

# **MDP 2010**

*Adopted by Bylaw 78/2010, July 8, 2010*

*Amended by Bylaw 52/2016, October 11, 2017*



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# Introduction

## CREATING THE MDP2010

The first Municipal Development Plan in the MD of Foothills was adopted in 1998. Council appointed a Steering Committee of local landowners who were given the task of drafting a plan that would guide growth and development in the MD. While small changes were made over the years, it was not until 2008, a full 10 years later, that Council began the process to fully review and amend the Municipal Development Plan. Throughout 2008 and 2009, a newly appointed Steering Committee looked for guidance and inspiration from the public, the Province, and the existing plan in their development of the MDP2010.

The MDP2010 is based on the original plan, strengthening the intention to maintain agriculture as the dominant land use in the MD. This new plan addresses the intention to work with the public on the creation of growth plans and strategies for sustainable development that maintains the rural character of our landscape. The MDP2010 points towards a future where the MD directs and plans for the anticipated growth. This work is done not only to create vibrant sustainable communities, but also to conserve the rural landscape for future generations.

## 2016 AMENDMENT TO MDP2010

Subsequent to the adoption of MDP2010, in 2010, the MD of Foothills adopted a Growth Management Strategy and then in early 2015 a new Land Use Bylaw (Bylaw 60/2014) was adopted. The adoption of the Land Use Bylaw necessitated some amendments to the MDP2010 as there were some items that conflicted and Section 638 of the Municipal Government Act states that “all statutory plans adopted by a municipality must be consistent with each other”. In addition, there were several sections of the MDP2010 which dealt with items better incorporated into a Land Use Bylaw. Once these were addressed in an adopted bylaw, they could be removed from the MDP2010. The Growth Management Strategy while not a statutory document is an important strategic plan and it was felt that it should be mentioned in the MDP2010.

## ENABLING LEGISLATION

### MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT, SECTION 632

The Municipal Government Act, Section 632, provides the legislative framework under which the MD of Foothills’ Municipal Development Plan has been prepared. The MGA lists both the required and optional contents of a Municipal Development Plan.

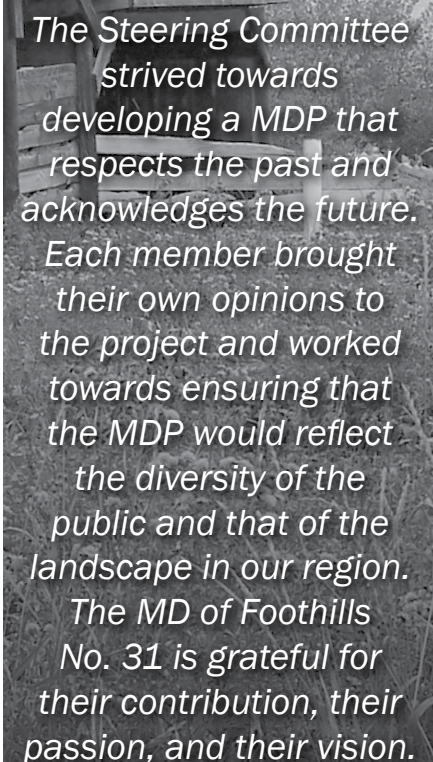
See Appendix B for the lists of required and optional contents.

### Steering Committee members:

Chairman Doug Longson  
Deputy Chair Larry Thomas  
Rick Scott  
Wendy Palmer  
Randy Coates  
Rhonda Longson  
Stephen Pick  
Jessie Hari  
Barbara McNeil  
Carmen Heinen  
Theresa Berglund  
Michael Bird  
Sten Lundberg

### MD Staff members:

Heather Hemingway  
Donna Thurston



*The Steering Committee strived towards developing a MDP that respects the past and acknowledges the future. Each member brought their own opinions to the project and worked towards ensuring that the MDP would reflect the diversity of the public and that of the landscape in our region. The MD of Foothills No. 31 is grateful for their contribution, their passion, and their vision.*

# Vision Statement



The vision statement is a declaration of the MD's most desirable future. It reflects the tremendous diversity found both in our landscape and in our people.

*The MD of Foothills encompasses a diverse rural landscape in which leadership and planning support a strong agricultural heritage, vibrant communities, a balanced economy and the stewardship of natural capital for future generations.*



# Principles for Planning

## NATURAL CAPITAL

The vision statement supports stewardship of *natural capital* for future generations. Capital is defined as any form of wealth capable of producing more wealth. Natural capital extends this idea into the natural world. This approach underlines land as an asset to be maintained and protected for future generations because it supports important economic, ecological, as well as social activities.

Sustaining natural capital is a precondition for economic prosperity. The natural capital found in well managed and sustainable landscapes links economic prosperity and environmental protection, and can do so for generations. The long term benefits of clean water, air, aesthetically pleasing landscapes and ecologically sound habitats that ensure a wealth of biodiversity go far beyond the value of what can be achieved in short term development considerations.

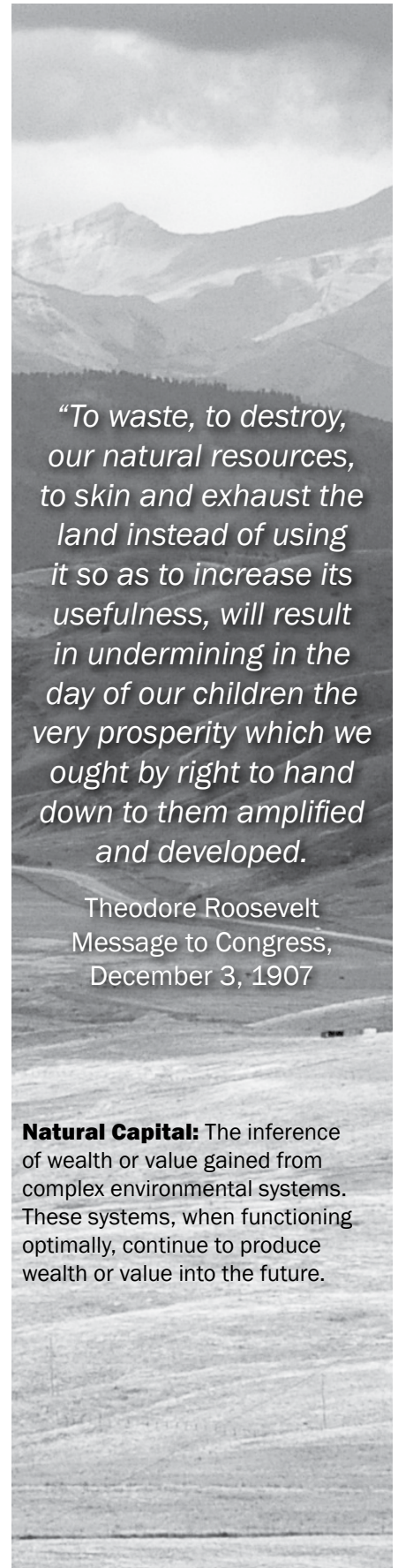
While most MD landowners understand the importance of healthy, functional landscapes, extending that awareness to others is more challenging. In essence we need to preserve the ecosystems for their own sake regardless of whether or not we understand how they might serve us. Further it asks us to learn from nature and apply what we learn to our own production models. Finally it asks to look long term, towards the needs of the next generation, just as the last generation did for us.

Natural capital is inherent in all environmental systems. For us this is especially important for:

- our agricultural lands of the east, south and southwest;
- our watershed lands of the west;
- the biodiversity of the Aspen Parkland Ecoregion;
- the surface water features and riparian areas throughout the MD.

## PLANNING FOR GROWTH

We live next door to Calgary, a rapidly growing city of over a million people; growth will occur here. The Calgary Region, of which we are a part, projects a population of around three million people by 2050. We can expect significant growth pressure in that same time period. As well, we can expect the towns within our borders to see similar or even greater growth. This pressure requires leadership that directs growth to create vibrant communities, economic opportunities, limits fragmentation of agricultural land, and supports conservation of the natural environment.



*“To waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the day of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed.*

Theodore Roosevelt  
Message to Congress,  
December 3, 1907

**Natural Capital:** The inference of wealth or value gained from complex environmental systems. These systems, when functioning optimally, continue to produce wealth or value into the future.

# Principles for Planning

*"I roamed the countryside  
searching for answers  
to things I did not  
understand."*

Leonardo da Vinci

## CONSERVATION & FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT

The Municipal Development Plan emphasizes conservation. This emphasis is not only placed on conserving the natural capital such as our agricultural lands, critical watershed, and habitats, but also on conserving the quality of life we enjoy today. We know that development and growth will occur and the response is a balanced mix of growth in Hamlets and identified growth areas which will support the preservation of large open land areas.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are many opportunities to create great places for people of all ages to live, work and play. The Municipal Development Plan asks that we create communities rather than individual lots. The intent is to create communities which provide different types of housing, recreational uses, transportation options, jobs, and services within the community itself. Community development should be explored in the MD where there are feasible public transportation options or in tandem with our municipal neighbours, where appropriate densities and economies of scale can be achieved.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The main underlying principle of the vision statement and the Municipal Development Plan is sustainability. In 1987 the Bruntland Commission, a UN commission charged to find a global strategy for development that respected the environment, published the report "Our Common Future". The report came up with this widely accepted and often cited definition:

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

## REGIONAL COOPERATION

Sometimes planning is more efficient and effective if it is done on a scale larger than a single municipality. This is especially true when it comes to planning significant infrastructure. The MD of Foothills is committed to working with our municipal neighbours to find regional solutions to issues such as servicing, transportation, and the protection of regional assets when it makes sense to do so.



# Our Rural Character

We are a rural municipality. Being rural is a large part of why we live here. The rural character of the Municipal District No. 31 is depicted in over 350 photos submitted as part of a photo contest held in 2009. The winning entries are showcased in a supplementary document to this MDP and provide an important resource in understanding our rural character. As such, these images represent a benchmark of how we see ourselves at this time in history.

Planning for growth must be understood within the context of our rural character. Here are five qualities which begin to define the character of the MD of Foothills No. 31.

**Wide Open Spaces:** Being rural means being, for the most part, undeveloped. Vast areas of our Municipality are farm and ranch land and should remain so. This land is the foundation of our agricultural economy. There are few homes and other man-made structures here. While not all areas of the MD will remain undeveloped, we should manage new land uses and subdivision in the MD to retain rural quality and preserve agricultural lands.

**Scenic Vistas:** The views and vistas found in the MD are beautiful. While not every view can be protected from change, preserving the scenic quality is essential to the rural character, economic vitality, and quality of life in the MD of Foothills. These visual resources, available to everyone, are valuable and deserve consideration within the planning framework of the MD of Foothills.

**Dark Skies:** A night sky filled with galaxies, stars, and planets is a source of beauty and inspiration to people and cultures around the world. Rural areas like ours have dark skies while in urban areas the night sky is bleached by artificial light. We need to consider this and design in ways that keep our skies dark.

**Historic and Archaeological Resources:** Preserving and studying our cultural heritage gives us a key piece of our rural character. The stories, treasures, and cultural landscapes of people through the ages and of those who homesteaded here give us a sense of belonging. They are particularly valuable as new landowners, with no history or background in farming, move to the MD of Foothills.

**Air, water, soil, biodiversity:** The quality of the physical environment is higher in rural areas than in developed areas of the region. Preserving the quality of the air, water, soil, and biodiversity maintains the rural character of the landscape of our MD.

*“Ironically, rural areas have become viewed by a growing number of people as having a higher quality of life not because of what it has, but rather because of what it does not have!”*

Dr. Don A. Dillman,  
Rural Sociologist



# Policy Framework



The Municipal Development Plan is part of a planning and policy framework established by the Province of Alberta.

Appendix A shows the hierarchy of the plans affecting the MD of Foothills. The framework includes a Provincial Realm, a Regional Realm and a Municipal Realm. Each tier must respect and be consistent with the levels above, providing successively finer scale policy and process.

## PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

The Municipal Government Act, Section 632 provides the legislative framework for the MD of Foothills' Municipal Development Plan. The MDP is the top level planning document for a municipality. All municipalities with populations over 3500 must adopt a Municipal Development Plan by Bylaw. Section 632 (3) (a to f) as seen in Appendix B defines the mandatory and optional content of a Municipal Development Plan.

## REGIONAL PLANNING

The Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA) was proclaimed by the Alberta government in October 2009, this document sets out the legal basis for regional land use planning in Alberta. In the ALSA the Lieutenant Governor in Council is given the ability to establish planning regions and to create plans for these regions.

The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) was approved by Cabinet of the Government of Alberta on July 23, 2014, and became effective on September 1, 2014. The SSRP is intended to establish a long term vision for the region and provide a framework to ensure that future planning and development aligns with Provincial policies.

The adoption of the SSRP, or any regional plan, does not take away the responsibility and authority for local land use planning from local governments. The authority to create municipal development plans, area structure plans and land use bylaws still lies with the municipalities; however, all new municipal plans will have to be in alignment with their regional plan. In addition, according to Sections 20 and 21 of the ALSA each municipality must review their existing plans and bylaws and make amendments as necessary in order to ensure they comply with the regional plan in effect for their region. Once the review is complete the municipality will submit a statutory declaration affirming that it is in compliance with the ALSA regional plan. Municipalities have 5 years, from the date their regional plan comes into effect, to submit the statutory declaration to the Land Use Secretariat. Thus the MD of Foothills has until September 1, 2019 to complete a review of all municipal plans and amend as appropriate to ensure compliance.



