.

28.2 A minimum of 75% of a phase should be completed prior to development commencing on the next phase.

29 Implementation

No single action will turn the future that is envisioned by the GMS into a reality. The success of the GMS policies depends on the collective impact of many decisions and actions by a wide range of community partners.

In order to translate the broad-based policy directions of the GMS into specific plans for new communities within the plan area, the GMS will be implemented primarily through Area Structure Plans, Neighbourhood Outline Plans and Land Use amendment applications and subsequently through subdivision and development permit applications.

29.1 Land Use Planning

Provincially mandated implementation tools for municipal land-use planning are the Municipal Development Plan (Town Plan) and the Land Use Bylaw. The Town Plan articulates future vision and character of the town and ASP's provide direction for land uses and the provision of infrastructure as well as guidance under which subdivision and development may occur. The Land Use Bylaw is a prescriptive regulation controlling individual property development.

In addition to the Town Plan, ASPs and the Land Use Bylaw, High River utilizes Neighbourhood Outline Plans that are non-statutory and provide an essential link between ASPs and subdivision. NOPs contain greater detail than contained in ASPs, but must be consistent with the principles and policy guidelines defined in an ASP.

Each of these planning instruments uses public consultation as an integral component of the planning process, and interested parties will have further opportunity to contribute to the planning of their communities.

Policies

29.1.1 The timing, direction and extent of development is determined through the ASP/NOP process, which establishes the land use pattern and infrastructure for an area.

29.1.2 Upon the adoption of an ASP, a developer may proceed with creating two or more NOPs for the subject planning area.

29.1.3 The NOP establishes the detailed design for each proposed neighbourhood and enables subdivision and development proposals to be prepared.

29.1.4 A NOP/land use amendment application should not be supported until all associated infrastructure and servicing costs have been addressed, in accordance with the GMS policies.

29.1.5 Land use amendment applications should not be granted approval unless an NOP that includes the site has been approved.

29.2 Intermunicipal Coordination

The purpose of this section is to ensure appropriate circulation to the MD of Foothills takes place so as to provide an opportunity to provide comments. As stated in the IDP, this includes:

- *"Applications for the adoption, amendment or repeal of Area Structure Plans (ASP'), Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs) and Area Concept Plans (ACPs) that contain land that is within 800 meters of the town/MD boundary (as may be amended from time to time). For these proposals the focus of comment will be on any matter that may have an impact on the MD's interests as outlined in Section 6.3.5 – Interface Planning;*

- *Applications for the adoption, amendment or repeal of ASPs ARPs and ACPs that are within the town and may have an impact on storm water entering the Highwood or Little Bow Rivers. This will apply to lands in the floodway as indicated in Map 7.1 – Town Referral Area;*

