



# Medicine Hat plan

*Growing to a city of 100,000+*

## Municipal Development Plan

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# Part I

## Role and Scope of the Municipal Development Plan

## Part 1 – ROLE AND SCOPE OF THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### 1.1 *Legislative Requirements*

The first General Plan for the City of Medicine Hat was adopted in 1979. As part of the city's planning system, that first Plan has been reviewed and updated a number of times since then, with the last major update taking place in 2004.

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is a statutory plan, prepared and adopted by bylaw, in accordance with Section 632 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) which states, in part, that an MDP must address:

- the future land use within the municipality;
- the manner of and the proposals for future development in the municipality;
- the coordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no inter-municipal development plan with respect to those matters in those municipalities;
- the provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically; and
- any other matters that the council considers necessary.

The MGA also allows an MDP to address other matters relating to physical, social, environmental and economic development.

### 1.2 *Scope*

The planning horizon for this Plan is 30 years, and it is based on a 50-year vision for the city's overall growth and development. It is a broad, conceptual framework that serves as the foundation for a number of future statutory and non-statutory planning documents, including:

- Area Redevelopment Plans, which are statutory plans defined by the *Municipal Government Act*, that direct the redevelopment, preservation or rehabilitation of existing lands and buildings, generally within existing areas of the city;
- Area Structure Plans, which are statutory plans defined by the *Municipal Government Act*, that direct the future land use patterns, transportation and utility networks and sequence of development in new communities;
- Conceptual Schemes, which are non-statutory or preliminary plans of subdivision;
- the Land-Use Bylaw, which is a statutory document that regulates subdivision and development and which is intended to implement the MDP as well as Area Redevelopment Plans and Area Structure Plans; and
- Urban Design Guidelines and Municipal Servicing Standards, which are non-statutory documents that guide changes in the built form and streetscape character of specific developments.

This MDP is rooted in a strong commitment to Smart Growth. Smart Growth is an urban planning theory that advocates for the development of compact communities that feature transit-oriented, walkable, bicycle-friendly land use configurations and a range of housing choices and employment alternatives. City Council adopted a Smart Growth Strategy in July 2007. The objective of this strategy is to build communities that:

1. Use less energy.
2. Reduce the use of automobiles.
3. Consume less land and other natural resources.
4. Create a “walkable” environment.
5. Provide a more vibrant place to live and work.

The Smart Growth Strategy focuses planning efforts on three broad principles:

1. Encourage the design of compact, well-designed, mixed-use neighbourhoods.
2. Support growth in existing residential communities while fostering unique neighbourhood identities.
3. Foster alternative transportation options and infrastructure systems that are sustainable including city streets, the public transit system, bike paths and multiuser trails.

The MDP should be viewed as a guide for growth and development rather than a rigid path to be followed. Although the MDP has been developed to be adaptable to emerging trends and conditions, it should also be reviewed and amended on a regular basis as the community grows, and in light of more in-depth future studies, provided these amendments stay within the overall intent, direction and Smart Growth orientation of this Plan.

### **1.3 Interpretation**

This Plan is broken into six key parts that collectively set out the policy framework for future growth and development within the City.

Part 1 sets out the role and scope of the MDP, while Part 2 outlines the community context. The Vision and Principles in Part 3 draw heavily on input received during multiple public and stakeholder engagement sessions in 2010-2011 as part of the City's Growth Management Strategy development process and Smart Growth Strategy. Part 4 contains policies aimed at implementing the 2011 Medicine Hat Growth Management Strategy. Part 5 consists of policies related to nine theme areas that represent the pillars of Smart Growth in Medicine Hat. Part 6 sets out a series of policies describing how the MDP will be implemented. The MDP also comprises a series of schedules and a glossary of key terms.

When reading the MDP, the following key points should be kept in mind:

1. Where an introductory preamble accompanies a policy, it is provided for information purposes only, and is intended to enhance the understanding of the policy. Should there be any inconsistencies between the preamble and a particular policy, the policy will take precedence.
2. The following terms, when used in policy statements, have specific meanings as follows:
  - “shall” or “will” in this document denotes an action statement that requires mandatory compliance;
  - “should” in this document denotes an action statement that requires compliance in principle, unless it can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the applicable authority that it is not reasonable, practical or feasible in a given situation; and
  - “may” in this document denotes a discretionary action that may or may not be undertaken depending on the situation and context.
3. The Municipal Development Plan is intended to provide broad policy direction with respect to land use planning and development matters in the City of Medicine Hat, in accordance with Section 632 of the Municipal Government Act. More specific direction with respect to land use and development is provided through the Land Use Bylaw (LUB). The intent of this Plan is that the policies are to be given full effect to the extent that they are consistent with the LUB. Where a policy in the MDP conflicts with a policy or standard in the LUB, the LUB shall prevail.
4. It must be further recognized that section 637 of the Municipal Government Act provides that “The adoption by a council of a statutory plan does not require the municipality to undertake any of the projects referred to in it.” To the extent that Plan policies contemplate the expenditure of public funds or the dedication of public resources, those policies must necessarily be read and interpreted subject to Section 637. Implementation of these policies will depend upon future resource allocation deliberations and decisions.
5. Unless otherwise specified within the MDP, the boundaries or locations of any symbols or areas shown on a map are approximate only and shall be interpreted as such. They are not intended to define exact locations except where they coincide with clearly recognizable physical features or fixed boundaries, such as roads or utility rights-of-way.
6. Throughout the MDP, the “City of Medicine Hat” and the “City” are used to describe the City of Medicine Hat as a municipal government, or corporation, whereas, “the city” and “Medicine Hat” are used to describe the physical area of the municipality.

#### 1.4 *Related Plans and Policies*

The MDP does not exist or function in isolation. It aligns with and supports several other important policies and initiatives.

A number of supporting City of Medicine Hat plans and documents were referenced in the development of this Plan, including:

- Growth Management Strategy (2011), which defines how, where and when the city should grow in the future;
- Strategic Priorities Report (2011), which outlines Council's immediate policy objectives and priority activities or initiatives;
- Downtown Parking Study (2011), which analyzes existing parking conditions, forecasts future parking demand, evaluates future parking conditions, and develops parking strategies to optimize parking in both the existing and future horizons;
- Long Range Transit Study (2006) which provides future directions for the City's regular transit and special transit services over the short- and long-term;
- Cycling Master Plan (2010), which consists of recommended routes, implementation timelines, cost estimates, design considerations, bicycle parking standards, and educational recommendations to encourage commuter and recreational cycling;
- Roadway System Master Plan (2005), which provides a strategy for the safe, efficient, and economical movement of people and goods within Medicine Hat, and outlines key strategies to aid the City in building and maintaining a road network that meets the needs of residents, businesses, and surrounding communities;
- Highway 1 and 3 Network Functional Planning Study (2011);
- Parks System Management Plan (2010), which comprises a Parks System Plan, a high level plenary document that addresses policies and principles, and Parks System Guidelines, which address mid-level principles such as parks distribution, land requirements and development guidelines;
- City's Heritage Resources Policy (2009), which provides a framework of principles, goals and a structure by which identification, protection and preservation related to heritage resources may be delivered;
- City's Public Art Policy (2005), which guides the acquisition and placement of public art located on municipal property;
- Leisure Trails Future Development Plan (2010);
- Recreation Master Plan (2011), which identifies trends as well as priorities for future recreation infrastructure, programming, and strategies;
- Community Environmental Roadmap, which provides a framework to better understand the community's environmental priorities, including performance indicators and long-term targets;
- City's Municipal Development Plan (2004); and
- Smart Growth Strategy (2007).

Within the regional context, the MDP incorporates directions from the Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) between the City of Medicine Hat, the Town of Redcliff and Cypress County. The IDP sets out a comprehensive policy framework regarding land use and future development within the urban fringe. The IDP also includes communication protocols and procedures for resolving conflicts as well as administering the plan among the three municipalities. The MDP also complements the IDP as it designates complementary uses adjacent to this urban fringe area and allows for coordination among adjacent municipalities in dealing with development, local or regional servicing, and transportation matters.

As per the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*, the MDP will also need to align with the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan. This regional plan is currently under development and the MDP will be reviewed upon its completion and amended if required.

On a neighbourhood scale, the MDP not only provides guidance to the creation of new planning frameworks and policies, as highlighted in Section 1.2, but it also supports the directions already outlined in proposed and existing Area Structure Plans (ASP's) and Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP's), including:

- Airport ASP
- Box Springs Business Park ASP
- Burnside Estates ASP
- Burnside Heights ASP
- Canyon Creek ASP
- Cimarron ASP
- Downtown Redevelopment Plan (non-statutory)
- Downtown Vicinity ARP
- Hamptons ASP
- Northeast Crescent Heights ASP
- North Sector Commercial/Residential ASP
- Parkview ASP
- Ranchlands ASP
- River Flats ARP
- Saamis Heights ASP
- South Flats ARP
- Southlands ASP
- South Ridge ASP
- Southview ASP
- South Vista Heights ASP

Finally, it is important to note that the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) serves as one of the key implementation tools for the MDP, providing the legislative authority to enact and enforce the policies laid out within this Plan. The purpose of the LUB is to regulate and control or prohibit the use and development of land and buildings within the city in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*. The LUB also provides the basis for making decisions on applications for development by establishing specific criteria and performance standards that are intended to ensure that the policies of the MDP are implemented. The basis for many of the criteria and performance standards in the LUB is found in the MDP. The LUB is also intended to implement Area Redevelopment Plans and Area Structure Plans, which apply to specific geographies in the city, and which contain policies that are specific to that geography.

### **1.5 MDP Public Consultation Process**

The MDP public consultation process began with consultations on the development of the City of Medicine Hat Growth Management Strategy. This included an initial series of stakeholder workshops and public meetings in Spring 2010, followed by a second round in Fall 2010. These discussions focused on the application of Smart Growth concepts in Medicine Hat and the exploration of various growth scenarios for the city. Following Council's review of the Growth Management Strategy in Spring 2011, work began on the development of the MDP. A Draft MDP was advertised and made available on the City's website and at City Hall for public comment in June 2011. Interested members of the public were able to provide comments via email, phone, mail or by meeting in-person with City staff. Immediately following the release of the Draft MDP, two public open houses were held. Each Open House included a presentation on the Draft MDP as well as a series of display panels highlighting key themes of the Draft MDP. Members of the public were asked to comment on the general themes in the Draft MDP as well as the specific proposed policies. The Draft MDP was mailed to the Public and Catholic School Boards as well as Cypress County and the Town of Redcliff. The feedback received through these various consultation mechanisms helped to shape the development of the MDP. The City would like to thank all of those residents and stakeholders who took the time to participate in this process.



## **Part II**

### **Community Context**

## Part 2 – COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Medicine Hat is a thriving city of approximately 61,000 residents. Located along the South Saskatchewan River and at the junction of Highway 1 and Highway 3, it has grown from a historic past as home to some of Canada's most important clay factories into a major urban community and an important service centre for the southeastern part of the province and the many rural residents in surrounding areas. Although it is seen as a major urban centre, the community has maintained its small town feel and rural roots.

The city is blessed with abundant natural resources including coal, clay, gas, and farmland. Its substantial large natural gas fields make Medicine Hat one of only a handful of cities in the world that produces and distributes its own natural gas and electricity. Its beautiful river valley cliffs, coulees and natural prairie landscape, along with its extensive heritage and cultural resources, make it a regional tourism destination. The Saamis Site, home to the world's largest teepee constructed as a tribute to the area's Blackfoot culture, is also an important local tourism asset. In addition to the oil and gas industry and tourism, other key economic drivers include agriculture, manufacturing, construction, aggregates, and retail and services. Being adjacent to Canadian Forces Base Suffield also offers a variety of business opportunities including emerging work related to Canada's unmanned vehicle systems, aerospace, technology and security industries. Medicine Hat is also looking forward to the future with aspirations to foster the alternative energy sector and related businesses that will move the community towards a green economy.

Growth over the past several years has been accommodated through residential and commercial development primarily south of the river, and industrial development primarily in the north, anchored around the Trans Canada Highway, Brier Park and the Canadian Fertilizer plant, and in the southwest agro-industrial area. Of particular focus has been the revitalization of Downtown Medicine Hat through initiatives such as the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and the establishment of a Business Revitalization Zone. Facilitating the relocation of the CPR yards outside of this area, attracting new business opportunities, and intensifying residential development are key factors to enhancing the Downtown core. This area also has several existing amenities that contribute significantly to revitalization efforts, including the Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre, City Hall, Medicine Hat Public Library, and the Heritage Trail System.

Residential and commercial development have increased over the past few years with the City leading the way in implementing the City's Smart Growth Strategy and creating sustainable greenfield development.

Medicine Hat's promising future is predicated on an extensive system of existing infrastructure. The city is well serviced, in part, through a network of highways, major arterial roads, local roads, rail and public transit. Future plans will see the relocation of the TransCanada Highway to bypass around the city which will allow for new opportunities along this important corridor. There is also a regional airport that provides connections to Calgary and accommodates charter and freight traffic. The Medicine Hat Regional Hospital supports a wide range of services for local and regional residents. Several recreational facilities serve the community such as the Family Leisure Centre, Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede, Cypress Centre, Arena and Echo Dale Regional Park.

Situated at the gateway to the Canadian Badlands, Medicine Hat is Canada's sunniest city and boasts numerous parks and environmental features. Police Point Park, the site of a historic North West Mounted Police outpost, is a 120-hectare site next to the South Saskatchewan River. One of Southern Alberta's well known birding destinations, the park also includes the Medicine Hat Interpretive Program building. Other significant sites include the Strathcona Island Park, Kin Coulee Park, Echo Dale Regional Park, and over 92 km of multi-purpose trails throughout the City. Local stewardship of these assets forms a strong basis for the many environmental initiatives and programs created by the City such as their neighbourhood recycling program, HatSmart and the Community Environmental Roadmap.



## **Part III**

### **Vision and Principles**

## Part 3 – VISION AND PRINCIPLES

### 3.1 *Vision*

It is the year 2060. As a ‘City of Choice for Families’, Medicine Hat has emerged as a major urban centre in Western Canada, and is now home to well over 100,000 people. It offers exceptional institutions, public facilities, sustainable public infrastructure and affordable services to its residents, and it is grounded in a vibrant and diversified economy. It is known as one of the safest and best communities in North America to raise children. As an environmentally conscious community, Medicine Hat is a leader in alternative energy, based on agricultural residual and waste to energy production, coupled with solar and wind.