# Policy Framework

## MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The MDP puts Provincial and Regional objectives into the municipal framework with the vision, along with goals, objectives, and policies that reflect the aspirations of the residents for whom it is prepared.

## CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLANS

The MDP is the highest level statutory plan guiding municipal decisions on growth and development, but it's not the only plan. Further levels, each providing specific focus and detail, may be needed to successfully meet the goals and objectives of the MDP. Some examples of plans which may be beneficial include the following:

### **Growth Management Strategy**

The MD of Foothills adopted a Growth Management Strategy (GMS) in 2013. The GMS builds on the vision, goals, objectives, and policies of the MDP, giving more direction on principles for growth, desired development patterns across the MD, as well as general parameters on location and types of development considered appropriate. The GMS divides the MD of Foothills into five growth management districts and provides a growth management vision and some specific strategies to guide future growth in each district. The GMS also sets the stage for the future development and implementation of *transfer of development credit programs* and other conservation initiatives. See Appendix C for an outline of the planning framework in the MD of Foothills.

### **Sustainability Strategy**

Managing the future growth of the MD of Foothills requires policy and practice that incorporate principles of sustainability. Towards this ideal, a Sustainability Strategy could identify some municipal goals and objectives for sustainability and provide strategies for attaining them. The goals in the strategy would be based on priorities that have been identified by Council and could relate to environmental priorities, economic goals, or social considerations.

### **Economic Development Plan**

Economic development strategies are paramount so that decisions about development and growth consider financial implications and economic growth. Principles and policy to enhance economic development would provide support to the implementation of the MDP.

### **Infrastructure Plan**

Infrastructure planning should be done in conjunction with growth planning to ensure that identified growth areas are serviceable and that existing transportation and utility infrastructure is used to its best advantage. This plan could also include services such as emergency services and recreation services.



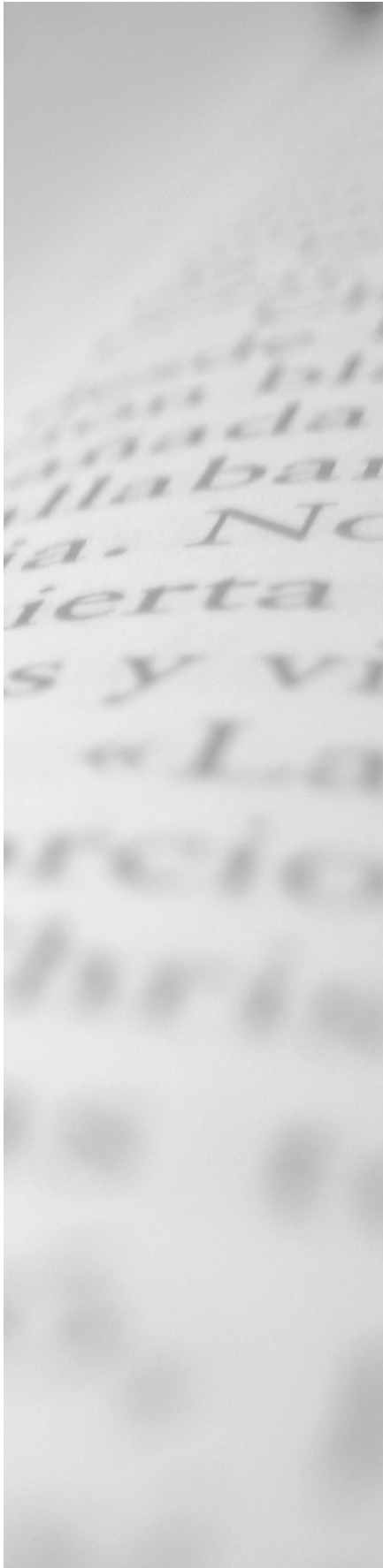
# Interpretation

In this Municipal Development Plan, and particularly within the policy sections, key operative terms, Shall/Will, Should, and May are used for consistency and clarity. The interpretation of these terms are outlined as follows:

**Shall** – is a directive term that indicates that the actions outlined are mandatory, therefore must be complied with, without discretion.

**Should** – is a directive term that provides direction to strive to achieve the outlined action, but is not mandatory. When the policy is directed to the developer, the onus is on the applicant to justify why the desired action/result is not proposed and/or will not be achieved.

**May** – is a discretionary term, providing notification that the policy in question can be enforced if the MD chooses to do so, and is usually dependent on the particular circumstances of the specific site and application.



# Agriculture

Conserving the *agricultural land* base is very important to our economy, our environment and our way of life here in the MD of Foothills. Agricultural products are renewable resources which provide jobs and revenue. The long-term viability of agriculture depends on the land base. Due to the diversity of agricultural pursuits we can no longer define good farm land strictly by criteria such as the Canada Lands Inventory (CLI) soil capability system. We view all land as potential agricultural land and worth conserving. Agricultural lands comprise a significant portion of the natural capital in the MD, and the MD has a duty to protect this land for use by future generations.

Most of the land in the MD of Foothills is made up of working farms and ranches, many of which have been in families for generations. These families not only work as farmers, but they are also responsible for *land stewardship*. We still have intact watersheds, abundant wildlife and spectacular open vistas, all ‘public goods’, because of the families who have cared for their lands. The costs of supplying and maintaining these goods on private lands are left largely on the shoulders of our farmers and ranchers. The Provincial government’s new Land-Use Framework recognizes this and plans to develop new policy to support stewardship and conservation on both public and private lands. The MD supports this initiative.

## GOAL

Conserve and protect the maximum amount of land in the MD as natural capital for use by the agricultural industry today and for future generations.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Make the preservation of agricultural land a priority for the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31.
2. Minimize the loss of agricultural land by limiting the amount of land removed from agricultural use.
3. Foster growth, diversification and development of the agricultural industry.
4. Support existing agricultural operations and the “*right to farm*”.
5. Partner with and encourage the agricultural industry to protect lands that are environmentally significant by adopting practices that promote soil and water conservation.
6. Encourage the agricultural industry to use water responsibly.

*“There is too little public recognition of how much we all depend upon farmers as stewards of our soil, water and wildlife resources.”*

John F. Kennedy



**Agricultural Land:** Lands designated as Agricultural in the Land Use Bylaw of the MD of Foothills. Agricultural parcels are a minimum of 21 acres in size. There is no maximum size of Agricultural parcel.

**Land Stewardship:** the practice of responsible land use to ensure that natural capital is maintained or enhanced for future generations.

**Right to Farm:** Provincial Legislation which protects farmers and ranchers from nuisance law claims.

# Agriculture



## POLICY

1. All lands in the MD are deemed to be agricultural lands unless zoned for other uses.
2. The MD supports maintaining the integrity of the agricultural land base and discourages the fragmentation of agricultural land, including the subdivision of land into smaller agricultural parcels.
3. Agricultural uses and industries that support agriculture should be encouraged to locate in the Municipality. Non-agricultural uses should only be permitted on lands where the MD judges the proposal to have minimal negative impacts on the agricultural resource.
4. When considering the conversion of agricultural lands to other uses the Municipality shall consider the following:
  - 4.1. Guidance and policy contained within the Municipal Development Plan and other approved plans in the Planning Hierarchy found in Appendix A of this MDP.
  - 4.2. Present or proposed use of lands in the vicinity, including that of confined feeding operations.
  - 4.3. Impact the proposed use will have on the existing or potential agricultural use of the property and properties that may be affected.
  - 4.4. Information contained within the farmland assessment records maintained by the Municipality.
  - 4.5. Response to referrals sent to Provincial government departments.
5. The subdivision of one parcel from a previously un-subdivided quarter section may be supported if the following criteria are met to the satisfaction of the Municipal District:
  - 5.1. The parcel is as small as possible while encompassing the structures, shelterbelts, well and septic fields necessary to the use, but not less than 2 acres in size and where possible, not larger than 20.99 acres.
  - 5.2. Where possible, given the other criteria in this subsection, the subdivision will be designed in a manner that respects natural capital, including but not limited to soils, vegetation, water bodies and their associated riparian areas, and views.
  - 5.3. The parcel has year round physical and legal access to a developed MD roadway.

- 5.4. Subdivision of the parcel does not negatively impact adjacent agricultural uses.
- 5.5. All provisions of the Land Use Bylaw have been met.
- 5.6. The parcel has been zoned to allow for the subdivision.
6. The subdivision of a fragmented parcel from a previously *un-subdivided quarter section* may be supported if the following criteria are met to the satisfaction of the Municipal District:
  - 6.1. The parcel is the entire area of the fragment.
  - 6.2. A suitable building site exists.
  - 6.3. Available legal and year round physical access sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed use.
  - 6.4. Proposed use of the parcel does not negatively impact adjacent agricultural uses.
  - 6.5. Applicant demonstrates that the parcel can be serviced on-site as per Provincial and Municipal regulations.
  - 6.6. The parcel has been zoned to allow for the subdivision.
7. While it should be noted that Agriculture continues to be an important use through all districts in the municipality; the Growth Management Strategy for the MD of Foothills identifies that Agriculture is the predominant land use in the East District and the South West District, and that this should remain so. Conversion of agricultural land to other uses in these areas is discouraged.

## Confined Feeding Operations

8. Ensure that each *confined feeding operation (CFO)* meets the *minimum distance separation (MDS)*.
9. Encourage each CFO to own the land included within the MDS.
10. Ensure that the CFO and the MDS does not fall within a minimum of:
  - 10.1. 3.2 km (2 miles) of any urban municipality or hamlet and does not encroach into any intermunicipal development plan boundaries.
  - 10.2. 0.8 km (1/2 mile) of a neighbouring dwelling.
11. CFOs should be located in an area where there will be minimal conflict with existing land uses and must take



**Fragmented Parcel:** A portion of a quarter section which is physically separated from lands within that quarter section due to roads, railway lines, natural water courses and water bodies, or other natural or man-made features.

# Agriculture



into consideration future expansion areas when looking at surrounding land uses.

12. Other uses and subdivisions shall be discouraged within the MDS of an existing CFO.
13. Direct CFOs towards parcels of 160 acres or more.

# Environmental Conservation & Open Space

Some of Alberta's most diverse and beautiful landscapes are located within the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31.

Subdivision and development must be carefully managed so environmental impacts are fully anticipated and addressed. When contemplating land use changes we must consider *watershed* management, the quality and quantity of water, wildlife habitat, air quality, and the visual quality of the landscape.

The MD is rich in significant natural landscapes, key wildlife areas, and important fish habitats. These resources are part of the Municipality's natural capital which should be conserved. The MD uses the guidelines provided by Alberta Environmental Protection located in Appendix D to identify *Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs)* throughout the Municipality. Figure 1 identifies known ESAs. The following are also examples of the types of habitat that are considered as Environmentally Significant.

- Parkland Environments – provides outstanding biodiversity, and a matrix of wildlife movement corridors in the MD.
- Foothills portion – valuable for both watershed and habitat protection, as well as providing some of the most spectacular scenery in the Calgary Region.
- Rivers, streams, lakes, *wetlands*, and their *riparian areas*.

The visual impact of development on the landscape is an important consideration in evaluating proposals for subdivision and land use change. Our open spaces and spectacular scenery add a vital dimension to life in the MD of Foothills and as such, development must be carefully designed to minimize the impact on the views.

## GOAL

Protect the Municipal District's natural capital with emphasis on the Environmentally Significant Areas, surface water features, and *landscapes of high scenic value* for future generations.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Endeavour to preserve the integrity of Environmentally Significant Areas.
2. Promote public awareness regarding the impact of development on the environment.
3. Recognize the importance of the visual quality and *cultural landscape* in the MD, including lands of archeological and historical significance.
4. Minimize visual impacts of development.
5. Support the use of *cumulative effects* management tools to determine the combined impacts of existing and proposed land-use on the landscape.

**Watershed:** Is the total land area that contributes water to a river, stream, lake or other body of water. It is synonymous with drainage area, drainage basin and catchment.

**Environmentally Significant Area (ESA):** These areas are believed to contain special features or characteristics or are part of a system which in turn gives rise to special biological attributes and are significant to the MD from an environmental perspective.

**Biodiversity:** The variety of genetic material, species, or organisms found within a specific area and the ecosystem they form.

**Wetlands:** Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support vegetation that is adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

**Riparian Areas:** Lands adjacent to a watercourse where the vegetation and soils show evidence of being influenced by the presence of water. Riparian areas are the green zone around a watercourse. They are the transitional zone between surface water and drier uplands and play a vital role in the healthy functioning of both.

# Environmental Conservation & Open Space

## **Landscapes of High Scenic**

**Value:** A measure of the aesthetic qualities of the landscape determined by the study of the many cultural and natural elements found within that landscape.

**Cultural Landscape:** “Represents the combined works of nature and of man. Cultural landscapes are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.” The World Heritage Committee of UNESCO IN 1992

**Cumulative Effects:** The combined effects of past, present and reasonably foreseeable land-use activities, over time on the environment.