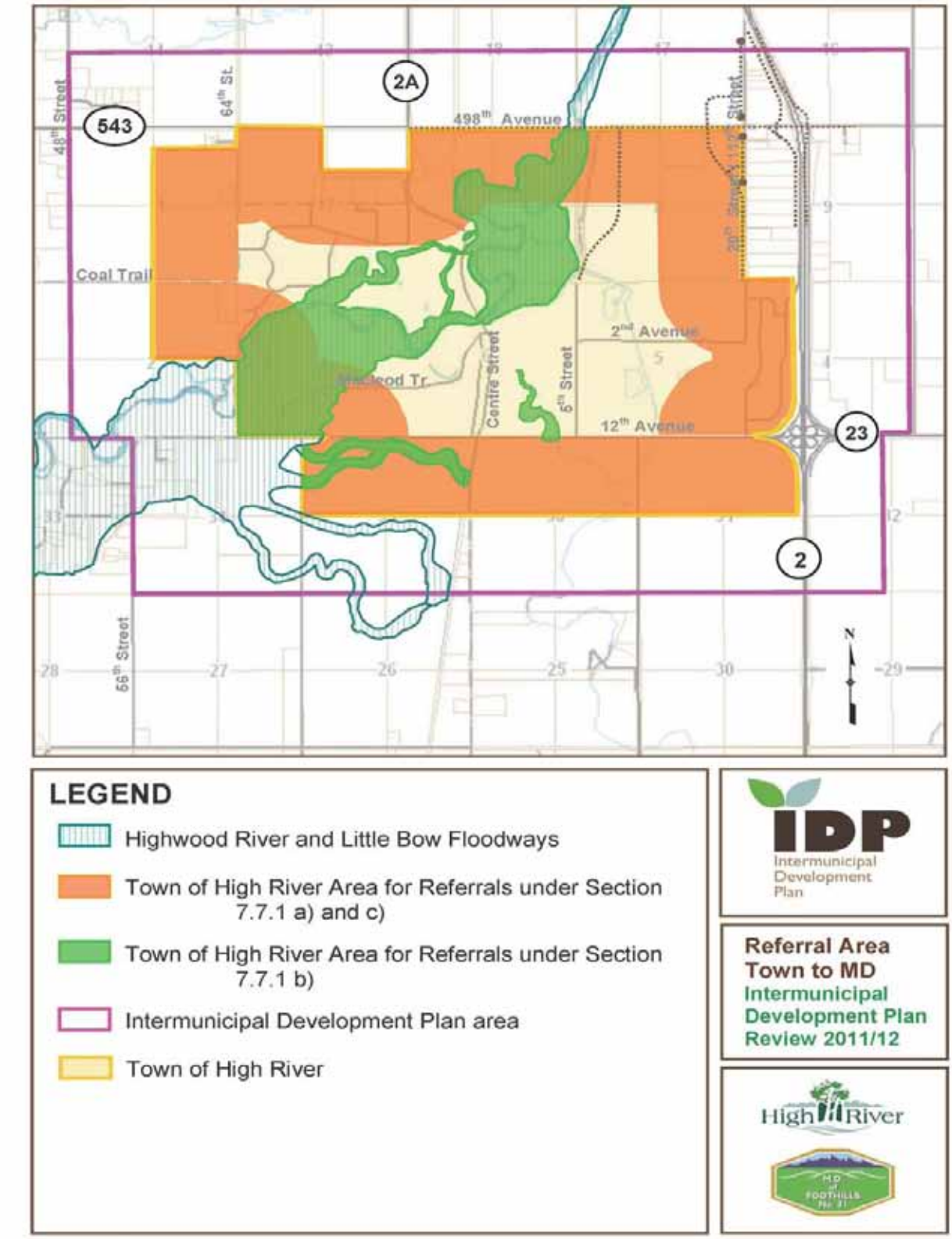
- *Applications for land use bylaw amendment, subdivision approval or development permits within 800 meters of the mutual town/MD boundary (approximately as shown on Map 7.1 (see Figure 16)– Town Referral Area as may be amended from time to time) in locations where there is no ASP, ARP or ACP in place to guide development decisions; Any planning proposal that may have an impact on the efficient movement of agricultural equipment along either 12th Avenue or 5th Street East."*

The Town will endeavour to consult and co-operate with MD of Foothills on planning, transportation and servicing matters that may arise within the GMS area that are in accordance with the 2012 IDP referral policy, in order to achieve a cooperative and co-ordinated outcome.

Policy

29.2.1 Applications should be circulated to the MD of Foothills in accordance with the IDP's intermunicipal referral policy, including: statutory and non-statutory plans within the plan area and proposed amendments to such plans; applications for NOPs/land use amendments; subdivision and development permits, and any other applications specified by the IDP.

Figure 16 – Town Referral Areas



30 Amendment Process

As explained in Section 1 of the Town Plan, the GMS forms part two of the Town Plan, and therefore, amending the GMS implies amending the Town Plan. All such amendments must be processed in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act* requirements related to statutory plans.

The GMS may be amended from time to time when a prospective developer wishes to create a form of development that may not be consistent with existing policies in the GMS. In addition, amendments may be initiated by Council or staff.

Council will consider amendment requests based on:

- Public interest; and
- Overall community objectives and values as established by the Town Plan and the GMS.

Where an amendment is initiated by a developer, the Town requires the submission of all such background information as is considered necessary to support the application prior to commencement of the bylaw amendment process. The application is circulated to internal and external agencies for comments, and to adjacent landowners who could be affected by the proposed change. Town administration reviews the amendment application and prepares a report, and presents the report to Council with its recommendations.