Despite its size and regional importance, Medicine Hat still feels like a small prairie town. Its history and culture are cherished and celebrated. It is beautiful and human-scaled, and its surrounding area still maintains its rural character. Medicine Hat’s neighbourhoods provide a mix of land uses and offer meaningful places to live, work, shop, play and learn. It’s safe and easy to get around the city, whether by car, bus, bicycle, or on foot, and the city’s recreation trails are the envy of the province.

Downtown Medicine Hat is vibrant and serves as both the focus of everyday life and a fun destination for residents and visitors alike. It bustles with activity in the daytime and evening throughout the year.

The City has invested in airport and transportation improvements. Partnerships with Canadian Pacific Railway and both the Federal and Provincial Governments have borne fruit. The city is a major distribution hub offering intermodal connectivity and inexpensive industrial land. Access to the American border is open and the city is well connected. The city has become a centre in the supply chain management for the “just-in-time” manufacturing in the North American economy. The rail yards are full, airfreight services operate twenty four/seven, and new truck terminals are clustered near the highway exits. Supply chain activities such as sourcing, procurement, inventory, conversion, and logistics management are all easily and efficiently carried out from the well-located Medicine Hat hub.

Major financial, engineering, repair and manufacturing businesses have moved to the city because the affordable and sustainable lifestyle offered in Medicine Hat helps them recruit and retain employees. Service and repair centres for high value technology equipment form a major employment cluster. The presence of high speed digital communication systems associated with the transportation growth and the availability of a very reliable and affordable energy supply has led to the extensive development of cloud communication computer farms. Medicine Hat College has grown to become a leading post-secondary institution in Canada, with significant presence of international students, and now offers programs and training to support the city’s rapidly developing business clusters. Optimism and innovation is a strong characteristic of every Hatter’s personality.

Despite the significant growth, new development has been accommodated through an appropriate balance of sensitive infill and redevelopment in existing neighbourhoods and the development of compact new neighbourhoods on the city's edge. Together, these neighbourhoods provide a full range of housing choices and community facilities for residents, including schools, parks and recreation facilities.

Medicine Hat continues to embrace and protect its natural heritage. Spectacularly situated along the South Saskatchewan River in a corner of the Canadian Badlands, its dramatic topography, stunning views, and extensive network of natural areas and parks create habitat for a diversity of flora and fauna, and attract visitors from across the province and beyond.

Medicine Hat is a community that has prospered for decades, and that looks forward to a future as one of Alberta's most authentic, livable and innovative places.

### 3.2 Principles

The MDP vision will be achieved through the following principles, which will be used to guide future decision-making:

#### ***A Great Place To Live***

- Compact, pedestrian-focused, human-scaled development.
- A mix of land uses that make Medicine Hat a community of diverse choices for living, working, shopping, playing and learning.
- A range of appropriate land uses, building types and scales to accommodate future growth.
- An appropriate balance of growth in greenfields and through intensification.
- A coherent, unified, safe and legible city where growth is contiguous, commercial centres are thriving, and neighbourhoods are connected.



#### ***A Prosperous Economy***

- A diversified economy that attracts new businesses and industries.
- An innovative community that serves as a model for other communities across Alberta and the Prairies.
- Continued development of economic assets, such as natural gas, agricultural and tourism.



#### ***A Vibrant Community Centre***

- A revitalized Downtown and inner-city neighbourhoods.
- A wide range of uses, amenities and services that create a community centre that attracts residents and businesses and makes Medicine Hat residents proud.



#### ***A Connected Community***

- Efficient connections for all modes of transportation.



***A Beautiful Community***

- Attractive, connected, healthy, safe, vibrant and diverse neighbourhoods.
- High quality urban and architectural design.
- An extensive pedestrian, cycling and transit network.



***A Community That Celebrates Its History, Culture and Diversity***

- Preservation and adaptive reuse of cultural heritage resources throughout the city, including the National Historic Clay District, Echo Dale Farm, Stampede and the Saamis Teepee Site.
- An inclusive community that welcomes a diverse population.



***A Healthy Community***

- An accessible network of public facilities and parkland that serves the city's residents and visitors and supports healthy lifestyles.



***A Green and Sustainable Community***

- Protected natural features and environmentally significant areas.
- A healthy urban forest.
- Communities that are safe from flooding and other natural hazards.
- A strong culture of conservation with respect to water use, energy use, and waste generation.
- A sustainable energy supply, with a growing mix of renewable energy sources.



***A Well-Serviced Community***

- Superior, efficient and cost-effective public infrastructure servicing.



***Implementation – Making It Happen***

- A wide range of planning and fiscal tools to implement the Plan.
- Community participation in development decisions.
- Collaboration with surrounding municipalities.





## **Part IV**

### **Growth Management Policies**

## Part 4 – GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICIES

### 4.1 Introduction

Medicine Hat's population growth has averaged just under 900 new residents per year over the past twenty years, and is projected to grow from 61,000 today to between 71,000 and 78,500 by 2025 and between 81,500 and 95,000 by 2040 (from "City of Medicine Hat Demographic and Market Trends Population and Employment Projections" prepared by Nichols Applied Management, 2010). The City's population is forecasted to reach 111,000 by 2067 (from forecasts based on target growth models prepared by Nichols Applied Management, 2010). That level of growth would require the construction of roughly 10,600 additional multi-family units and 13,200 additional single-family units.

Employment is expected to increase from 34,800 employees in 2009 to just under 60,000 employees by 2067, an increase of just over 70%. At that time, business services are expected to provide over 15,800 jobs, public services over 15,000 jobs, retail and wholesale trades 12,300 jobs, manufacturing and construction industries 9,600 jobs, and primary industries just under 6,700 jobs (from forecasts based on target growth models prepared by Nichols Applied Management, 2010).

This population and employment growth will need to be accommodated through the development of additional residential, commercial and industrial areas, and it will need to be supported by additional infrastructure, community services and recreation opportunities. How the City of Medicine Hat plans to accomplish this is set out in this Municipal Development Plan.

Much of Medicine Hat's future growth will take the form of greenfield development. Greenfield developments are new communities or subdivisions constructed on previously undeveloped land, such as agricultural land. The city's future greenfield areas will be designed to extend, augment, enhance and complete existing communities, and to create a cohesive and contiguous urban form. They will also be designed to make efficient use of land and infrastructure, to be compact, to offer a variety of uses and housing types, and to encourage non-automotive modes of transportation.

Growth will also contribute to revitalizing and renewing existing neighbourhoods in the city through intensification, focused on specific Intensification Areas. Intensification is an increase in the number of residents and/or jobs in existing neighbourhoods. Intensification is an important pillar of Smart Growth, as it can reduce pressures on agricultural and natural resources at the city's edge, encourage a greater mixing and diversity of land uses, enhance existing businesses, provide for more street life and vitality, encourage non-automotive transportation, make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and facilities, and bring new uses and amenities to existing communities.

The MDP seeks an appropriate balance between these two forms of urban development, by both endorsing compact greenfield development and encouraging sensitive intensification in specific areas.

The north western industrial and commercial area forms the most significant future major employment node in the city and region. It is well served by rail and road connections and can be expected to experience new industrial and commercial development over the planning horizon considered in this Plan.

At the centre of this area is one of the region's most significant industrial complexes. The Canadian Fertilizer Ltd. (CFL), a large volume manufacturer of agricultural fertilizer has been operating at this location for many decades. It is a large employer and a valued contributor to the Province's agricultural industry. The plant, as a part of the manufacturing process, uses anhydrous ammonia, with large volumes of this hazardous chemical stored on-site. The City has reviewed the risk considerations as a part of this planning process. The separation of certain uses which may for a variety of reasons have impacts upon each other is a common practice in the development of plans. It is noted that much of the area in this quadrant of the city is not fully developed. As such, the separation of incompatible uses could be better managed by the City.

The area that would most likely be impacted by the risk of any potential anhydrous ammonia leak or spill lies within 1.5 kilometres of the CFL site. Future subdivision can be expected throughout the area. Lands within the 1.5 kilometres risk area will be developed for compatible industrial uses such as warehousing storage and construction yards as well as similar large scale industrial uses.

Lands beyond the risk area can readily be developed for a wider range of uses. These can include industrial uses and supportive commercial uses ranging from hotels and restaurants to larger recreational developments. It is a common and reasonable practice to provide for separation between significant areas of industrial and commercial development and residential areas and so such uses should be discouraged in this general area. The development should be staged so that there is a transition from the CFL site to commercial development in the extremities of the area. Heavy industries will be located close to CFL and transition to light industrial and some commercial uses, such as warehousing and storage, commercial centers, office complexes, hotels, and related uses close to the extremities of the area.

At subdivision the City is entitled to require that up to ten percent (10%) of the land be given as Municipal Reserve (MR). In addition, the City can require the applicant to provide or dedicate lands as Environmental Reserve (ER) per the Municipal Government Act. The acquired MR lands should be used to create an attractive green space, with risk control features such as a berm, trees, storm wetlands and wet moat systems to generally align with the perimeter of the 1.5 kilometer area surrounding the CFL site. In addition to mitigating the risks from industrial spills and runoff, this Green Space will help to visually shield the Heavy Industrial Area from other uses. The Green Space would be provided with trees, vegetation and recreational spots to allow the employees in the area to relax during their breaks.

Smaller scale industrial development and some associated and supportive commercial development will likely continue to occur beginning in the Brier Park area and slowly extend northward towards the CFL site.

## 4.2 General

- (a) The planning horizon for this Plan is 30 years, and it is based on a 50-year vision for the city's growth.
- (b) Planning will be based on achieving a population target of between 81,500 and 95,000 people over the next 30 years.
- (c) It is the goal of the City of Medicine Hat to accommodate future growth through a balance of intensification and greenfield development.
- (d) Sufficient land capacity exists within the current municipal boundary of Medicine Hat to accommodate future growth for the next 30 years. The City will not consider any expansions to the municipal boundary within the planning horizon of this Plan.

## 4.3 Greenfield Areas

- (a) Greenfield Areas should be planned, designed and phased to ensure a compact, contiguous, and well-designed urban form that efficiently utilizes land and infrastructure.
- (b) Development of lands that are not contiguous with existing neighbourhoods will only be considered when more cost effective and efficient growth options are not available, and where the conditions of Policy 4.3(m) have not been met.
- (c) Each Greenfield Area will achieve a minimum density target of at least 17 dwelling units per gross hectare. For the purposes of this policy, gross hectares will be determined as described in Schedule E.
- (d) To help achieve compact growth within Greenfield Areas, public land uses such as school sites, road rights-of-way, stormwater facilities, and so on, should be planned and designed in such a way that they make efficient use of land and optimize public operational and maintenance costs for services.
- (e) The highest density areas within each Greenfield Area should be located directly along transit routes.
- (f) Areas identified as Priority One Greenfield Areas will be considered suitable for future development in accordance with an approved Area Structure Plan during the 30-year planning horizon of this Plan.
- (g) The Priority One Greenfield Areas constitute approximately 710 ha. They are illustrated in Schedule A and comprise, in no particular order:
  - (i) Cimarron and the South West lands;
  - (ii) Suntech lands;
  - (iii) Lower Burnside lands; and
  - (iv) 23rd Street lands (the "Cancarb Lands").

- (h) Based on the minimum density requirement in Policy 4.3(c), the Priority One Greenfield Areas are expected to accommodate approximately 7,000 to 9,000 dwelling units and 15,000 to 20,000 residents. These figures may vary depending on the extent of Non-Developable Areas and Regional Land Uses in each Greenfield Area.
- (i) Areas identified as Priority Two Greenfield Areas are anticipated for long-term future development, toward the end of the 30-year planning horizon of this Plan.
- (j) The Priority Two Greenfield Areas constitute approximately 1,527 ha. They are illustrated in Schedule A and comprise, in no particular order:
  - (i) Northeast Urban Reserve lands;
  - (ii) Upper Burnside lands; and
  - (iii) Holsom Road lands.
- (k) Based on the minimum density requirement in Policy 4.3(c), the Priority Two Greenfield Areas are expected to accommodate approximately 14,500 to 16,500 dwelling units and 32,500 to 37,000 residents. These figures may vary depending on the extent of Non-Developable Areas and Regional Land Uses in each Greenfield Area.
- (l) Development will not be allowed in areas identified as Priority Two Greenfield Areas, and the City will not consider applications for Area Structure Plans for Priority Two Greenfield Areas, until such time as the City land inventory undertaken in accordance with Policy 6.5(b) has demonstrated that both of the following conditions have been met:
  - (i) the total aggregated capacity of the Priority One Greenfield Areas is within 5 years of build-out; and
  - (ii) land supply and projected demand within Intensification Areas is insufficient to meet the forecasted demand.
- (m) Notwithstanding Policy 4.3(l), development of Priority Two Greenfield Areas may be allowed to precede Priority One Greenfield Areas provided the following conditions are met to the satisfaction of the City:
  - (i) the developer agrees to up front all costs associated with the construction of required municipal infrastructure, including off-site;
  - (ii) the ongoing costs to the City for the operation of any required municipal infrastructure and soft services are manageable and acceptable to the City;
  - (iii) the developer can demonstrate contiguity and efficiency with the existing urban form;
  - (iv) the development will not undermine the successful development of a Priority One Greenfield Area;
  - (v) the development will not undermine the success of reaching the City's goals with respect to intensification; and
  - (vi) an approved Area Structure Plan is in place.

- (n) Until an Area Structure Plan is approved, permitted land uses within Greenfield Areas will be limited to existing uses, agricultural uses, parkland, and recreational uses, as set out in the Land Use Bylaw. These uses are intended to be unserviced and to reflect a low intensity of development. New country residential development will not be permitted within Greenfield Areas.

#### **4.4 Intensification Areas**

- (a) Appropriate intensification is generally supported throughout the city, with a focus on Intensification Areas, and subject to a consideration of appropriate uses and development capacity.
- (b) It is the goal of the City of Medicine Hat to accommodate approximately 40% of the City's growth over the next 50 years, or approximately 22,000 additional people, through intensification.
- (c) Priority One Intensification Areas are anticipated to be redeveloped first. The Priority One Intensification Areas are illustrated in Schedule A and comprise, in no particular order:
  - (i) Downtown Medicine Hat;
  - (ii) River Flats;
  - (iii) Highway 3 / Airport Lands; and
  - (iv) South Flats.
- (d) Priority Two Intensification Areas are anticipated to be redeveloped over the longer term. The Priority Two Intensification Areas are illustrated in Schedule A and comprise, in no particular order:
  - (i) Uplands;
  - (ii) 13th Avenue; and
  - (iii) Dunmore Road.
- (e) The City will lead the preparation of an Area Redevelopment Plan for each Intensification Area, with a priority on the Priority One Intensification Areas.
- (f) The preparation of Area Redevelopment Plans should be guided by achieving the City's general vision for each Intensification Area, as described in Schedule D.