## **Biophysical Assessment:**

A review of land prepared by an environmental scientist or other qualified professional that identifies and assesses the environmental significance and sensitivity of the lands, and recommends appropriate measures for protecting the environmental features, which may be incorporated into the subdivision review process.

## **Integrated Watershed**

**Management:** A multi-disciplinary approach to managing the biophysical, economic, and social elements within a watershed in order to protect the water resource.

6. Minimize the impact of development on seasonal water bodies (such as wetlands and sloughs) so as to maintain their important functions for groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat.
7. Minimize the impact of subdivision and development on surface and sub-surface water resources.
8. Reduce the unlicensed use of groundwater by directing some growth to clusters and Hamlets.
9. Promote the maintenance of air quality within the municipality, in all planning decisions.
10. Utilize scientific tools such as biophysical assessments as part of the development process for the purposes of reducing the impact of development on the natural environment.
11. Endeavour to protect lands with unstable slopes and lands with erosion potential from inappropriate development.
12. Support the Provincial government’s initiative to develop a strategy for conservation and stewardship on private and public lands.
13. Support the development of *integrated watershed management objectives*.
14. Support the development and implementation of science-informed policy regarding:
  - 14.1. The integrity of rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands, and the conservation of riparian areas.
  - 14.2. The impact of development on wildlife movement corridors.

## **POLICY**

1. Proponents of development or redesignation of land which the MD believes would be located wholly or partly within Environmentally Significant Areas, shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the MD that the proposals would not jeopardize or significantly damage the characteristics of the resource. To this end, the MD may commission specialized studies, such as a biophysical assessment, geotechnical assessment, and/or environmental impact assessment by an appropriate *qualified Professional* at the proponent’s expense.
2. The MD should require that protective measures be taken in instances where a proposed development or land use redesignation would be located in or near the following areas:
  - 2.1. Fish spawning grounds,
  - 2.2. Nesting, feeding, and staging areas for birds,



# Environmental Conservation & Open Space

- 2.3. Historical and archaeological resource sites,
- 2.4. Wintering areas for ungulates,
- 2.5. Wildlife corridors,
- 2.6. Wetlands.
3. To ensure that the natural qualities of the landscape or the wildlife habitat are protected within an Environmentally Significant Area, the MD may require the following at the redesignation, subdivision, or development permit stage:
  - 3.1. Development setbacks from the water course as specified in the MD of Foothills' Riparian Setback Matrix Model,
  - 3.2. Reduction in densities,
  - 3.3. Buffers,
  - 3.4. Dedication of reserves,
  - 3.5. Preservation of shoreline vegetation,
  - 3.6. Restrictive covenants to further control and/or restrict development.
4. Features and setbacks that are not suitable for development, where public access is not desirable, and where municipal enforcement and management is not required may be designated as an *Environmental Reserve Easement*.
5. A *Conservation Easement* may be considered to preserve significant natural features and/or areas that do not qualify as *Environmental Reserve* under the Municipal Government Act. The use and control of these features and/or areas shall be clearly stated in the easement agreement.
6. The MD shall work with those agencies, having jurisdiction, to assist in identifying existing and potential air quality concerns and to mitigate or eliminate these issues.
7. At the time of subdivision, land that is within the 1:100 year *floodway* may be designated Environmental Reserve or Environmental Reserve Easement. Development on existing titles partially within the 1:100 floodway shall be restricted to the area outside the 1:100 year floodway. Development and/or Re-development of land wholly within the 1:100 year floodway is discouraged but may proceed in conformance with the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw.
8. Subdivision within the 1:100 *flood fringe* is discouraged and should only be considered when accompanied by a

*“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.”*

Aldo Leopold

**Conservation Easement:** The easement is a legal agreement on land that is executed between the landowner and an easement holder, such as a municipality or conservation organization, and which prohibits certain types of uses or development from occurring on the land.



# Environmental Conservation & Open Space



comprehensive professional report (peer reviewed) supporting the suitability of the lands to developed in conformance with the requirements of the Government of Canada, the Province of Alberta and the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31. Development and/or Re-Development of lands within the 1:100 flood fringe shall meet those same requirements.

9. On the basis of a land use, subdivision, or a development permit application, the MD should require an assessment be undertaken by a qualified Professional to determine *top of bank* where the *bed and shore* of a water course is not defined.
10. The MD has developed a Riparian Setback Matrix Model (RSMM) to protect lands and riparian corridors adjacent to watercourses and water bodies. The use of this model to determine appropriate setbacks to proposed development may be imposed by Council on the basis of a land use, subdivision, or development application.
11. Subdivision and development proposals involving *hazard lands* or lands located in the 2013 Flood Hazard Protection Overlay, as defined in the MD's Land Use Bylaw, shall be preceded by a geotechnical assessment conducted by a qualified Professional Engineer that demonstrates to the satisfaction of the MD that slopes are stable, flood hazard areas are defined, safe building elevations exist, and the potential for damage from groundwater, flooding and/or erosion to existing or new developments is mitigated.

The MD of Foothills No. 31 manages development by using a balanced approach which reduces the fragmentation of lands while allowing for continued residential growth in the MD. This approach directs residential growth to fragmented lands and identified growth areas in the form of clustered development, and hamlet style developments and away from un-fragmented agricultural lands. In addition, the MD's growth management strategy indicates that the majority of the future residential development will be directed towards the Central District. The Municipal Development Plan supports the following six types of residential development in the MD:

## **Country Residential**

Country Residential lots are traditional acreage lots. These parcels are intended to remove an existing homestead from a farming operation, as well as to further subdivide existing parcels zoned Country Residential.

The traditional subdivision of large lots with private onsite services has become unsustainable, particularly in regard to land consumption, water supply, potential impacts from private sewage systems, as well as long term road maintenance costs. This type of development should be directed to areas which are already fragmented.

## **Cluster Residential**

Cluster Residential lots are those which are designed to reduce the development footprint by placing parcels close to each other in association with a larger remnant parcel that cannot be further subdivided. This type of development can maintain the open space nature of the landscape, thereby not dramatically altering the rural character. The Cluster Residential subdivision uses a smaller area of land for roads and houses, and is therefore more efficient when compared to Country Residential lots. This development form is considered most appropriate for the Central District or for identified growth areas within the MD.

## **Country Estate Residential**

While there are still some instances where traditional country residential lots with individual wells and septic systems are appropriate, in order to use land more efficiently the MD of Foothills established a new land use in the 2014 Land Use Bylaw to provide for higher density country residential development. The Country Estate Residential land use is intended to accommodate higher density development (0.25 to 5 units per acre) based on communal servicing as part of a comprehensively planned development in accordance with an approved Area Structure Plan, Area Concept Plan, Outline Plan, or as part of a hamlet.



# Residential



## **Hamlet Residential**

Hamlet Residential lots are those developed in a semi urban form resembling a village or small town. Much of the new residential development in the MD of Foothills will be in the form of communally serviced, compact, mixed use communities planned from the perspective of environmental, social, and economic sustainability. The MD will direct the majority of future residential growth to existing hamlets, new hamlets, and developed lands that can be redeveloped to higher densities.

New Hamlet Residential development will be focused in areas of the MD where transportation, servicing, and community development can be maximized for all residents in the region. The MD will implement strategic planning to provide guidance on the principles, general locations, and desired components of new Hamlet Residential development. Where new communities are to be developed or where redevelopment opportunities arise, the best available environmental technology and innovation will be employed within all municipal infrastructure systems and buildings.

## **Residential Multi-Family**

In the interest of providing a greater range of housing choices in the MD, the 2014 Land Use Bylaw created a new Residential Multi-Family district. This district is intended to provide for the development of multi-family units in Hamlets or comprehensively planned developments on the basis of communal water and wastewater servicing. This type of development is to be located in an area with an approved Area Structure Plan, Area Concept Plan, Outline Plan, or within a Hamlet.

## **Residential Manufactured Home District**

The Residential Manufactured Home District is intended to provide more housing choices for MD residents. This land use district is intended to provide for manufacture housing within comprehensively planned manufactured home parks that are to be located within a hamlet. This type of development must be serviced by municipal water and a communal wastewater disposal system.

## **GOAL**

Support a variety of residential development forms in appropriate locations which serve to minimize the fragmentation of agricultural lands, the impact on the natural environment, and the long term financial implications to the MD.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure the efficient use of land for residential development in order to:
  - 1.1. Minimize the fragmentation and conversion of agriculture land.
  - 1.2. Maintain rural character and open space environments.
  - 1.3. Efficiently use existing and new infrastructure, utility systems, and services.
2. Manage residential development through adopting strategic and statutory plans and other means which provide reasonable assurance to landowners of the intended future development pattern in the MD.
3. Allow for opportunities to apply innovative land use planning and land conservation concepts that improve municipal efficiencies and reduce rural sprawl.
4. Accommodate residential populations in a variety of housing forms in the MD of Foothills.
5. Consider the development of new planned neighbourhoods where the location and infrastructure can support increased intensity of use, such as secondary suites or major home based businesses.
6. Encourage the development of attractive residential environments.
7. Ensure that residential development conforms to environmental and public health guidelines.
8. Implement development controls in order to ensure that all aspects of developments proceed as intended.



# Residential



## POLICY

1. Residential developments should be located, designed, and serviced in ways which will minimize costs to the MD.
2. The MD shall require the preparation of an *Area Structure Plan, Outline Plan, or other such plan* for residential development in accordance with the guidelines found within Appendix C, Planning Framework.
3. Proposals for *residential parcels* should be developed to be compatible with the surrounding area and existing land uses. Consideration will be given to the density, design, traffic, and the visual impact of the proposal on the adjacent lands. Proposals shall be considered on the basis of the following criteria:
  - 3.1. Impact on agricultural industry, the efficient use of land, and the conservation of water.
  - 3.2. Guidance found within this MDP, and other documents as listed in Appendix A, Planning Hierarchy.
  - 3.3. Impact on the natural capital of the MD.
  - 3.4. Suitability of the land for residential uses.
  - 3.5. Environmental significance of the land and adjoining properties.
  - 3.6. Environmental impact.
  - 3.7. Cumulative effects of the development.
  - 3.8. Condition of the Provincial and/or Municipal road servicing the proposed development.
4. The MD supports the development of specialized housing for seniors, special needs, etc. in hamlets and within our urban neighbouring communities where appropriate utilities and services are available.
5. Applications proposing the creation of residential parcels in areas which are deemed as Environmentally Significant should provide a detailed, site specific biophysical assessment to determine the impacts of the development and where possible provide for mitigation of those impacts.
6. One dwelling unit may be located on a single residential parcel unless it is a form of multiple dwelling permitted in accordance with the Land Use Bylaw.

7. The developer shall be responsible for demonstrating to the satisfaction of the MD and Alberta Environment that each residential parcel can be serviced with potable water at a minimum in accordance with the requirements as listed within Appendix F.
8. All residential developments shall meet appropriate standards to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works with respect to such matters, including, but not limited to, soil, slope stability and water table analysis, biophysical assessment, proof of water, water and wastewater systems requirements, stormwater management, road design, lighting design, setbacks, site coverage, flood mitigation measures, fire prevention, building heights, landscaping, and dedication of reserves.
9. All residential parcels shall have a *developable area* of land which:
  - 9.1. Is not subject to the development restrictions such as those created by sour gas or other natural resource extraction, flooding, hazardous lands, landfills, transfer stations, sewage lagoons, or other restrictions as indicated by the MGA and the Provincial Planning Regulation.
  - 9.2. Contains a water table and soils suitable for the construction of a residence and the wastewater disposal system to be utilized.
  - 9.3. Does not exceed 15% in slope unless a report has been submitted to the satisfaction of the MD, prepared by a qualified Professional which indicates that the developable area is suitable for residential construction.
  - 9.4. Meets the setback requirements of the appropriate district in the Land Use Bylaw.
  - 9.5. Is considered developable by the Subdivision Authority.
10. The Municipality may require the developer to submit reports prepared by a qualified Professional and substantiated by a qualified Professional recommended by the Municipality, at the cost of the developer, to prove the suitability of the site for the proposed development.
11. The design and infrastructure of residential development should functionally link adjoining lands.
12. All residential development shall be setback an appropriate distance from all surface water features, including wetlands, for the purposes of riparian land protection. The method of



# Residential



protection will be determined by the *Subdivision Approving Authority* with guidance from the adopted MD of Foothills Riparian Setback Matrix Model.

13. All residential parcels and roads should be designed and developed such that there is minimal visual impact on adjoining properties and roadways and that the natural features of the site are retained.
14. Creation of residential parcels on the basis of access by easement should not be supported.
15. Country Residential District, Cluster Residential District, Country Estate Residential District, Hamlet Residential District, Residential Multi-Family District, and Residential Manufactured Home District subdivisions shall comply with the density, parcel size, and servicing requirements as outlined in the appropriate section of the Land Use Bylaw.



Participation in recreation activities is one of the foundations of a balanced life. Within the MD there is a diverse spectrum of recreational and educational opportunities which are important to the well being of a healthy and engaged community.

The following four categories of recreational development are those contemplated within the Municipal Development Plan:

## **Recreational Centres and Facilities**

The MD contains many arenas, rodeo facilities, riding clubs and community halls which are managed by local user groups and agricultural societies.