If Council agrees to an application going forward (First Reading of the amending bylaw), a public hearing must be held to provide an opportunity for those affected by the amendment to comment. After taking into consideration any questions or concerns raised at the public hearing, and directing any amendments as deemed necessary, Council may then proceed with further readings and adoption of the bylaw.

Over the course of implementing the GMS policies, it is intended that all other statutory plans of the Town of High River align with the objectives and policies of the GMS. In situations where there is conflict with any statutory plan, the GMS prevails.

If an amendment to a statutory plan like the Land Use Bylaw is deemed acceptable even though it conflicts the GMS, both documents must be amended; this can be undertaken at the same time.

The successful implementation of the GMS is dependent upon consistent application of the policies with due consideration of its goals.

Upon incorporation of this Growth Management Strategy, within the Town Plan the policies contained herein will be in full force and effect.

31 Conclusion

The GMS is a proactive and visionary document that will shape future growth in High River. By focusing on creating sustainable development in High River, the town will mitigate the fragmentation of agricultural land, preserve its valued open spaces and environmental assets, establish vibrant and thriving neighbourhood commercial nodes, and ensure development in High River is environmentally, socially, and fiscally sustainable.

The GMS will be a guiding document to evaluate future land-use planning policy and maintain consistency with community goals.

The GMS is the manifestation of local principles and values in its municipal planning framework. Furthermore, by defining what form of development will occur in High River, this strategy will enable High River to consistently achieve the ideals of its residents, including the preservation of heritage and culture and the "small town" atmosphere. The policies in the GMS are aligned with the provincial and regional planning policies, and will ensure High River is a leader in guiding sustainable growth that truly reflects local needs and desires, and yet addresses regional planning issues

Appendix A – Policy Summary

7.3.1 Land for future industrial development in High River will be focused on the south east area. New industrial development in the annexation area will be discouraged.

8.1.1.1 The GMS advocates the removal/relocation of the existing overhead transmission line in the NE part of the annexation area, and supports all endeavours in this regard. If the transmission line has to be retained the Area Structure Plan for the area shall ensure that an adequate right-of-way is protected.

8.1.1.2 The long term use of the abandoned CPR right-of-way south of Highway 543/498 Avenue will be determined as part of a study of the whole length of unused track and for that part within the annexation area, the results shall be incorporated into the Area Structure Plan for the area. In the interim the right-of-way should be used as an extension of the Happy Trails system.

8.1.3.1 All existing rural industrial zoning in the annexation area should be phased out.

8.1.3.2 The two existing industrial buildings ("Anna's Cookies" building in the NW are and the former aircraft hanger in the NE area) are allowed to stay and can be used for mixed uses.

9.1 The "Town of High River Infrastructure Master Plan" (August 2011) should be used to guide the provision of future road and utility services.

9.4.1 Future storm water ponds should provide for passive public recreation and adopt best management practices in methods of construction, including"bio retention".

9.4.2 Use natural features (drainage and vegetation patterns) to increase onsite infiltration and minimize runoff.

9.5.1 The Highway 543/498 Avenue scenic corridor shall be the subject of a joint study with the MD of Foothills in accordance with the provisions of the 2012 Intermunicipal Development Plan.

9.5.2 The Highway 543/498th Avenue shall be the subject of a joint study with the MD of Foothills in accordance with the provisions of the 2012 Intermunicipal Development Plan.

9.5.2.1 Provision shall be made to protect the rights-of-way of Highway 2A and 5thStreet to allow for twinning of the roads in the future.

9.5.2.2 The future transportation network should be as indicated on Figure 10.

9.5.2.3 Access points from major roads should be in accordance with Figure 10.

9.5.2.4 Area Structure Plans shall indicate how new development areas will connect to existing developed areas.

9.5.2.5 Neighbourhood Outline Plans shall indicate the methods of traffic calming to be used to reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.

9.5.2.6 The Area Structure Plan for the North West area should consider the location of a future pedestrian bridge over the Highwood River and pedestrian connections to it.

9.5.2.7 Neighbourhood Outline Plans should indicate how alternative transportation could be integrated into new development areas.

9.5.2.8 Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans shall indicate the provisions to be made to accommodate future transit infrastructure.