#### 4.5 Business Development Area

- (a) Lands within the Business Development Area identified in Schedule A: Land Use shall be considered suitable for future industrial and commercial development during the 30-year planning horizon of this Plan, subject to the other policies of this Plan.
- (b) The City, in cooperation with private landowners, should encourage the marketing of lands within the Business Development Area to prospective employers and investors.
- (c) Permitted uses within the Business Development Area in Schedule A: Land Use will be described in the Land Use Bylaw.

##### 4.5.1 Heavy Industrial Area

This area is located in the northern quadrant of the City and is centered on the long existing Canadian Fertilizers Limited plant (CFL). This plant which started production in 1976 is one of Medicine Hat's anchor industries and major employers.

- (a) The area immediately surrounding the CFL storage area may be subject to a readily identified risk in the event of a leak. As a result, development within one and one half (1.5) kilometers of the plant should be limited to purely heavy industrial development consisting of manufacturing, warehousing, and open storage uses such as laydown yards.
- (b) Due to the unique nature of the Heavy Industrial Area shown in Schedule A: Land Use, light industrial uses, commercial activity with residential functions (i.e. hotels), and institutional uses (i.e. schools, hospitals, seniors facilities) will not be allowed.

##### 4.5.2 Industrial-Commercial Area

This area is intended for development of a mix of industrial and commercial uses as shown on Schedule A: Land Use.

- (a) The City recognizes that it is important to define the area nearest the Canadian Fertilizer plant for other similar heavier industries and related or supportive uses. This existing heavy industrial area must be protected from incompatible uses. As a result lands within the 1.5km of the CFL site will be developed for additional heavier industrial uses. All lands within the Business Development Area outside of the 1.5 kilometer distance from the CFL site are transitioning from heavy industrial uses to medium industrial uses down to complementary light industrial and then supporting commercial uses. The logical progression of development of these lands will begin with commercial and light industrial development occurring close to the southern portion of Box Spring Road, along 23rd Street NW and the Trans-Canada Highway; where visibility from the existing road network will be important to a wide range of commercial uses. As development proceeds deeper into the undeveloped industrial-commercial area there will be a greater likelihood of heavier commercial uses and a larger emphasis on

various industrial uses can be expected. These uses may include light industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, outside storage yards, commercial centers, office complexes, hotels and community facilities.

Detailed application of appropriate uses will be determined within the Land Use Bylaw and based on the existing Box Springs Area Structure Plan.

- (b) Where a development proposal is not consistent with the general land use approach described in Policy 4.5.2 (a), it can only be considered as a discretionary use; with applicable conditions and provision of a risk management strategy. Factors to be considered will include, but not be limited to, the nature of the proposed use and its relationship/proximity to the Canadian Fertilizer plant, compatibility and consideration of alternative design and operational management strategies that are intended to mitigate any safety concerns which might be identified in the risk management strategy.

#### **4.5.3 The Green Space**

- (a) In cooperation with future development in the general area, the City should create a landscaped separation (i.e. Green Space) located approximately a 1.5km distance from the CFL site, as conceptually shown in Schedule A: Land Use. The Green Space should be about 100 meters wide with berms and landscaped features that provide for a physical and visual separation between the heavy industrial uses and the more immediate adjoining mixed industrial heavier commercial areas nearby.
- (b) Notwithstanding any other policy of this Plan, the City may use the Municipal Reserve provisions of the subdivision requirements in respect of new non-residential development (i.e. subdivision process) to acquire lands for the possible implementation of the Green Space.
- (c) The City, as it implements the Green Space using lands acquired through the subdivision process, should review the impact of the Green Space on the development of the area, and may consider amendments intended to improve the effective screening and physical separation of uses.

#### **4.6 Brownfields**

- (a) The City should undertake an inventory of brownfield sites throughout the City and develop a brownfield redevelopment strategy that examines how brownfield sites can be returned to active uses that contribute to the implementation of this Plan, including potential incentive programs.

#### **4.7 Intermunicipal Planning**

- (a) The City recognizes the area shown in Schedule B as the Intermunicipal Development Plan Area and endorses progressive intermunicipal relations with respect to this area through the approved Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP).
- (b) The City shall apply the Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) wherever required by the IDP, and specifically as it addresses areas identified in the IDP as Urban Referral Area or Airport Vicinity Protection Area (AVPA), piped servicing, intermunicipal liaison procedures, and further studies noted in the IDP.
- (c) The City shall make future infrastructure and services decisions based on the provisions of intermunicipal agreements identified within the Tri-Area Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP).



# Part V

## General Policies

## Part 5 – GENERAL POLICIES

### 5.1 A Great Place To Live



*Continuing to make the City of Medicine Hat a great place to live will mean providing a wide range of choice and diversity in housing types, employment opportunities, amenities, services, and shopping opportunities, in all parts of the city.*

#### 5.1.1 Complete Communities

- (a) All communities should be planned to be complete communities by providing the following:
- (i) a range of housing choices, covering a mix of built forms and ownership tenures;
  - (ii) a variety of lot sizes in order to encourage variety in design and sizes of homes;
  - (iii) access to a diverse range of employment opportunities;
  - (iv) neighbourhood stores and services that can meet the day-to-day needs of residents within walking distance of their homes;
  - (v) a range of transportation choices, including walking, cycling, public transit, and private automobiles;
  - (vi) architectural and natural elements that contribute to a local identity and strong sense of place;
  - (vii) 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, as well as opportunities for solitude in an outdoor environment;
  - (viii) spaces for community gardens to encourage local food production;
  - (ix) local schools, social infrastructure, places of worship and community services;

- (x) a connected street, sidewalk network and trail that promotes comfortable, safe and universally accessible travel;
  - (xi) a healthy natural environment, including a healthy urban forest, and connections to the City's parks system; and
  - (xii) infrastructure and services that are sustainable and cost-efficient over the long term.
- (b) It is the goal of the City of Medicine Hat for all communities to be planned such that the following are achieved:
- (i) a maximum 800 metre walking distance between any given residence and the nearest neighbourhood commercial area;
  - (ii) a maximum 400 metre walking distance between any given residence and a park; and
  - (iii) a maximum 400 metre walking distance between any given residence and a public transit stop.
- (c) Shorter walking distances than those described in Policy 5.1.1(b) are encouraged for high density residential areas and for areas with seniors housing and services.
- (d) Employment generating land uses within the City are encouraged to be developed concurrently with residential development.
- (e) Residents' access to employment opportunities will be facilitated by increasing residential housing opportunities in areas close to compatible employment land uses, increasing compatible employment opportunities in areas close to residential land uses, and creating mobility linkages between residential and employment areas.
- (f) The establishment and growth of small home-based businesses and work-from-home uses should be encouraged.

### 5.1.2 Development in Existing Neighbourhoods

- (a) Growth and change will be encouraged in all existing neighbourhoods through intensification and redevelopment provided that it:
  - (i) is in context with the existing neighbourhood;
  - (ii) utilizes innovative and creative designs that foster distinctiveness, while still respecting the existing character;
  - (iii) ensures an appropriate transition between low-density residential areas and more intensive multi-residential or commercial areas;
  - (iv) complements the established character of the area and does not create dramatic contrasts in the physical development pattern; and
  - (v) is supported with services and infrastructure.
  
- (b) Where, in the opinion of the City, intensification or redevelopment in an existing neighbourhood is of a large scale, or where it will result in significant commercial intensification within an exclusively residential area, and where the existing neighbourhood is not within an Intensification Area, the City may require the preparation of an Area Redevelopment Plan that addresses:
  - (i) how the proposed development meets Policy 5.1.2(a);
  - (ii) how the proposed development will contribute to making the existing neighbourhood a more complete community in accordance with Policy 5.1.1(a); and
  - (iii) other matters identified in Policy 6.2(f).
  
- (c) The City of Medicine Hat will prepare intensification guidelines to assist landowners and developers in understanding the City's requirements and expectations for development in existing neighbourhoods.

### 5.1.3 Commercial and Retail Development

- (a) Different types of retail services are encouraged to locate within different areas as follows:
  - (i) in the Downtown, while general retail uses should still be allowed, the long term focus should be on businesses that augment and contribute to a strong pedestrian-friendly environment, such as specialty retail, tourism, culture, entertainment, and professional service and office land uses;
  - (ii) highway commercial areas should accommodate large format retail uses, vehicle-oriented services, and large land users that cannot be accommodated Downtown;
  - (iii) arterial commercial areas (e.g. Dunmore Road) should focus on retail uses and services that meet the daily needs of local residents while also providing an opportunity to accommodate retail uses and services that serve residents across the city in a pedestrian- and transit-oriented form;
  - (iv) neighbourhood commercial areas should focus on retail uses and services that meet the daily needs of local residents, such as variety stores, dry cleaners, and child care centres; and
  - (v) Medicine Hat Municipal Airport lands should focus on highway and travel commercial uses such as hotels, restaurants, car rentals and convenience stores.
  
- (b) Sufficient neighbourhood commercial areas to service local residents are encouraged in all neighbourhoods.
  
- (c) In order to maintain an attractive appearance along the city's highway commercial areas and arterial commercial areas, the following design elements for new and/or revitalized commercial development should be considered:
  - (i) landscaping of boulevards, medians and setback areas;
  - (ii) consistency in architectural styles, particularly for buildings within the same commercial parcel;
  - (iii) pedestrian-oriented development, including sidewalks, direct access for pedestrians such as locating building entrances at the sidewalk;
  - (iv) landscaping and designing parking areas to facilitate pedestrian movements through the parking area;
  - (v) transit-oriented development;
  - (vi) breaking up long, continuous buildings through architectural detailing; and
  - (vii) screening large parking, loading and outside storage areas from the roadway through appropriate landscape design.

#### 5.1.4 Accessible and Affordable Housing

- (a) Affordable housing is encouraged to locate close to schools, parks, playgrounds, and shopping areas in all parts of the city, with a focus on locations well served by public transit, while avoiding an over-concentration of affordable housing in any one area.
- (b) New development in Greenfield Areas should integrate affordable housing that is visually indistinguishable from neighbouring and nearby market housing.
- (c) The City of Medicine Hat will support the private sector, public agencies and other orders of government in the provision of affordable and accessible housing through championing new and innovative pilot developments, and encouragement of private sector, public sector or non-governmental organization initiatives and partnerships.
- (d) New residential development in Greenfield Areas should be designed, where appropriate, to allow for adaptation and evolution over time, so that the city's housing stock can evolve to meet the changing needs of Medicine Hat residents over time. This may include, for example, housing mixes, lot coverages and lot sizes that allow housing to be adapted in such a way that changing households can remain in the same home or neighbourhood for many years.
- (e) The City of Medicine Hat will implement federal and provincial accessibility standards for people with special needs in the development of new neighbourhoods and the redevelopment and intensification of existing neighbourhoods. This should include barrier-free guidelines for dwellings and commercial developments as well as for City-owned facilities and infrastructure such as sidewalks and para-ramps.

## 5.2 A Prosperous Economy



*A prosperous economy is a vital part of Medicine Hat's future. The City of Medicine Hat is blessed with abundant natural resources, well-established industries, unparalleled scenic beauty, and a strategic location as the service centre for many small communities and rural residents in the surrounding area. Future economic growth in the city will build on these strengths.*

### 5.2.1 General

- (a) The city should be planned in a manner that attracts and retains businesses and investment, fosters economic diversification, and provides a climate that supports and enhances economic activity.
- (b) The City should continue to encourage the economic diversification and expansion of existing businesses.
- (c) The City should continue to promote the city's role as a regional service centre.
- (d) The City should promote tourism through the following:
  - (i) encouraging the development of tourism, recreation, and culture-related businesses, particularly those that encourage visitors to stay overnight in the city;
  - (ii) ensuring that the city's natural and historic amenities are marketed to visitors; and
  - (iii) working in partnership with local businesses and others to promote Medicine Hat as a destination.
- (e) An economic development strategy should be undertaken to engage the community and to seek out and foster partnerships and alliances to implement economic development. Furthermore, the economic development strategy will be considered in future updates of this plan and the *Land Use Bylaw*.

### 5.2.2 Industry

- (a) The City should seek to ensure the availability of competitively priced, readily serviceable and developable industrial land in various forms and for a wide range of industrial activities. These areas should be designed and maintained for industrial uses, with commercial uses limited to those that are ancillary to and supportive of the primary industrial use.
- (b) In situations where the nature of existing or planned industrial activities requires separation from non-industrial uses, appropriate setbacks and landscaped buffers will be required.
- (c) Where isolated pockets of industrial development outside of the Business Development Area is surrounded by residential uses, the redevelopment of the industrial use to uses that are more compatible with the predominant, surrounding residential character should be encouraged. The intent of this policy is to attract new land uses that are compatible with both the existing industrial and residential uses as opportunities arise.

### 5.2.3 Natural Gas

- (a) The City will apply appropriate safety setbacks from natural gas facilities, including sour gas, as determined by the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB).
- (b) Residential uses, permanent overnight accommodations, and public facilities shall not be developed in the vicinity of natural gas facilities (including sour gas), unless located outside setbacks established by the ERCB.
- (c) Industrial, commercial or other non-residential uses may be developed adjacent to natural gas facilities (including sour gas), subject to any setbacks as determined by the ERCB.
- (d) Any subdivision or development application within the city that impacts a natural gas facility (including sour gas) shall be referred for comment and recommendation to the ERCB.

### 5.2.4 Agriculture

- (a) The City will seek to protect existing agricultural operations by maintaining appropriate definitions and land use designations in the Land Use Bylaw.
- (b) Agricultural activities such as urban and near urban agriculture is encouraged.
- (c) The premature fragmentation of agricultural land through land subdivision is discouraged.