As well, the MD of Foothills has partnered with municipalities within our borders (High River, Okotoks, Turner Valley, Black Diamond, and Longview) to facilitate, construct, and expand several public recreation facilities in the region.

## **Natural Areas**

There are several areas in the MD where the public has access to lands in their natural state. These lands may provide opportunities for hiking, fishing, bird-watching, and enjoying nature.

## **Commercial Recreational Developments**

Businesses providing recreational opportunities for a fee to the public, or to their private members, are commercial recreational developments. Some examples in the MD include golf courses, equestrian facilities, paint ball facilities, RV resorts and retreats.

## **Municipal Reserve**

The *Municipal Government Act* allows the MD to secure *Municipal Reserve Lands* at the time of subdivision for parks, buffers and school reserves. Many of these lands are available as public park space and are operated and maintained by local community associations. The public reserve policies are attached as Appendix E.

## **GOAL**

Support and provide opportunities for recreation and education facilities for all MD of Foothills residents that will promote a healthy lifestyle while protecting the rural integrity, landscape, and environment.



# Recreation



## OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a framework that will plan long term strategies for recreational and educational needs.
2. Ensure that the Municipal reserves and/or school sites are planned in the best interests of the community.
3. Support recreation development on lands where there is a minimal impact on the environment, agriculture, water, and municipal infrastructure.
4. Minimize conflicts between recreational developments and existing land uses.
5. Partner with urban centres to facilitate, construct, and expand public recreation and education facilities.
6. Support partnerships that provide recreational and educational opportunities for Municipal District of Foothills residents.
7. Provide recreational services and opportunities that enhance the quality of life of MD residents.
8. Protect sites of archaeological and historical significance within the Municipality.

## POLICY

1. The MD may require the preparation of an Area Structure Plan, Outline Plan, or other such plan for recreational development in accordance with the guidelines found within Appendix C, Planning Framework.
2. Proposals for commercial recreational developments shall be compatible with the surrounding area and existing land use. Consideration will be given to size, design, noise, odour, traffic, dust, and the visual impact of the proposal on the adjacent land uses. Proposals shall also be considered on the basis of the following criteria:
  - 2.1. Quantity of water available to service the development.
  - 2.2. Use of, and impact on, the adjoining lands.
  - 2.3. Agricultural capability of the lands.
  - 2.4. Condition of Provincial and/or Municipal roads servicing the proposed development.
  - 2.5. Environmental Significance of the land and adjoining properties.

- 2.6. Suitability of the land for recreational purposes.
- 2.7. Environmental impact.
3. All recreational facilities and developments should be designed, developed, and operated such that:
  - 3.1. Land use conflicts are minimized.
  - 3.2. Reasonable privacy is afforded to existing residences.
  - 3.3. Disturbance and/or removal of topsoil and vegetation are minimized.
  - 3.4. Development has direct legal and physical access of a standard acceptable to the Municipal District.
  - 3.5. Natural features of the site are retained to assimilate the development into the rural landscape.
4. All recreational facilities and developments shall be required to be located, designed, and serviced in ways which will minimize costs to the Municipal District.
5. All recreational facilities and developments in the vicinity of highways shall be set back a reasonable distance to reduce the visual impact and to protect future right-of-way requirements.
6. Compatible recreational facilities and developments may be allowed in industrial and commercial areas as well as hamlets where they can serve the needs of the surrounding community.
7. The location of recreational developments shall be subject to the developer demonstrating, to the satisfaction of the MD, the existence of a proven potable water supply system and wastewater disposal system adequate to meet the needs of the development.
8. Municipal Reserve land or *cash-in-lieu of reserves* shall be taken in conformance with the policies as outlined in Appendix E.





We have a variety of businesses in the MD of Foothills No. 31 providing goods, services, and jobs to residents. The MD welcomes both new and existing businesses to locate here. This expands local job opportunities and helps us weather economic downturns. As well, these businesses are important generators of municipal revenue to help create a balanced and stable tax base in the MD.

The Highway 2A Industrial Corridor, Figure 3, offers an excellent site for a strategic regional employment and service node. This area will accommodate the majority of new business development within the MD.

There are five categories of business activities supported in the Municipal District:

## **Agricultural Business Development**

While agricultural production is a significant contributor to the economy of the MD in and of itself, there has been a demonstrated need to provide for more commercialized agricultural operations. The Agricultural Business District land use was created with the adoption of Land Use Bylaw 60/2014. It is intended to provide for agricultural-related business in agricultural areas. Uses include primarily agricultural processing, retailing of agricultural products and business uses related to agricultural activity while allowing for limited services related to agriculture.

## **Commercial Development**

Commercial use includes businesses such as stores, offices, gas stations, and restaurants. Hamlets, both existing and new, as well as service nodes in planned communities, may be suitable for commercial development. Development of commercial services outside hamlets or planned commercial areas must be carefully managed to maintain the rural character of the MD. Recently there has been increased demand for the MD to allow the development of commercial equestrian facilities and dog related facilities. It is recognized that these facilities contribute to the area economy; however, they have the potential to impact adjacent lands and therefore should be considered carefully to avoid conflicts.

## **Industrial Development**

The MD will continue to encourage increased and diverse industrial activity by creating a supportive business environment for industrial users within the Highway 2A corridor. Industrial uses include intensive business activity that usually involves the manufacturing, transforming, storing, transporting, and/or servicing of goods.

## Natural Resource Extraction Industry

Subsurface resources such as gas, oil, and gravel will continue to be extracted, transported, and processed in the MD of Foothills. The extractions and/or harvesting of these resources are generally controlled through Provincial legislation. This type of industry is appropriate in rural areas and provides a valuable contribution to the economic sustainability of the region.

## Home Based Business

There is continued demand to allow home based businesses in the MD of Foothills. The Land Use Bylaw classifies this type of economic activity into either minor or major home based businesses. Careful management of this type of economic development is necessary to minimize conflicts, particularly when located in the vicinity of existing residential development.

## GOAL

Work independently and with other private and public agencies to drive economic growth by accommodating a variety of complementary business uses, services, and employment opportunities within the boundaries of the MD of Foothills.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Support economic development activity which results in a more diverse tax base.
2. Support economic development as a means of providing local residents with a greater choice of employment opportunities.
3. Encourage economic development in identified employment areas, such as the Highway 2A corridor, to concentrate development and maximize economies of scale for servicing and infrastructure.
4. Ensure that industrial and commercial development is done in a manner that reduces land use conflict.
5. Facilitate economic development through pro-active land use planning (statutory and non-statutory plans) and implementation (zoning, subdivision).
6. Support commercial developments in hamlets, new comprehensively planned community development, and/or redevelopment areas on the basis of an approved Area Structure Plan, Outline Plan, or Area Redevelopment Plan.
7. Encourage existing and future businesses to introduce sustainable initiatives.



*“Facilitate economic development through pro-active planning and implementation strategies.”*

MDP2010 Steering  
Committee



8. Direct new subdivision and development, particularly residential uses, away from valuable gravel deposits and other non-renewable resources so as not to constrain the extraction of the resource.
9. Encourage home-based businesses which cause minimal land use and neighbourhood conflict.
10. Ensure that the intensity of a home-based business is compatible with the area it is located in and has minimal impact on the environment, agriculture, water, and municipal infrastructure.

## POLICY

### General Criteria

1. The MD shall require the preparation of an Area Structure Plan, Outline Plan, or other such plan for Commercial and Industrial developments are in accordance with the guidelines found within Appendix C, Planning Framework.
2. Proposals for commercial or industrial developments, in addition to Natural Resource Extraction, should be developed to be compatible with the surrounding area and existing land uses. Consideration shall be given to size, design, noise, odor, traffic, dust, and the visual impact of the proposal on the adjacent lands. Proposals shall also be considered on the basis of the following criteria:
  - 2.1. Appropriate transportation and utility infrastructure;
  - 2.2. Land use conflicts are minimized;
  - 2.3. Impact on adjoining lands;
  - 2.4. Reasonable privacy is afforded to residents;
  - 2.5. Design does not preclude the possible development of adjoining lands;
  - 2.6. Retention of the natural site features;
  - 2.7. Efficiency of use of land;
  - 2.8. Weed control program.
3. Proposals for home-based businesses shall be considered on the basis of the following criteria:
  - 3.1. Impact on area residents;
  - 3.2. Impact on adjoining lands;

- 3.3. Impact on the environment;
- 3.4. Traffic generation;
- 3.5. Water consumption;
- 3.6. Sewage disposal;
- 3.7. Dust, odor, noise, exterior lighting, visual impacts; and
- 3.8. Proximity to Heritage Pointe.

## Location

4. Industrial and commercial developments shall be encouraged to locate in existing and new industrial and commercial parks or in Hamlets where plans are in place to allow for these developments and where they can serve the everyday needs of the surrounding community.
5. Intensification of existing *industrial and commercial parks* shall be encouraged as a means of promoting the efficient use of land and infrastructure.
6. Compatible commercial uses may be allowed in industrial areas.
7. Industrial parks should be located within 1.6 km (one mile) of a primary *highway*.
8. Industrial development, including natural *resource extraction industries* should be discouraged from locating in close proximity to urban centers, hamlets, or areas which are known to possess unique historical and/or environmental features that would be disturbed or destroyed by resource extraction.
9. Any business development that creates an increase in heavy vehicle traffic should not be located within 2 km of the Hamlet of Heritage Point.

## Environment

10. Where the MD believes that natural resource extraction industry may have negative impacts on area residents, an Environmentally Significant Area, a critical wildlife habitat, an important fish spawning area, or a historical or archaeological resource the developer shall take the necessary measures to mitigate possible impacts.
11. Industrial developments, including natural resource extraction industries, shall not be allowed to contribute to the degradation of watercourses or groundwater aquifers. The MD will





therefore work with the appropriate authorities to ensure that the highest standards are imposed on industries in order to minimize contamination, pollution, or reduction in the value of the Municipality's watercourses and aquifers.

12. Industrial development should not occur in Environmental Significant Areas as defined in Appendix D.
13. Natural resource extraction industries may locate in an Environmentally Significant Area subject to demonstrating to the satisfaction of the Municipality that the impacts are within acceptable limits.

## Transportation and Infrastructure

14. Developers of natural resource extraction industries shall enter into a Developers Agreement and/or Road Use Agreement with the Municipality respecting road construction, surfacing, maintenance, control of noise or dust, and necessary measures to reduce land use conflicts.
15. The location of industrial and commercial development shall be subject to the developer demonstrating to the satisfaction of the MD the existence of a proven potable water supply and wastewater disposal capacity adequate to meet the needs of the development.

## Approvals, permits and consultations

16. Developers of natural resource extraction industries shall be required at the time of application for a development permit to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the MD that the necessary permits and approvals have been obtained from the appropriate Provincial government agencies.
17. Oil and gas operators are encouraged to consult with the Municipality prior to establishing new facilities or pipelines.
18. AER subdivision and development setback regulations and guidelines shall be applied respecting sour gas and other oil and gas facilities, including pipelines, when considering subdivision and/or development applications.
19. Persons applying for development permits for lands which would be located in the vicinity of *oil and gas facilities and pipelines* are encouraged to consult with the operator of the facility or pipeline to ensure that adequate setbacks are maintained.



# Transportation

Maintaining and operating a safe, financially sustainable and efficient transportation system is very important to MD of Foothills residents. The MD will continue to work with neighbouring municipalities and the Province to ensure that the transportation system meets the needs of our residents.

## Roads

We currently maintain over 2000 km of roadways. Our road construction and maintenance consumes an average of 13 tonnes of gravel per MD resident per year. Road maintenance is the largest budget item for the MD.

Decisions on improvements and maintenance standards have long term impacts on budgets. Continuing to meet the needs of a growing population is dependent on planning for growth in the MD within focused and centralized areas. A centralized pattern of development where transportation infrastructure is used efficiently is more financially sustainable than a pattern of development dispersed across the landscape. The MD of Foothills Growth Management Strategy indicates that the majority of future growth will be directed to the Central District of the MD.

## Public Transit

As the region's population grows, public transit is becoming a possibility. Long range transportation strategies must consider alternative and public transportation models. Studies have begun at a regional level to explore this option. The MD will continue to explore opportunities to provide public transit options for our residents in cooperation with our urban neighbours.

## Airports and Airstrips

The publicly owned High River Regional Airport and several private airstrips are located throughout the MD. These facilities provide recreation and education opportunities, as well as facilitating efficient movement of goods and people, and farm management operations. The High River Regional Airport Area Structure Plan was adopted by MD Council in 2002.

## GOAL

Develop and maintain a safe, sustainable and efficient transportation system.



# Transportation

## OBJECTIVES

1. Operate and maintain transportation systems safely and effectively.
2. Be forward thinking with respect to alternative transportation modes, public transit, and the transportation requirements of future generations.
3. Promote centralized communities and compact residential development where full cost recovery and efficiencies in road maintenance should be achieved.
4. Plan and manage transportation systems in co-operation with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation, neighbouring municipalities, and the region.
5. Ensure that those who benefit from the subdivision and development of land pay the necessary cost for the supporting infrastructure.
6. Protect the High River Regional Airport from encroachment by incompatible uses.
7. Encourage the suitable location and safe operation of private airstrips within the MD in coordination with Transport Canada.

