

BYLAW NO. 24/015

A BYLAW OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO TO ADOPT A NEW MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN BYLAW NO. 24/015

WHEREAS Section 632 of the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, c. M-26 (the “MGA”) and amendments thereto, authorizes Council to enact a bylaw adopting a new Municipal Development Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, in the Province of Alberta, duly assembled, hereby enacts as follows:

1. This Bylaw may be cited as the “Municipal Development Plan for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo”.
2. Bylaw No. 11/027 Municipal Development Plan for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and all subsequent amendments thereto, is hereby repealed.
3. This bylaw comes into effect on the day it is passed.

READ a first time this _____ day of _____, 2024.

READ a second time this _____ day of _____, 2024.

READ a third and final time this _____ day of _____, 2024.

SIGNED and PASSED this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Mayor

Chief Legislative Officer

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

JULY 2024



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**





MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO

TREATY NO.8 TERRITORY



The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo humbly acknowledges that the land on which we live, learn, work and play is Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dene, and the unceded territory of the Métis.



RMWB



 TREATY 8 TERRITORY

 ALBERTA

 REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

Acknowledgement

The Municipality extends its gratitude to all residents, stakeholders and Indigenous Partners who supported the development of this plan. Together, we built a Municipal Development Plan that reflects the strong values of the Region, while providing an inclusive and sustainable vision for the future that will guide communities forward. Wood Buffalo's greatest strength is the people who call this place home and you will see the collaborative efforts and shared vision in the pages ahead.

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HOW TO READ THE MDP

The MDP provides a vision and goals for Wood Buffalo to achieve as it continues to grow. Additionally, it contains considerable contextual information, directions for how to implement the MDP, and substantial policy. This supports the use and implementation of the MDP to have the greatest impact possible.

MDP ORGANIZATION

The MDP is divided into three distinct sections.

1. Introduction: Summarizes the MDP's purpose and regional context and presents the MDP's vision and goals for the Municipality.
2. Policies: Presents how the MDP will achieve the vision and goals.
3. Implementation: Provides a framework for actions the Municipality will make to implement, evaluate, and amend the MDP as required. This section also includes performance measures that will serve as a barometer to track the success of the MDP over time.

Appendices, graphics, callouts, and other information are included throughout the MDP as supplementary information to help further contextualize and explain MDP content. While these components do not legally form part of the MDP unless explicitly stated, they can be used to support the interpretations of policy. Revisions to these graphics, descriptions, and appendices may be undertaken without an MDP amendment.

POLICY TERMS

The below key terms outline how the MDP, and its policies should be interpreted and implemented.

- The Municipality: Refers to the municipal corporation that is the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, the local government.
- Wood Buffalo or "the Region": Refers to the geographic region of the Municipality, but not the Municipality itself.
- Will: Indicates policies for the municipality to work on based on available resources, administrative priorities, and Council's direction
- Should: Indicates policies that require compliance in principle but can be varied where unique or unforeseen circumstances provide for courses of action that would satisfy the general intent of the policy, subject to the discretion of the applicable authority on a case-by-case basis.
- May: These policies indicate that the applicable authority will determine the level of compliance required.
- Support or Encourage: Means the Municipality will endeavour to provide assistance and/or advocate for partners to deliver the policy's identified outcome(s).

Definitions

The definitions for the terms used in the MDP can be found in Appendix A – Glossary.

MDP STRUCTURE

VISION

The vision sets direction for sustainable growth and development of the Region.

GOALS

The goals inform the MDP's policies, creating a guiding framework. Each goal has a thematic colour that makes it easily identifiable, and will help you navigate through the document.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Directions are where the Vision and Goals become operational, providing specific objectives that collectively help make the MDP work.

SUB-SECTIONS

Strategic Direction's Sub-Sections are policies grouped into specific subject areas. These provide structure to the overall flow of each Strategic Direction and help keep like policies collected together for easy reference.

POLICIES

Policies outline how the MDP will achieve the vision, goals, and strategic directions through statements identifying what the Municipality will do.

ACTION ITEMS

Action items support with the implementation of the policies.





INTRODUCTION

WOOD BUFFALO'S STORY

Wood Buffalo's story is best understood through the very things that make this place what it is:

- *The land we have built our lives on*
- *The people who call this place home*
- *The tenacious and innovative spirit we all share, and*
- *The endless opportunities this place provides us with.*

Understanding this story helps to frame the goals of the community and contextualize how we can work together to build an even better Wood Buffalo into the future.

TODAY'S WOOD BUFFALO

Wood Buffalo is a place of amazing contrasts: it is simultaneously diverse and modern, yet includes endless wilderness; its oil sands are the industrial heart of Canada's economic engine, yet it is environmentally focused and conscious; it is rooted in history, yet young and vibrant.

While its reputation has not always been fairly shared around the world, those who live here know that Wood Buffalo is a place of perseverance, remarkable landscapes, amazing people, tenacious community spirit, and tremendous opportunity.

As a dynamic and ever-changing place, Wood Buffalo has seen tremendous growth over the past several centuries. Its identity has been and continues to be shaped by the Indigenous Peoples

who were the original caretakers and stewards of this land. It has evolved from a strategic trading site, with rail access at the confluence of major rivers into its current state as a vibrant hub of oil sands extraction, technological innovation, and economic opportunity. Throughout these changes, the Municipality has eagerly explored ways to accommodate residents, improve quality of life, and make Wood Buffalo an amazing place to call home.

By boldly addressing the growth experienced to date, the plans of the past have set Wood Buffalo up for success. Today, the Municipality finds itself in an advantageous position with room to grow and community amenities that are the envy of the world – a solid foundation to build upon.

Building on the great work already done, an even more caring, people-centred Wood Buffalo is ready to be created.

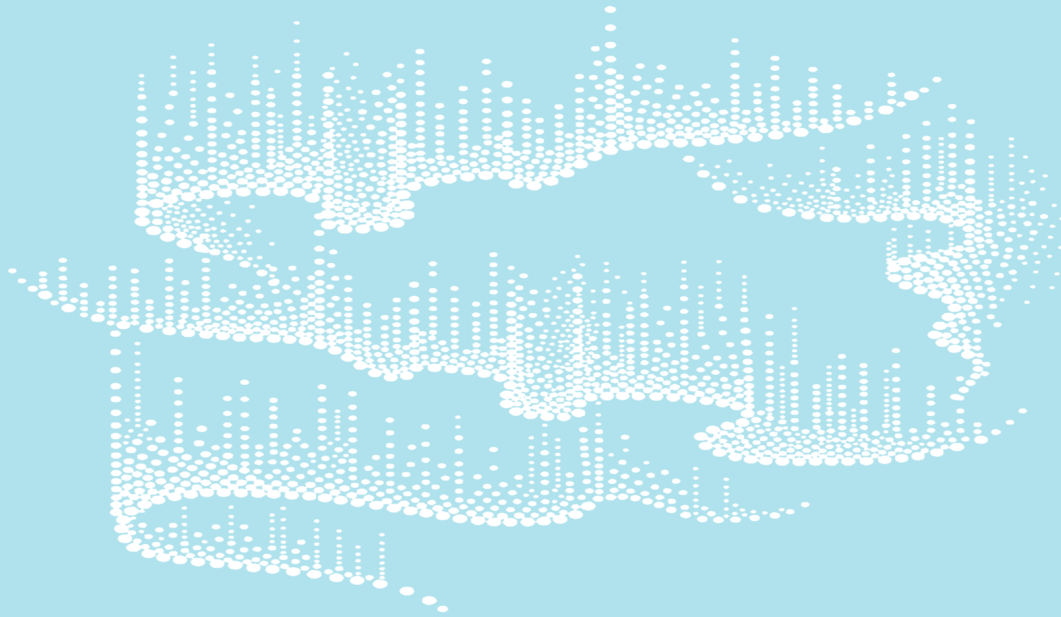
A STORY OF LAND



WITH OVER
450 HECTARES
OF RECREATIONAL SPACES

A MUNICIPAL AREA OF OVER
63,000KM²





WITH MORE THAN
130KM
OF MAINTAINED TRAILS

HOME TO ONE OF CANADA'S
MOST RECOGNIZABLE SPECIES
THE CARIBOU

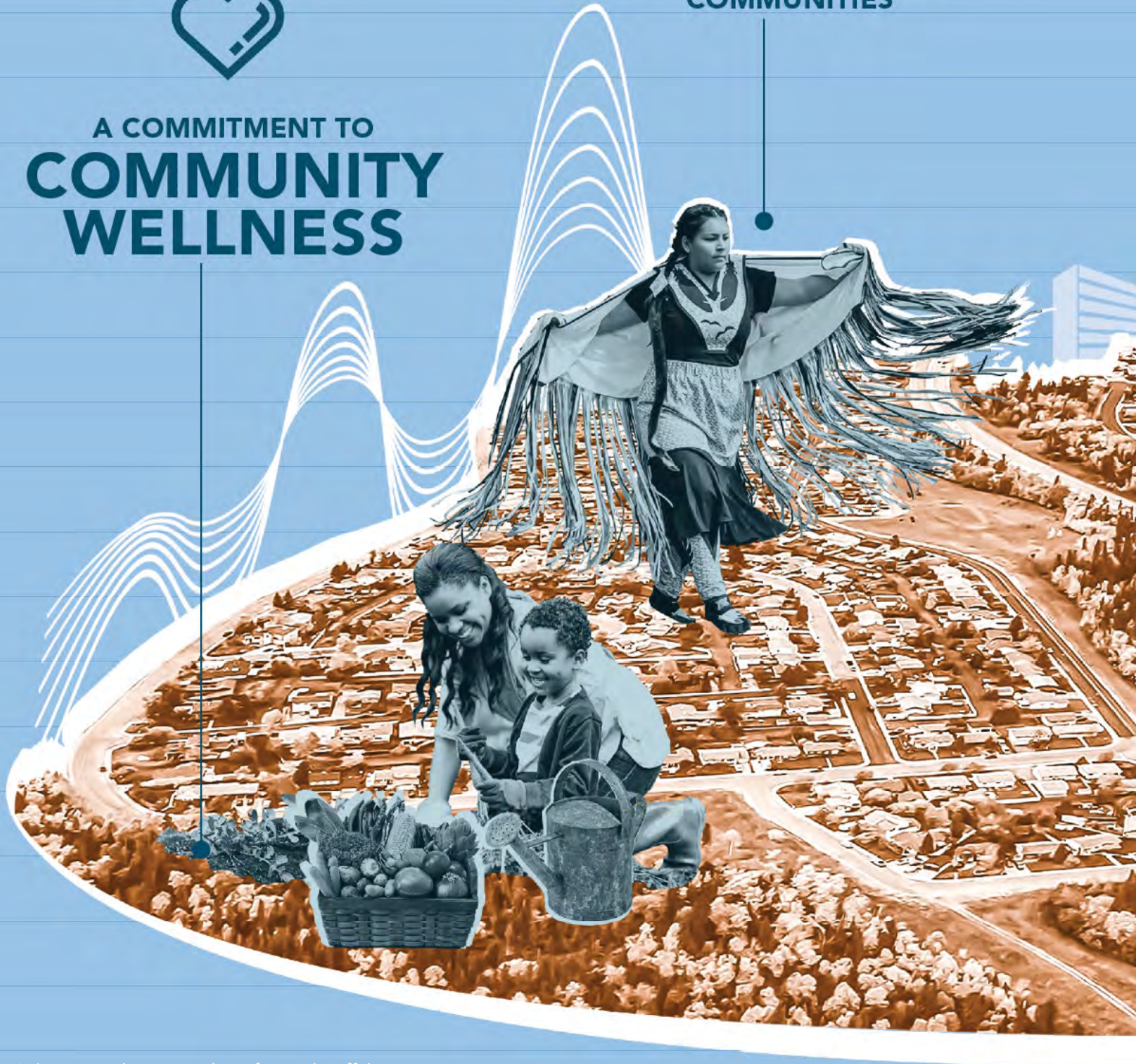


A STORY OF PEOPLE



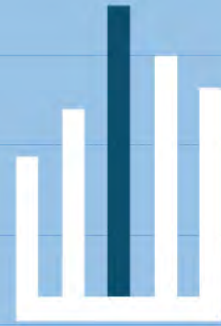
HOME OF
**6 FIRST NATIONS
& 6 MÉTIS**
COMMUNITIES

A COMMITMENT TO
**COMMUNITY
WELLNESS**





DIVERSE
WITH OVER 80 LANGUAGES
SPOKEN IN WOOD BUFFALO



33 YEARS OLD
THE AVERAGE WOOD BUFFALO
RESIDENT IS 9 YEARS YOUNGER THAN THE
THE AVERAGE CANADIAN



A STORY OF TENACITY

86% REBUILT
OF WILDFIRE AFFECTED
PROPERTIES

NEWLY RENOVATED
**INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT**



RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT
**IN FLOOD
PRONE AREAS**
FLOOD MITIGATION STRATEGY:
CONSTRUCTION OF BERMS

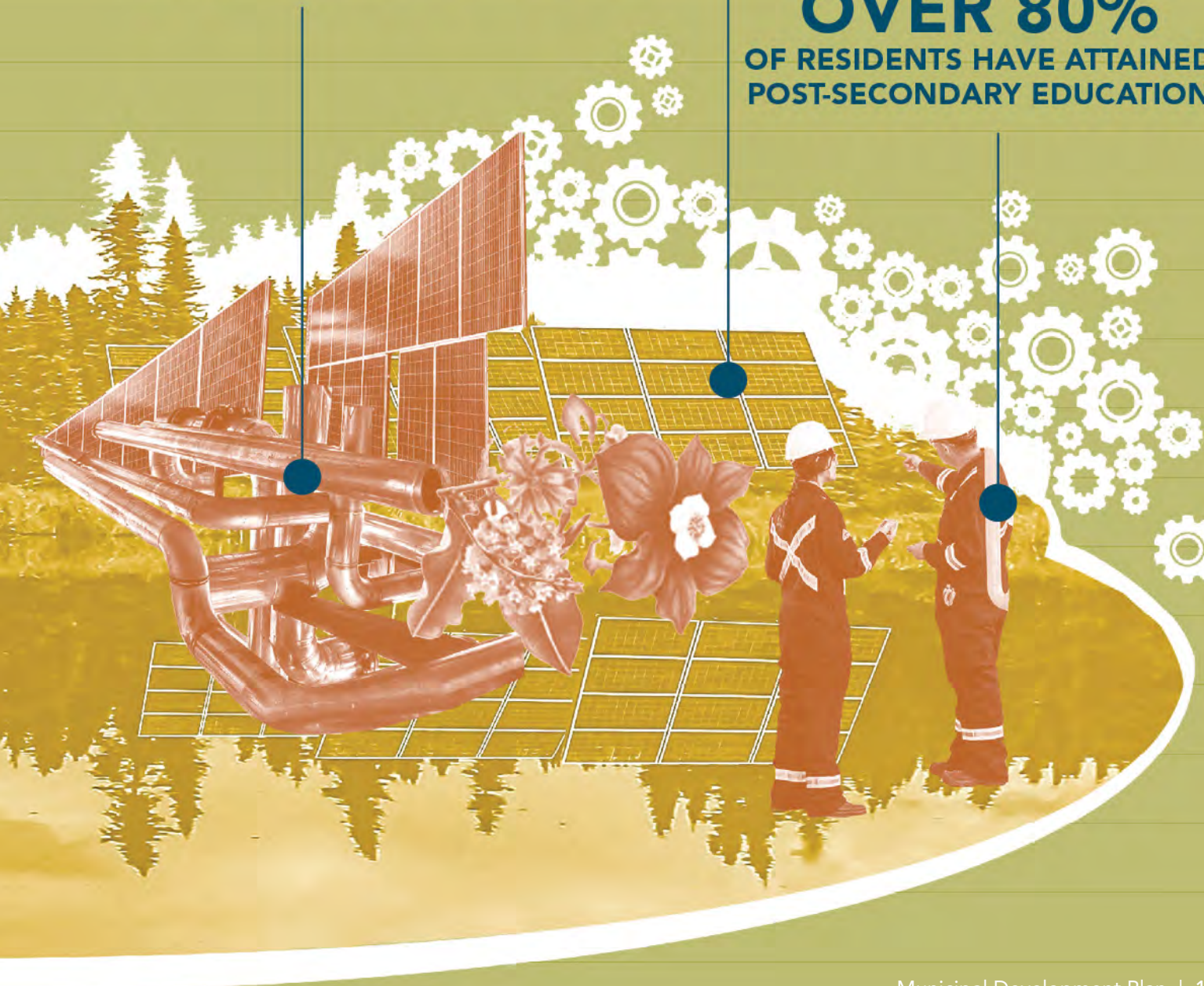


SUPPORTERS OF
CLEAN ENERGY

OIL SANDS CONTRIBUTE **13%** TO
CANADA'S GDP



OVER 80%
OF RESIDENTS HAVE ATTAINED
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION



A STORY OF OPPORTUNITY

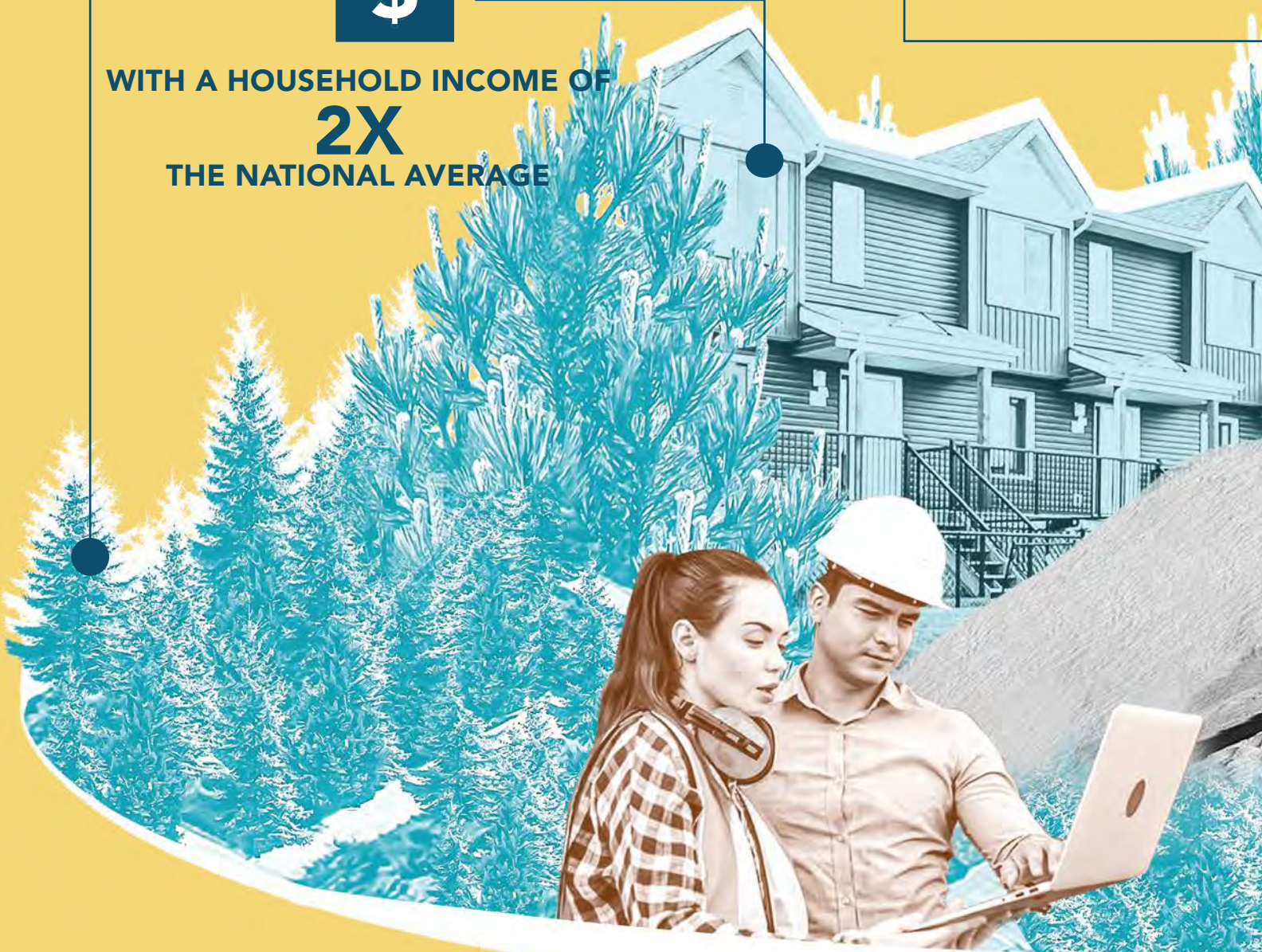
CONTINUED GROWTH IN 
OIL PRODUCTION
470,000 BPD IN 2023

ADVENTURE TOURISM

WITH FEATURES SUCH AS ACCESS TO
WILDERNESS, PARKS, WATERBODIES
AND POTENTIAL COTTAGE LIVING



WITH A HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF
2X
THE NATIONAL AVERAGE



EDUCATION

1,100 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN
2023

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

THROUGH DOWNTOWN
REVITALIZATION INCENTIVES
PROGRAM, AND TAX
INCENTIVES



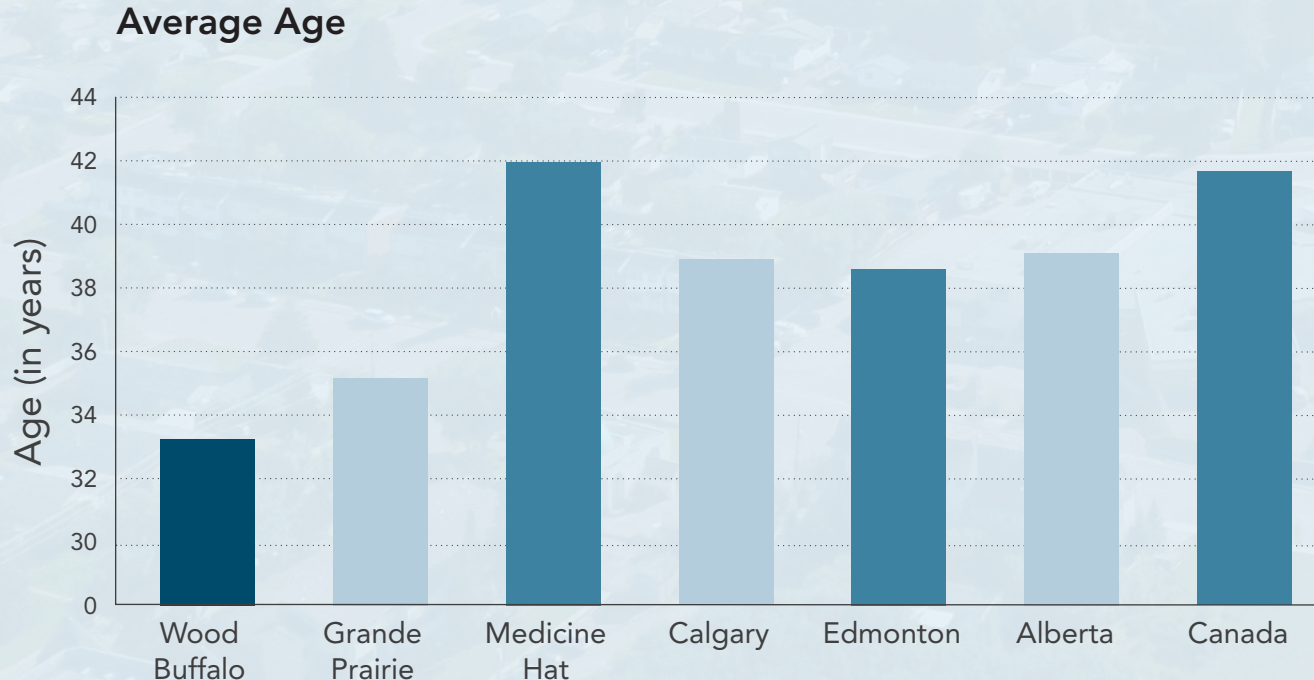
BY THE NUMBERS...

Wood Buffalo's story is one of unique context and circumstance. With abundant natural resources and opportunity, Wood Buffalo has grown into a place where:

PEOPLE IN WOOD BUFFALO ARE YOUNGER WITH LARGE FAMILIES

AGE AND GENDER PROFILES

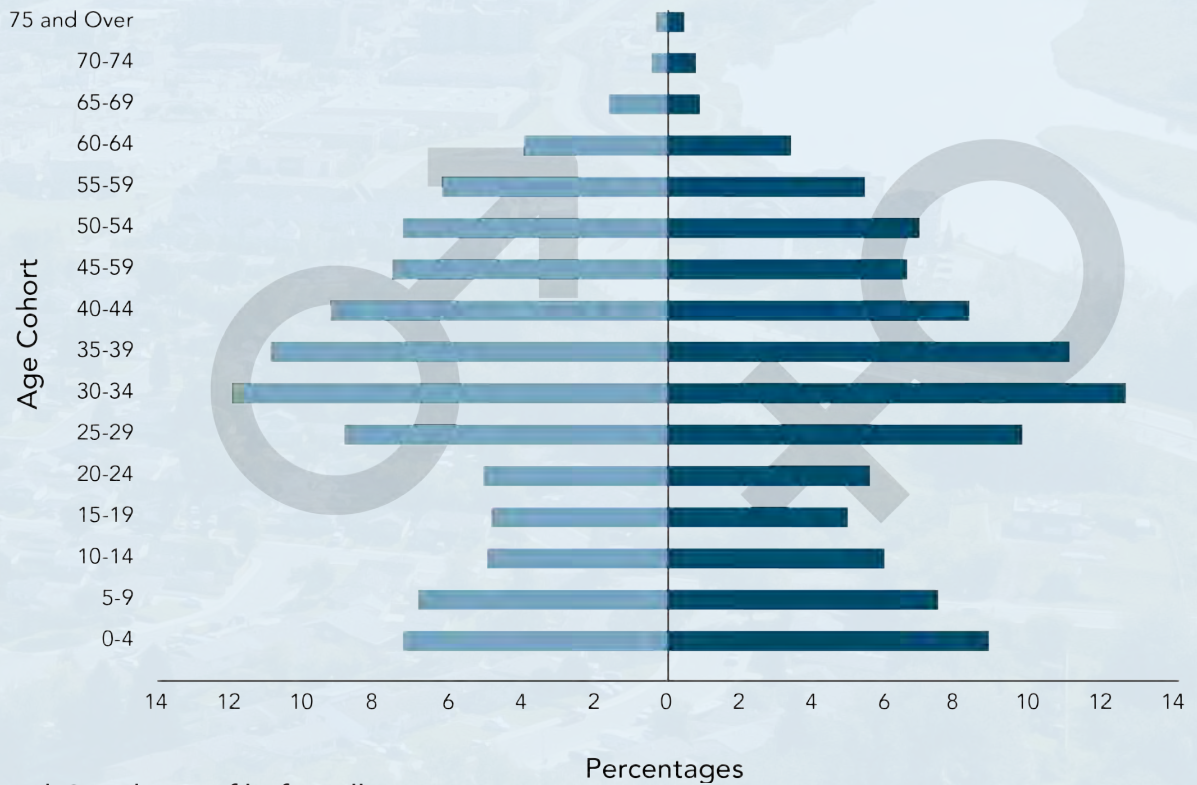
Figure 1: Comparison of Wood Buffalo's Average Age with Cities of similar size, the Province average, and National average



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Figure 2: Comparison of Age and Gender Profile of Wood Buffalo with the Province of Alberta

Age and Gender Profile for Wood Buffalo



Age and Gender Profile for Alberta

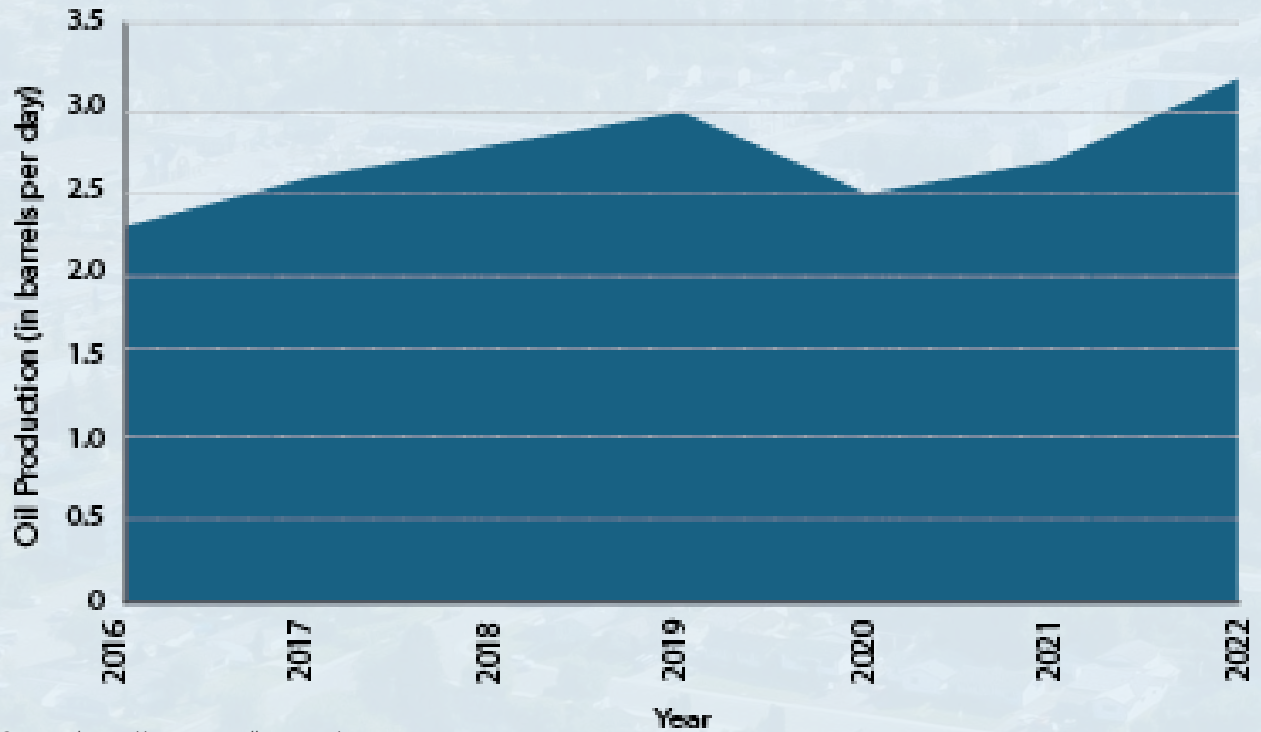


Disclaimer: The 2021 Municipal Census also enumerated 0.08% of the population identifying as transgender and 0.02% identifying as Other.

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

INDUSTRY GROWTH WILL SUSTAIN THE REGION FOR YEARS TO COME

Figure 3: Oil Sands Production trend in Alberta from 2016-2022



Source: <https://www.oscaalberta.ca/>

97% of Canada's oil comes from oil sands. 96% of oil sands are located in Wood Buffalo.