### 5.3 A Vibrant Downtown



*The Downtown is the historic heart of Medicine Hat. This plan sets the stage for new growth in the Downtown, including a mix of specialty retail, special activity programming, arts and culture, entertainment, and restaurants, while at the same time providing new living and working opportunities for Medicine Hat residents.*

#### 5.3.1 Role of the Downtown

- (a) A wide range of land uses should be permitted in the Downtown. Desired new land uses include a hotel, a community gathering place, cultural facilities, and office complexes.
- (b) It is the goal of the City of Medicine Hat to accommodate at least 5 percent and as much as 10 percent of total future population growth within the Downtown over the next 50 years.
- (c) A variety of housing types will be encouraged in the Downtown, including accessible and affordable housing, and housing that caters to people at all stages of life, such as singles, students, young families, empty nesters, and seniors.
- (d) Land uses that attract residential populations into the Downtown are encouraged, such as retail uses, food and personal services, restaurants, theatres, and public spaces.
- (e) It is the goal of the City of Medicine Hat to accommodate up to 5 percent of total future employment growth within the Downtown over the next 50 years.
- (f) The Downtown will continue to be the primary focus for civic, social, cultural, arts, professional, office and entertainment land uses, and the priority location for facilities associated with these land uses.

- (g) Businesses that augment and contribute to a strong pedestrian-oriented environment should be encouraged to locate in the Downtown prior to locating in other areas of the city.
- (h) Home-based businesses are encouraged in residential transition areas leading to the Downtown.

### 5.3.2 Design in the Downtown

- (a) The City should prepare urban design guidelines for the Downtown, to be guided by the Historical Downtown Medicine Hat vision within the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.
- (b) New development in the Downtown is encouraged to incorporate the following design elements:
  - (i) setbacks from front property lines that maintain, where possible, a strong pedestrian-friendly environment;
  - (ii) entrances that directly face the street with porches, canopies, windows and other design features that highly articulate the facades and bring a human scale and pedestrian comfort to the street face;
  - (iii) heights that are scaled to the street, with a maximum height of 2 to 3 storeys at the street edge, and any additional storeys terraced or stepped back to provide a human-scaled street environment;
  - (iv) courtyards or other breaks in the block pattern to reduce sterility and long block faces;
  - (v) facilities for cyclists, including secure bike storage;
  - (vi) formal and informal public seating;
  - (vii) private and semi-private spaces that provide for recreation and amenity on-site;
  - (viii) usable “green roofs” or balconies to bring green and colour to the Downtown;
  - (ix) minimization of the number of curb cuts or other vehicular disruptions to sidewalks;
  - (x) outdoor cafes and other similar uses that create pedestrian activity on the sidewalk and adjoining courtyard areas; and
  - (xi) other elements that create a strong pedestrian- and transit-friendly environment.
- (c) Off-street parking between the street and the front of the building is strongly discouraged. Where necessary, off-street parking in the Downtown should be directed to underground facilities, parking structures, or surface parking behind the building that is unobtrusive and screened from public view.
- (d) Loading areas for commercial uses should be limited to lanes or to areas that are out of public view, or they should be buffered by screens or landscaping.

- (e) The major entrances to and exits from the Downtown should be distinguished with unique signage that symbolizes the core area and contributes to a strong sense of place.
- (f) The City of Medicine Hat will continue to review ways to reduce the barrier effect of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) rail line, for example by working with CPR to examine opportunities for new or improved pedestrian crossings, and encouraging the re-location of the marshaling yards out of the Downtown.
- (g) New strip mall development will not be permitted in the Downtown.
- (h) The proliferation of redundant or unnecessary signage is discouraged in the Downtown.

## 5.4 A Connected Community

*The efficient movement of goods and people throughout the city and the region is extremely important to economic prosperity and managing growth. The complementary relationship between land use and transportation is therefore critical. Creating efficient major roadways, railways and airports to foster economic development, designing complete, safe and visually appealing local streets for residents, connecting people to the destinations that they need to reach, and ensuring transit availability throughout the city, are all vital to Medicine Hat's future.*



### 5.4.1 General

- (a) To achieve a well-connected city, land use planning, urban design and transportation planning should be closely integrated.
- (b) The planning and design of development across the city should be based on supporting a transportation hierarchy that gives priority to passenger transportation options in the following order:
  - (i) pedestrians and cyclists;
  - (ii) transit; and
  - (iii) single occupant vehicles.
- (c) The City of Medicine Hat should support initiatives that provide for the mobility of all residents by ensuring that accessibility and inclusion are considered in the planning and design of all urban transportation facilities, including transit.

#### 5.4.2 Complete Streets

- (a) The City of Medicine Hat will plan, construct, operate and maintain the roadway system in a manner that promotes safety for the user.
- (b) Roads should be planned and designed as complete streets, accommodating all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transit and private vehicles, with priority placed on users in accordance with Policy 5.4.1(b).
- (c) In addition to any requirements of the Municipal Servicing Standards, the following design elements may be considered for new roadways in Greenfield Areas and when re-designing or re-developing existing roadways:
  - (i) provision for the safe and efficient movement of service and emergency vehicles;
  - (ii) optimizing building frontage (i.e. development facing the roadway) to provide a safer and more attractive walking environment for pedestrians;
  - (iii) spacing of traffic lights that contributes to a safe pedestrian environment;
  - (iv) access points to residential neighbourhoods that are highly visible;
  - (v) treed boulevards between sidewalks and traffic lanes that separate pedestrians from the roadway; and
  - (vi) in commercial areas, reducing mid-block curb cuts for entry/exit of vehicles to parking lots to improve pedestrian safety and reduce road congestion.
- (d) The Municipal Servicing Standards roadway hierarchy should be subject to periodic review and adjusted where necessary as a result of urban growth, innovations in technology, improvements in financing methods, or changes in public requirements.

### 5.4.3 Major Roadways

- (a) Appropriate noise attenuation methods should be used between major roadways and adjacent residential areas.
- (b) The requirements for truck movements to, from and within the city will continue to be recognized in the planning and maintenance of the roadway network. Designated truck routes should minimize, as far as practical, negative influences on established residential areas. Dangerous goods routes must balance the interests of the trucking industry and businesses with those of the community and immediately adjacent neighbourhoods.
- (c) The integrity of the TransCanada Highway through Medicine Hat should be protected by controlling access pursuant to the Memorandum of Agreement Between Alberta Infrastructure and the City of Medicine Hat for the Transfer of Title for the TransCanada Highway (Highway 1) and Crowsnest Trail (Highway 3) from the City to the Province.
- (d) The City should continue to work with Alberta Transportation with the objective that in matters dealing with the TransCanada Highway and other provincial highways, provision is made for the safe, efficient and effective transportation of people and goods, and provincial decisions respect and help to implement this Plan, and other municipal plans.
- (e) Planning within the city's boundaries will continue to take into account the future TransCanada bypass, as depicted in Schedule B, and its potential impacts on the city.

#### 5.4.4 Transit

- (a) All streets to be used for fixed route transit service in new residential subdivisions should be built to the established collector standards, including transit supportive surface treatments and street layouts.
- (b) All residences in new subdivisions should be located within a 400 metre walking distance of a transit stop, with shorter walking distances encouraged for high density residential areas and for areas with seniors housing and services.
- (c) The planning and design of transit stops and shelters should take the following into account:
  - (i) direct access to the stop for pedestrians on paved or solid surfaces;
  - (ii) the posting of route schedules;
  - (iii) bus shelters which are aesthetically pleasing, accessible and offer adequate weather protection; and
  - (iv) public safety, including lighting and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.
- (d) Major activity centres and trip generators should be planned to front onto streets with regular transit service. These facilities include junior and senior high schools, recreation centres, key social service centres, civic buildings, higher density residential developments, and shopping and commercial areas.
- (e) The location of planned transit stops within new subdivisions should be considered at the ASP stage, and indicated with temporary signage at the time of street construction so that new residents will have an early indication of the future transit plans.

#### 5.4.5 Walking and Cycling

- (a) Promote a high degree of attention to the architectural design and detailing of building edges in areas of interface with heavy pedestrian traffic, notably commercial streets and streets in the Downtown.
- (b) The City should establish minimum requirements for bicycle parking, both on-street and within buildings.
- (c) In the design of new subdivisions, provide for direct connections (e.g. sidewalks, cycling routes and trails) between residential areas and key destinations, such as commercial areas, schools, and transit stops.
- (d) Encourage the continued development of the trail network.

#### 5.4.6 Railway

- (a) The City of Medicine Hat should continue to liaise with Canadian Pacific Railway, as well as railway regulatory agencies, with regard to:
  - (i) relocating the rail yards as a long term goal;
  - (ii) minimizing the impact of railway operations on adjacent land uses and properties;
  - (iii) storage and/or handling of hazardous materials in the rail yards;
  - (iv) enhancing the pedestrian environment alongside the rail line, including sidewalks and landscaping;
  - (v) increasing pedestrian access options across the rail line, including improvements to the existing pedestrian underpass and a new pedestrian overpass, in accordance with the recommendations of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan; and
  - (vi) encouraging the use of environmentally responsible practices to reduce energy use and pollutant emissions.
- (b) Railway operations should be suitably separated, screened and buffered from incompatible land uses.

#### 5.4.7 Airport

- (a) Compatibility of airport and surrounding land uses is fundamental to the ongoing viability and success of the Medicine Hat Municipal Airport. On the one hand, it is critical that airport operations not be jeopardized by surrounding development. Equally important is the need to consider safety and quality of life from a land owner's perspective in all decisions related to developments that are proposed in proximity to the airport.
- (b) It is recognized that regulatory oversight of airports and general aviation falls within federal jurisdiction, while general land use regulation is a matter under provincial, and by extension, local jurisdiction. Subject to delegation of federal powers, where necessary, it is important that legislative controls be put in place to protect airport operations and to regulate land uses in the vicinity of the airport in a responsible manner. In order to accomplish this, the City will review the current Airport Vicinity Protection Overlay and prepare an Area Structure Plan and/or Area Redevelopment Plan to identify specific land use policies for lands outside existing Airport land ownership and as conceptually depicted in Schedule A, the Airport Vicinity Transition Area.
- (c) Future expansion and development of the Medicine Hat Municipal Airport is still being studied and has not yet been determined. It is therefore important to keep open the opportunities until a decision has been made.

### 5.4.8 Parking

- (a) Parking requirements will be evaluated based on a consideration of land use and parking demand, and in a manner that reflects the City's desire to promote compact development and non-auto modes of transportation.
- (b) The City may consider a reduction in minimum parking requirements where the applicant has proposed measures to promote non-auto modes of travel, or where possibilities exist for shared parking between adjacent land uses.
- (c) In the Downtown and within Intensification Areas, cash-in-lieu of parking requirements may be considered to support shared parking facilities in convenient, centralized locations that service the proposed use.
- (d) The following design elements may be considered for new parking areas associated with non-residential or multi-residential uses, and when re-designing or re-developing existing parking areas associated with these uses:
  - (i) visual screening for parking areas that are adjacent to the street;
  - (ii) providing a landscaped area between surface parking and all property lines;
  - (iii) punctuating large parking areas and long parking rows with soft landscaped islands to define major vehicle and pedestrian routes, provide shade, and break-up the expanse of paved areas;
  - (iv) organizing parking spaces and rows to provide consolidated soft landscaped areas and opportunities for on-site stormwater management;
  - (v) positioning parking rows perpendicular to the main building entrance(s) to assist safe pedestrian movement toward the building;
  - (vi) integration of bicycle parking;
  - (vii) providing access to surface parking lots from secondary streets or laneways whenever possible;
  - (viii) sharing driveway access between adjacent sites where feasible;
  - (ix) providing at least one pedestrian route between the main building entrance and the public sidewalk that is uninterrupted by surface parking and driveways;
  - (x) in larger parking lots or where parking lots serve more than one building or destination, providing logical, well-marked pedestrian routes for safe travel through the parking lot, including Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) considerations;
  - (xi) where parking is located at the rear of buildings, rear entrances and pedestrian walk-throughs in order to facilitate pedestrian access to the street;
  - (xii) provision of parking stalls that meet disability need; and
  - (xiii) other elements that may be identified by the City.

## 5.5 A Beautiful Community



*Well-designed buildings, landscaping, parks, natural features and public art all contribute to making Medicine Hat a beautiful community that is attractive to residents, businesses and visitors, and a source of pride for all Medicine Hat residents.*

### 5.5.1 General

- (a) The City of Medicine Hat, in the development of its facilities and buildings, should encourage high quality architecture, exterior design and landscaping, as well as how these facilities and buildings integrate with surrounding aesthetics, features and views.
- (b) New development should preserve and enhance attractive features and views.
- (c) Landscaping standards that address on-site landscaping for commercial, industrial, residential and institutional development should be established.
- (d) The City of Medicine Hat should partner with community groups to promote civic pride, environmental responsibility, and beautification throughout the city.
- (e) The design of buildings, parks, trails, public space, and parking areas should adhere to the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
- (f) The City of Medicine Hat should prepare urban design guidelines, where needed, to provide direction and guidance on the implementation of the policies of this Plan.
- (g) Architectural guidelines that contribute to a strong sense of place are encouraged as part of Area Structure Plans.

### 5.5.2 Public Art

- (a) The City of Medicine Hat has an established *Public Art* Policy which incorporates public art into the planning, design, and execution of selected municipal capital improvement projects. Selected capital construction projects covered by this policy are those with high visibility and public impact, such as new buildings that will provide community services, park projects, and major engineering structures such as bridges and viaducts.
- (b) The provision of public art as part of private developments is encouraged, and consideration may be given to development bonusing in return for the provision of public art in particular in the Downtown area.

## 5.6 A Community That Celebrates Its History, Culture and Diversity

*Medicine Hat's vibrant history, abundant cultural resources and diversity create a sense of pride among existing residents and give Medicine Hat a unique sense of place. From the pre-settlement history of the Blackfoot Nation through to the nationally significant clay industry and the emerging arts community, this Plan lays the foundation for the preservation and celebration of Medicine Hat's history and culture as a critical part of city building.*



### 5.6.1 Preservation of Cultural Heritage Resources

- (a) The preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage resources should be considered a key part of the wider design and urban development agenda in the city.
- (b) As a key contributor to the city's attractiveness to new investors, residents and visitors, Medicine Hat's culture and heritage should be recognized as an integral part of economic development efforts.
- (c) The City of Medicine Hat has established a Heritage Resource Committee. This Committee of Council is charged with examining opportunities for the use of heritage designation bylaws and other preservation instruments available to local government to support the restoration and preservation of heritage properties in the City.
- (d) The City of Medicine Hat will continue to update and expand the City's inventory of cultural heritage resources, including a heritage inventory of the Downtown.
- (e) Wherever possible, cultural and heritage resources will be preserved and enhanced.
- (f) Private landowners are encouraged to preserve and enhance cultural heritage resources on or associated with their properties.