## POLICY

1. The MD shall evaluate subdivision and/or development applications based on, amongst other considerations, the available and projected capacity of its transportation infrastructure including those that are governed by agreements with other municipalities.
2. Any new transportation improvements shall be constructed to meet or exceed MD standards.
3. Developers shall execute a *Developers Agreement* which specifies their responsibility for the design, construction, upgrading, and maintenance of the transportation systems required for the development.
4. The applicant of a subdivision and/or development permit may be required to complete a fiscal impact assessment addressing the life cycle cost to the MD of maintaining the infrastructure required to service the subdivision and/or development.
5. Bylaws and policies shall be established and kept current for off-site levies, redevelopment levies, and contributions required from the subdivision and development of parcels to recover the capital cost of providing transportation systems required for



# Transportation

development in the MD.

6. The MD shall work with other levels of government to develop an integrated, multi-use transportation network to meet the needs of MD residents and businesses.
7. Road widening for municipal roads and the dedication of land for the purposes of roads may be required at the time of subdivision and may apply to all new parcels as well as the remnant.
8. New transportation infrastructure shall employ stormwater management techniques to protect surface water and riparian areas in the MD.
9. The MD shall, in cooperation with rail service authorities, consider current and future rail linkage networks.
10. The MD shall ensure on-going invasive weed surveillance and control measures are implemented in and around all transportation infrastructure including air strips.



Currently the MD is involved with utility systems for water supply, waste water management, stormwater management and solid waste management.

## **Water Supply**

The MD of Foothills promotes the effective stewardship and responsible management of our water resources.

A safe, sustainable water supply is essential for all land use in the MD. Efficient and careful use of our water resources is one of the most important factors influencing growth in the MD.

Provincially licensed communal systems, sourced from either groundwater or surface water, are considered safer and more sustainable for population growth than individual wells. Communal systems are tested for safety and allow for water conservation enforcement.

The MD's water policy, Appendix F, specifies the requirements, in accordance with the Provincial Water Act, for creating new parcels of land in the Municipality. The MD will keep current with emerging groundwater science and technologies to ensure sound ground water conservation management.

## **Wastewater**

Wastewater is the other half of the water use system. The standard household septic tank and field functions well in areas with low populations, suitable soils, and groundwater conditions. Upgraded units which provide a higher level of treatment are in use in some of the more populated areas. Monitoring and maintenance of both systems is left up to the homeowner.

Safer and more sustainable systems of wastewater management are required to accommodate continued growth in the MD. Communal wastewater systems are feasible for comprehensively planned developments and must meet strict guidelines for use, monitoring, and maintenance; these types of systems, which are operated either by the MD or privately, are already in use in the Hamlets of Cayley, Blackie, Heritage Pointe, and Priddis Greens.

## **Stormwater**

Development impacts drainage patterns; stormwater management tries to manage these impacts. Comprehensively planned development, using master drainage plans and best practices management, can control stormwater and erosion. Regardless of the scale of development, drainage plans will be required in order to mitigate the impact. Preservation of critical water features such as wetlands and riparian areas shall be part of drainage



plans. The MD supports integrated watershed management plans which address water quality, such as the Bow Basin Watershed Management Plan and the Highwood Management Plan.

## **Solid Waste and Recycling**

The MD of Foothills operates the Foothills Regional Waste Management Facility serving not only the MD and its hamlets, but also the towns of High River, Black Diamond, Turner Valley, Nanton, Okotoks, and the Village of Longview. The MD also manages the Priddis and Black Diamond/Turner Valley transfer stations.

To extend the life span of the Regional Waste Management Facility, the MD will, in cooperation with our urban neighbours, continue to promote recycling, composting, and other waste reduction practices through education and facility operation policies.

## **GOAL**

Develop and maintain safe, sustainable and efficient utility systems for water and waste management.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. Promote water supply and wastewater systems that meet or exceed Provincial standards for health, safety, and environmental impact through education and policy.
2. Promote centralized communities and compact residential development where communal water supply and wastewater systems are developed and full cost recovery can be achieved.
3. Recognize in all decisions that water is a limited and precious resource, which must be used wisely and efficiently, and that all planning decisions shall be made so as to minimize impacts upon existing water users.
4. Encourage water conservation measures such as rain water collection, use of low flow fixtures, and minimized outdoor watering through education and policy.
5. Manage stormwater in a manner that sustains the quality and quantity of water being released into the MD's water features utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management principles wherever possible.
6. Ensure the benefits of any new development outweigh the environmental, economic, and social costs of stormwater management solutions.
7. Promote recycling and composting programs to reduce the solid waste going into the landfill.





8. Be science informed in planning decisions on all utilities and services including surface water conservation; subsurface aquifers; and water well management, wastewater and stormwater technology.

## POLICY

### General:

1. Bylaws and policies shall be established and kept current for off-site levies, redevelopment levies, and contributions required from the subdivision and development of parcels to recover the capital cost of providing utility systems required for development in the MD.
2. Developers shall execute a Developers Agreement which specifies their responsibility for the design, construction, upgrading, maintenance, and monitoring of the utility systems required for the development.
3. Applicant of a subdivision and/or development permit may be required to complete a fiscal impact assessment that considers the life cycle cost, to the MD, of maintaining the infrastructure required to service the subdivision and/or development.
4. A cooperative approach may be taken with other municipalities and the Province towards the development of intermunicipal utilities systems and integrated utility corridors.
5. The MD's Design Guidelines and General Construction Specifications shall be revised and updated regularly to include appropriate design standards for utility infrastructure construction that meets acceptable Engineering standards and green infrastructure approaches.
6. Dedication of lands for the purposes of public utilities may be required at the time of subdivision.
7. Developers shall ensure that utility activities do not encroach upon Environmentally Significant areas, unless unavoidable and any such impacts shall be mitigated.

### Water and Wastewater:

8. The MD shall consider the efficiency of use and conservation practices of potable water systems as a top priority in all development.
9. Communal water and wastewater systems are encouraged, where feasible. Such systems may be owned and operated privately or by the MD, and shall comply with all Provincial regulatory and licensing requirements.

10. Private sewage disposal systems shall comply with the Alberta Private Sewage System Standard of Practice and, if necessary, the requirements as outlined within a development permit issued by the MD.
11. Water well construction shall comply with the installation and operational requirements of the Provincial Water Act.
12. The MD shall apply the requirements of the Provincial Water Act or the Municipal Water policy to all applications for unserviced subdivision, as per Appendix F of this Municipal Development Plan.
13. The MD shall investigate the feasibility of providing municipal water and wastewater utility systems to hamlets which presently do not have community utility systems.
14. The MD shall encourage water conservation by implementing programs that include metering and water use restrictions.
15. The MD shall work with the appropriate jurisdictions to establish an ongoing groundwater monitoring and comprehensive water testing program to protect and maintain groundwater quality and quantity.
16. The MD shall promote grey water reuse and other integrated resources management techniques for industry and other applications.

## **Stormwater:**

17. The MD is supportive of the preparation of master drainage plans for watersheds where development is actively proceeding or where significant land use changes are occurring or contemplated. More detailed drainage plans shall be prepared in conjunction with Area Structure Plans, Outline Plans, and Area Redevelopment Plans.
18. A stormwater management plan, prepared by a qualified Professional Engineer, may be required for all future subdivision and/or development in accordance with Provincial regulations and Municipal standards.
19. Stormwater management facilities may be recognized as utilities.
20. Stormwater management plans shall take into account the impact on riparian areas.





21. The MD shall recognize the importance of natural wetlands in the hydrology of a rural watershed and the existing natural habitat. These natural wetlands shall be conserved or equivalent reconstructed wetlands developed, to the satisfaction of all Approving Authorities.
22. The MD shall develop stormwater quality and quantity monitoring systems for a number of the rivers in the MD.

## **Solid Waste Management**

23. The MD of Foothills shall continue to work with surrounding municipalities on the planning, development of *integrated solid waste management* systems.



# Intermunicipal

In the MD of Foothills No. 31 we have a long history of cooperating with the municipalities within our borders, being the Towns of Okotoks, High River, Black Diamond, Turner Valley, and the Village of Longview, as well as those we share borders with, including The City of Calgary and our rural neighbours of Rocky View County, Wheatland County, The MD of Willow Creek, Vulcan County, and The MD of Ranchland. These centres have an important role to play in providing goods and services to MD residents. Conversely the MD provides many opportunities to town and city residents.

The Municipal District has partnered with adjacent municipalities to construct schools, transportation, and other public facilities and to deliver emergency, recreation, and landfill services. Together we are also undertaking studies to explore our collective challenges and to harness our collective power to achieve mutual goals. By working together we improve the quality of life, economic strength, and diversity of the entire region.

*Intermunicipal Development Plans* (IDPs) have been adopted between the MD of Foothills and all of our urban neighbours: the City of Calgary; each of the Towns of Black Diamond, Turner Valley, High River, and Okotoks; and the Village of Longview. Rural IDPs have also been developed to create a policy framework to assist with cooperation and collaboration between the MD of Foothills and Vulcan County, Wheatland County, The MD of Willow Creek, and The MD of Ranchland. The MD supports maintaining current intermunicipal plans and addressing mutual land use interests within established intermunicipal boundary areas.

## GOAL

Work cooperatively with our municipal neighbours and senior level of government to promote compatible land use patterns, efficient municipal services, and joint planning of infrastructure on lands of mutual interest for the benefit of all residents in the region.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Continue to support reciprocal planning frameworks, such as Intermunicipal Development Plans, that respect the interests of the MD and our municipal neighbours.
2. Work in partnership with our municipal neighbours to address the cumulative effects of development.
3. Co-operate with our municipal neighbours in order that the goals and objectives of each municipality can be achieved within their corporate boundaries.



# Intermunicipal



4. Support opportunities to jointly plan infrastructure with our municipal neighbours.
5. Encourage shared services between the MD and our municipal neighbours.

## POLICY

1. Lands contained within the boundaries of an adopted Intermunicipal Development Plan shall be subject to the goals, objectives, and policies contained within the Intermunicipal Development Plan and the Municipal Development Plan.
2. The MD shall support compatible land use patterns in areas of mutual interest through planning initiatives that benefit the MD and our municipal neighbours.
3. Joint use agreements with our municipal neighbours may be established to provide the economies of scale necessary to develop and operate major recreational and other mutually beneficial facilities.
4. The MD may pursue regional and sub-regional planning and investment in order to achieve collective and common goals as well as mutual benefits, which may include transportation and utility networks, watershed protection and planning, and regional growth corridors.

# Implementation & Amendment

The purpose of a Municipal Development Plan is to guide planning and development in the MD of Foothills No. 31.

This Municipal Development Plan, MDP2010, is a continuation of the MDP process initiated in 1998. All municipal documents and corporate actions must reflect the intent of the MDP.

Factors affecting land use, economic development, environmental sustainability, and the provision of municipal services are constantly changing; therefore, the MDP must be monitored, periodically reviewed, and amended to ensure the policies remain relevant.

## GOAL

Implement the Municipal Development Plan and allow for amendment as required.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure other statutory and non-statutory documents and all aspects of the MD's planning and development activities are consistent with the Municipal Development Plan and its policies.
2. Measure the effect of the Municipal Development Plan over time.
3. Report regularly to the public to encourage meaningful public involvement and participation in planning matters.
4. Support, communicate, and collaborate between all levels of government.
5. Encourage and promote interaction and communication between the private, non-government, and public sectors.
6. Allow amendments to the Municipal Development Plan as needed.

## POLICY

1. The policies contained in this Municipal Development Plan shall be implemented through:
  - 1.1. The MD's Land Use Bylaw
  - 1.2. Other statutory and non-statutory documents and broader land use strategies
  - 1.3. Subdivision and development review processes
  - 1.4. Development Agreements



# Implementation & Amendment



## 1.5. Various forms of corporate communication

2. Municipal Development Plan policies shall guide the review and amendment to the Land Use Bylaw, all local planning documents, and other land use planning decisions.
3. The requirements of the Municipal Government Act shall be applied when amending the Municipal Development Plan.
4. The Municipal Development Plan shall be periodically reviewed by Council. A major review of the MDP shall be undertaken as determined by Council.
5. The MD shall provide opportunity for involvement from the public and other stakeholders in the review and amendment of the Municipal Development Plan.
6. The MD shall continue to provide guidance and work with the public, community groups, and the private sector on matters relating to land use planning.

# Glossary

**AER:** Alberta Energy Regulator, the Provincial board responsible for the regulation of energy resources in Alberta.

**Agricultural Land:** Lands designated as Agricultural in the Land Use Bylaw of the MD of Foothills. Agricultural parcels are a minimum of 21 acres in size. There is no maximum size of Agricultural parcel.

**Area Structure Plan:** A statutory plan, adopted by Bylaw, which provides a land use strategy for subsequent redesignation, subdivision and development of an area of land.

**Bed and Shore:** The bank of a body of water as defined under the Provincial Surveys Act, which states that “when surveying a natural boundary that is a body of water, the surveyor shall determine the position of the line where the bed and shore of the body of water cease and the line shall be referred to as the (top of) bank of the body of water”. The Bed and Shore of a permanent water body is usually under the ownership of the Province of Alberta under the Public Lands Act.