9.5.2.9 Area Structure Plans shall identify where off-site infrastructure is required to allow the area to be fully developed.

9.5.2.10 All new development must contribute to off-site infrastructure through "off site levies".

9.6.1 Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans shall indicate the provisions to be made to accommodate future transit infrastructure.

9.6.2 High River will Continue working with the Calgary Regional Partnership on potential regional transit system

10.1 The land owned by the Town of High River adjacent to the south boundary of the Agricultural Grounds shall be the subject of detailed discussion between the town and the Agricultural Society and the results incorporated into a future Area Structure Plan.

10.2 The Town shall participate in a joint study of the country residential area adjacent to the eastern boundary of the town in accordance with the provisions of the Intermunicipal Development Plan. In consultation with the MD of Foothills, the land within the "triangle" formed by Highway 543/498 Avenue, 112th Street and the 112th Street "connector" may be included in this joint study.

11.1 In formulating Development/Subdivision Agreements to cover on site infrastructure costs of development, appropriate long term operating costs should also be included.

12.1 All new residential areas should be designed to be compact and walkable.

12.2 A mix of housing choices are to be provided in all new residential areas.

12.3 The average residential density within a Neighbourhood Outline Plan area should be a minimum of 8 units per gross acre.

12.4 Two general residential land uses are to be considered in new areas: low/medium density and high density.

12.5 Secondary suites should be allowed in all new residential areas as a discretionary use.

12.6 Residential development is preferred to be maximum of 400 metres from a neighbourhood centre.

12.7 High density residential areas should be close to neighbourhood centres.

14.1 The average density of new residential development should be a minimum of 8 units per gross acre and higher wherever possible.

14.2 All existing statutory plans should be reviewed to assess opportunities to incorporate policies contained in the Growth Management Strategy.

14.3 The land uses of the major undeveloped areas in the pre- 2012 town boundary shall be as indicated on Figure 15.

14.4 A review should be undertaken to determine a program for upgrades to existing infrastructure.

14.5 A study should be undertaken to determine possible tools that could be used to make intensification more attractive.

15.1.1 New developments should avoid the use of curvilinear road networks that lead to crescents, p-loops and culs-de-sac.

15.1.2 A modified form of the old town grid/lane pattern shall be the basis for the road infrastructure in all new residential areas

15.1.3 Designs for new residential development should feature short blocks, sidewalks on both sides of the roads, rear lanes, narrow widths for travel lanes, boulevard landscaping, and on-street parking.

15.1.4 A modified version of existing roadway standards with reduced asphalt and rights-of-way should be encouraged in new residential areas.

15.1.5 The existing municipal roadway standards shall be revised to incorporate rear lanes, sidewalks on both side of the roads, demarcated parking, bicycle movement, reduced width of streets and traffic calming devices.

15.2.1 A rear lane (maximum width of 6.0 metres) should be provided for all new communities to ensure that those communities remain a pedestrian friendly and enhance the safety of the street corridor.

15.3.1 The Town of High River Engineering Standards shall be amended to incorporate the "Complete Streets Standards" which shall include:

- *The right-of-way dimensions for the following street classifications: major, primary collector, standard collector, local and rear lane.*
- *The dimensions of travel lanes and parking/landscaping lanes.*
- *Sidewalks on each side of all roads except rear lanes.*
- *The dimensions for Happy Trails pathways.*
- *The dimensions for those sidewalks that link two sections of the Happy Trails pathway network.*
- *Accommodation of bicycle movement.*
- *Incorporation of traffic calming devices.*

15.3.2 New roadways in all new development in the annexation areas shall follow the "Complete Streets Standards" set out the Town of High River Engineering Standards.

15.3.3 New roadways in new development areas within the pre-2012 town boundary should wherever possible adhere to the "Complete Streets Standards."

15.3.4 The municipal roadway standards should be subject to periodic review and adjusted where necessary as a result of growth, innovations in technology or changes in best management practices.

16.1 Neighbourhood Commercial Centres should be designed to provide for the day-to-day retail/service needs of people living generally within 400 metres.

16.2 The uses that can be included in a Neighbourhood Commercial Centre are encouraged to be: retail/personal services, mixed uses (including live/work), health care facilities, recreation facilities, day care centres, post offices, open space (playgrounds, pocket parks, etc), libraries, schools, limited office-based employment, emergency and protective service facilities and social service facilities.