- (g) In land use and development decisions, the City of Medicine Hat may encourage the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage resources and promote heritage-friendly development by:
  - (i) recommending that applicants undertake an Historic Resources Impact Assessment, where appropriate, in accordance with the *Land Use Bylaw*;
  - (ii) encouraging development proponents to either conserve the cultural heritage resource as part of their development, or to incorporate the resource harmoniously into their development through adaptive reuse; and/or
  - (iii) encouraging the relocation of buildings worthy of conservation if they cannot be preserved on their original sites.
- (h) Unique and significant landform features should be preserved where possible, including such things as paleontological resources, and locations with excellent vistas of the countryside or escarpments.

### **5.6.2 A Distinct Community Identity**

- (a) The City of Medicine Hat will promote awareness and appreciation for the heritage and history of Medicine Hat.
- (b) The City of Medicine Hat should establish appropriate land use regulations and guidelines to control and enhance the attractiveness of gateways into the city, such as those along major highways, through such things as distinctive urban design features, public art, signage, and enhanced landscaping.
- (c) The City of Medicine Hat should recognize community identity and history in naming streets, parks and neighbourhoods.
- (d) The use of building materials and architectural styles that reflect the heritage and history of Medicine Hat is encouraged.
- (e) Local history interpretive elements should be incorporated where appropriate as part of improvements to the public realm.

### **5.6.3 An Inclusive Community**

- (a) The City of Medicine Hat will promote awareness and appreciation of the growing diversity of its population.
- (b) The planning and design of neighbourhoods should encourage development that meets the basic needs of the city's most vulnerable residents. In this regard the City will ensure that the best development practices are considered in any new development and consideration will be given to any national and provincial standards.

## 5.7 A Healthy Community

*How our community is planned and designed is not only important from the standpoint of mobility, infrastructure servicing, and environmental protection. It is also critical to nurturing healthy lifestyles. The adequate provision of parks, leisure trails, schools and recreation facilities are all important contributors to the health and well-being of Medicine Hat residents.*



### 5.7.1 Municipal Reserve

- (a) The dedication of Municipal Reserve land at the time of subdivision will generally be ten percent of the land remaining after any Environmental Reserve land has been dedicated. Pursuant to the MGA, the City may seek additional Municipal Reserve lands where population densities warrant.
- (b) When Municipal Reserve land is established as a result of the subdivision of land within the corporate boundaries of the city, the title of such reserve land shall be vested in the City.
- (c) The general location and distribution of Municipal Reserve land will be determined at the Area Structure Plan stage, and further refined through the subsequent Conceptual Scheme and Plan of Subdivision stages.
- (d) The location of Municipal Reserve land will be guided by a consideration of the optimum location for the intended public use. The location of stormwater management facilities or of constrained lands such as gas wells shall not dictate the location of Municipal Reserve land.
- (e) A strip of land that is identified in an Area Structure Plan as a buffer between incompatible land uses may be designated as Municipal Reserve provided it is not used as a utility right of way, in which case it shall be designated a Public Utility Lot.

- (f) Where a narrow parcel of land is required to provide a leisure trail or pedestrian connection within a subdivision, it may be designated as Municipal Reserve unless it is also used as a utility right of way, in which case it shall be designated a Public Utility Lot.
- (g) The City of Medicine Hat will review and update the Municipal Reserve Credit Policy (a Standard Operating Procedures document), including consideration of functional Municipal Reserve and community requirements for school sites, as well as neighbourhood, community and city-wide active and passive recreational facilities.

### **5.7.2 Parks**

- (a) It is the goal of the City of Medicine Hat to have a park within a maximum 400 metre walking distance of every resident.
- (b) It is the goal of the City of Medicine Hat to maintain and enhance as much of the riverfront as possible as an active, accessible, pedestrian/bicycle-oriented amenity, and to improve pedestrian connections between residential areas and the riverfront.
- (c) In considering park development in Area Structure Plans, the City shall refer to the hierarchy of parks identified in the City's Parks System Management Plan for function and design characteristics.
- (d) Within certain parks, consideration may be given to the provision of community gardens, or allotment gardens, which allow people without yards to have a garden.

### **5.7.3 Trails**

- (a) The City will continue to develop an accessible trail system that reaches into all residential communities in Medicine Hat, and offers residents the opportunity to travel the length and breadth of the city off-road as well as on-road.
- (b) The general alignment of trails through a new development area, and connections to the existing trail system, will be identified in Area Structure Plans, and should be reviewed by the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Department during the ASP review process.
- (c) Trails may be included in Environmental Reserves in order to provide pedestrian access and opportunities to appreciate the natural area. Where possible, trails within Environmental Reserves should be located on the periphery of significant habitat areas and trail alignments should respect and follow the topography of the land.
- (d) School grounds and parks should be linked to the trail system wherever possible.

#### 5.7.4 Schools

- (a) At the time of the preparation of an Area Structure Plan, the City will work with the School Boards to determine, based on life-cycle enrollment projections, the need for additional school sites, and the proportion of Municipal Reserve to be set aside as School Reserve.
- (b) Any sites designated through the ASP process will be registered Municipal Reserve and set aside for the appropriate school boards when/if they are required.
- (c) The amount of Municipal Reserve dedicated for school purposes should include buildings, parking, landscaping and sports fields and a maximum should be established.
- (d) Where feasible, school buildings should be utilized as community facilities after school hours.
- (r) Every effort should be made to maintain existing community school buildings as schools. Where this is not feasible, surplus school buildings should be adapted for other community uses and all open space transferred to the City.
- (f) The City of Medicine Hat and School Boards should update the “City and School Boards Agreement, 1980”, and consider including new Municipal Government Act designations for reserve land such as Community Services Reserves.

## 5.8 A Green and Sustainable Community



*The protection and enhancement of Medicine Hat's environmental assets, such as its river valley and coulee escarpments, is vital to the future growth and health of the city. Medicine Hat residents and businesses also have an important role to play in improving environmental health through water conservation, energy conservation, and waste reduction.*

### 5.8.1 Environmental Reserve

- (a) During the preparation of an Area Structure Plan, areas that should be dedicated as Environmental Reserve shall be identified based on the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act* and the policies of this Plan.
- (b) Environment Reserves next to residential areas should be separated by physical barriers during construction, and after construction is complete, should be clearly demarcated from adjacent properties.

### 5.8.2 Environmentally Significant Areas

- (a) Environmentally Significant Areas within the City of Medicine Hat should be identified, inventoried and evaluated in terms of their respective significance.
- (b) Wherever possible, the City will use Environmental Reserves and statutory planning tools (e.g. environmental reserve easements and conservation easements) as established in provincial legislation as vehicles for protecting Environmentally Significant Areas.

- (c) A municipal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), paid for by the developer, may be required at the discretion of the City. Where other studies have been completed, they may be accepted as part of the EIA. EIAs may be required to include one or more of the following:
  - (i) a description of existing environmental conditions, the proposed development, and the significance of potential short term, long term and cumulative environmental impacts, including impacts of construction and operating activities;
  - (ii) identification of appropriate and feasible mitigation measures including land planning, project design, construction techniques, and operational practices to reduce or eliminate potentially adverse effects on the environment;
  - (iii) identification of residual impacts, monitoring requirements, and the need for more extensive environmental impact assessment work; and/or
  - (iv) other elements identified by the City.
  
- (d) Issues to be addressed in municipal Environmental Impact Assessments may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:
  - (i) fish and wildlife and associated habitat;
  - (ii) vegetation;
  - (iii) surface and bedrock geology;
  - (iv) soils, terrain and slopes;
  - (v) flood potential;
  - (vi) surface and groundwater quantity and quality;
  - (vii) air quality;
  - (viii) visual resources;
  - (ix) land and resource use;
  - (x) cultural and heritage resources; and
  - (xi) construction and demolition waste management .
  
- (e) Developments adjacent to wetlands, water bodies, and watercourses should not result in any of the following:
  - (i) reduction of water quality;
  - (ii) impediments to the flow of water;
  - (iii) soil erosion or shoreline damage;
  - (iv) loss of recreational potential;
  - (v) restrictions to access to the water, unless safety factors dictate otherwise;
  - (vi) negative effects on the visual quality of the natural amenities;
  - (vii) negative effects on fish and wildlife habitat; or
  - (viii) net loss of significant wetland habitat.

### 5.8.3 Flood Risk Areas

- (a) The subdivision and development of land within the floodway will not be allowed. Infill development and/or subdivision in the flood fringe may be allowed provided the City's Guidelines for Flood Proofing and the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw are met.
- (b) In natural areas or Environmental Reserves within the floodway, there should be no construction of permanent structures, other than trails and associated structural components or interpretive elements.
- (c) Berms as a design solution for floodway/flood fringe areas should only be considered where there are no other acceptable options, and this option is able to enhance the public realm.
- (d) Servicing upgrades should be reviewed in support of an improved floodway/flood fringe condition.

### 5.8.4 Urban Forestry

- (a) The City will promote the provision and maintenance of a healthy, viable urban forest in all areas of Medicine Hat through a variety of measures that may include:
  - (i) establishing a city-wide tree planting target;
  - (ii) protecting existing trees, particularly mature trees, and planting additional trees;
  - (iii) establishing minimum requirements in the Municipal Servicing Standards for tree planting in new subdivisions;
  - (iv) establishing minimum requirements in the Municipal Servicing Standards for tree planting in boulevards;
  - (v) ensuring the availability of sufficient above- and below-grade space to accommodate street trees; and/or
  - (vi) where tree removal is unavoidable as a result of new development, adopting a "no net loss" approach.
- (b) All development sites shall include in their landscape plans the identification, type and quantity of trees to be planted, subject to Development Authority Approval. Single dwelling residential lots will provide at least two trees per residential unit.
- (c) Landscaped strips for all new developments will be required in order to contribute to the urban forest and create improved streetscapes.

### 5.8.5 River Valley and Coulee Escarpments

- (a) The river valley and coulee escarpments should be preserved as open space corridors.
- (b) Activities and uses that are allowed in the river valley will generally be limited to:
  - (i) pedestrian and bicycle trails;
  - (ii) transportation corridors that provide important linkages in the city's transportation network;
  - (iii) open air recreation which does not adversely affect the natural environment or result in land form modifications;
  - (iv) uses that conserve, interpret and restore elements of the natural environment;
  - (v) uses that promote the conservation of the natural environment;
  - (vi) uses involved in the scientific or educational study of the natural or cultural heritage characteristics of the valley; and
  - (vii) small scale structures which contribute to, or are accessory to the above uses.
- (c) A preliminary assessment and map outlining the approved geotechnical top of bank, bottom of slope, and setback and development lot lines will be required at the developer's cost at the time of application for approval of an Area Structure Plan. At the developer's cost, the top of bank, bottom of slope, and setback lines shall be illustrated by legal survey prior to final endorsement of the plan of subdivision.
- (d) The preferred land uses for land adjacent to the top of bank of the river valley or coulee escarpments are visually appealing open space or public uses such as trails. Where new development is proposed near to the top of bank of the river valley or coulee escarpments, it shall meet the following conditions:
  - (i) maintenance of the natural configuration and appearance of the escarpments and their natural features;
  - (ii) conformity with the top of bank setbacks defined in the Land Use Bylaw;
  - (iii) where suitable, creation of useable open space at the escarpment edge; and
  - (iv) maintenance of views to and from the escarpment slope, for example by bordering the top of slope with a single-loaded street.
- (e) As part of any subdivision of land in the river valley, adequate protective setbacks from Environmental Reserve and Environmentally Significant Areas shall be maintained.
- (f) Native vegetation and trees along river and creek shore lands should be preserved, without restricting public access to the shores.

- (g) Erosion control and bank stabilization shall be done in a manner that is sensitive to the natural area and wildlife, and should be limited to the stretches of river or creek shores where action may be required to protect existing development, infrastructure, or property.

#### **5.8.6 Designing with Nature**

- (a) New development should be planned, where possible, to accommodate to the surrounding landscape and topography.
- (b) Park planning and building design is encouraged to recognize and, where possible, take advantage of natural site features including sloping land, existing vegetation and habitat areas, riverbank areas and water bodies.

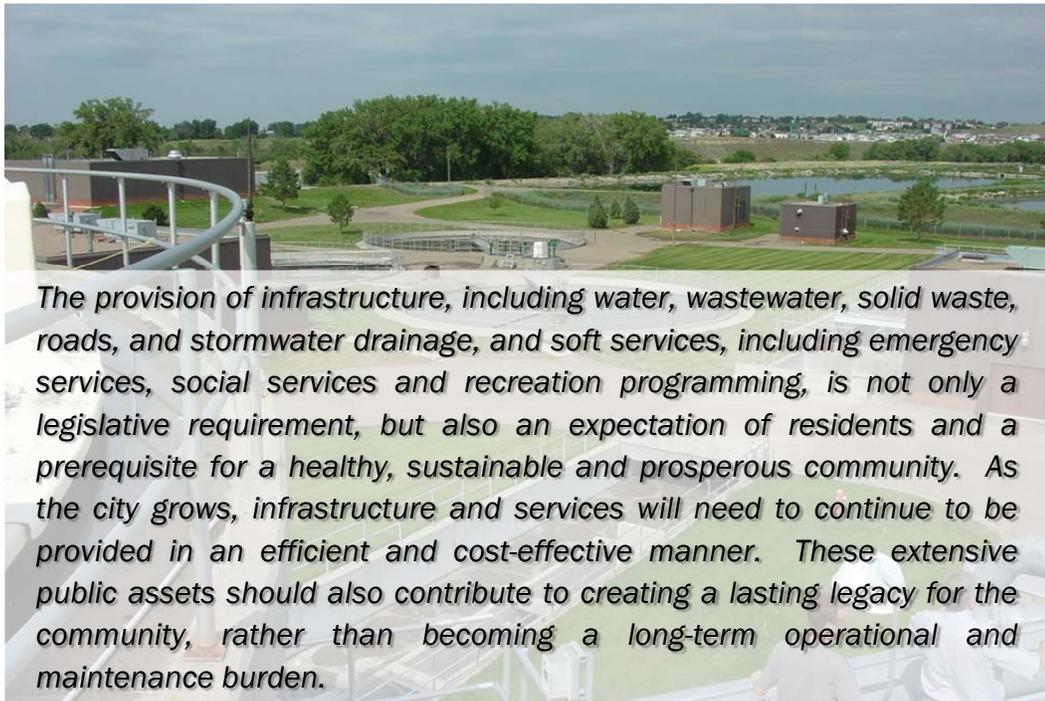
#### **5.8.7 A Culture of Conservation**

- (a) Developers are encouraged to build and design subdivisions and developments that:
  - (i) incorporate environmentally sustainable construction standards;
  - (ii) meet environmental standards such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or BuiltGreen Alberta;
  - (iii) use low impact and sustainable technologies;
  - (iv) use best management practices to reduce water and energy consumption; and
  - (v) reduce construction waste and utilize best practices for building deconstruction with emphasis on recycling materials and material reuse.
- (b) As part of the Area Structure Plan approval process, the City may require applicants to provide a description of sustainability measures that they have taken or intend to undertake. The City will develop a standard Sustainability Checklist to guide applicants in identifying and selecting potential sustainability measures.
- (c) Once it is developed, the City may consider development bonusing to encourage applicants to complete the Sustainability Checklist, or to reward applicants who commit to undertaking a significant number of measures described in the checklist.