**Biodiversity:** The variety of genetic material, species, or organisms found within a specific area and the ecosystem they form.

**Biophysical Assessment:** A review of land prepared by an environmental scientist or other qualified professional that identifies and assesses the environmental significance and sensitivity of the lands, and recommends appropriate measures for protecting the environmental features, which may be incorporated into the subdivision review process.

**Cash-in-lieu of Reserves:** The contribution of money to the Municipal Reserve (MR) fund equivalent to the market value of the land required to meet the 10% Municipal Reserve dedication requirements under the Municipal Government Act.

**Combined Contiguous Parcels (for the purposes of Cluster Residential subdivision):** Two or more parent parcels which have common boundaries, or boundaries that are directly adjacent but separated by road, river, right-of-way, or reserves.

**Conservation Easement:** The easement is a legal agreement on land that is voluntarily executed between the landowner and an easement holder, such as a municipality or conservation organization, and which prohibits certain types of uses or development from occurring on the land.

**Confined Feeding Operations (CFO):** As defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB), means an activity on land that is fenced or enclosed or buildings where livestock, (as defined under the Agricultural Operations Practices Act), are confined for the purposes of growing, sustaining, finishing or breeding by means other than grazing. Also includes any other building or structure directly related to that purpose but does not include residences, livestock seasonal feeding and bedding sites, equestrian stables, auction markets, race tracks or exhibition grounds.

**Cumulative Effects:** The combined effects of past, present and reasonably foreseeable land-use activities over time on the environment.

**Developable Area:** Means the minimum area required on a lot to ensure that there is adequate space for a building site, water well and sewage disposal system taking into account the setback distance requirements of the Municipality's land use bylaw, provincial requirements, and any required setbacks recommended by a geotechnical engineer following a review of the site.

**Developers Agreement:** A legal binding contact between a developer and the Municipality outlining the obligations of the developer with respect to a specific development.

**District Plan:** A municipal plan which provides a framework for future development in one of the MD of Foothills 5 growth management districts. A district plan is more detailed than the Municipal Development Plan but somewhat less detailed than an Area Structure Plan.

**Engineering Standards:** Engineering standards set by the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists, Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA).

# Glossary

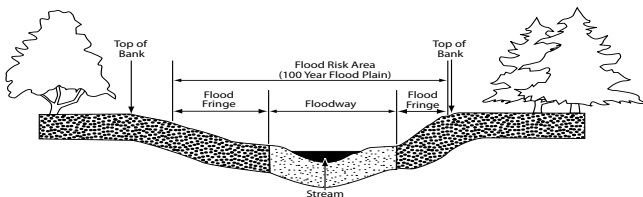
**Environmental Reserve:** In accordance with Section 664 of the Municipal Government Act, land which is undevelopable because of its natural features or location, such as unstable slopes or flood prone; environmentally sensitive such as a gully, ravine or coulee; or a strip of land abutting the bed and shore of a body of water or water course, that a developer may be required to dedicate at the time of subdivision. Environmental Reserve must be maintained in its natural state or used as a park.

**Environmental Reserve Easement:** Pursuant to Section 664 of the Municipal Government Act, the developer of a subdivision may register an environmental reserve easement for the protection and enhancement of the environment, rather than dedicating land as environmental reserve. The land that is referred to in an environmental reserve easement remains in private ownership rather than public ownership as in the case with environmental reserve. The purpose of the easement is to protect the natural environment.

**Environmentally Significant Area (ESA):** These areas are believed to contain special features or characteristics or are part of a system which in turn gives rise to special biological attributes and are significant to the MD from an environmental perspective.

**First Parcel Out:** A single lot or parcel created from a previously un-subdivided quarter section. First parcels out are not intended to be further subdivided.

**Flood Fringe:** The outer portion of the flood risk area adjacent to the floodway. The water in the flood fringe is generally more shallow and flows more slowly than in the floodway.



**Floodway:** The inner portion of a flood risk area where the risk of flood is the greatest and floodwaters are the deepest, fastest and most destructive.

**Fragmented Parcel:** A portion of a quarter section which is physically separated from lands within that quarter section due to roads, railway lines, natural water courses and water bodies, or other natural or man-made features.

**Green Infrastructure:** A network of landscaped and/or natural areas threading through a site. It includes features such as street trees, landscaped boulevards, riparian stream corridors, wetlands, or wooded areas. Green infrastructure provides residents of a development with a connection to the natural world as well as many environmental benefits including absorption of storm water.

**Hazard Lands:** Lands which may be prone to flooding, shoreline erosion or slope instability hazards or any hazard that may result in life loss or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption, or environmental degradation.

**Highway:** A road that is designated as a highway pursuant to the Public Highways Development Act.

**Industrial and Commercial Park(s):** Subdivision for the establishment of industries and/or commercial activities in accordance with the Municipal requirements.

**Integrated Solid Waste Management:** Employing several waste control and disposal methods such as source reduction, recycling, re-use, energy generation, and land filling, in order to maximize the use of waste products and minimize the environmental impact of waste streams.

**Integrated Watershed Management:** A multi-disciplinary approach to managing the biophysical, economic and social elements within a watershed in order to protect the water resource.

**Intermunicipal Development Plan:** Pursuant to Section 631 of the MGA, this plan is prepared to address planning and development issues within the fringe areas of two adjacent municipalities.

**Land Stewardship:** The practice of responsible land use to ensure that natural capital is maintained or enhanced for future generations.

# Glossary

**Land Use Bylaw:** A bylaw of the Municipality passed by Council pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act and intended to prohibit, regulate and control the use and development of land and buildings within the Municipality.

**Landscapes of High Scenic Value:** A measure of the aesthetic qualities of the landscape determined by the study of the many cultural and natural elements found within that landscape.

**Minimum Distance Separation (MDS):** The Agricultural Operations Practices Act determines the minimum distances required from the outside walls of neighbouring residences to the point closest to manure storage facilities or manure collection areas.

**Municipal Government Act:** Provincial legislation by which municipalities in Alberta are governed. The MGA sets out the legislated roles and responsibilities of municipalities and elected officials.

**Municipal Reserve Land:** A subdivision authority may require the owner of a parcel of land that is the subject of a proposed subdivision to provide part of that parcel for park or school purposes.

**Natural Capital:** The inference of wealth or value gained from complex environmental systems. These systems, when functioning optimally, continue to produce wealth or value into the future.

**Natural Resource Extraction Industry:** An enterprise which is governed by natural geographic or geological features and may include, but is not limited to the extraction and processing of mineral deposits, petroleum and natural gas, or sand and gravel deposits.

**Oil and Gas Facilities and Pipelines:** Petroleum related infrastructure, either above or below ground or both. Includes, but not limited to pipelines, wells, processing facilities.

**Outline Plan:** A non-statutory plan that is used as a guideline for the subsequent redesignation, subdivision and development of an area of land.

**Parent Parcel(s):** The parcel(s) of land which is /are subject to an application for subdivision.

**Qualified Professional:** An individual with specialized knowledge recognized by the Municipality and/or licensed to practice in the Province of Alberta. Examples of qualified Professionals include, but are not limited to Agrologists, Engineers, Geologists, Hydrologists and Surveyors.

**Residential Parcel:** A parcel of land developed for the purposes of residential use and designated as such within the Residential Land Use District, which includes the subdistricts of Country Residential, Cluster Residential, Country Estate Residential, Hamlet Residential, Residential Multifamily, and Residential Manufactured Home.

**Right to Farm:** Provincial Legislation which protects farmers and ranchers from nuisance law claims.

**Riparian Areas:** Lands adjacent to a watercourse where the vegetation and soils show evidence of being influenced by the presence of water. Riparian areas are the green zone around a watercourse. They are the vital transitional zone between surface water and drier uplands and play a role in the healthy functioning of both.

**Riparian Setback Matrix Model:** Means a scientifically-based model supported by the Municipality to assist in the protection of shorelines, water quality, and riparian areas, while allowing for development to occur in a sustainable manner by establishing appropriate setbacks for development from important riparian areas.

**Subdivision Approving Authority:** The authority authorized by MD Council to exercise subdivision powers and duties on behalf of the Municipality.

**Transfer of Development Credit Programs:** A tool used to direct development away from specific landscapes, such as productive agricultural land and sensitive natural areas towards lands identified for development.

# Glossary

**Top of Bank:** The upper valley break line or the line defining the uppermost or most obvious topographical discontinuity in slope distinguishing between the upper plateau and the valley wall. The “top of bank” is a natural boundary formed by the action of water for a long enough time to leave its signature on the ground. Unless coincidental, it is not a historic high water mark, a flood line, or the current waterline. An Alberta Land Surveyor may be required to define the Top of Bank. Top of Bank determination is a key aspect to delineating hazard lands as well as delineating between publically and privately owned lands in some cases.

**Un-Subdivided Quarter Section:** A quarter section, lake lot, river lot or settlement lot that has not been subdivided except for public or quasi-public uses or only for a purpose referred to in section 618 of the Municipal Government Act. In addition, the MD considers quarter sections within gore strips and fragmented parcels which constitute more than ½ of the quarter section, lake lot, river lot or settlement lot as un-subdivided quarter sections.

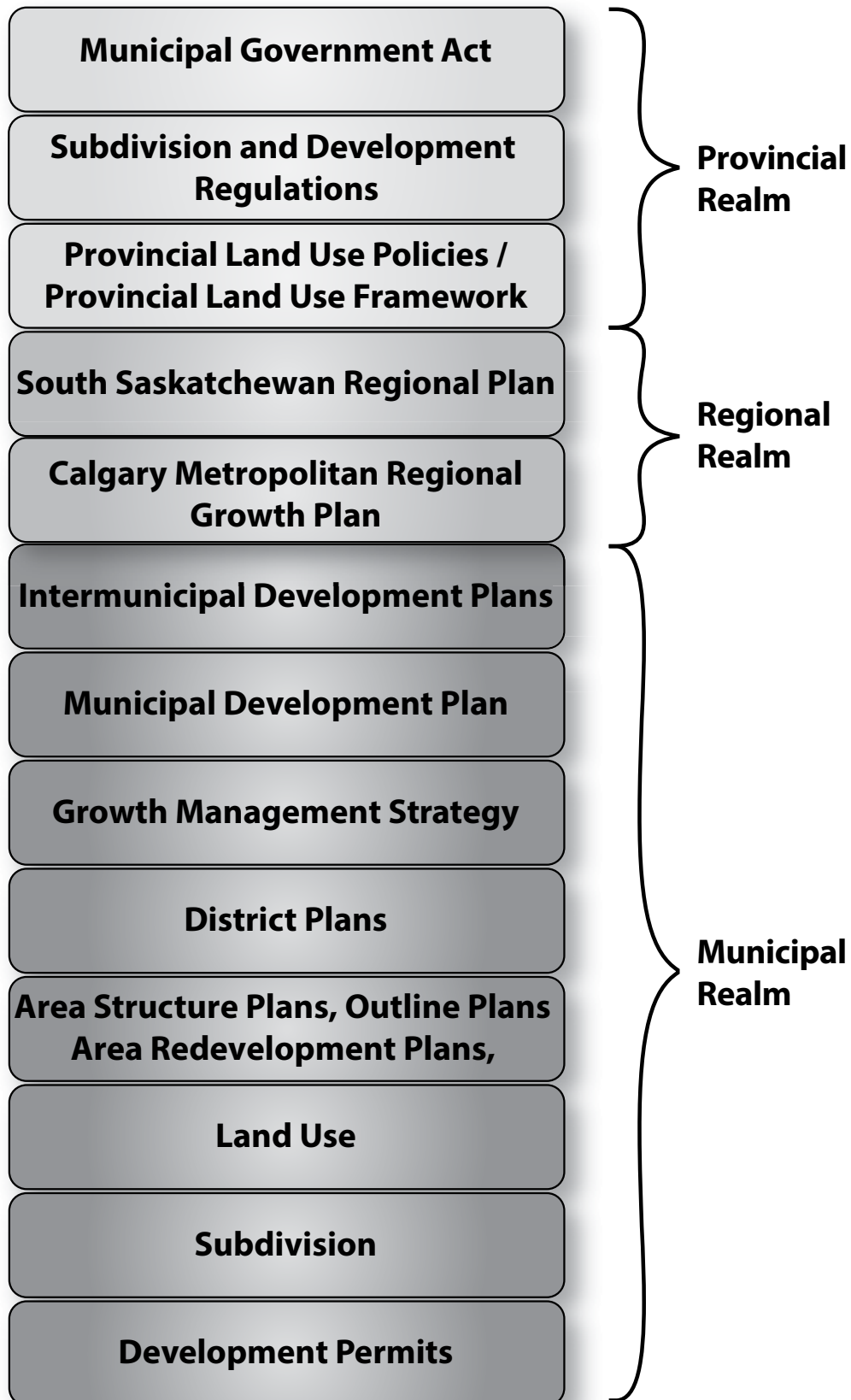
**Walkable Communities:** Foster pedestrian activity for easy, inviting and safe foot movement to goods (e.g. housing, offices, retail) and services (e.g. transportation, schools, libraries, recreation) required by community residents on a regular basis. Notwithstanding a pedestrian corridor focus, walkable communities shall expand transportation options and create trail networks and roadscapes that better serve a range of users including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and automobiles.