16.3 Neighbourhood Commercial Centres should provide pedestrian links to residential areas and the Happy Trails pathway system.

16.4 Neighbourhood Commercial Centres should provide for future transit infrastructure.

16.5 Each Neighbourhood Commercial Centre should be designed with individual flair and character.

16.6 The northwest cell should contain two or three Neighbourhood Commercial Centres, one of which may be large enough to serve the whole area.

16.7 The northeast cell should contain three Neighbourhood Commercial Centres, one of which may be large enough to serve the whole area.

16.8 The north cell should contain one Neighbourhood Commercial Centre.

16.9 No commercial development shall take place adjacent to the south side of Highway 543/498th Avenue or any new access created until the study referred to in Policy 9.5.1.2 has been finalized.

16.10 New commercial development shall primarily be "neighbourhood commercial" (i.e. servicing the adjoining residential area).

17.1 Future development in the fringe area of the town should endeavour to protect existing scenic views of the Rocky Mountains.

17.2 The ASP for the north west portion of the annexation area should consider measures ensuring that future development in the fringe areas will gradually transition from urban to a more rural character.

18.1 The design of all new residential communities should attempt to achieve "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighbourhood Design" status.

19.1 The development industry and the public sector are encouraged to incorporate the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design into the design and development of new communities and redeveloped facilities.

20.1 The 2012 annexation area is to accommodate a future site for new Town shops and a detailed study may determine an appropriate location.

20.2 The 2012 annexation area is anticipated to be required to accommodate a site for a future two-bay emergency and protective services facility in the vicinity of Highway 2A. A detailed study will assess the future need and an appropriate location.

21.1 The construction of future schools should take into account the potential to share indoor and outdoor space with other community facilities.

21.2 Wherever possible future community services should be located in new Neighbourhood Centres.

21.3 Provision should be made for permaculture and traditional gardening activities to co-exist with urban development.

21.4 Provision should be incorporated in Area Structure Plans for urban agriculture (e.g. community gardens)

22.1.1 Neighbourhood parks should generally be located within 400 metres of residential development.

22.5.1 A designated area should be dedicated for an off leash dog park in each planning cell.

22.6.1 Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Outline Plans should provide for extensions of the Happy Trails pathway system as indicated on Figure 13.

22.6.2 The space required for the extension of the Happy Trails should be part of the MR dedication.

22.6.3 School grounds, parks and natural areas should be linked to the Happy Trails system wherever possible.

22.6.4 The 2012 annexation area is to accommodate a site for a new recreation/leisure centre in the NW planning cell.

22.6.5 Any new community amenities provided by a developer such as landscaping or water features must be self sustaining.

23.1 A minimum of 10% of developable land within an area covered by an Area Structure Plan shall be dedicated as Municipal Reserve.

23.2 Any Environmental Reserve or Public Utility Lots will be requirements over and above any Municipal Reserve requirement.

23.3 The location of Municipal Reserve dedication is to be determined on an Area Structure Plan basis and shall take into account the need for schools, parks, appropriate community facilities and extension of the Happy Trails pathway system.

23.4 Wherever possible, uses within Municipal Reserve areas should share space, e.g. joint use by schools and the community of outdoor space.

24.1 That part of the Highwood River valley contained within the 2012 annexation area as indicated on Map 1 shall be the subject of a joint study with the MD of Foothills in accordance with the provisions of the Intermunicipal Development Plan.

24.2 The results of the Highwood River Flood Management Master Plan, as approved by Council, shall be incorporated as appropriate into the Growth Management Strategy and the Land Use Bylaw.

24.3 An Area Structure Plan should include details of measures to be taken to encourage energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable infrastructure and low impact development.

24.1.1 Encourage community and development industry to efficiently use water.

24.1.2 Incorporate water smart principles and practices into Town operations, facilities and policies.

24.1.3 Explore new opportunities to reuse, recycle and consume water.

24.1.4 Incorporate water efficient landscaping practices into the Town's landscape design requirements

24.2.1 An Area Structure Plan should include details of measures to be taken to encourage energy efficiency, water conservation, sustainable infrastructure and low impact development.