#### **5.8.8 Energy Sustainability**

- (a) As per the City's Community Environmental Roadmap, a wind farm project will be supported as a permitted use within the Wind Resource Development Area identified in Schedule A, subject to the approval of the Alberta Utility Commission.
- (b) Development patterns and designs should encourage non-auto modes of transportation as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## 5.9 A Well-Serviced Community



### 5.9.1 General

- (a) Growth and development in the city will be planned and designed to optimize the use of existing infrastructure and soft services, and to provide for the most efficient delivery and operation of new infrastructure and soft services.
- (b) Growth will be accommodated in accordance with this Plan in a manner that avoids premature investment in infrastructure.
- (c) The City of Medicine Hat will provide infrastructure that is affordable and cost-effective over the lifecycle of the asset.
- (d) Functional Service Reports or Engineering Studies identifying all servicing requirements for each stage of development will be submitted concurrently with an ASP, Conceptual Scheme, Plan of Subdivision or Development Permit, as deemed appropriate by the City. The content and scope of Functional Service Reports or Engineering Studies will be established in the Municipal Servicing Standards.

### 5.9.2 Water, Wastewater, Stormwater Drainage and Roadways

- (a) The City of Medicine Hat should optimize the use of existing water, wastewater and stormwater drainage servicing capacity by permitting development only in areas that are contiguous to existing development, except where the conditions of Policy 4.3(m) are met.
- (b) The design of water, wastewater and stormwater drainage systems in Medicine Hat should have regard for long-term maintenance requirements and ease of future servicing and infrastructure replacement.
- (c) The City of Medicine Hat will follow regulatory and industry standards and practices for water and wastewater systems design, construction and operations.
- (d) The location, design parameters, amenity features and general size of all stormwater management facilities shall be determined at the time of the Area Structure Plan.
- (e) All stormwater management facilities should be located on Public Utility Lots adjacent to Municipal Reserve parcels wherever possible, and should complement the public open space concept for the area.
- (f) Stormwater sewers should be designed with due consideration for the type of surface drained and detaining of water from entering minor systems for high intensity storms. Stormwater systems should be designed such that the overland flows generated by major storm events are safely conveyed via the overland drainage system. In addition, stormwater management ponds should not only control the rate of discharge, but also provide improved water quality (as per Alberta Environment Guidelines) prior to discharge into natural watercourses.
- (g) New private sewage disposal systems will not be allowed, except in support of small scale development that is approved in accordance with Policy 4.3(n).



# Part VI

## Implementation – Making It Happen

## Part 6 – IMPLEMENTATION – MAKING IT HAPPEN

### 6.1 Introduction

No single action or decision will turn the future that is envisaged by this Plan into a reality. The success of this Plan depends on the collective impact of thousands of decisions and actions by a wide range of community partners. More detailed planning will be necessary through Area Structure Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans and Conceptual Schemes, in order to translate the broad policy directions of this Plan into specific plans for new and revitalized communities across the city. The Land Use Bylaw will also need to be updated to implement the MDP. As the largest landowner in the city, the City of Medicine Hat has a critical role to play as a land developer. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the success of this Plan depends on the people of Medicine Hat, and their willingness to share ideas, be open to new ideas, and facilitate change. As this Plan is implemented, the City will need to tap into the ideas and creativity of its residents to guide and inform the many important decisions that lie ahead.

### 6.2 Area Plans

- (a) All new Area Structure Plans and new Area Redevelopment Plans must be consistent with this Plan.
- (b) Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans that were approved by the City prior to approval of this Plan are recognized. Future reviews of, and amendments to those ASP's and ARP's will be required to better align with the policies of this Plan.
- (c) An Area Structure Plan will be required for all new development in Greenfield Areas prior to the redesignation of lands. At minimum, ASP's should address the following:
  - (i) the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act*, including the sequence of development proposed for the area, the land uses proposed for the area, the density of population proposed for the area, and the general location of major transportation routes and public utilities;
  - (ii) projection of the total area population, employment and dwelling unit mix;
  - (iii) the development objectives for the ASP;
  - (iv) a statement detailing how the ASP complies with this Plan, and an explanation and justification for any areas of deviation;
  - (v) the manner in which site conditions and topography will influence development of the site;
  - (vi) identification of all constraints to development, including but not limited to, pipeline corridors, gas wells, utility and road rights-of-way, and environmental features;
  - (vii) all relevant environmental factors;
  - (viii) parking requirements and how those requirements will be satisfied;

- (ix) how the plan minimizes conflicts between land uses, including the identification of buffers between residential and commercial or industrial areas;
  - (x) architectural guidelines;
  - (xi) the general location and distribution of Municipal Reserve land in accordance with Policies 5.7.1(c) through 5.7.1(f);
  - (xii) the location of major parks and recreation facilities in accordance with Policy 5.7.2(b);
  - (xiii) the general alignment of trails in accordance with Policy 5.7.3(b);
  - (xiv) appropriate locations for any needed school sites in accordance with Policy 5.7.4(a), as well as planned interim uses for school sites;
  - (xv) identification of areas to be dedicated as Environmental Reserve in accordance with Policies 5.8.1(a);
  - (xvi) impacts the proposed development will have on existing infrastructure and soft services and how these impacts have been considered and addressed;
  - (xvii) how required infrastructure and soft services will be provided;
  - (xviii) the location, design parameters, amenity features and general size of all stormwater management facilities in accordance with Policy 5.9.2(d);
  - (xix) location of transit routes and transit stops in accordance with Policy 5.4.4(e);
  - (xx) adequate provision for emergency vehicles;
  - (xxi) any other matters necessary to implement this Plan; and
  - (xxii) any other matters that the City of Medicine Hat considers necessary or that may be identified in the City's Municipal Planning Process Manual.
- (d) All new Area Structure Plans shall clearly establish how the minimum densities will be achieved in accordance with Policy 4.3(c)
- (e) A detailed Conceptual Scheme will be required when the Area Structure Plan under which lands are being developed covers more than one quarter section of land, or when the level of detail provided in the Area Structure Plan is general in nature, or as otherwise determined at the discretion of the City. At minimum, Conceptual Schemes should address the following:
- (i) a demonstration of how the Conceptual Scheme is consistent with the Area Structure Plan;
  - (ii) greater detail regarding land use, density, road networks, transit provision, municipal services, locations of Municipal Reserves and Environmental Reserves, subdivision, street names, parks, open space, playgrounds, landscaping and streetscapes;
  - (iii) urban design
  - (iv) the relative alignment and grades of trails within the parks system and the connections to the surrounding land uses and existing trail system;
  - (v) any other matters necessary to implement this Plan; and
  - (vi) any other matters that the City of Medicine Hat considers necessary or that may be identified in the City's Municipal Planning Process Manual.

- (f) Area Redevelopment Plans will provide a comprehensive framework for larger scale redevelopment and intensification in existing neighbourhoods. At the discretion of the City, ARP's may provide specific direction with respect to one or more of the following:
- (i) land use;
  - (ii) density, including identification of areas for higher density redevelopment;
  - (iii) built form, including compatibility with adjacent uses;
  - (iv) impacts the proposed redevelopment will have on existing infrastructure and soft services and how these impacts have been considered and addressed;
  - (v) transit provision;
  - (vi) urban design;
  - (vii) accessibility;
  - (viii) mitigation of flood risk and flood proofing measures;
  - (ix) preservation of viable housing stock;
  - (x) redevelopment levies and off-site levies;
  - (xi) the transitional implementation of current Land Use By-law standards;
  - (xii) any other matters necessary to implement this Plan; and
  - (xiii) any other matters that the City of Medicine Hat considers necessary or that may be identified in the City's Municipal Planning Process Manual.

### **6.3 Incentives for Intensification**

- (a) Continue to demonstrate flexibility in responding to development opportunities in Intensification Areas.
- (b) The City may explore incentives for intensification.
- (c) The priority for incentives developed in accordance with Policy 6.3(b) will be the Priority One Intensification Areas.
- (d) The City of Medicine Hat should promote development in Intensification Areas by considering opportunities for strategic acquisition of lands and properties in Intensification Areas, including brownfield sites, and undertaking site preparation and land consolidations where required.

#### 6.4 MDP Review and Amendment

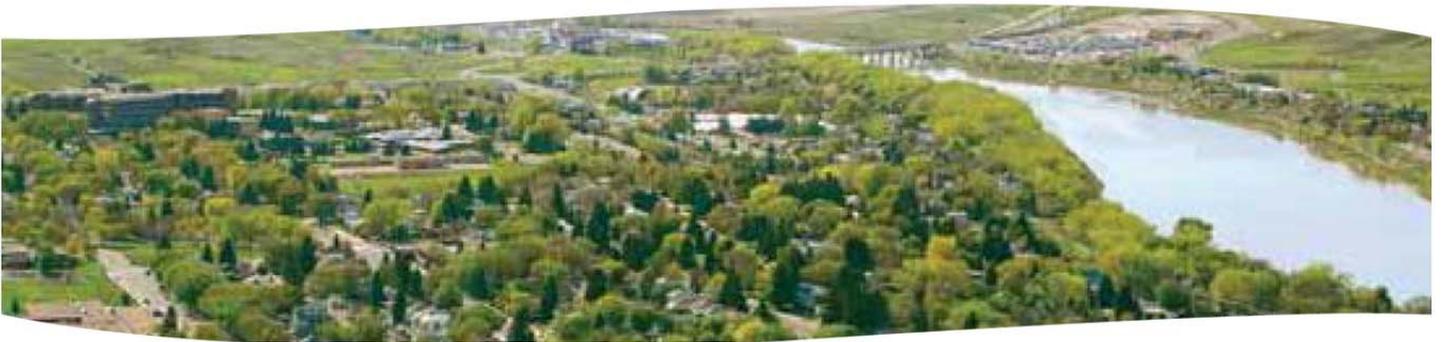
- (a) While this Plan is based on a 30-year planning horizon, it is recognized that both internal and external factors will change during that time period. To respond to these changing circumstances, the MDP will need to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains current and relevant to the needs and aspirations of Medicine Hat. A review of this Plan should be undertaken per *Municipal Government Act* requirements, with revisions made to the Plan as required as a result of each review.
- (b) This Plan is a living document that may be amended from time to time. Any changes to this Plan will require a bylaw amendment and public hearing.
- (c) The following information will be requested of an applicant by the City as part of the MDP amendment process, prior to accepting an application as being complete:
  - (i) a clear statement of the proposed text or map amendment;
  - (ii) a legal description of the land affected;
  - (iii) a certificate of title of ownership or interest in any land to be affected by the amendment;
  - (iv) a statement indicating the reasons for the amendment;
  - (v) a statement clearly articulating how the amendment achieves the Vision and Principles contained in Part 3 of this Plan, and implements the Growth Management Policies contained in Part 4 of this Plan and the General Policies in Part 5 of this Plan;
  - (vi) a statement explaining the implications for adjacent properties;
  - (vii) a statement explaining the implications for servicing requirements; and
  - (viii) a list of individuals or interest groups that may be affected by the amendment and a statement of the results of any consultation undertaken with potentially affected interests as identified by the applicant and the City.
- (d) In cases where the amendment may result in substantial impacts, the City may require the submission of additional information to assess the suitability for the uses intended, such as Conceptual Schemes, an initial screening of potential environmental impacts, impacts of the amendment on infrastructure, and/or impacts on the local economy. The scope of the information required shall be determined in consultation with City staff and the applicant.

## 6.5 Monitoring

- (a) The City should monitor the implementation of this Plan by identifying and tracking progress toward a series of indicators related to Smart Growth, quality of life, economic performance, environmental health, public health and safety, mobility, and other matters that the City deems important.
- (b) The City should undertake to report annually on lot consumption and population and employment growth. This reporting should address the following:
  - (i) population and employment growth trends;
  - (ii) an inventory of existing municipal housing stock according to housing type;
  - (iii) an inventory of available and developable residential and employment land, including land for intensification and greenfield development; and
  - (iv) a projection of future land consumption.