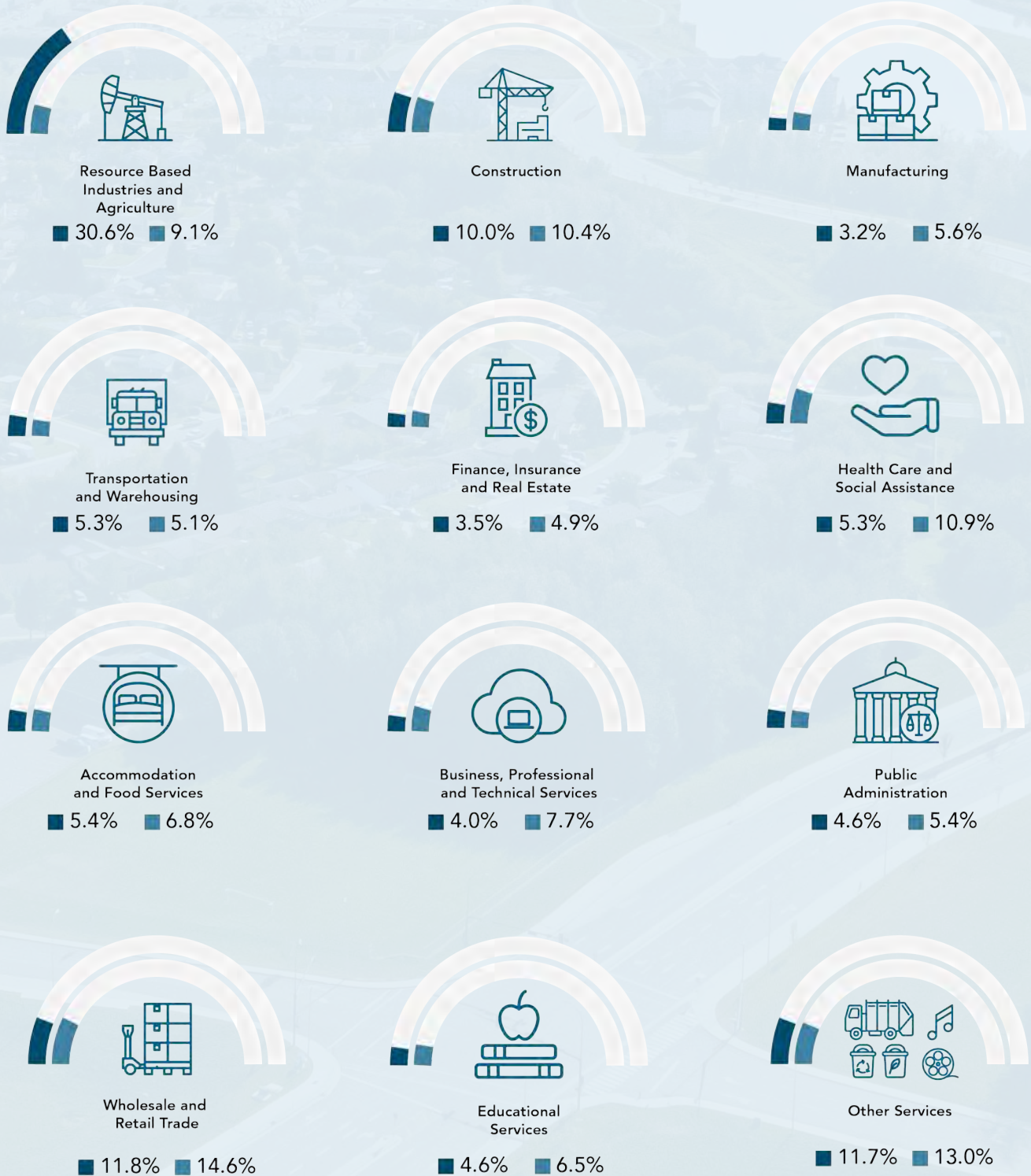
Source: www.fmwb.ca



EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

Figure 4: Comparison of employment distribution by sector in Wood Buffalo with the Province of Alberta

■ Wood Buffalo
 ■ Alberta



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

RESIDENTS MAKE MORE MONEY THAN THE AVERAGE CANADIAN

Table 1: Comparison of Household Income in Wood Buffalo with cities of similar size, the Province, and the Nation

	2021 Median Household Income	Above National Median	Average Total Individual Income	Above National Average
Wood Buffalo	\$208,372	185%	\$73,000	80%
Calgary	\$140,919	93%	\$44,800	11%
Edmonton	\$121,620	67%	\$45,600	13%
Grande Prairie	\$118,776	63%	\$49,600	22%
Medicine Hat	\$98,207	35%	\$41,200	2%
Alberta	\$125,522	72%	\$44,800	11%
Canada	\$73,000	0%	\$40,500	0%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census



House Price Survey Ranks Fort McMurray As Most Affordable Market Globally

HuffPost Canada, January 21, 2020

Source: https://www.huffpost.com/archive/ca/entry/affordable-housing-canadian-cities_ca_5e262200c5b673621f7a72b9

Fort McMurray most affordable housing market in Alberta.

CTV News, November 22, 2018

Source: <https://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/fort-mcmurray-most-affordable-housing-market-in-alta-report-1.4188283>

Global News, August 28, 2018

Source: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4412102/alberta-housing-market-most-least-affordable-zocasa/>

WHY WE PLAN

A Municipal Development Plan is adopted to fulfill the requirements of section 632 of the Municipal Government Act for the Province of Alberta.

The Plan is prepared to develop a long-term vision with a focus on sustainable economic and social growth of the Region, while preserving the environment, respecting local Indigenous heritage and promoting safe and orderly development in the Region.

PURPOSE

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) sets a vision for growth and development of the Municipality. It identifies strategic moves and provides an implementation framework for a Municipality to achieve its vision within a specific timeframe. The MDP serves as a guiding policy document for future decisions regarding the use of publicly owned and privately owned land, and the infrastructure and services that are needed to support the intended uses.

By prioritizing sustainable development, the MDP ensures that the Municipality's growth aligns with the needs of its residents and the broader community.

Specifically, the MDP:

- Identifies a new vision for the Municipality to guide the future growth and development of Wood Buffalo through to 2044.
- Identifies goals for the Municipality.
- Outlines a community and people-focused approach to growth.
- Assists in the coordination of municipal decisions about land use, transportation, infrastructure, recreation, the arts, and community services.
- Proposes new policies, programs, and investments for the Municipality to investigate to provide a better quality of life and economic opportunity for all.
- Affirms the Municipality's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and relationship-building with the Indigenous communities throughout Wood Buffalo.
- Helps residents and landowners understand how they can expect the Municipality to prioritize growth and investment throughout Wood Buffalo now and in the future.

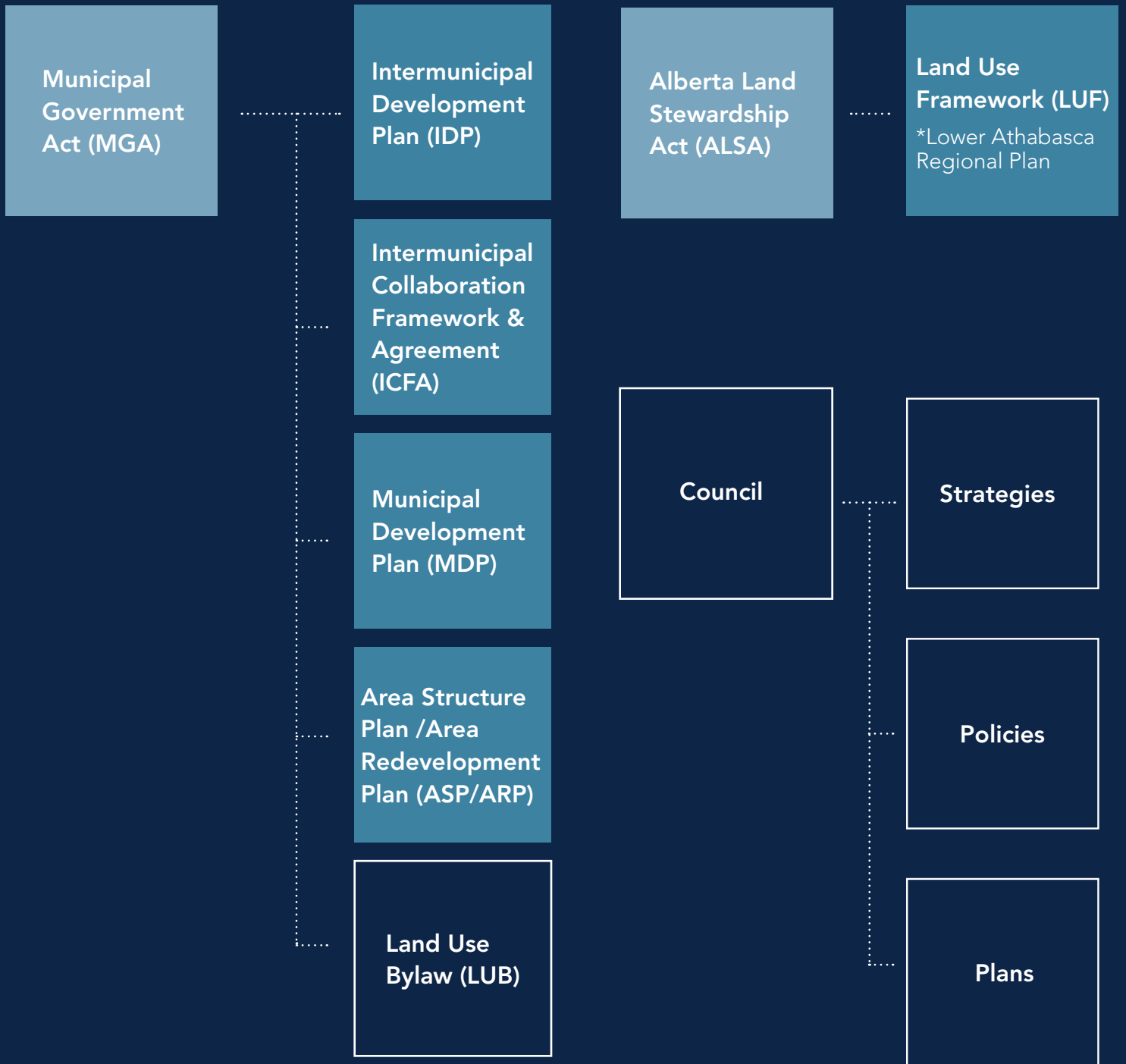
PLANNING POLICY HIERARCHY

The MDP sits in a hierarchy of provincial and local planning regulations and is required by section 632 of the Province's Municipal Government Act. The MDP is the broadest plan specific to Wood Buffalo and applies to the entire Region. The MDP provides policy direction, while other plans such as Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans are subordinate to the MDP and must be consistent with its policies and directions. The level of detail and specificity in policies increases with each step downwards in the planning hierarchy, with the Land Use Bylaw providing the most detailed direction applicable to individual pieces of land in the Municipality.

STATUTORY PLANS

Municipal Development Plans, Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Agreements, Intermunicipal Development Plans, Area Structure Plans, and Area Redevelopment Plans are adopted by municipalities in accordance with the MGA to ensure effective long-term growth strategies for a municipality.

PLANNING POLICY AUTHORITY



DOCUMENT TYPE

- Statutory
- Legislation
- Non-Statutory

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) provides the legislative framework under which all municipalities must operate. The MGA states that the purpose of a municipality is to:

- Provide good government;
- Foster the well-being of the environment;
- Provide services, facilities, or other things that, in the opinion of Council, are necessary or desirable for all or a part of the municipality;
- Develop and maintain safe and viable communities; and
- Work collaboratively with neighbouring municipalities to plan, deliver, and fund intermunicipal services.

Part 17 of the MGA regulates planning and development, empowering municipalities to prepare plans:

- To achieve orderly, economical, and beneficial development, use of land and patterns of human settlement.
- To maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment within which patterns of human settlement are situated in Alberta.

Section 617 of the MGA requires all municipalities to adopt and maintain an MDP. This MDP must be consistent with all Intermunicipal Development Plans established between the municipality and the municipalities adjacent to it, without infringing on the rights of individuals for any public interest except to the extent that is necessary for the overall greater public interest.

ALBERTA LAND STEWARDSHIP ACT AND LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA) guides the Alberta Land-Use Framework (LUF). The LUF establishes an approach to regional planning that manages Alberta's land and natural resources through a watershed management approach. The LUF was released in December 2008 and sets out seven land-use regions based around Alberta's major watersheds, and the Lower Athabasca Region regulates Wood Buffalo.

LOWER ATHABASCA REGIONAL PLAN

The Lower Athabasca Regional Plan (LARP) was developed under the Province of Alberta's Land Use Framework, which in turn was given legal force through the Alberta Land Stewardship Act (ALSA). This framework sets out an approach to managing the province's land and natural resources to achieve Alberta's long-term economic, environmental and social goals.

Under this framework the Lower Athabasca Region was identified, and the LARP prepared. The LARP outlines growth and environmental policies that the Municipality's MDP and all other subordinate documents must align with. The LARP:

- Establishes a long-term vision for the Region.
- Aligns provincial economic, environmental, and social policies at a regional level.
- Seeks to balance economic development opportunities with social and environmental considerations.
- Identifies economic, environmental, and social outcomes and objectives for the Region.
- Describes the strategies, actions, approaches, and tools required to achieve the desired outcomes and objectives.

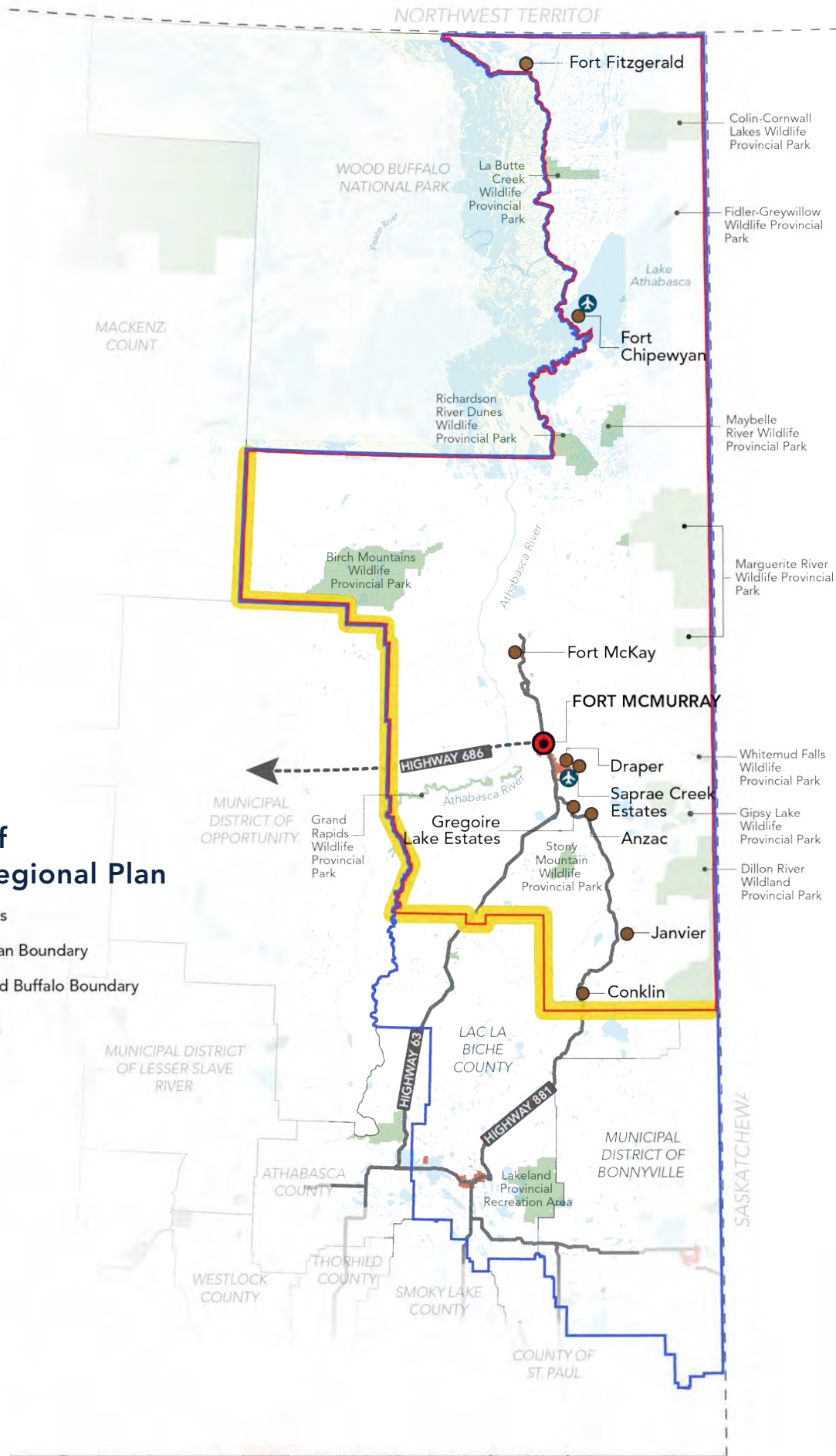
- Establishes monitoring, evaluation, and reporting commitments.
- Provides guidance to decision-makers regarding land-use management throughout the Region.

INTERMUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND INTERMUNICIPAL COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS














Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDP) provide coordinating policies to guide land use and growth management between partnering municipalities that share a border. The requirements for these plans are outlined in Part 17 of the MGA, and may include how any two municipalities will work together, develop joint lands, and/or co-ordinate parks, open space, recreation, transportation, water, utilities, and other municipal services across boundaries. IDPs must be approved by the Councils in both partnering municipalities. The Municipality currently does not have any approved IDPs.

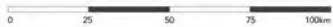
An alternative to an IDP is an Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Agreement (ICFA), the requirements for which are outlined in Part 17.2 of the MGA. Like an IDP, these frameworks include how adjacent municipalities will work and communicate together on matters of interest and importance. ICFAs are non-statutory agreements. The Municipality has ICFAs in place with all adjacent municipalities:

- Municipal District of Opportunity #17 (Bylaw 18/024)
- Mackenzie County (Bylaw 20/003)
- Lac La Biche County (March 24, 2020 Council Resolution)
- Improvement District 349 (February 11, 2020 Council Resolution)



**Map 1:
RMWB in context of
Lower Athabasca Regional Plan**

-  Provincial & Territorial Borders
-  Lower Athabasca Regional Plan Boundary
-  Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Boundary
-  Inter-municipal Collaboration Framework Agreement Areas
-  Highways
-  Highway 686 Future Expansion
-  Airport
-  Urban Service Area
-  Rural Communities
-  Urban Areas
-  Waterbodies
-  National Park
-  Wildlife Provincial Park



LAND USE BYLAW

All municipalities in Alberta are required to prepare a Land Use Bylaw (LUB) under section 640 of the MGA. LUB regulates the use and development of land and buildings by dividing municipalities into different land uses or “zones” with regulations directing how the site may be used.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

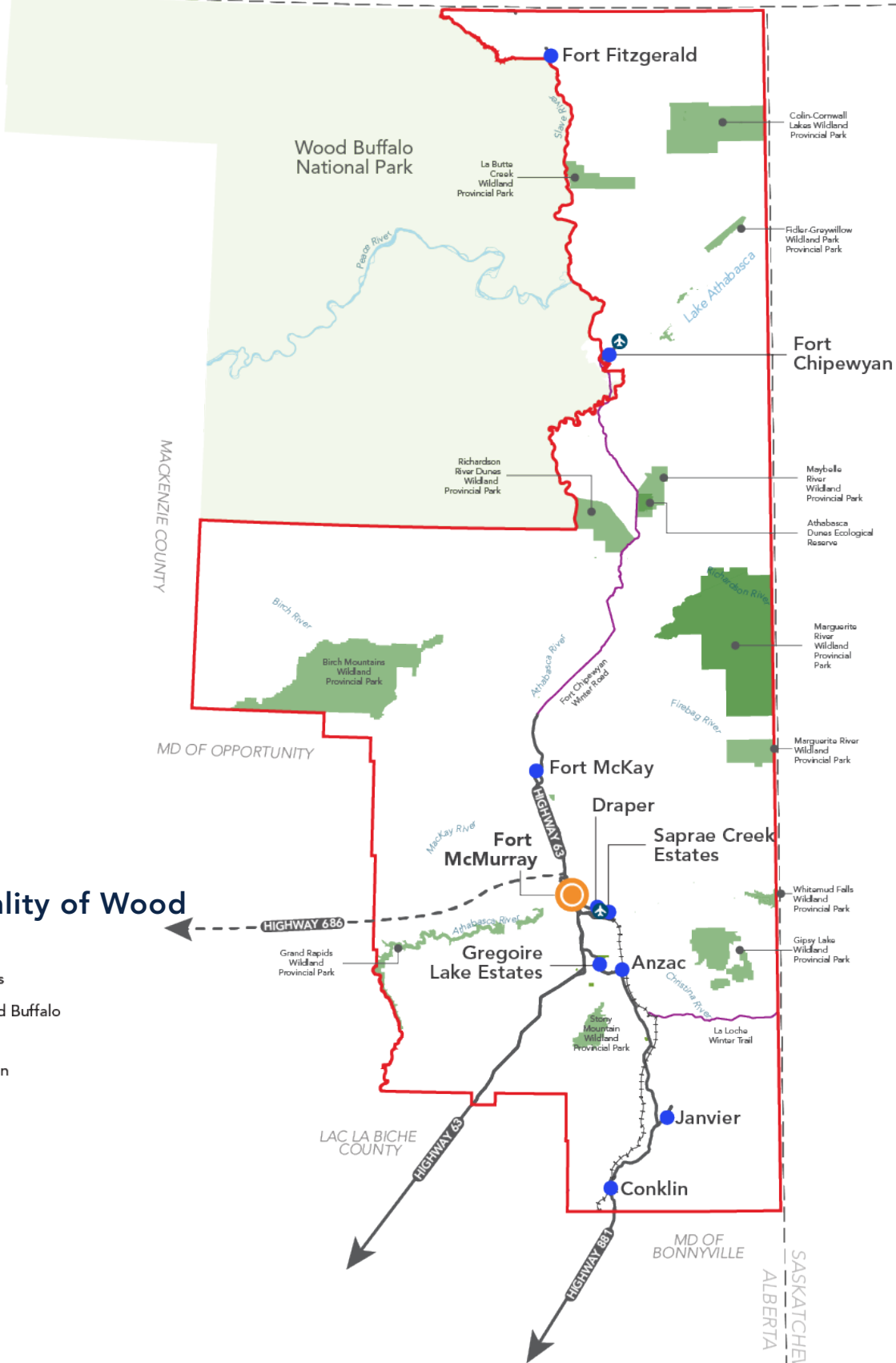
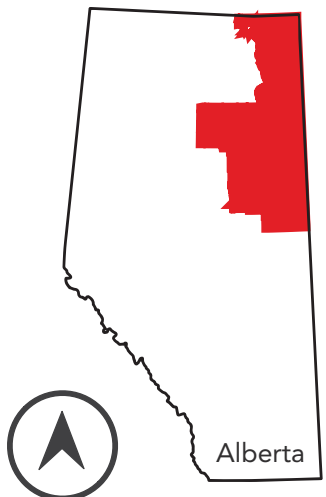
Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) are statutory plans. Municipalities are required to adopt an MDP under section 632 of the MGA. The MGA requires that MDPs address:

- The future land use within the municipality.
- The manner of and the proposals for future development in the municipality.
- The coordination of land use, future growth patterns, and other infrastructure with adjacent municipalities if there is no intermunicipal development plan with respect to those matters in those municipalities.
- The provision of the required transportation systems either generally or specifically within the municipality.
- The provision of municipal services and facilities either generally or specifically.

The MGA also addresses a series of other concerns that MDPs can address, including matters related to the environment, economic development, municipal programs, finances, and other matters.

OTHER STATUTORY PLANS

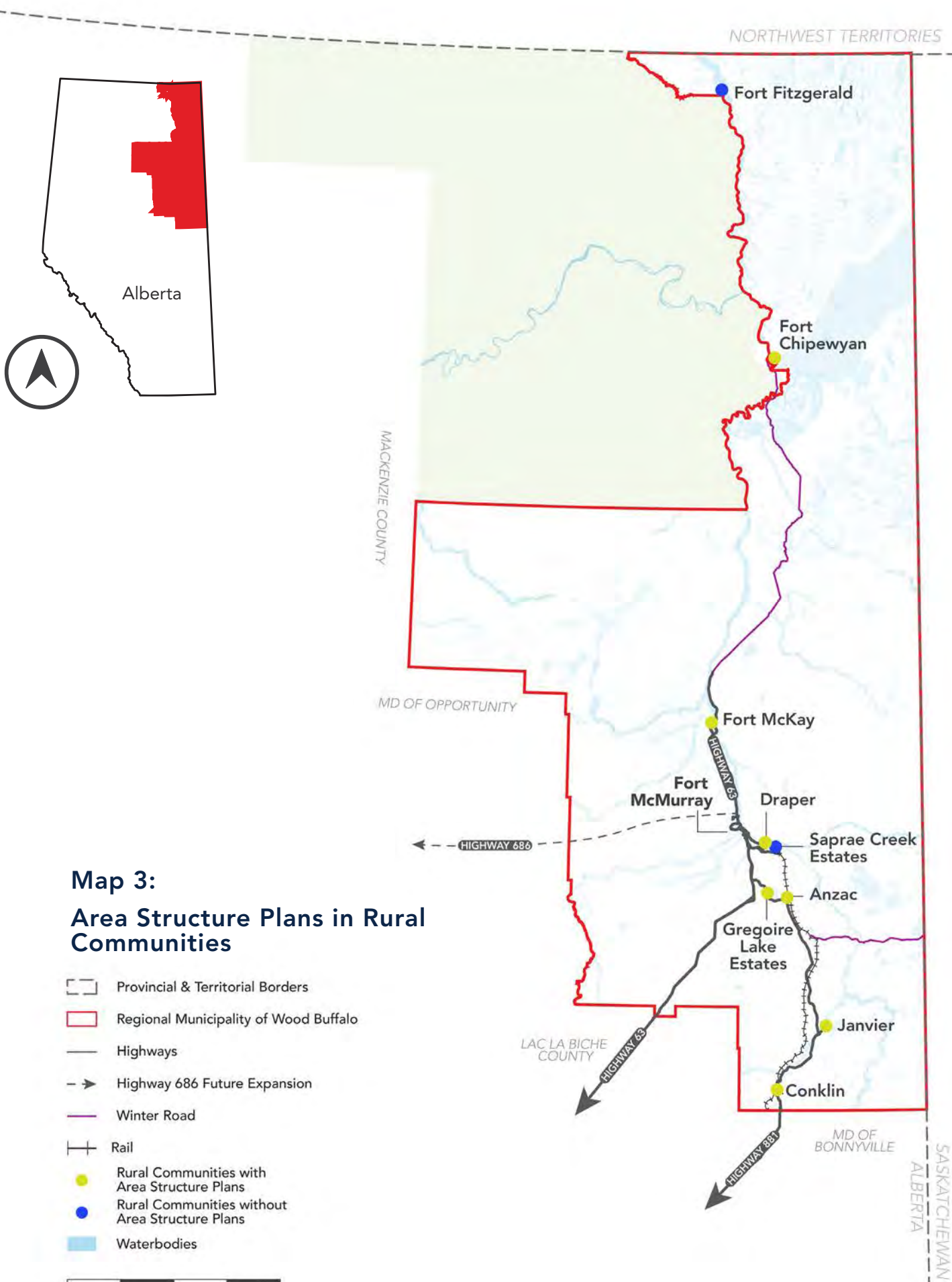
Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs) are statutory plans that are subordinate to the MDP, and provide a land use strategy for developing a specific area of land in the Municipality. These local plans contain maps, goals, and policies that set out general locations for major land uses, major roadways, utility servicing, recreation areas, and development phases, as well as providing more specific and locally relevant context than the MDP does.

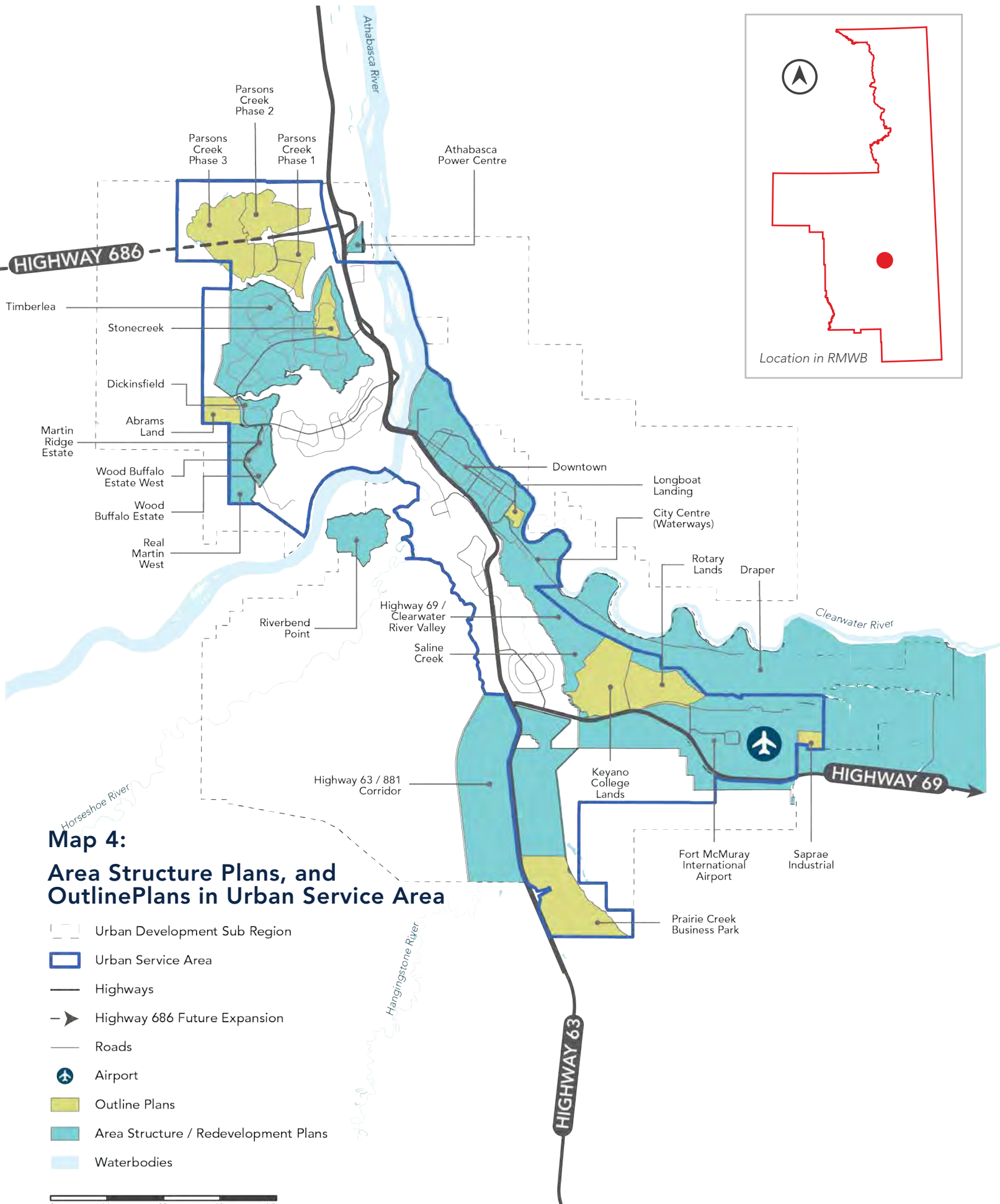


Map 2:
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

- Provincial & Territorial Borders
- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
- Highways
- Highway 686 Future Expansion
- Winter Road
- Rail
- Airport
- First Nation Reserves
- Urban Service Area
- Rural Communities
- Waterbodies
- National Park
- Wildlife Provincial Park







WHY A NEW PLAN?

The existing Municipal Development Plan (MDP), approved in 2011, was based on a growth model that no longer applies. Given the changes in Wood Buffalo's social, cultural, and economic conditions, it is imperative for the Municipality to adopt a new MDP. This updated plan will facilitate sustainable growth and embrace a place-based approach for our community while also reinforcing Truth and Reconciliation efforts.