24.4.1 New development including infrastructure should examine opportunities to adopt with dark skies initiatives.

25.1 The 2012 annexation area should be divided into four planning cells as indicated on Figure15.

25.2 Each of the planning cells, North West, North and North East, shall be the subject of one or more Area Structure Plans.

25.3 Prior to any rezoning taking place within the 2012 annexation area, an Area Structure Plan and a Neighbourhood Outline Plan must be in place and the content of such plans must follow the ASP/NOP guidelines.

25.4 An Area Structure Plan shall demonstrate how future development will transition to adjacent areas both outside and inside the town.

25.5 As part of any Area Structure Plan the following studies should be undertaken: an Environmental Overview Assessment or an Environmental Assessment; a Geotechnical Assessment, and a Heritage Resources Impact Assessment.

27.1 ***The Land Use Bylaw shall be reviewed to ensure that it is aligned with the provisions of the Growth Management Strategy. Such review may include the creation of new or revised land use districts.***

27.2 ***Over the time that applies to the Growth Management Strategy a minimum of 25% of new residential development shall be encouraged to take place within the area contained within the town boundary that existed prior to January 1st, 2012.***

28.1 ***Each ASP and NOP shall indicate the proposed phasing of future development and the timing of the provisions of infrastructure.***

28.2 ***A minimum of 75% of a phase should be completed prior to development commencing on the next phase.***

29.1.1 ***The timing, direction and extent of development is determined through the ASP/NOP process, which establishes the land use pattern and infrastructure for an area.***

29.1.2 ***Upon the adoption of an ASP, a developer may proceed with creating two or more NOPs for the subject planning area.***

29.1.3 ***The NOP establishes the detailed design for each proposed neighbourhood and enables subdivision and development proposals to be prepared.***

29.1.4 ***A NOP/land use amendment application should not be supported until all associated infrastructure and servicing costs have been addressed, in accordance with the GMS policies.***

29.1.5 ***Land use amendment applications should not be granted approval unless an NOP that includes the site has been approved.***

29.2.1 ***Applications should be circulated to the MD of Foothills in accordance with the IDP's intermunicipal referral policy, including: statutory and non-statutory plans within the plan area and proposed amendments to such plans; applications for NOPs/land use amendments; subdivision and development permits, and any other applications specified by the IDP.***

Appendix B - Calgary Metropolitan Plan- Density Calculation

Density = Number of Units ÷ Gross Residential Area

Sample Density Calculation

(Figures are for sample density calculation only)

A sample community with 259 hectares (640 acres) of total land area, 37 hectares (91 acres) of non-developable lands, 43 hectares (106 acres of regional land uses and 3,029 units (multi unit or single unit), would result in a housing density of 17 units per hectare (7 units per acre)

GROSS TOTAL AREA (total land area of community)	**259 hectares**
Less: Non-Developable Lands	**37 hectares**
Equals: GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA	**222 hectares**
GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA	222
Less: Regional Land Uses	**43 hectares**
Equals: GROSS RESIDENTIAL AREA	**179 hectares**
Number of Units	3,029 units
Divided by Gross Residential Area	179 hectares
Equals: **DENSITY**	17 UPH
or	7 UPA

Units per hectare - UPH
Units per acre - UPA

Non-Developable Lands include:	
Environmental Reserve	20
Expressways	8
Railways	4
Other Non-Developable Lands	5
	37 hectares

Regional Land Uses include:	
Regional Open Space	5
Major Commercial Centres > 2.8 ha or 7 acres	8
Major Institutional Sites	5
Senior High Schools	9
Industrial areas	2
Lakes/water bodies	10
Other Regional Uses	4
	43 hectares

Gross Residential Area Include:	
Single Unit Residential	91
Multi Unit Residential	4
Local Commercial	5
Local Parks & Open Space	18
Elementary & Junior High School Sites	7
Local Roads & Lanes	41
Church Sites	1
Daycare Centres	1
Community Centres	2
Small Indoor Recreation Sites	1
Small Site Fire & Police Stations	1
Wet/Dry Ponds & Public Utility Sites	2
Other Local Uses	5
	179 hectares