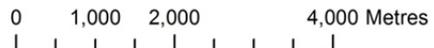
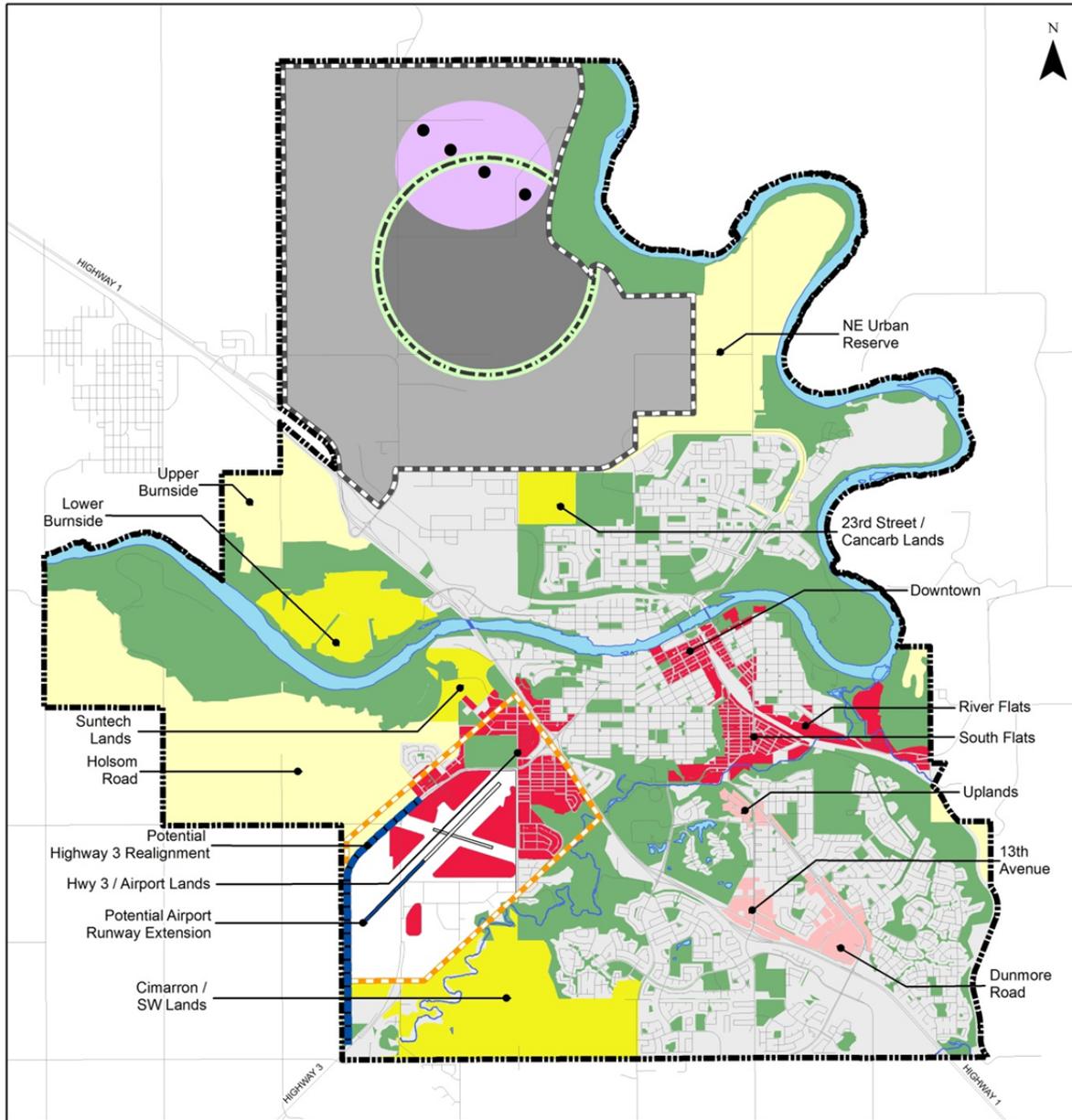
## 6.6 Public Engagement

- (a) The City will promote consultation and facilitate the involvement of residents in land use and development issues.
- (b) The City will continue to work closely with volunteers and community organizations to plan, develop and implement programs and services for the community that help to implement this Plan.



## Schedules

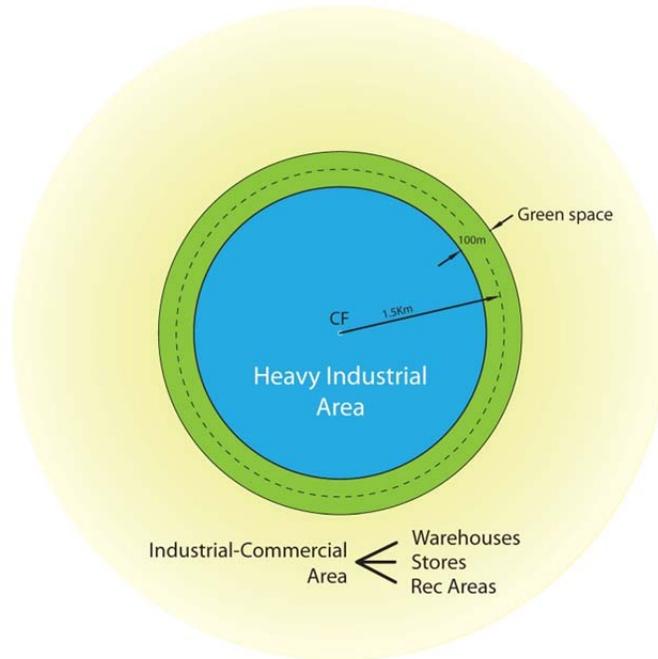
SCHEDULE A: LAND USE



- |   |                                       |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Priority 1 Greenfield Area                  | Wind Resource Development Area        | Airport Runway Extension                |
| Priority 2 Greenfield Area                  | Preferred Wind Turbine Location       | Highway 3 Realignment                   |
| Priority 1 Intensification Area             | Water Body                            | Road                                    |
| Priority 2 Intensification Area             | Green Space*                          | Municipal Boundary                      |
| Business Development Area                   | Airport Vicinity Transition Area      | <i>*See Appendix I for illustration</i> |
| Heavy Industrial Area (0.0km-1.5km)*        | Developed and/or Area Being Developed |   |
| Industrial-Commercial Area*                 | Area Undergoing Future Studies        |   |
| Open Space + Environmentally Sensitive Area |                                       |   |

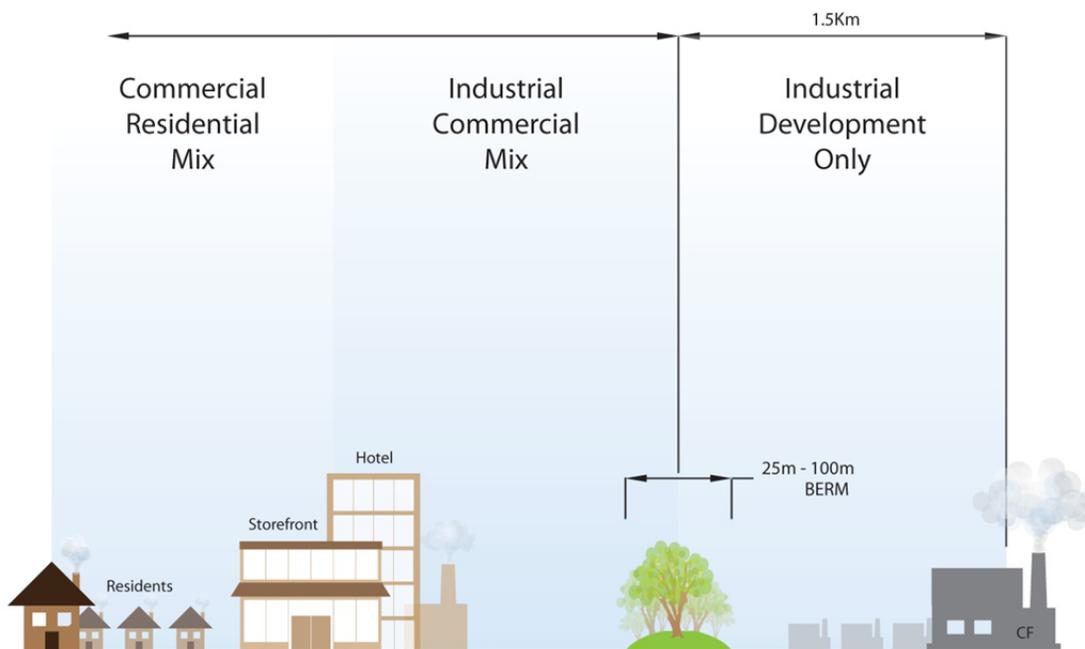
## APPENDIX I (Illustrations)

(a) Conceptual Plan View of Business Development Area\*



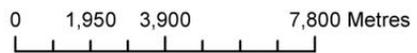
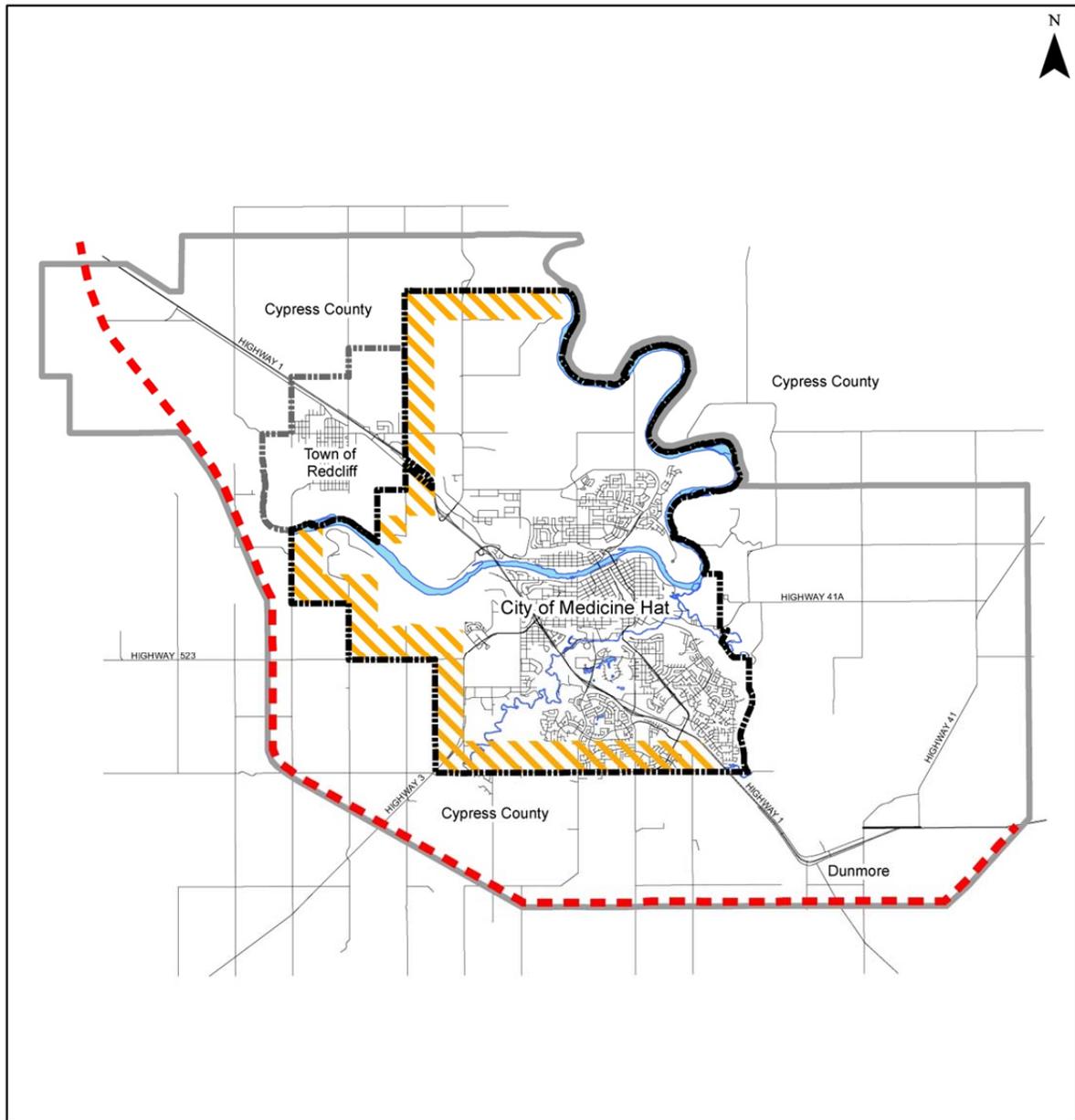
(b) Conceptual Cross-Section of the Business Development Area\*

### CONCEPTUAL



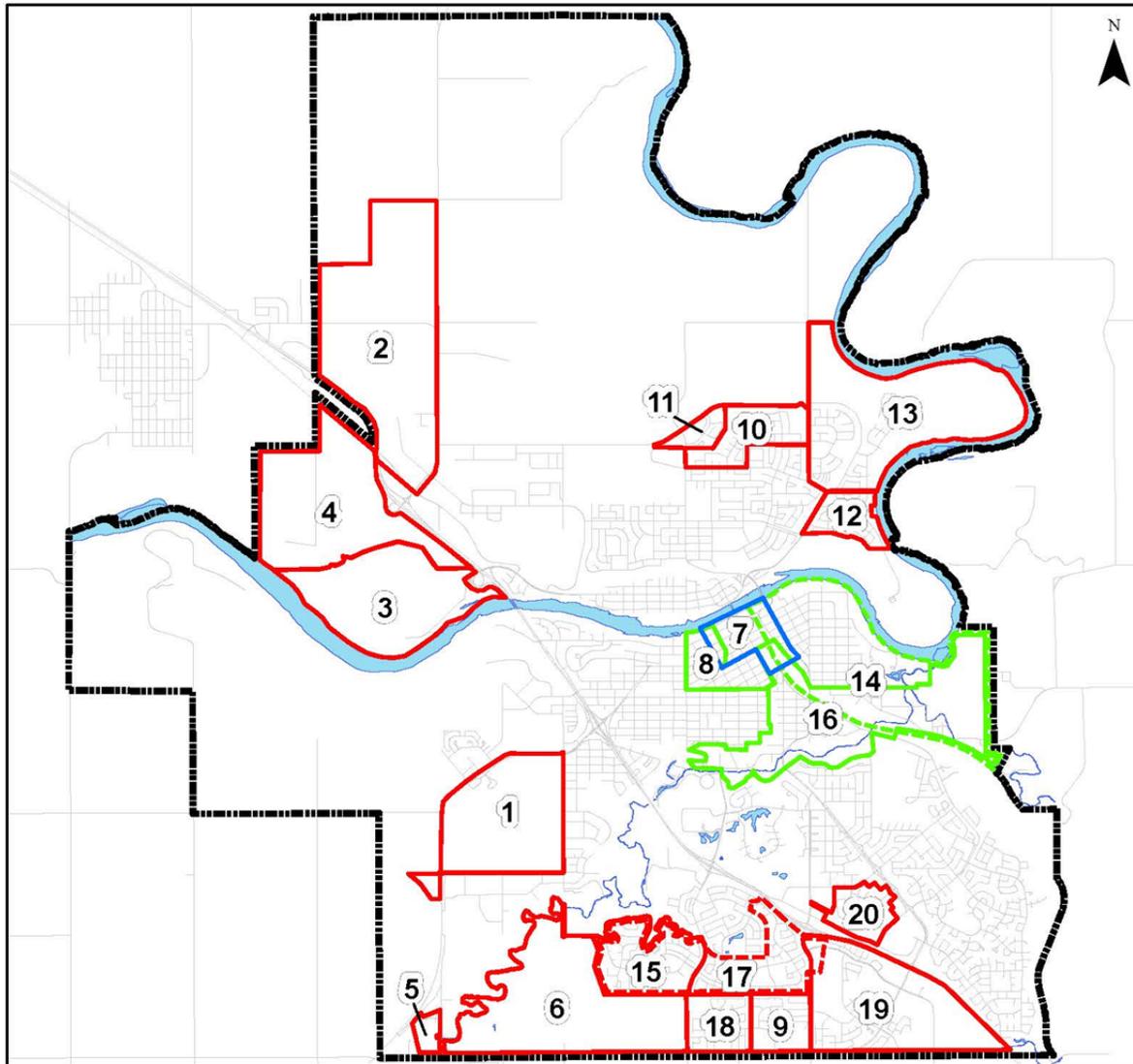
\*These graphics are provided for illustration purposes only. They do not form part of the Municipal Development Plan or part of Schedule A. These drawings are Not to Scale.