**Watershed:** Is the total land area that contributes water to a river, stream, lake, or other body of water. It is synonymous with drainage area, drainage basin, and catchment.

**Wetlands:** Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support vegetation that is adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.



## Hierarchy of Planning Documents



# Appendix B

## **Municipal Government Act, Section 632**

The Municipal Government Act, Section 632, provides the legislative framework under which the MD of Foothill's Municipal Development Plan has been prepared. The MGA lists both the required and optional contents of a Municipal Development Plan.

Section 632(3) (a) identifies the required content of a Municipal Development Plan as follows:

1. The future land use within the municipality;
2. The manner of and the proposals for future development;
3. The co-ordination of land use, future growth patterns and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities;
4. The provision of the required transportation systems either generally or specifically within the municipality and in the relation to adjacent municipalities; and
5. The provision of a municipal service and facilities either generally or specifically.

Section 632 (3) (b) outlines optional policies which may also be included in a Municipal Development Plan:

1. Proposals for the financing and programming of municipal infrastructure;
2. The co-ordination of municipal programs relating to the physical, social and economic development of the municipality;
3. Environmental matters within the municipality;
4. The financial resources of the municipality;
5. The economic development of the municipality; and
6. Any other matter relating to the physical, social or economic development of the municipality.

Section 632 (3), (c), (d), (e) and (f) continue with identification of additional policies to be included in the Municipal Development Plan:

1. May contain statements regarding the municipality's development constraints, including the results of any development studies and impact analysis, and goals, objectives, targets, planning policies and corporate strategies;
2. Must contain policies compatible with the subdivision and development regulations to provide guidance on the type and location of land uses adjacent to sour gas facilities;
3. Must contain policies respecting the provision of municipal, school or municipal and school reserves, including but not limited to the need for, amount of and allocation of those reserves and identification of school requirements in consultation with affected school authorities; and
4. Must contain policies respecting the protection of agricultural operations.

## Planning Framework

### INTRODUCTION

The framework provides the basic organizational structure of planning in the MD. It is defined within the Municipal Realm of the larger planning hierarchy in Appendix A of this MDP. The framework covers a range of scales, from plans that address the entire MD to development permits on a single parcel of land. Generally, each level must be consistent with the preceding level, and provides greater detail and refinement of policy as it moves down the hierarchy.

### INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)

Intermunicipal Development Plans are developed by adjacent municipalities for the purpose of jointly coordinating common interest, conflict resolution, land use, and development in the fringe areas.

These plans can provide guidance on a number of issues within the plan area beyond the minimum requirements outlined in the MGA. Lands identified for future urban expansion and subsequent annexation are identified in an IDP.

### MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (MDP)

The MDP provides broad direction for growth and development across the entire Municipal District in accordance with a vision, goals, objectives and policies. The MDP provides guidance to Council as well as guides the development of more detailed levels within the planning framework.

### GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (GMS)

Based on the MDP, the GMS provides the strategic context of how and where growth is to be accommodated in the MD as a whole, over a long time frame. The Growth Management Strategy may include topics such as:

- Establishment of growth expectations, principles, and aspirations.
- Examination of existing and future transportation and utilities systems, groundwater resources, important areas of natural capital and other spatially explicit opportunities and constraints for growth on the MD landscape.
- Analysis of alternative growth patterns appropriate for different areas within the MD, and the costs and benefits of these alternatives.
- Segregation of the municipality into areas of similar nature and character for the purposes of further long range planning such as Development Concept Plans.
- Policy on how development and subdivision should proceed to achieve the vision and goals, including the use of transfer of development credits programs and other initiatives that support conservation and stewardship of land.

# Appendix C

## Planning Framework

### DISTRICT PLANS

A District Plan addresses the planning for one of the 5 growth management districts identified in the Growth Management Strategy. While the focus of the District Plan is to address planning to accommodate future growth, it may also be used to establish a landscape of conservation for the purposes of maintaining its natural capital. The District Plan addresses the needs of the area for which it plans, and as such, the contents of the plan must be designed specifically for each individual area, and include the vision of its residents. Extensive public consultation and involvement is integral in the creation of a District Plan. The intent is to provide reasonably broad direction and the appropriate level of detail dependent on the intensity of the development envisioned within the specific area. In areas where growth is envisioned, the District Plan will address:

- Further refinement of the plan boundaries and growth projections which were initiated within the GMS.
- Character and form of the community development proposed, including densities, settlement patterns and special use districts.
- Major infrastructure requirements within the plan area, including utility servicing, transportation planning, environmental conservation, open space design as well as identifying necessary community and regional facilities.
- Details with respect to transferable development credits and transferable density targets, sending and receiving areas, conservation area planning and other such matters relating to land conservation efforts.
- Requirements for further planning, studies, levies and other actions to implement the plan.
- Intended phasing of development within the plan area.

### AREA STRUCTURE PLANS (ASP)

ASPs are intended to provide a higher level of planning detail for a smaller area than undertaken in any of the plans listed above in the hierarchy. This is a statutory plan, and as such, all planning authorities must adhere to the ASP. These plans provide policy direction on how a specific area of land will develop over time, and identify the fundamental layout of land uses on the landscape prior to the preparation and submission of the more detailed plans. This plan does not detail parcel layout, it offers a broader level of planning which requires significant public consultation and involvement. An ASP can be created by the MD or by the developer. An ASP specifically outlines the following detail:

- Policy, goals and objectives of the plan and how it supports the plans in higher levels of the framework.
- Sequence of development for a proposed area.
- Specific or general land uses, populations and densities.
- Specific location of transportation routes, utilities, environmental conservation, public open space design, and housing and business types.
- Implementation strategy required to undertake the proposal.

## Planning Framework

### AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (ARP)

ARPs are similar to ASPs, except that an ARP is used to facilitate the “redevelopment” of an area that is already developed. The ARP provides policy direction regarding the removal, reconstruction and/or preservation of an area and buildings and provides for improvements of infrastructure.

### OUTLINE PLANS

A conceptual scheme that provides a much greater level of detail in terms of the actual subdivision design, site specific technical analysis and details how the proposal is in keeping with the overall municipal goals for development. Outline plans are intended to be completed after the adoption of an ASP, but not in all cases. Outline Plans are undertaken by the developer and can be done concurrently with an application for redesignation and/or subdivision. Outline plans are professionally created documents that are used to fully inform Council and the public of the proposed development, and may contain the following topics:

- Proposed phasing of the development.
- Servicing and access details for the development.
- What the built environment will look like including lot configuration, parcel sizes, road widths and access locations, all land uses and housing types and styles, architectural controls and other development restrictions, technical studies and other detailed information to fully visualize the proposal.

### APPLICATION FOR LAND USE, (Redesignation or Amendment to the Land Use Bylaw)

The developer submits an application for redesignation or amendment of the Land Use Bylaw to apply to change the zoning of land or to allow the creation of additional parcels with the same or different land use district. The site plan submitted with the application must show all proposed land uses within the application area. This stage of development often requires the developer to undertake the conditions regarding utility servicing.

### SUBDIVISION APPLICATION

The submission of a Plan of Subdivision provides the legal registration requirements for the subdivision of lands. Additional requirements for Developers Agreements are often required as part of this step.

### DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Where indicated in the Land Use Bylaw, or as part of the Bylaw or Resolution allowing for the parcel, the requirements of a development permit must be met prior to or concurrently with the development of the parcel.

# Appendix D

## Definition of Environmentally Significant Areas

Environmentally Significant Areas are identified in Environmentally Significant Areas studies prepared for the Resource Information Branch, Alberta Environmental Protection, and local municipalities, and may include the following:

1. “Hazard” lands that are unsafe for development in their natural state such as floodplains and steep and unstable slopes; or that pose severe constraints on types of development such as Aeolian surficial deposits and permanent wetlands;
2. Areas that perform a vital environmental, ecological or hydrological function such as aquifer recharge;
3. Areas that contain unique geological or physiographic features;
4. Areas that contain significant, rare or endangered plant or animal species;
5. Areas that are unique habitats with limited representation in the region or are a small remnant of once large habitats that have virtually disappeared;
6. Areas that contain an unusual diversity of plant and/or animal communities due to a variety of geomorphological features and microclimatic effects;
7. Areas that contain large and relatively undisturbed habitats and provide sheltered habitat for species that are intolerant of human disturbance;
8. Areas that provide an important linking function and permit the movement of wildlife over considerable distances, including migration corridors and migratory stopover points;
9. Areas that are excellent representatives of one or more ecosystems or landscapes that characterize a natural region;
10. Areas with intrinsic appeal due to widespread community interest or the presence of highly valued features or species such as game species or sport fish; and
11. Areas with lengthy histories of scientific research.

## Municipal Reserve Policy

### Public Reserve Policy (Adopted April 18/96)

Under Section 666(1) of the Municipal Government Act the Council may require the owner of a parcel of land that is subject to a subdivision proposal, to provide land for municipal reserve or provide money in place of the municipal reserve.

The amount of land or cash-in-lieu of land to be provided for municipal reserve will be equal to 10% of the titled parcel(s). The land required to be provided as environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement will not be included in the calculation of municipal reserve.

Under Section 671(2) it states that Municipal reserve, school reserve or municipal and school reserve may be used by a municipality or school authority or by them jointly only for any or all of the following purposes:

- a. a public park;
- b. a public recreation area;
- c. school authority purposes;
- d. to separate areas of land that are used for different purposes.

#### **I. NO PUBLIC RESERVE IS REQUIRED WHEN:**

- a. one lot is to be created from a quarter section;
- b. land is to be subdivided into lots of 16 hectares (39.5 acres) or more and is to be used only for agricultural purposes;
- c. the land to be subdivided is .8 hectares (1.98 acres) or less; or
- d. reserves have already been provided for the title.

Even though no public reserve is required, a Deferred Reserve Caveat may be placed on title at the discretion of Council to notify the landowner that at the time that the parcel is further subdivided, municipal reserve will be required.

#### **II. FORM OF RESERVE – DEDICATION OF LAND OR CASH-IN-LIEU**

For a redesignation or subdivision application, when the reserves to be provided are more than 1.98 acres, a separate lot must be shown on the site plan. It will be at the discretion of Council at the time of the decision as to whether land will be taken or cash-in-lieu.

On lots 21 acres or less, 10% cash-in-lieu of land will be required under the following circumstances:

- a. on the full original parcel where the land is being subdivided to the maximum density allowed under the Land Use Bylaw.
- b. on two of the lots where the proposal is to create 75% of the maximum allowable density with the reserves being deferred on the largest lot.
- c. on one of the lots where the proposal is to create 50% of the maximum allowable density with the reserves being deferred on the largest lot.

#### **III. COUNCIL MAY REQUIRE THE RESERVES TO BE DEFERRED WHEN:**

- a. it is deemed that the maximum allowable density allowed under the Land Use Bylaw has not been obtained. The balance of the reserves owing on the existing title will be deferred, by Caveat, on the largest lot.
- b. parcels are located within an urban fringe or Inter-Municipal Development area;
- c. the new lot is created under the 'Agricultural District' Land Use Rules.

A Deferred Reserve Caveat would be placed on title to notify the owner on title that at the time that this parcel is further subdivided, municipal reserve will have to be provided.

This policy will serve as a guideline and the form of Public Reserve will remain at the discretion of Council.

# Appendix F

## Water Policy

*On quarter sections of land where the proposal would not create more than 5 lots proof of adequate water supply is a municipal requirement prior to final reading of a bylaw for redesignation and the subsequent subdivision of land.*

The Municipality will require the applicant for redesignation or subdivision to drill one well per lot, to a maximum of three wells, and conduct a 12hour pump and 12-hour recovery test on each well. These test results must be submitted to the Municipality with Q20 calculations, stamped and sealed by a member of APEGGA.

### **EACH Q20 REPORT MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA**

- guidelines as per Alberta Environment Protection specifications;
- a minimum safety factor of 0.7 must be used in calculating the Q20 results;
- the recommended pumping rate resulting from the Q20 calculations must be equal to, or greater than, the total number of lots within ¼ mile of the proposed lots (including the proposed lots), divided by 6;
- the well must recover to at least 90% of its original drawdown or be recovered for the same duration as the drawdown.

*The recommended Q20 from the engineer cannot exceed the rate at which the well was pumped. All test results must be recorded and calculated from the static water level.*

### **EXCEPTIONS TO THE ABOVE POLICY**

- In areas, that in council's opinion, are not known for water shortages;
- Where the total number of lots within the ¼ section, including the proposed lot(s), will not exceed 5 lots, council may require a 4 hour pump / 4-hour recovery test with results submitted to the municipality showing a minimum pump rate of 4 igpm;
- No proof of water required on lots containing an existing residence;
- No proof of water required on parcels exceeding 20 acres in size.