PLAN PROCESS

The MDP was developed through a process that balanced the input of the public, Indigenous Partners, Council, and municipal staff who would be implementing the plan. A three-phase approach was taken for plan development:

- Phase 1: Background Research and Analysis
- Phase 2: Engagement and Draft MDP
- Phase 3: Finalize MDP

Each phase included research and content creation, internal staff review of working MDP content, a public engagement campaign and engagement with Indigenous Partners to confirm and revise developed plan content, and Council workshops to further refine the plan.

Phase 1: Background Research and Analysis

Phase 1 began in 2019 with the Municipality undertaking a detailed analysis of the existing MDP. The focus of this review was to determine if the MDP required an update or complete rewrite, and to complete a best practices review from other MDP-type documents from across the country to ensure any future document incorporated contemporary planning approaches while remaining a made in Wood Buffalo document. The findings of this internal review identified the need for a comprehensive rewrite of the previous MDP.

In 2020 the developed background research and analysis were put into action with a preliminary "visioning" engagement and Council workshop. The findings from this exercise helped inform the development of the MDP's goals and BIG MOVES that later evolved into the Action Items contained within this MDP.

Phase 1 ran from May 2020 to November 2020. The "visioning" engagements within Phase 1 were held between September to November, 2020, and over 700 people participated.

Phase 2: Engagement and Draft MDP

Phase 2's "direction" engagement presented draft high-level policy shifts ("BIG MOVES"), guiding principles, and a vision statement, identifying the key new directions that the MDP proposed to take. Council workshops, meetings with Indigenous Partners, and stakeholder workshops also helped provide further insight into the appropriateness of the proposed policy shifts, guiding principles, and vision.

The findings of this exercise helped inform development of the first complete draft of the MDP, allowing Administration at the Municipality their first opportunity to fully review and provide input on how the MDP would be operationalized over the coming years.

Phase 2 ran from November 2020 to March 2022. The engagements within Phase 2 were held between January to March, 2021, and over 1,200 people participated.

Phase 3: Finalize MDP

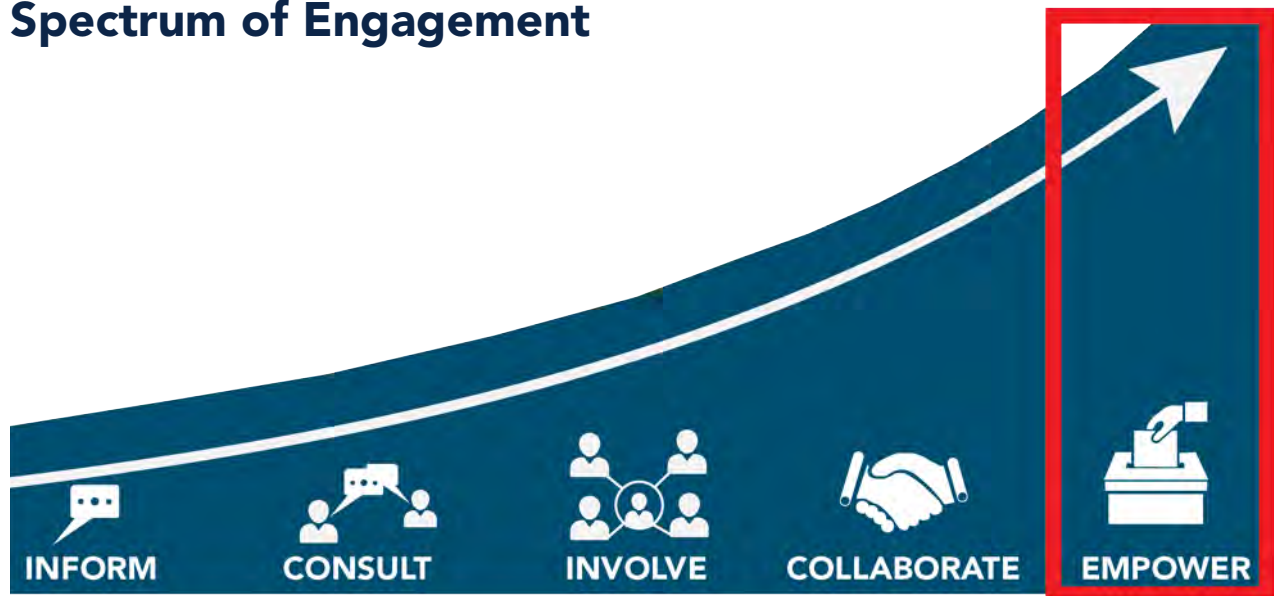
Phase 3's "finalize" engagement unveiled the full draft MDP publicly for the first time. During this engagement major changes to the plan direction were highlighted, while the public, stakeholders, Indigenous Partners, and Council were provided the opportunity to review the MDP document in detail.

Throughout this phase substantial feedback was collated into a comprehensive update to the draft plan, ensuring that the final product reflected the interests and insights of all those involved in plan production to the greatest extent possible.

Phase 3 ran from January 2022 to August 2023. The engagements within Phase 3 were held between January to June, 2022, and over 1,400 individuals participated.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Spectrum of Engagement



The spectrum of engagement represents a continuum of participation methods, based on five levels of involvement in the decision-making processes by the public, which includes residents, stakeholders, and Indigenous Partners. Each of the five levels represents an increasing degree of involvement and influence:

- **Inform:** the goal is to provide the public with accurate information to facilitate understanding
- **Consult:** involves seeking public feedback on proposals and decisions.
- **Involve:** aims to work directly with the public to ensure their concerns are consistently understood and considered.
- **Collaborate:** entails partnering with the public in each aspect of the decision-making process, including developing alternatives and identifying preferred solutions.
- **Empower:** the public is given the decision-making power and control the outcome.

The spectrum of engagement helps to determine the appropriate level of public participation the Municipality should employ through out a project, such as the MDP. Choosing the right level of engagement helps to build trust, foster transparency, and ensure that the outcomes are inclusive and representative of the community's needs and desires.

The MDP engagements were conducted at the highest level of Spectrum of Engagement with the key stakeholders, the Indigenous Partners, the rural communities, the Council Appointed Committees, the Mayor and the Councilors, and the residents. The engagement gave an opportunity and empowered all participants to guide us and decide to finalize their vision, goals, and policies for the Region that they call home. The policies resulted through engagement will also help empower the municipal departments to implement the short, medium, and long-term action items to achieve the goals of the MDP.



MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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WHAT WE HEARD FROM WOOD BUFFALO

ENGAGEMENT PHASE 1 - VISIONING

OVER 700 PEOPLE REACHED

Public, Stakeholder, and Indigenous engagement opportunities were held from September 28, 2020 to November 1, 2020, and reached over 700 people.



2 Open Houses



Online Survey



Interactive Mapping



Online Discussion Forum



Idea Sharing Platform



Workshops, In-Person and Virtual Meetings

The MDP would not be possible without the significant input shared by residents from throughout Wood Buffalo. Three phases of engagement provided significant insight into the values, priorities, and ambitions of the community, resulting in a truly Made-for-Wood Buffalo MDP.

21 THEMES GATHERED FROM FEEDBACK

Substantial feedback was gathered during Phase 1. The Project Team then analyzed the data and identified 21 overall main themes.

Arts, Culture, Entertainment	Attract People	Collaboration and Recognition
Develop Responsibly	Economic Opportunity	Education
Family	High Quality of Life	Image
Nature	Place-Based	Oil and Gas, and Related Industries
Recreation	Renewable and Green Industries	Retail
Thrive	Tourism	Community Spirit
Essential Services	Innovation & Expertise	Truth and Reconciliation


THEMES GROUPED INTO 5 CATEGORIES

These themes were grouped into 5 categories as potential foundations for the draft MDP goals.




ENGAGEMENT PHASE 2 - BIG IDEAS


Public Engagement




925+



2 VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSES



ONLINE SURVEY




IDEA SHARING PLATFORM





ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM

Stakeholder and Indigenous Engagement



300+

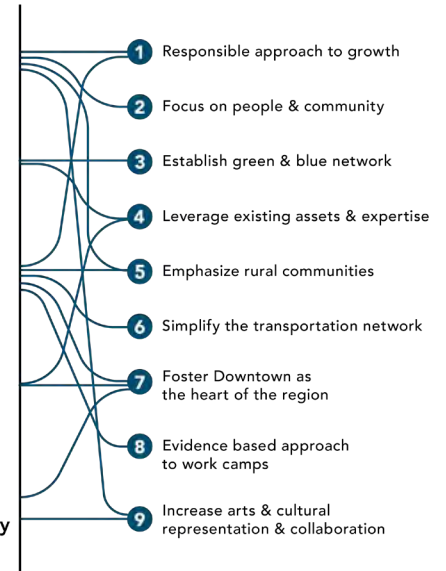



42
IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Goals



Overarching Big Moves



OVER 1,200 PEOPLE REACHED

Public, Stakeholder, and Indigenous engagement was held from January 28, 2021 to March 1, 2021, reaching over 1,200 people. The focus of engagement was gaining feedback on draft MDP components and possible major policy shifts (“BIG MOVES”), seeking to refine the overall direction of the MDP.

6 MAJOR CHANGES WERE IDENTIFIED

Six major changes were identified, in addition to minor shifts, identified areas for strengthening or improving policy, and other tweaks to proposed directions. These six major changes represented the most significant needs for the MDP project to address while preparing the final draft.



Including Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Partners as a 6th MDP Goal



Ensuring the goals are not repetitious, and have clear direction



Revisiting the Vision to better reflect its intention



Emphasizing the Blue and Green Networks in the MDP as a priority



Committing to improved communication and collaboration with rural and Indigenous Partners



Aligning with existing economic development initiatives, including the Place Brand Strategy

WHAT WE HEARD FROM WOOD BUFFALO

ENGAGEMENT PHASE 3 - COMPLETE DRAFT

OVER 1,400 PARTICIPANTS

Phase 3 prioritized a highly accessible engagement strategy to provide all residents the opportunity to review and comment on the draft MDP. More than 1,400 participants took part in the engagement from January 31, 2022 to June 9, 2022.

Phase 3 Goal

The project team analyzed public feedback to determine desired modifications to be made to the draft MDP, with common themes including:



- Truth & Reconciliation
- A Diversified Economy
- Winter City Design and Tourism
- Regional Linkages
- Equity, *Inclusion*, and Diversity
- Support for Research and Institutional Centres



Participant List

Understanding perspectives from the entire Region was crucial in creating a comprehensive MDP. Individuals across a broad range of sectors had the opportunity to provide feedback, including:

- Residents
- Mayor and Councillors
- Internal Stakeholders
- External Stakeholders
- Indigenous Partners and *Rural Communities*
- Council Appointed Committees

PHASE 3 BY THE NUMBERS



96%

OF RESPONDENTS AGREE WITH THE PLAN



171,154

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS MADE

89%

RESPONDENTS HAD SEEN THE DRAFT MDP PREVIOUSLY

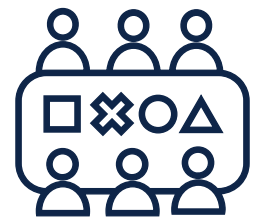


97%

OF RESPONDENTS LIVE IN WOOD BUFFALO

28

ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP SESSIONS WERE PROVIDED AS PART OF PHASE 3



91%

OF RESPONDENTS REVIEWED THE DRAFT MDP PRIOR TO ENGAGEMENT

WOOD BUFFALO'S VISION

The vision and goals are foundational ideas that guide the MDP. The vision articulates the ideal Wood Buffalo as determined by the residents and is an aspirational statement that helps the Municipality to make informed decisions. Goals provide further direction to help achieve the vision.

The MDP is divided into chapters, one for each goal, with the vision statement woven throughout the entire document. Together, these vision and goals inform the MDP's policies, creating a guiding framework for Wood Buffalo.

VISION

WOOD BUFFALO is a flourishing Region and community of choice with a strong sense of identity, history, and optimism, to call home, today and tomorrow.

The Wood Buffalo of tomorrow will be built on its greatest strengths today.

Wood Buffalo is a place like no other, offering tenacious community spirit, incredible economic opportunities, limitless natural wonder, cultural diversity rarely found anywhere else in the world, and remarkable Indigenous culture and history.

By focusing and building on what already makes Wood Buffalo great, residents will pursue opportunity, together, for all those who call Wood Buffalo home.

GOALS

The six MDP goals are central ideas about who and what Wood Buffalo values most. Each goal provides guidance for strategic direction and action items that collectively achieve the MDP's vision.

The goals were developed through extensive engagement with the public, stakeholders, and Indigenous Partners, and reflect the core elements of what Wood Buffalo aspires to be. Importantly, many of the goals and their strategic directions have overlapping values and outcomes. This reflects the degree to which all goals are related to one another. In achieving objectives in one goal, all goals benefit, and the Municipality moves closer to realizing its overarching vision.

Creating an even better Region for tomorrow is Wood Buffalo's story to tell, and this is only the beginning. To achieve this vision the Municipality has identified six goals:

- 1 Home and Belonging** 
- 2 Economic Growth and Innovation** 
- 3 Truth and Reconciliation** 
- 4 Celebrating Community and Culture** 
- 5 Connecting to Nature** 
- 6 Responsible Development** 





Image Source: FMWB Site



POLICY

HOW TO READ THE POLICIES

This sample page is a helpful guide to understanding the key elements of the MDP policies.

Strategic Directions Sub-Sections
Policies are grouped under each Strategic Direction by theme.

. **Strategic Directions**
Identifies the Strategic Direction that the following policies support.

. **Strategic Direction Introduction**
Provides the Strategic Direction's intent and connects to the overarching goals.

. **Policies**
Identify individual actions that can be taken to achieve the Strategic Direction and overarching Goal.

1.1 ENHANCING WOOD BUFFALO'S LIVABILITY

Livability results from many facets of a community coming together to create a home.

A livable Wood Buffalo is accessible, welcoming, and encouraging, providing access to the things people need and want to support a high quality of life.

1.1.1 Foster Opportunities for Social Interaction

Communities are social as much as physical environments. In order to build a genuine sense of belonging, communities must be socially sustainable with environments that facilitate friendly interactions throughout the community. These interactions can help promote well-being, increase personal security, and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. Establishing places where people can congregate will provide more opportunities for social interaction increasing social sustainability.

Opportunities for social interaction can occur in many different forms throughout Wood Buffalo across all four seasons. Parks, plazas, mixed use developments, community gardens, halls, events, festivals, and more provide these opportunities every day. The design and siting of housing and commercial spaces can provide opportunities for social interaction year-round. By focusing on enhancing these opportunities where they already exist, and creating new opportunities for social interaction, Wood Buffalo can become an even more welcoming and livable place than it already is. To meet the needs of the community, the Municipality will support the development of gathering spaces in appropriate and accessible locations.

- a) The Municipality will promote social well-being by supporting agencies and organizations that increase social infrastructure like recreation, housing, food, etc. This social infrastructure includes access to education services, community support services, healthcare, public spaces, information, and public facilities for all community members.
- b) The Municipality will integrate safe, high-quality, human-scaled, multi-use public spaces, such as parks, plazas, and squares, as part of development or redevelopment projects. The mechanism for requiring this in private and public development projects will be determined through future study. 🏡

44 | Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Action Items
This icon identifies the key initiatives the Municipality must undertake to realize the MDP's vision and goals.

Supporting Information

Provides additional facts, definitions, or figures to help contextualize the MDP content.

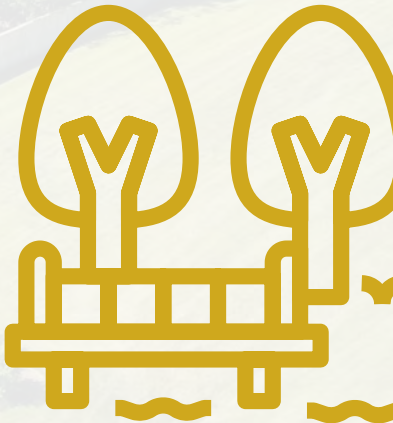
Supporting Information does not form a part of the MDP's policy.