"Slopes which may be part of the Environmental Reserve are determined not to be developable only if they are considered geo-technically unstable"

Source: Planning Development & Assessment, 2003

OVERALL LAND USE MIX IN 26 SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES

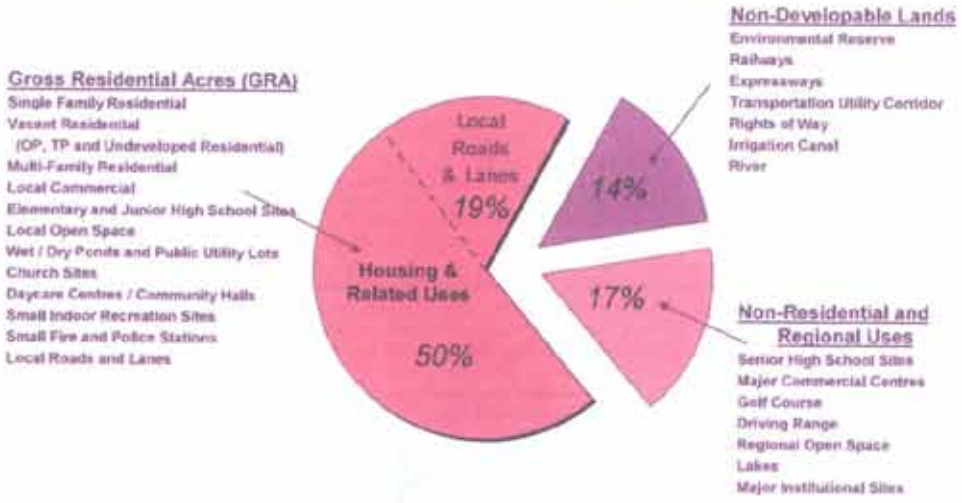


Table 22: Calculation of Density

Density = Number of Units divided by Gross Residential Area

GROSS TOTAL AREA LESS NON DEVELOPABLE AREA EQUALS ***GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA***
GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA LESS REGIONAL LAND USES EQUALS ***GROSS RESIDENTIAL AREA***

Sample Density Calculation

(Figures are for sample density calculation only)

A sample community with 259 hectares (640 acres) of total land area, 37 hectares (91 acres) of non-developable lands, 43 hectares (106 acres) of regional land uses and 3,050 units (multi unit or single unit), would result in a housing density of 17 units per hectare (7 units per acre).

GROSS TOTAL AREA:	259 hectares
Less	
NON DEVELOPABLE AREA:	37 hectares
Equals	
GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA	*222 hectares*
GROSS DEVELOPABLE AREA:	222 hectares
Less	
REGIONAL LAND USES:	43 hectares
Equals	
GROSS RESIDENTIAL AREA	*179 hectares*
NUMBERS OF UNITS:	3,050 Units
Divided by Gross Residential Area:	179 hectares
Equals: DENSITY	17 UPH
or	7 UPA

Units per hectare - UPH

Unit per acre- UPA

While the density criteria noted in this document provides general direction for a consistent approach in calculating density on a community-wide basis, it cannot address the unique and often disparate components associated with individual ownership areas and specific Outline Plan and Land Use applications. A comprehensive review will be required at the Outline Plan and Land Use stage to ensure that the mathematical density calculation accurately reflects the intent of policy initiatives and achieves City of Calgary objectives.

Definitions

(The information below may not represent all possible uses)

"Gross Total Area" include:		**259 hectares**
All lands within a physical boundary or total area		
"Non-Developable Area" include:		**37 hectares**
Environmental Reserve	20	
Expressways	8	
Railways	4	
Other Non-Developable Lands	5	
"Gross Developable Area" include:		**222 hectares**
Regional and Local Uses (lands that can be built on)		
"Regional Land Uses" include:		**43 hectares**
Regional Open Spaces	5	
Major Commercial Centres > 4.0 ha or 10 acres	10	
Major Institutional Sites	3	
Senior High Schools	9	
Industrial areas	2	
Public Lakes/water bodies	10	
Other Regional Uses	4	
"Gross Residential Area" include:		**179 hectares**
Single Unit Residential	91	
Multi Unit Residential	4	
Local Commercial	5	
Local Parks & Open Space	18	
Elementary & Junior High School Sites	7	
Local Roads including Majors & Lanes	41	
Church Sites	1	
Daycare Centres	1	
Community Centres	2	
Small Indoor Recreation Centre	1	
Small Site Fire & Police Stations	1	
Private Lakes, Wet/Dry Ponds & Public Utility Sites	2	
Other Local Use	5	