### **6 LOTS OR MORE PER 1/4 SECTION**

For all applications proposing the use of a communal water system or where 6 or more lots (including existing) will be on a 1/4 section, proof of water must conform to the Water Act.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

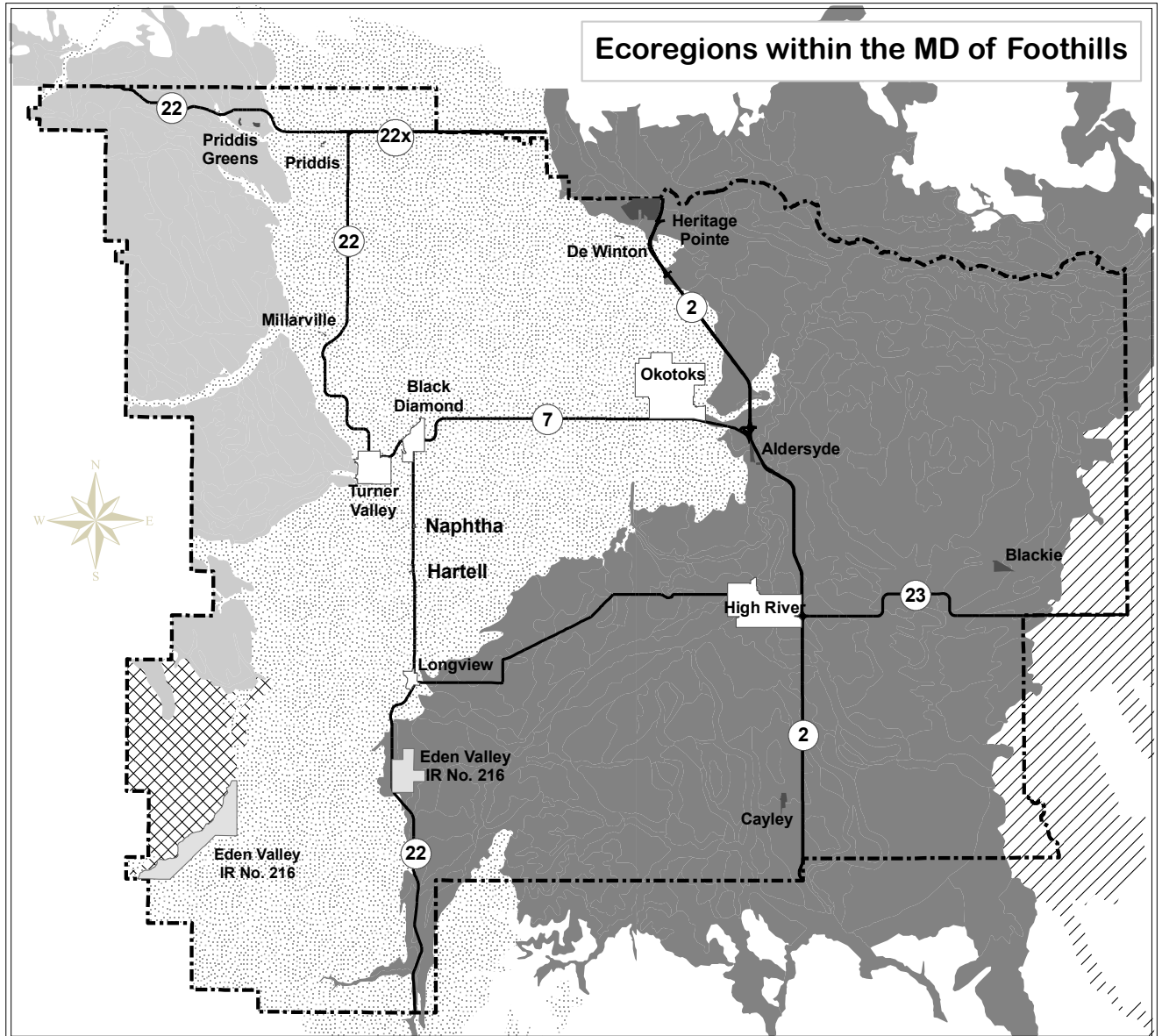
In cases where staff deems that the well test results submitted do not meet the requirements of this policy, an appeal can be made to Council.

In the case where a 4 hour pump test is required and the well is unable to attain 4 IGPM, a Q-20 must be conducted, meeting the above noted Q-20 criteria.









# Figure 1

## Eco Regions



### Legend

#### Ecoregion

-  Moist Mixed Grassland
-  Fescue Grassland
-  Aspen Parkland
-  Alberta Plateau
-  Border Ranges
-  MDF Boundary

Ecoregions are the result of the combined characteristics of climate physiography, soils, and vegetation into single cartographic areas ( Stong and Anderson, 1980). There are 17 ecoregions within Alberta.

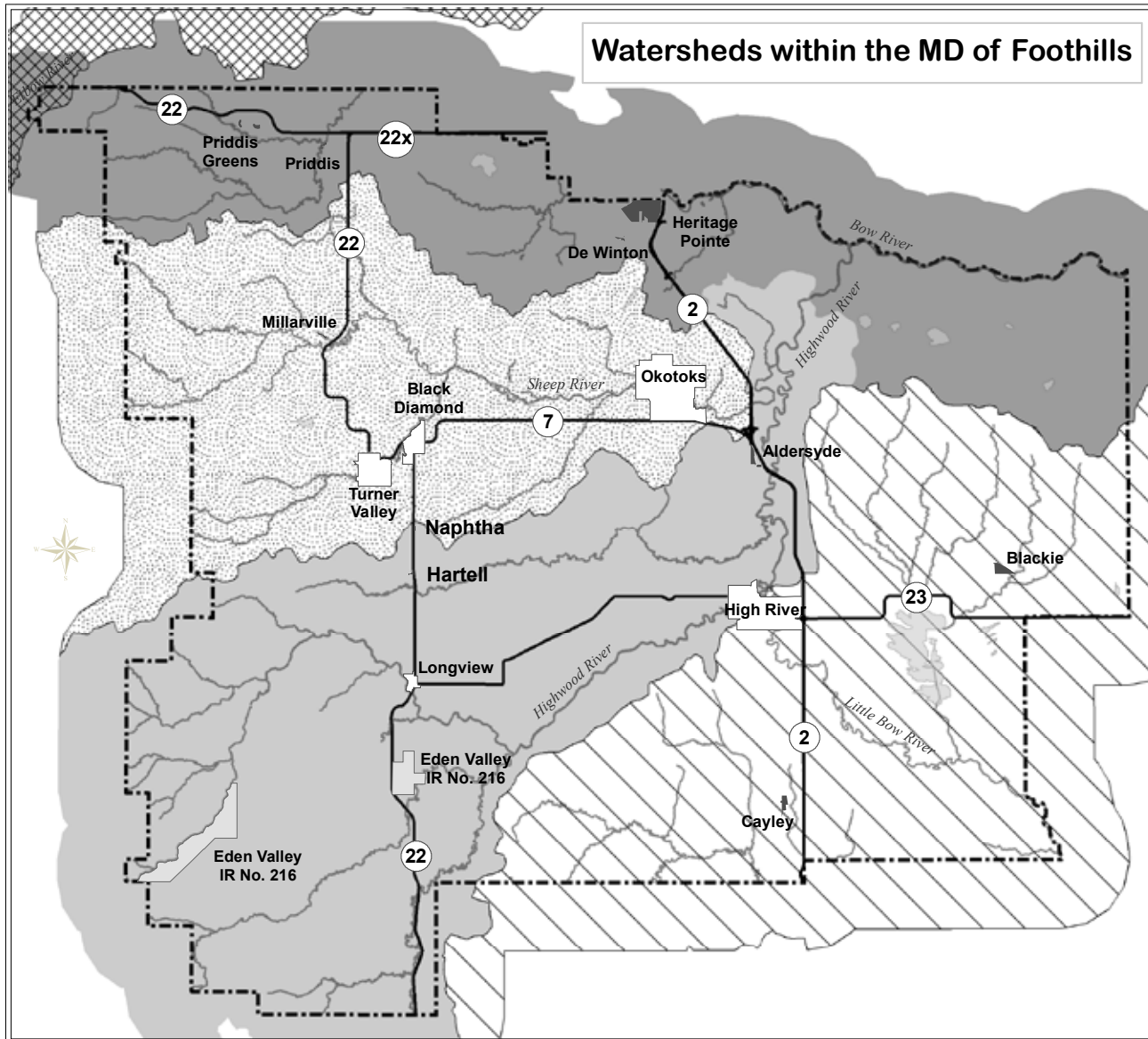
The Ecoregions within the MD of Foothills map is based on the Canada- Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (CAESA) Soil Inventory Project. The spatial data is derived from AGRASID 3.0.

For more information [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sag6169](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sag6169) and [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sag10372](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sag10372)






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# Figure 2

## Watersheds



### Legend

-  Bow River
-  Elbow
-  Highwood River
-  Little Bow River
-  Sheep River

A watershed is an area where all surface water drains into the same body of water (river, lake, or ocean). Surface water consists of the tiny trickles of water flowing on the surface of the Earth that develop into larger streams and eventually combine to form rivers and lakes.

Alberta is divided into seven major river basins or major river systems, namely the Peace, Athabasca, Hay, North Saskatchewan, South Saskatchewan, Beaver and Milk River basins.

Within the MD of Foothills there are 5 sub basins as indicated in the legend.

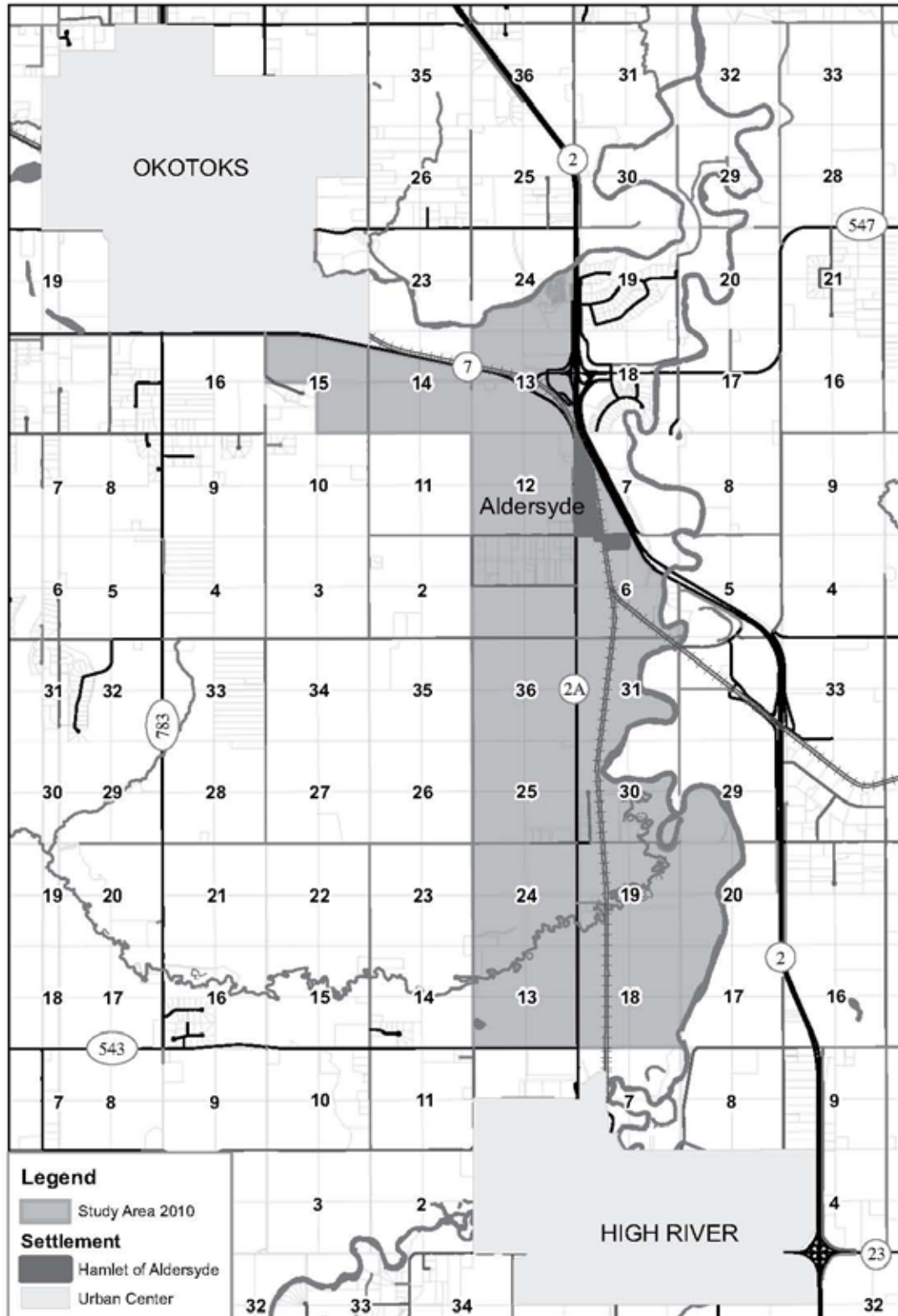
For more information:

<http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/environment/hydrology/watershed/1>  
<http://environment.alberta.ca/apps/basins/default.aspx>

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# Figure 3

## Highway 2A Industrial Corridor



# Figure 4

## Growth Management Districts