Section Goal

Identifies the over-arching goal for this specific section of the MDP.

| Home & Belonging

- c) The Municipality will strategically plan and utilize community resources (such as libraries, parks, meeting places, community policing, recreation services etc.) to ensure that all neighbourhoods have convenient access.
- d) The Municipality will encourage and promote the development of distinctive and attractive Community and Neighbourhood Cores with safe, accessible public spaces that align them with the Municipality's Design Guidelines and supportive funding programs.
- e) The Municipality will encourage and promote pilot programs Downtown that allow cafés, restaurants, and stores to spill out into the public realm. These pilot programs should activate streets and sidewalks in a more lively, vibrant manner.
- f) Where pilot programs undertaken in 1.1.1.e are successful, the Municipality will review its existing statutory plans, policies, and bylaws to ensure that these initiatives are easily implementable throughout Wood Buffalo.



WHAT IS LIVABILITY?

Livability describes the conditions of a high quality of life for all inhabitants of a place, including their physical and mental wellbeing.

7 in 10

Wood Buffalo residents feel a sense of belonging in the region.

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey

>100

Wood Buffalo is home to more than 100 social profit agencies and organizations.



HOME AND BELONGING



Wood Buffalo strives to be a place for all, a place where people help and support one another, with compassion at the heart of every community. However, this sense of place, safety, and belonging can only be achieved when building communities that meet the needs of all.

HOME AND BELONGING

Wood Buffalo strives to be a place for all, a place where people help and support one another, with compassion at the heart of every community. This goal identifies opportunities for Wood Buffalo to reinforce its unique sense of place, improve community safety, and foster belonging by meeting the needs of all.



HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1.1

ENHANCING WOOD BUFFALO'S LIVABILITY

- Foster Opportunities for Social Interaction
- Promote a Variety of Mobility Choices
- Embracing All Four Seasons
- Diverse and Attainable Housing Choices

1.2

CREATING A SAFE AND SECURE REGION

- Plan for an Inclusive Community
- Promote Community Safety
- Promote Safe Mobility
- Plan for an Accessible Community
- Maintain High Standards in Emergency Response and Emergency Preparedness

1.3

CREATING CARING COMMUNITIES THAT SUPPORT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Promote Access to Local Food
- Enhance Assistance and Support to People in Need
- Promote Equitable Access to Health Care, Education, & Social Services
- Promote Health Equity Throughout the Region

1.1

ENHANCING WOOD BUFFALO'S LIVABILITY



Livability results from many facets of a community coming together to create a home.


A livable Wood Buffalo is accessible, welcoming, and encouraging, providing access to the things people need and a high quality of life.

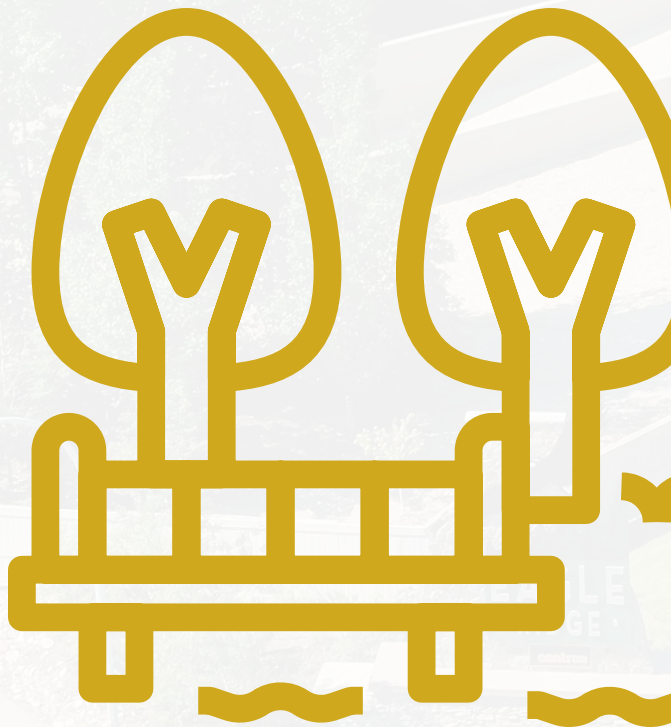
1.1.1 Foster Opportunities for Social Interaction

Communities are social as much as physical environments. In order to build a genuine sense of belonging, communities must be socially sustainable with environments that facilitate friendly interactions throughout the community. These interactions can help promote well-being, increase personal security, and promote Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Establishing places where people can congregate will provide more opportunities for social interaction, increasing social sustainability.

Opportunities for social interaction can occur in many different forms and places throughout Wood Buffalo across all four seasons. Parks, plazas, mixed use developments, community gardens, halls, events, festivals, and more provide these opportunities every day. The design and siting of housing and commercial public spaces can provide opportunities for social interaction year-round. By focusing on enhancing social interaction opportunities where they already exist, and creating new opportunities, Wood Buffalo can become an even more welcoming and livable place. To meet the needs of the community, the Municipality will support the development of gathering spaces in appropriate and accessible locations.

- a) The Municipality will promote the social well-being initiatives of agencies and organizations that increase social infrastructure like recreation, housing, food security, etc. Social infrastructure can include access to education services, community support services, healthcare, public spaces, information, and public facilities for all community members.
- b) The Municipality will integrate safe, high-quality, human-scaled, multi-use public spaces, such as parks, plazas, and squares, as part of development or redevelopment projects. The mechanism for requiring this in private and public development projects will be determined through future study. 
- c) The Municipality will plan for and utilize community resources (such as libraries, parks, meeting places, community policing, recreation services etc.) to ensure that all neighbourhoods have convenient access.
- d) The Municipality will encourage and promote the development of distinctive and attractive Community and Neighbourhood Cores with safe, accessible public spaces that align them with the Municipality's Design Guidelines and supportive funding programs. 

- e) The Municipality will encourage and promote pilot programs in Downtown that allow cafés, restaurants, and stores to spill out into the public realm. These pilot programs should activate streets and sidewalks in a more lively, vibrant manner. 
- f) Where pilot programs undertaken in 1.1.1.e are successful, the Municipality will review its existing statutory plans, policies, and bylaws to ensure that these initiatives are easily implementable throughout Wood Buffalo.



WHAT IS LIVABILITY?

Livability describes the conditions of a high quality of life for all inhabitants of a place, including their physical and mental wellbeing.

Source: Sustainable Cities Institute

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7 in 10

Wood Buffalo residents feel a sense of belonging in the Region.

Source: General Social Survey, Statistics Canada, 2020

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> 100

Wood Buffalo is home to more than 100 social profit agencies and organizations.

1.1.2 Promote a Variety of Mobility Choices

An integrated and well-connected street, sidewalk, and trail network helps promote active modes of transportation year-round. Modes of active transportation already offered at different times of year in the Municipality include walking, biking, and even cross-country skiing. A connected network also helps enhance the viability of transit by improving local access to buses while maximizing the return on municipal investment in transit. This, in turn, can serve to improve community health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions while providing residents with additional mobility choices. Providing residents with mobility choices through thoughtful complete street design can reduce the dependence on single occupant vehicles and relieve congestion for commuters while improving the quality of life for active transportation users.

- a) The Municipality will develop new Design Guidelines that support mobility and safety in all seasons. 🐻
- b) To maximize pedestrian and cycling connectivity, the Municipality should require active transportation infrastructure to be incorporated in new public and private sector developments to the greatest extent possible. Emphasis should be placed on frequently used pedestrian and cycling connections and routes.
- c) The Municipality will prioritize active transportation projects that connect neighbourhoods to the Downtown. All residents should have several options for accessing Wood Buffalo's hub for employment, shopping, services, education, arts, culture, and recreation. 🐻
- d) Where warranted, the Municipality will provide a base level of transit service to facilitate convenient transit access in areas with sufficient population and employment densities. Focusing service in denser areas will improve transit performance and its return on investment, as defined by the Municipality's Transit Master

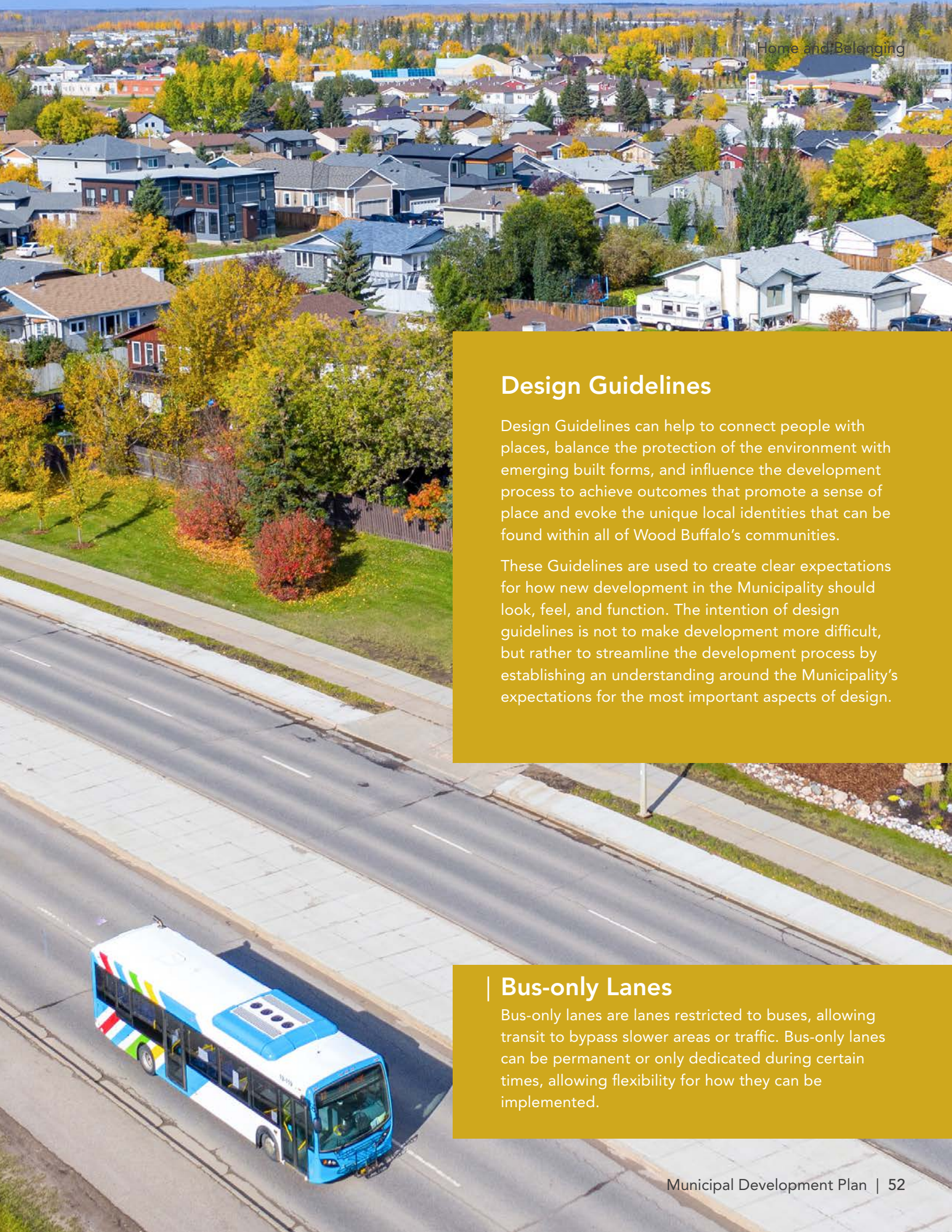
Plan, and help inform improvements such as developing rapid-transit routes or bus-only lanes.

- e) The Municipality should improve comfort and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users by providing streetscape amenities (e.g. sidewalks, trees and other plantings, furniture, bike facilities, boulevards, etc.).
- f) In alignment with and building on the Transit Master Plan, the Municipality will explore more sustainable and innovative solutions for transportation to provide more efficient service from Downtown to the Municipality's Rural Communities throughout the year.
- g) The Municipality will continue to work with industry, Alberta Transportation, and potential service providers to explore effective regional transportation networks that serve residents of the Region and the workforce.
- h) The Municipality will work with Alberta Transportation to investigate opportunities for adding active transportation infrastructure along Highway 63 for safer use of the highway by active modes.
- i) The Municipality will support new mobility initiatives (such as scooter shares and bike shares), in establishing a presence throughout Wood Buffalo to increase connectivity and accessibility for all residents.



Rapid Transit Routes

Rapid Transit Routes provide higher-speed passenger transportation than more traditional transit options by prioritizing stops, introducing transit-priority signals, or partially separating transit from general vehicle traffic.



Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines can help to connect people with places, balance the protection of the environment with emerging built forms, and influence the development process to achieve outcomes that promote a sense of place and evoke the unique local identities that can be found within all of Wood Buffalo's communities.


These Guidelines are used to create clear expectations for how new development in the Municipality should look, feel, and function. The intention of design guidelines is not to make development more difficult, but rather to streamline the development process by establishing an understanding around the Municipality's expectations for the most important aspects of design.

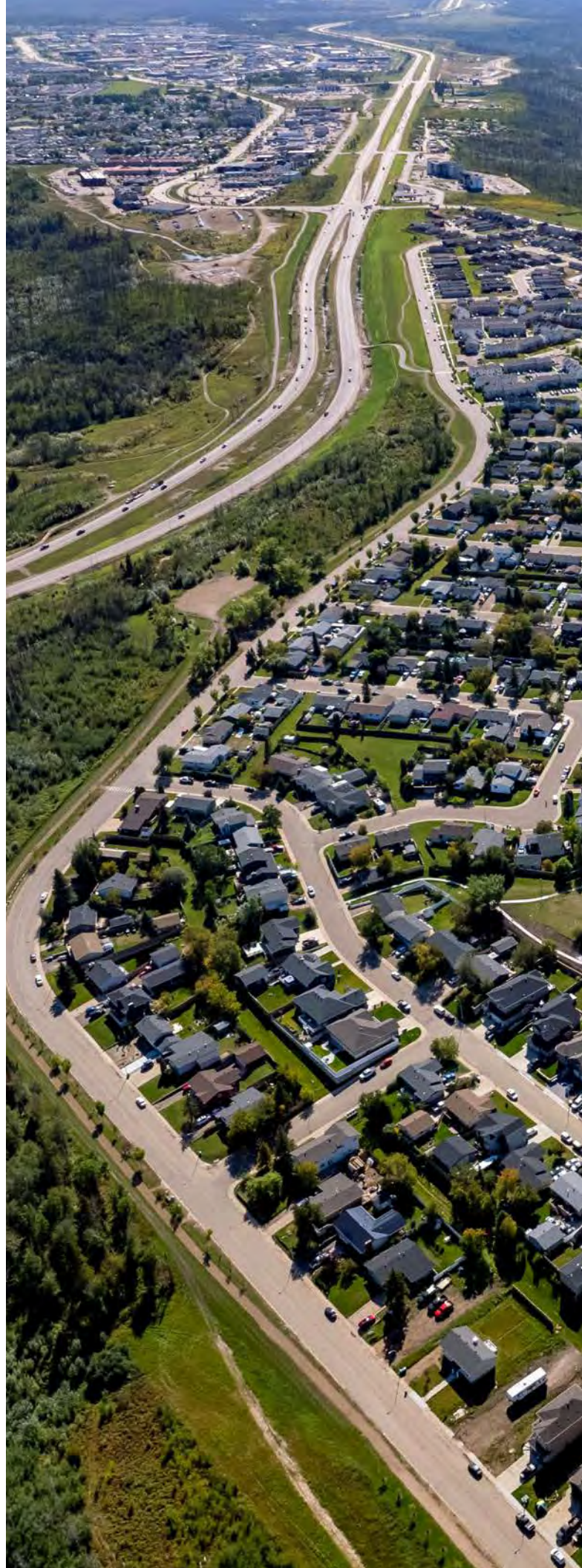
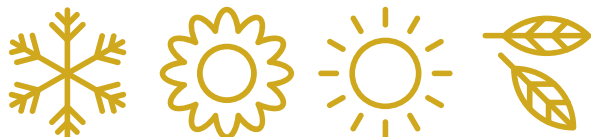
| Bus-only Lanes

Bus-only lanes are lanes restricted to buses, allowing transit to bypass slower areas or traffic. Bus-only lanes can be permanent or only dedicated during certain times, allowing flexibility for how they can be implemented.