"Slopes that may be part of the Environmental Reserve are determined not to be developable only if they are considered geo-technically unstable"

Source: Planning Development & Assessment, 2006

Density and Land Requirement Calculations Modified November 15, 2008

				Total Regional Growth
Gross Total Area (GTA)	100.0%	259.00		50000
	Percent of Area	**Example Area Reduction (ha)**		
Non Developable Area (NDA)				
Environmental Reserve	5.5%	14.25		2750
Expressways, Rail and other Transportation Corridors	4.5%	11.66		2250
Other Non-developable Areas	2.0%	5.18		1000
Subtotal (NDA)	**12.0%**	**31.08**		6000
Regional Land Uses (RLU)				
Regional Open space	2.0%	5.18		1000
Major Commercial Centres	4.0%	10.36		2000
Major Institutional Centres	1.0%	2.59		500
High Schools	3.5%	9.07		1750
Industrial Areas	1.0%	2.59		500
Public Lakes and Waterbodies	3.0%	7.77		1500
Other Regional Uses	1.5%	3.89		750
				0
Subtotal (RLU)	**16.0%**	**41.44**		8000
Gross Residential Area (GRA)				
Residential Areas				
Single Unit	35.0%	90.65		17500
Multi Family	1.5%	3.89		750
Local Commercial	2.0%	5.18		1000
Local Parks and Open Space	7.0%	18.13		3500
Elementary and Junior High Schools	2.7%	6.99		1350
Local Roads	18.5%	47.92		9250
Local Community Uses	2.3%	5.96		1150
Private Lakes Wet & dry Ponds, Public Utilities	1.0%	2.59		500
Other Local Uses	2.0%	5.18		1000
Subtotal (GRA)	**72.0%**	**186.48**		36000
Total	**100.0%**	**259.00**		50000

Gross Residential Density Calculations

	7.00	Units per acre (UPA)=	17.30 Units per hectare (UPH)
	8.00	Units per acre (UPA)=	19.77 Units per hectare (UPH)
Population Per Household Assumption	2.75		
Population Densities for Gross Residential Area (GRA)			
Population per Hectare of GRA at 7 UPA	47.57		
Population per Acre of GRA at 7 UPA	19.25		
Population per Hectare of GRA at 8 UPA	54.38		
Population per Acre of GSA at 8 UPA	23.00		
Population Densities for Gross Total Area (GTA)			
Population per Hectare of GTA at 7 UPA (calculated on GRA)	34.25		
Population per Acre of GTA at 7 UPA (calculated on GRA)	13.86		
Population per Hectare of GTA at 8 UPA (calculated on GRA)	39.14		
Population per Acre of GTA at 8 UPA (calculated on GRA)	16.56		

Required Greenfield Land Calculations

Future Population Additions	1,600,000			
Potential Intensification Assumptions	**Intensificaton Population**	**Greenfield Population**		
25%	400,000	1,200,000		
10%	160,000	1,440,000		
0%	0	1,600,000		
Mixed Use Areas				
	At 7 UPA Required Area (ha)	**Contigency Assumption**	**Total Area needed with contigency**	
25%	35,038	20%	42,046	
10%	42,046	20%	50,455	
0%	46,718	20%	56,062	
	At 8 UPA Required Area (ha)	**Contigency Assumption**	**Total Area needed with contigency**	
25%	30,659	20%	36,790	
10%	36,790	10%	40,469	
0%	40,878	0%	40,878	

NOTE: These numers do NOT include pure industrial lands

Area at 8 UPA + 25% intensification	30658.67	ha
Average Density for Compact Urban Nodes	39.14	pop / hectare
Area at 8 UPA + 25% intensification + 20% contingency lands	36790.41	ha
Density used for O2 GIS tool to create larger footprint	32.62	pop / hectare

Appendix C - Bibliography

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