SCHEDULE B: INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AREA

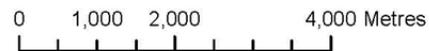


- City of Medicine Hat Boundary
- Tri Area Intermunicipal Development Plan Boundary
- - - - - Proposed Trans-Canada Highway Bypass
- Urban Referral Area
- Water Body
- Road

SCHEDULE C: EXISTING ASP AND ARP BOUNDARIES



1	Airport Area Structure Plan
2	Box Springs Business Park Area Structure Plan
3	Burnside Estates Area Structure Plan
4	Burnside Heights Area Structure Plan
5	Canyon Creek Area Structure Plan
6	Cimarron Area Structure Plan
7	Downtown Redevelopment Plan
8	Downtown Vicinity Area Redevelopment Plan
9	Hamptons Area Structure Plan
10	North East Crescent Heights Area Structure Plan
11	North Sector Commercial/Industrial Area Structure Plan
12	Parkview Area Structure Plan
13	Ranchlands Area Structure Plan
14	River Flats Area Redevelopment Plan
15	Saamis Heights Area Structure Plan
16	South Flats Area Redevelopment Plan
17	South Ridge Area Structure Plan
18	South Vista Area Structure Plan
19	Southlands Area Structure Plan
20	Southview Area Structure Plan



Categories

- Area Structure Plan
- Area Redevelopment Plan
- Redevelopment Plan (non-statutory)
- Water Body
- Road
- City of Medicine Hat Boundary

*Disclaimer: Plan boundaries are approximate only. Please refer to each individual plan for further detail.*

**SCHEDULE D: INTENSIFICATION AREA VISIONS**

Intensification Area	Desired Residential and Commercial Development Types	Approximate Additional Units	Approximate Additional Residents	Approximate Additional Jobs
Downtown Medicine Hat	Mixed use buildings, with two floors of commercial / employment uses and residential above.	2041	3750	375
River Flats	Ground-oriented residential buildings and/or mixed use buildings with one floor of commercial / employment uses and residential above.	940	1882	1296
South Flats	Ground-oriented residential buildings and/or mixed use buildings with one or two floors of commercial / employment uses and residential above.	3460	6829	779
Uplands	Ground-oriented residential buildings and/or mixed use buildings, with two floors of commercial / employment uses and residential above.	687	1362	452
13th Avenue	Ground-oriented residential buildings and/or mixed use buildings with one floor of commercial / employment uses and residential above.	1061	2114	-385
Highway 3 / Airport Lands	Employment / office buildings and/or mixed use buildings with one floor of employment uses and residential above.	572	814	3698
Dunmore Road	Mixed use buildings, with two floors of commercial / employment uses and residential above.	2709	5412	5967

## SCHEDULE E: MINIMUM GREENFIELD DENSITY CALCULATION

For the purpose of Policy 4.3(c), the definition of GROSS HECTARE will be as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{GROSS HECTARE} &= \text{GROSS TOTAL AREA} \\
 &\quad \text{less} \\
 &\quad \text{NON-DEVELOPABLE AREA} \\
 &\quad \text{less} \\
 &\quad \text{REGIONAL LAND USES}
 \end{aligned}$$

### Density Calculation Definitions:

**“Gross Total Area”** is all lands within the boundary of an Area Structure Plan.

**“Non-Developable Area”** is any lands designated as Environmental Reserve, any lakes or water bodies, and any lands to be utilized for provincial highways, arterial roadways or railway rights-of-way.

**“Regional Land Uses”** are any lands designated as publicly-owned open space as well as any lands designated for major commercial centers, major institutional sites, senior high schools, or industrial uses.

**“Major Commercial Centres”** are lands designated for commercial activities that generally serve a city-wide function, such as office or retail, that also occupy 4.0 ha (10 ac) or more of contiguous land area.

**“Major Institutional Sites”** are lands designated for institutional uses that generally serve a city-wide function, such as hospitals, but not including schools.

## SCHEDULE F: GLOSSARY

**Adaptive Reuse** - The process of adapting old structures for new purposes.

**Affordable Housing** - Housing that meets the needs of households earning 65 per cent or less of the median household income in Medicine Hat and that are spending 30 per cent or more of their gross annual household income on shelter.

**Age-Friendly** – An inclusive and accessible urban environment that prolongs active ageing.

**Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)** - A statutory plan as defined by the *Municipal Government Act*, that directs the redevelopment, preservation or rehabilitation of existing lands and buildings, generally within existing areas of the city.

**Area Structure Plan (ASP)** - A statutory plan as defined by the *Municipal Government Act*, that directs the future land use patterns, transportation and utility networks, and sequence of development in new communities.

**Boulevard** - The area between the edge of a roadway and the legal property line of the immediately adjacent property, except the area covered by a public sidewalk.

**Brownfield Site** - A brownfield site is an abandoned, vacant, derelict or underutilized property where past actions have resulted in real or perceived contamination and where there is an active potential for redevelopment. Brownfield sites include parcels of all sizes from corner gas stations to large areas encompassing many properties.

**Buildout** – For a Greenfield Area, refers to the physical completion of the residential, commercial and other development as described in the Area Structure Plan for that area.

**City** – Where capitalized as the “City of Medicine Hat” or the “City”, refers to the City of Medicine Hat as a municipal government, or corporation. Where written in lower case as “the city” or as “Medicine Hat”, refers to the physical area of the municipality.

**Complete Street** - A street designed and operated to enable safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and public transit and private vehicle users. A complete street incorporates green infrastructure and optimizes public space and aesthetics wherever possible. The degree to which any one street supports different modes of transportation, green infrastructure or public space varies depending on the surrounding context and the role of the street.

**Contiguous** – Immediately adjacent and sharing a substantial common boundary, with no intervening vacant land, and with an existing or potential substantial physical interface of road connections, parks, and land uses.

**Crime Prevention through Environmental Design** (CPTED, pronounced sep-ted) 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 or users behavior. It influences both the opportunities for crime to take place and peoples fear of crime. CPTED consists of four (4) guiding principles that are used to supplement traditional target hardening (bars, locks, cameras, and fences) strategies by enhancing naturally occurring views or designs. The principles are: natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement, and property/area ownership.

- **Natural surveillance:** 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 affect how much can be seen. It also includes the placement of public/group activities to areas that are general isolated or where it's not financially/structurally feasible. The development of natural surveillance methods and moving away from traditional surveillance systems which are generally expensive due to installation, equipment, and monitoring.
- **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 access to potential targets and increasing the perception of risk for would-be offenders.
- **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, semi-private, and private there is little confusion as to where a person should and should not be. Hence, increasing perception of risk to would-be offenders due to them being 'out of place' in a defined space.
- **Ownership/Maintenance:** A well maintained home, business, building, or community/public space creates a sense of guardianship and helps deter unwanted/criminal behavior. Maintenance gives the perception that the area is cared for and that those using the space feel safe and also cared for which may deter unwanted/criminal behavior. Those willing to engage in unwanted behavior may be deterred as the perception of being confronted by the group increases. Ownership also defines what the space is intended to be used for.

**Cultural Heritage Resources** – Includes structures, streetscapes, buildings, landmarks, viewpoints, parks, gardens, landscapes, topographical and natural features, archaeological sites, and artifacts that possess unique value from a cultural perspective.

**Downtown** – The area covered by the December 2009 Downtown Redevelopment Plan. Upon adoption of a statutory Area Redevelopment Plan for the Downtown, the Downtown will be defined as the area that is subject to that ARP.

**Existing Neighbourhood** – Neighbourhood in which the majority of homes and businesses were built as of the date of adoption of this Plan.

**Environmentally Significant Area (ESA)** - A natural area site that has been inventoried prior to potential development and which, because of its features or characteristics, is significant to Medicine Hat from an environmental perspective. May include areas containing rare flora, wildlife habitat, habitat corridors, floodplains, riparian areas, wetlands, escarpments, significant natural landforms, forests or areas of continuous tree cover, natural hazards, and/or native prairie grasslands.

**Escarpment** - A steep slope formed by the erosive action of water, and normally adjacent to a watercourse.

**Flood Fringe** - The outer portion of the Flood Risk Area adjacent to the floodway. The flood water in the fringe is generally more shallow and flows more slowly than in the floodway, and conditions are generally less hazardous than in the floodway.

**Flood Proofing** - Measures taken to permanently protect individual buildings or other developments from flood damage. For example, an effective flood proofing measure may be to use elevated pads or fill to raise buildings above the design flood level. Flood proofing also includes certain safeguards such as locating electrical panels and shut-off valves for gas and water lines above the design flood level, and restricting the use of rooms below the flood level.

**Flood Risk Area** - The area that would be affected by the design flood. In Alberta, the adopted design flood is the 100-year flood.

**Floodway** - The portion of the Flood Risk Area where floodwaters are the deepest, fastest and most destructive.

**Goal** - A desirable condition to be achieved, or a sought-after end state. A goal is not a binding commitment, nor is it determinative on any specific decision or action.

**Greenfield Areas** – Areas identified as Priority One or Priority Two Greenfield Areas in Schedule A.

**Infrastructure** - The physical structures that support a society, including roads, transit, water supply, sewers, power grid, telecommunications, etc.

**Intensification** - The development of a property, site or area in an existing neighbourhood at a higher density than currently exists. Intensification can be achieved through redevelopment, development of vacant/underutilized lots, the conversion of existing buildings, or through infill development in previously developed areas.

**Intensification Areas**– Areas identified as Priority One or Priority Two Intensification Areas in Schedule A.

**Municipal Reserve** - Land provided, as part of a subdivision, by the developer without compensation for park and school purposes in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*. This includes lands dedicated as Municipal Reserve (MR), School Reserve (SR) and Municipal and School Reserve (MSR).

**Off-site Levy Bylaw** – A bylaw of the City of Medicine Hat specifying the sharing of costs between the City and developers respecting the provision of existing and future infrastructure shared between the existing and proposed city population (e.g. water and sewage treatment plant expansion, major trunk lines, major roads). The *Municipal Government Act* sets out details of what can be included in an off-site levy bylaw.

**Park** – Any land acquired, developed or used by the City as a public park, sports field, playground, recreational area or cemetery, title to which is vested in the name of the City. Includes land acquired by the City through subdivision as Municipal Reserve or Environmental Reserve.

**Pedestrian-oriented or Pedestrian-friendly** - An environment designed to make travel on foot safe, convenient, attractive and comfortable for various ages and abilities. Considerations include directness of the route, interest along the route, safety, amount of street activity, separation of pedestrians and traffic, street furniture, surface material, sidewalk width, prevailing wind direction, intersection treatment, curb cuts, ramps and landscaping.

**Public Art** - Visual works, which are displayed in public areas, including, but not limited to:

- sculptures (in any media);
- paintings, media arts, photography, murals or tableaux in any variety of materials;
- tableaux of an illustrative nature that interpret the historical significance of a site; and
- architectural embellishments, street inlays or landscaping features with artistic intent.

**Public Realm** - All exterior places, linkages and built form elements that are physically and/or visually accessible to the public, regardless of ownership. These elements can include, but are not limited to, streets, pedestrian ways, bikeways, bridges, plazas, squares, transportation hubs, gateways, parks, waterfronts, natural features, view corridors, landmarks and building interfaces.

**Public Space** - The formal and informal spaces around, between and within buildings that are publicly accessible, including squares, plazas, courtyards and pedestrian walkways.

**Redevelopment** - The creation of new units, uses or lots on previously developed land in existing neighbourhoods.

**Sense of Place** - A strong identity and character that is felt by local inhabitants and visitors. Factors that help to create a “strong sense of place” include natural and cultural features, built form and architecture, mobility to and within the place and the people who frequent that place. Areas with a good sense of place often have elements that are appealing to the five senses (sight, smell, touch, taste, sound) and generally encourage people to linger longer and enjoy the atmosphere.

**Soft Services** - Those municipally supplied services that are in addition to the basic provision of water, sewers and roads. Soft services include, but are not limited to, emergency and fire services, transit, social services, recreation programming, recreation and leisure facilities, playfields, etc.

**Streetscape** - All the elements that make up the physical environment of a street and define its character. This includes paving, trees and vegetation, lighting, building type and style, setback, pedestrian, cycle and transit amenities, street furniture, etc.

**Strip Mall** - Predominantly a single storey commercial building with on-site surface parking and generally less than fifty percent building lot coverage.

**Transit-oriented, Transit-friendly or Transit-supportive** - The elements of urban form and design that provide for a fully-accessible and efficient transit system. These range from land use elements (e.g. locating higher density housing and commercial uses along transit routes) to design (e.g. street layout that allows efficient bus routing). It also encompasses pedestrian-friendly features, as most transit riders begin and end their rides as pedestrians.

**Urban Agriculture** - All agricultural growing opportunities within an urban municipality’s boundaries. This includes commercial farming operations, community gardens, allotment gardens, vertical gardens, backyard gardens, edible landscaping, green roofs, aquaculture, animal husbandry, and apiculture, but excludes stockyards, feedlots, and intensive livestock operations.

**Urban Forest** - All the trees and associated vegetative understory in the city, including trees and shrubs intentionally planted, naturally occurring or accidentally seeded within the city limits.

**Urban Forestry** - The planning, establishment, protection and management of trees individually, in small groups, or under forest conditions within the City.