1.1.3 Embracing All Four Seasons

Wood Buffalo experiences four seasons with extreme weather differences between the summer and winter months. Fully embracing each season can expand tourism and increase outdoor play and activity, but requires consideration of outdoor comfort during long summer days and long winter months. By responding intentionally to the unique environmental conditions, the Municipality can further enhance itself as a true winter city. Building for the natural environment means creating opportunities for year-round celebration and fostering a unique community spirit.

- a) Within the Municipality's Urban Design Guidelines, a Four Seasons Strategy should be developed that acknowledges not just that Wood Buffalo is a winter region, but that it has potential year-round. 
- b) The Municipality will encourage and support the development of year-round recreation opportunities that actively take advantage of the long summer days and long winter months. Opportunities include events that allow residents and visitors to maintain active, healthy, lifestyles no matter the season.
- c) Through local economic development organizations, the Municipality should investigate opportunities to build partnerships with local business groups and external partners to bring events and activities that celebrate seasonal changes (i.e. solstice parties, winter activities along the rivers, etc.). year-round to Wood Buffalo These events will reinforce Wood Buffalo's image locally and outside of the Region as a place that embraces all of its seasons.



Four Seasons Strategy

Many communities across Alberta and Canada have adopted “Winter City” strategies and approaches to providing more activities, events, and festivals during the long winter months Canada experiences. While this approach helps create excitement and activate places at a time of year when people are less likely to be outdoors, a more comprehensive strategy could help make Wood Buffalo an even better place to live year-round.

A Four Seasons Strategy means embracing all seasons in Wood Buffalo, thinking intentionally about how the Municipality can create opportunities for the celebration of this amazing place year-round through thoughtful programming such as sports tourism, intentional planning for all weather conditions, and influencing built form and building designs.

This strategy will also still recognize winter city design and the winter cities concept, recommending the development of separate winter city design guidelines to support the strategy. The creation of a Four Seasons Strategy is one of the MDP’s Action Items, and its successful implementation will directly improve the livability of Wood Buffalo for all residents. Ultimately, this strategy will enable residents to enjoy the outdoors no matter the month.



1.1.4 Diverse and Attainable Housing Choices

Wood Buffalo's diverse population requires equally diverse housing choices. A wide range of housing types, densities, sizes and tenures for different incomes, ages, abilities, and demographic groups should be available throughout the Region.

Providing a wider range of housing choice in both new and existing communities requires creativity and insight into the housing needs of different populations within Wood Buffalo. This will help create housing stability in the Region that makes investing longer-term in the community more enticing. Longer-term community investment will make all of Wood Buffalo more vibrant, lively, and attractive for all.

a) The Municipality will support innovative housing options that accommodate a variety of housing needs, incomes, and lifestyles. In particular, the Municipality will encourage housing innovations that respond to Wood Buffalo's northern climate, promote affordability, and/or increase local vibrancy and desirability.

- b) The Municipality will collaborate with social profits and other organizations in Wood Buffalo in advocating to senior levels of government for investment in affordable housing.
- c) Where possible, the Municipality will support new housing choices, experimental designs, and sustainable building practices. These projects should help advance local knowledge and inspire continued innovation in the housing market. 
- d) The Municipality will continue supporting affordable housing providers in advising and assisting groups interested in building affordable housing.

| Affordability

Housing affordability is defined in many different ways, with individual municipalities often creating their own local approach. One of the most common measures of housing affordability is the 30% shelter cost to income ratio.

Source: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation



Innovative Housing Options

There are many new and emerging innovative forms of housing that could help address affordability issues. Some options include:

- **Tiny houses** (pictured below), where reduced home sizes lead to cost savings
- **Co-housing**, where different groups of people come together to buy and live in a home together
- **Pre-fabricated secondary suites**, where second units are made more affordable due to their modular and mass-produced nature.

It is important for the Municipality to remain flexible and open to allowing emerging trends and innovations in housing so that housing affordability can be addressed through as many approaches as possible, helping to meet the unique circumstances of all Wood Buffalo residents.



Source: Toronto Star



1.2

CREATING A SAFE AND SECURE REGION

Feeling safe and secure is a fundamental part of creating a sense of belonging.

Wood Buffalo is home to people with a broad spectrum of identities, backgrounds, and experiences that contribute to the rich diversity of our Region. It is important that everyone has equal opportunities to thrive in the Region. To realize this vision, barriers (such as discrimination and inequities) that affect equity-deserving groups must be identified and addressed.

The Municipality endeavours to provide safe communities for all, and this means fostering inclusivity, promoting safety, addressing the mobility and accessibility needs of everyone, and supporting a robust and responsive Emergency Response network.

1.2.1 Plan for an Inclusive Community

Inclusion is about everyone. Race and culture are often the focus of diversity and inclusion work; however, individuals have many identities that together make Wood Buffalo a vibrant community and diverse Region. The Municipality recognizes the breadth of identities, abilities, races, cultures, 2SLGBTQI+ communities, ethno-cultural groups, and languages represented in Wood Buffalo. By endeavouring to implement inclusionary and anti-discrimination practices, the Municipality can enhance the sense of safety and security experienced by all residents.

- a) The Municipality will revise regulations, policies, and processes to emphasize anti-discrimination efforts and further establish an inclusive, welcoming, and safe Region for all.
- b) The Municipality will improve the awareness of diversity and inclusion initiatives and existing programs and services in the Municipality. This will be done by partnering with the Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (RACIDE), the Equity and Inclusion Office, social not-for-profits, and other government agencies to develop improved support systems and increase representation initiatives.
- c) The Municipality will work with community partners, Equity-Deserving Groups, and other government agencies to develop strategies for meaningful engagement to ensure diverse voices are identified, involved and engaged.
- d) The Municipality will celebrate, protect, and promote the rights of Equity-Deserving Groups by working in collaboration with community partners to hold events recognizing Alberta's protected classes.
- e) The Municipality will continue to support educational and awareness initiatives that aim to prevent all forms of discrimination as defined in the Equity Framework.

- f) The Municipality will review and revise regulations using the Equity Framework to identify and address systemic barriers, and to further establish Wood Buffalo as an equitable, inclusive, and safe Region.
- g) The Municipality will collaborate with local organizations to foster more inclusive and equitable policies and practices in workplaces throughout Wood Buffalo.
- h) The Municipality will work alongside Equity-Deserving Groups and other partners to increase the safety and well-being of residents experiencing discrimination, hate incidents, and prejudice.
- i) The Municipality will work alongside Equity-Deserving Groups to identify gaps, needs, and opportunities to improve equity, diversity and inclusivity practices in municipal projects, plans, and initiatives.
- j) The Municipality will offer community capacity development support for Black, Indigenous, and any other Equity-Deserving Groups based on a sustainable community-driven development approach to respond to challenges, creating local social improvement and economic development.

WHAT IS INCLUSIVITY?

Inclusivity is the practice or policy of identifying and addressing barriers rooted in historical and ongoing oppression and segregation processes to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all people. Lack of Inclusivity prevents people from fully participating in social and economic life, which is detrimental to all.

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16%

of Wood Buffalo residents live with a disability or chronic disease.

Source: FuseSocial The Wellbeing of Wood Buffalo 2019

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10

Dimensions of Diversity are considered in the Municipality's Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan Workbook.

These dimensions are:

- Children and Youth
- Sexual Orientation
- Socio-Economics
- Health and Mobility
- Indigenous & Rural
- Language
- Gender
- Seniors
- Ethno-cultural
- Religion

Source: 2017 Wood Buffalo Diversity and Inclusion Community Plan 2017-2022

1.2.2 Promote Community Safety

Community safety is a complex challenge that requires coordinated efforts from residents, community groups, policymakers, and law enforcement. Issues such as homelessness, substance abuse, poor lighting, and many others can cause safety concerns and limit the ability of people to fully participate in society. By working together local health authorities, policy agencies, and community groups can identify ways to improve public safety, education and outreach programs to meet the needs of the Region's urban and rural communities. This programming, effective policy leadership, and considerations for improving the design of the public realm can increase the overall comfort and security of all citizens.

- a) The Municipality will identify and maintain a list of organizations involved in community safety. 
- b) The Municipality will co-ordinate with community safety organizations to identify and act on ideas to improve community safety.
- c) The Municipality will encourage the use of urban design, and neighbourhood design principles in site planning that enhance the security and safety of communities.
- d) The Municipality will promote community and neighbourhood design that addresses safety and security by incorporating principles such as natural surveillance, access control, lighting, and clearly delineated public and private space into newly developed Design Guidelines.
- e) The Municipality will liaise with the RCMP to identify and act on opportunities to collaborate with community groups on expanding safety awareness.
- f) The Municipality will work alongside Equity-Deserving Groups to develop and implement an Equity Framework to guide the organization in embedding equity and inclusion into daily operations and municipal initiatives, projects, and plans. 

1.2.3 Promote Safe Mobility

As the Municipality provides more mobility choices, it must also ensure new streets and sidewalks are designed to be shared safely among different users. Year-round safety of all users can be improved with traffic calming, crosswalks, school zones and appropriately scaled lighting. These features work alongside regular maintenance and operations programs to enable safe mobility.

- a) The Municipality will provide a safe and efficient transportation network for all forms of mobility in alignment with the Transportation Master Plan. This network will consider the needs of all road users but should emphasize improving safety and efficiency for pedestrians.
- b) Where required, the Municipality should review road standards to incorporate connected bicycle lanes and facilities to create a complete cycling network, where possible.
- c) The Municipality will encourage improvement and expansion of service offerings at Fort McMurray International Airport.
- d) The Municipality will continue to work with Alberta Transportation to maintain and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation network throughout the year.
- e) The Municipality will continue to work with Alberta Transportation to identify and rectify infrastructure deficits for road maintenance, street lighting, and others to improve overall quality and safety of the network.
- f) The Municipality will identify gaps in safe mobility infrastructure and seek opportunities to collaborate with Alberta Transportation and mobility stakeholders to address these gaps.
- g) The Municipality will continue working to identify and eliminate barriers to public transportation experienced by Indigenous Peoples, seniors, people with disabilities, women, youth, and other Equity-Deserving Groups.

1.2.4 Plan for an Accessible Community

When private and public spaces provide equal access for individuals of all ages and physical abilities, this enables all residents to be full and active members of the community. Accessibility is an important issue to the Region, and an Advisory Committee on Aging has already been created to focus on this issue. By incorporating Universal Design within the built environment, residents of all abilities will not have to compromise on safety, access, and mobility. It is important to remember that designing for accessibility means designing for everyone, including people with disabilities. Specifically, this means creating an accessible Wood Buffalo that improves the lives of everyone in the community, including seniors, people of all ages with mobility challenges, expectant mothers, people with young children, and more.

- a) The Municipality will incorporate elements of Universal Design into the new Design Guidelines and ensure the application of Universal Design features in all public development.
- b) In developing the Universal Design component of the new Design Guidelines referenced in 1.2.4.a, the Municipality will consult with stakeholders, agencies, businesses, the private sector, and residents, as required, to ensure accessibility measures are addressed.
- c) The Municipality will integrate Universal Design into public spaces and municipal transportation infrastructure to ensure that they are safe and easy to navigate for differently abled people.

- d) To promote accessibility, the Municipality will encourage private developments to adopt the Universal Design standards as outlined in the Design Guidelines.
- e) The Municipality will prioritize developing and retrofitting publicly accessible spaces and facilities to incorporate safe and equitable access to all residents. Municipal assets in the Downtown should be prioritized for accessibility improvements.
- f) The Municipality is recognized as an Age-Friendly Community by the Province of Alberta and will continue to explore initiatives in collaboration with community groups that support an age-friendly region. Emphasis should be placed on ensuring public space design is safe and easy to navigate for seniors.



| Universal Design

Universal Design is the design of buildings and or environments to make them accessible to all people, regardless of age, disability or other factors.



Source: Centre for Excellence in Universal Design

| Equity-Deserving Groups



Equity-deserving groups are groups who have historically been denied equal access to employment, education, and other opportunities. Such groups include members of an Indigenous community, immigrants and refugees, persons with disabilities, racialized peoples, youth, women, members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, people living in poverty or facing unemployment/underemployment, or people experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness.

1.2.5 Maintain High Standards in Emergency Response and Preparedness

Emergency response is the immediate action taken to abate a crisis. Timely emergency response for fire suppression, rescue service, and medical care is a critical component of safety and security in the Region. Emergency response is supported by adequate and appropriate emergency preparedness, ensuring that the proper resources and practices are in place to enable timely response. By maintaining high standards in emergency response and emergency preparedness, the Municipality will ensure the safety and security needs of residents are met.

- a) The Municipality will establish thresholds to inform the expansion of fire services to service the anticipated future growth levels of the Urban Service Area and Rural Communities. 
- b) Following preparation of the thresholds outlined in 1.2.5.a, the Municipality will ensure its capital budget implements these service increases at the appropriate time. 
- c) The Municipality will continue to establish and maintain guidelines, partnerships, and mutual aid agreements to ensure a timely and efficient emergency response to industrial accommodations and facilities outside of the Urban Service Area.
- d) Recognizing that the needs and contexts of Wood Buffalo's rural communities differ from that of the Urban Service Area, the Municipality

will work to expand training and education opportunities for emergency preparedness and emergency response in rural communities.

- e) The Municipality will continue to explore new ideas and best practices to institute guidelines and procedures for civic addressing in rural and remote areas. The intention of this work is to aid first responders in providing prompt emergency services.
- f) The Municipality will work to expand emergency response capacity in rural communities over time through servicing agreements, mutual aid partnerships, and infrastructure requirements for new development.
- g) The Municipality will establish a monitoring program for emergency response efficacy. This monitoring program will increase the awareness of response times and promote continuous improvement of the Municipality's emergency responsiveness and preparedness.
- h) The Municipality will explore opportunities to create a Transit Evacuation Plan that identifies vulnerable populations (i.e. seniors, children at school, childcare facilities, low-income population) requiring evacuation assistance during emergency events. 
- i) The Municipality will collaboratively develop and share Emergency Action Plans with key businesses and institutes throughout the Region for use during times of emergency. 
- j) The Municipality will perform hazards, risks, and vulnerability reassessments regularly to identify changing degrees of vulnerability and exposure for urban and rural communities, development sectors, infrastructure, and ongoing or planned projects.
- k) The Municipality will identify emergency mitigation measures and update emergency action plans accordingly.

1896

the year National Fire Protection Association was founded. It's the organization that produces the standards that the Municipality follows to ensure it provides high-quality **Emergency Response** services to residents.

Source: National Fire Protection Association

1.3

CREATING CARING COMMUNITIES THAT SUPPORT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

A caring Wood Buffalo meets the needs of it's community members.

Access to food, social supports, mental and physical health care, and healthy lifestyle opportunities contribute to overall community wellness, while also supporting the attraction and retention of families. Supporting early childhood and youth development is also critical to health and wellness – for kids, youth, adults, families and the entire community.

Importantly, these supports must be accessible to Wood Buffalo residents from all walks of life. By providing these social, cultural, and recreational opportunities, the Region can support healthy and fulfilling lives.

1.3.1 Promote Access to Local Food

Local food production and distribution can help provide reliable access to healthy foods while contributing to a sense of community and the local economy. Producing food locally can also help make food more readily available and affordable in remote areas of Wood Buffalo while creating healthy competition for suppliers and promoting local food producers. Land use policies and regulations should facilitate opportunities to grow, process, and distribute food throughout the Region. For example, encouraging community gardens, greenhouses and seasonal farmers markets in the Region can provide residents and business owners with the ability to buy, share, and sell local food. Beyond the local economic opportunities, they provide, markets and gardens also function as community hubs that facilitate new social connections.

- a) The Municipality will promote healthy and productive agriculture by encouraging food production throughout its many communities. This can include expanding urban agriculture opportunities (e.g. community gardens, urban farming, etc.) to improve food system resiliency.
- b) Where appropriate, the Municipality will encourage new developments to consider including edible plants in landscaped areas.
- c) The Municipality will encourage the private and non-profit sectors to provide community gardening on private or municipality-owned land, where appropriate.
- d) The Municipality will support a food and agriculture system that contributes to the local economy and the overall cultural, financial, social, and environmental sustainability of the Region.
- e) The Municipality will support investments in new and innovative technologies that address food security in northern climates and remote communities.

- f) The Municipality will collaborate with Provincial and Federal governments to explore opportunities for developing alternate routes of transportation connectivity to all communities so that food supply chain continuity is preserved in the event of emergencies. Improvements in this area are critical in supporting food security to urban and rural communities.

1.3.2 Enhance Assistance and Support to People in Need

Supporting those most in need helps to build a stronger community. Recognizing access to safe shelter provides a basis to address all other challenges, a housing first approach could help transition people into housing from the streets and shelters without pre-conditions of treatment acceptance or compliance. It is when people have a consistent and safe home that other support and treatment options have a greater likelihood of success, making efficient use of public investment in helping those in greatest need.

- a) The Municipality will continue collaborating with non-profit agencies to build on the successes of ongoing work to combat homelessness in the Region.
- b) The Municipality will prepare a new long-term comprehensive housing plan to address homelessness, building on the work done in the Municipality's 2010-2020 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. 🐾



~ 160

the approximate number of homeless residents of Wood Buffalo at any given point in time

Source: 2022 RMWB Homeless Point-in-Time Count



FORT CHIPEWYAN'S SUSTAINABLE FOOD CENTRE

Just because it's the north doesn't mean there can't be fresh produce year-round! Three Nations Energy has taken advantage of new innovations in indoor farming, investing in local food production by purchasing a "Growcer" container farming system.

This facility is co-located with the K'ai Tailé Market and allows the community to grow fresh produce year-round in a climate-controlled environment.


Three Nations Energy has even bigger plans for increasing access to local food with a second phase planned to create a Sustainable Food Centre. This centre will reduce dependence on imported food and increase locally-grown food for Fort Chipewyan.

Source: Three Nations Energy, www.3ne.ca

- c) In collaboration with local partners and other levels of government, the Municipality will assist people in need through social programs.
- d) The Municipality will work with regional partners to offer recreational programs and facilities to help address the needs of at-risk youth.

1.3.3 Promote Equitable Access to Health Care, Education, and Social Services

While many health, education, and social care services fall under the provincial government’s jurisdiction, the Municipality has a role to play in advocating for improved access and investment in healthcare, particularly community-based care. The Municipality must also more broadly identify and respond to the social and educational needs of its residents, such as aging-in-place, access to medicine, and rural healthcare. This is especially true for residents living in rural communities in Wood Buffalo, where access to services is a barrier. Focusing on making the Region a more healthy, supportive, equitable and caring place to live contributes to personal and community wellness and can help Wood Buffalo attract and retain residents over the longer-term.

- a) The Municipality will advocate to other levels of government for increased investment and improved access to healthcare for Wood Buffalo residents.
- b) The Municipality will support initiatives to provide improved physical and mental health care services and facilities within Wood Buffalo.
- c) The Municipality will maintain an inventory of existing and required community support services with the intention of understanding changing needs over time to streamline and improve the efficacy of advocacy work with other levels of government. 
- d) The Municipality will create programs and services, as appropriate, within its jurisdiction that respond to the ongoing and changing needs of the population. While needs and


priorities could change over time, focus should be given to young families, seniors, youth, young adults and other demographic groups or at-risk populations.

- e) The Municipality will support economic development groups to explore opportunities to enroll and participate in entrepreneurship immigration programs and other initiatives that support relocation to the Region.
- f) The Municipality will continue striving to be proactive in responding to Provincial and Federal funding opportunities for community support services.
- g) The Municipality will enhance the provision and maintenance of services and facilities oriented towards seniors and families, such as seniors and family-oriented activities at libraries, community centres, and other locations.
- h) The Municipality will encourage the flexible use of space within community support service buildings and school buildings through joint use agreements. This flexibility will help to accommodate mentorship programs, community gatherings, special events, and other initiatives that support expanding health care, education, and social service access to Wood Buffalo residents.

1.3.4 Promote Health Equity Throughout the Region

Many factors influence health. While genetics and lifestyle choices are important, individual and community health is also influenced by a broad range of social, economic, and environmental factors. Food, water, and air quality all influence health, as do access to community amenities and activities. As these factors can vary significantly depending on where residents are born, grow up, live, and grow old throughout Wood Buffalo, the Municipality has a role in increasing health equity throughout the Region. Health equity is the absence of unfair systems and policies that cause different health outcomes based on an individual’s location or demographic. By promoting health equity, the Municipality will seek to reduce

inequalities and to increase access to opportunities and conditions conducive to health for all.

- a) The Municipality will promote social well-being and quality of life by appropriately planning for the provision of high-quality social, community, and health services and facilities accessible to those throughout the Region.
- b) The Municipality will work with community partners to gather key health outcomes data and increase health reporting throughout the Region. This data can be used to inform evidence-based decision-making and ongoing dialogue with senior levels of government about the unique and distinct needs of Wood Buffalo's many different communities.
- c) The Municipality will ensure that where community-based programming is not possible, centrally located services are still accessible to those who require them.
- d) The Municipality will advocate to Alberta Health Services and other service delivery partners to improve the provision of mobile health services and expand access to mental and physical healthcare in rural communities.
- e) The Municipality will review the Land Use Bylaw, statutory plans and other development regulations and propose amendments, as appropriate, to expand the locations where health services can locate and streamline their approvals. 



| Mobile Health Services

A mobile health clinic is a basic doctor's office or exam room that is capable of travelling to patients. These vehicle-based clinics help connect patients to care when patients would have otherwise gone without.

MUNICIPAL NOMINEE PROGRAM

The Municipal Nominee Program was created in 2021 as a means to allow local communities, Chambers of Commerce, and local labour councils to directly sponsor permanent immigrants. The program is intended to foster a wider distribution of immigrants upon entry to Canada, and incentivize permanent settlement by immigrants in these communities.

NORTHERN IMMIGRATION PILOT

The Northern Immigration Pilot is a community-driven program designed to spread the benefits of economic immigration to smaller communities throughout Canada. The program accomplishes this by creating a path to permanent residency for skilled foreign workers who want to work and live in participating communities.

WHAT IS A HEALTHY COMMUNITY?

Healthy communities can be defined as a place where healthy built, social, economic, and natural environments give citizens the opportunity to live to their full potential regardless of their socially, culturally, or economically defined circumstances. A healthy community allows people to come together to make their community better for themselves, their family, their friends, their neighbours, and others.

*Source: 2018 Canadian Institute of Planners
Healthy Communities Policy Statement*

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

ACTION ITEMS

- Conduct studies to identify mechanisms for integrating safe, high-quality, human-scaled public spaces into new development
- Develop and implement Region-wide Design Guidelines
- Develop and implement Downtown public realm activation pilot programs
- Develop and implement an Active Transportation Master Plan focused on Downtown connectivity
- Develop and implement a Four Seasons Strategy
- Review and revise the Land Use Bylaw to encourage and facilitate mixed-use development
- Develop and implement an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy for the Region
- Prepare and maintain a list of community organizations involved in safety
- Maintain the Municipality's status as an Age-Friendly Community, recognized by the Province of Alberta, and continue to explore initiatives in collaboration with community groups that support an age-friendly region
- Establish thresholds for fire service expansion
- Explore opportunities to develop a Transit Evacuation Plan
- Develop Emergency Action Plans
- Prepare a new Long-Term Housing Plan
- Develop and maintain an inventory of existing and required community support services





ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INNOVATION

70%

of Canada's oil exports come from Wood Buffalo's oil sands

Source: Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers

Wood Buffalo is often considered the economic engine of Canada, a place of opportunity with high-paying jobs and a way to kick-start your career or take it to the next level. While Wood Buffalo's oil sands will continue to be the backbone of the local economy well into the future, the time is now to double down on economic growth that increases the productivity and ancillary revenue streams for the oil sands industry's players while fostering economic diversification.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INNOVATION

Economic diversification and development bring vibrancy to the local economy and prosperity throughout Wood Buffalo, without forgetting the core oil sands industry. As a centre for excellence in oil sands extraction technology and innovation, the Region will continue to support and serve its health and knowledge growth.



HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

2.1

EMPOWERING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Diversified Regional Economy
Fostering Economic Development Throughout Wood Buffalo
Responsible Natural Resource Development
Capitalize on the Outdoors

2.2

SUPPORTING SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting Local Innovation
Building on Our Skills and Knowledge

2.1

EMPOWERING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Creating an environment where new and expanding businesses can thrive is paramount to Wood Buffalo's long-economic success.

Leveraging opportunities to better connect the Municipality to global markets as well as finding ways to accelerate new ideas, reduce administrative red tape, and support emerging technologies and existing industrial powerhouses are all key to growing the economy. Empowering regional economic development means promoting initiatives that will expand the regional economy's depth and breadth. This in turn will create new opportunities throughout Wood Buffalo.



2.1.1 Diversified Regional Economy

Shifting global economic conditions, forest fires, and floods have all had a profound effect on Wood Buffalo's economy over the past decade. As the Municipality and the world change, Wood Buffalo must find innovative ways to not only leverage existing industrial strengths but also support and accelerate its economic tenacity and vibrancy. Opportunities to leverage diversification initiatives in the institutional and education sectors should be explored, and the Municipality has an important role to play in making this happen. However, diversifying the regional economy is not something that happens overnight. This policy section highlights opportunities for the Municipality to support a thriving economy for all stakeholders throughout Wood Buffalo. The Region's economy can become more balanced and diversified, providing greater stability, opportunity, and a higher quality of life for all.

- a) Downtown will continue to be the preferred location for investment in business incubators, shared administration facilities, and other tools to support start-ups and small businesses as they expand and grow.
- b) The Municipality will support local economic development organizations as they provide programs that stimulate new start-ups, ensure the availability of viable commercial and retail spaces Downtown, and promote local businesses to markets near and far.
- c) The Municipality will investigate opportunities to prioritize development approvals for new or expanding local businesses Downtown that meet or exceed the objectives of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan. 
- d) Where natural disasters or pandemics may negatively impact the viability of local business or contribute negatively to the overall health of Wood Buffalo's economy, the Municipality may expand upon the initiatives outlined in Policy 2.1.1.c so that the Municipality's economy is able to quickly address the impacts of the disaster and recover.

Expedited Downtown Development Approvals

Expedited development approvals for applications Downtown could incentivize and encourage development through a variety of means, such as assisting business owners through the development approvals process, reducing municipal fees and charges for development that complies with the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan, or fast-tracking priority applications.

- e) The Municipality will explore opportunities for helping local economic development organizations facilitate Business Continuity Plan development for business owners. These plans will help businesses assess their risks and ensure critical resources are available to ensure they stay in business during and after disasters such as wildfires or floods.
- f) Where appropriate, the Municipality will support the development of home-based businesses by connecting prospective entrepreneurs with the local economic development agency and assist small businesses in accessing Provincial and Federal funding.
- g) The Municipality will regularly evaluate the Social Procurement Policy to ensure it is appropriately achieving its goals and objectives.
- h) The Municipality will collaborate with the local economic development agency in supporting their efforts to attract and retain businesses.
- i) The Municipality will endeavour to retain existing businesses and attract new businesses by preparing an “Ease of Doing Business” plan in collaboration with the local economic development agency. 
- j) As part of the “Ease of Doing Business” plan the Municipality will encourage ongoing dialogue with the business community, focusing on tools the Municipality could employ to provide business relief or competitive advantages. Programs such ‘Tax Exemption for New Development in Downtown 2020’, ‘Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program (DRIP)’, and ‘Natural Resource Extraction Support Project Tax Incentive 2024’ may continued to be explored and offered as tax deductions, and operating incentives to promote regional economic development.
- k) The Municipality will support community partners and local economic development organizations in the delivery of business retention and expansion programs that strengthen local business. 

Economic “Intensification”

This means leveraging the existing infrastructure and human capital in Wood Buffalo to explore new complementary, industry-adjacent revenue-generating endeavours, thus “intensifying” the economic impact of Wood Buffalo’s existing industries.

Source: International Institute for Environment and Development



- l) The Municipality will explore, create, and encourage the development of opportunities for economic collaboration with Indigenous communities, organizations, and other partners.
- m) The Municipality should work with the oil sands industry, project accommodation operators, and other industries to identify and act on economic opportunities.
- n) The Municipality recognizes the importance of both FIFO and project accommodations in the Region and remains supportive of working with operators to support oil sands operations throughout the Region.
- o) The Municipality will work with stakeholders through local economic development organizations to create supportive plans and programs to help kick-start new businesses within the oil sands industry, project accommodation operators, the service industry, secondary supportive industries and independent sustainable industries.
- p) The Municipality will support investment in new and innovative technologies related to the ongoing energy transition that leverages the Region's established expertise in energy technology. This could include carbon capture, and carbon sequestration, experimental and commercial-scale hydrogen generation, and new approaches to developing renewable energies.
- q) The Municipality will support continued implementation of the Wood Buffalo Sports Strategic Plan to realize the economic impact potential of the Region's world-class recreational assets.
- r) The Municipality will continue supporting local economic development organizations to maximize the revenue opportunities presented by hosting sports tournaments, sports events, and cultural camps, focusing primarily on attracting and generating overnight stays and expenditures.



EASE OF DOING BUSINESS PLAN

An Ease of Doing Business Plan could investigate creating a dedicated municipal team that serves as a simple one-stop-shop for accessing municipal resources, helping find ways for new business ideas to take root in Wood Buffalo, working closely with the local economic development organization, and enhancing overall business customer experience when working with the Municipality.



FLY-IN FLY-OUT

Fly-in fly-out (FIFO) is a method of employing people in remote areas by flying them temporarily to work sites instead of relocating them permanently. Providing a welcoming environment for newcomers is critical to help transition more FIFO employees to permanent residents.

Source: Deacon, Papineau, & Lamanes, University of Alberta, 2017

2.1.2 Fostering Economic Development Throughout Wood Buffalo

Wood Buffalo covers a massive geographic area. Finding ways to generate local economies of scale, act on mutually beneficial efficiencies, and embrace the needs, aspirations, and interests of all residents, the Indigenous communities, and stakeholders within the Region can strengthen and support Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism. Economic and employment diversification does not happen in isolation and will require commitment from Wood Buffalo's many institutions and oil sands industry partners, as well as investment from both the public and private sector. The diverse communities, cultures, and industries within the Municipality offer valuable opportunities for cross-connections across Wood Buffalo, enabling the realization of economic development prospects across various sectors. Opportunities to expand existing industries as well as realizing the potential of emerging ones such as tourism could create regional economic impacts benefitting Wood Buffalo residents.

- a) To support economic diversification, the Municipality will encourage joint economic development initiatives and advocate for greater collaboration between the Region's institutions, oil sands industry, Indigenous communities, and economic stakeholders.
- b) The Municipality will encourage the development of oil sands industry relations plans to support the initiatives outlined in Policy 2.1.2.a.
- c) The Municipality will promote collaborative efforts with regional stakeholders, including local economic development organizations, to encourage economic development activities and training opportunities for all.
- d) The Municipality will work collaboratively and in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation with local Métis and First Nation communities on economic reconciliation and development initiatives.

- e) The Municipality will work collaboratively with rural communities and economic development partners to ensure their unique needs are addressed and reflect a coordinated and regional approach to economic development.
- f) The Municipality will work with rural communities to identify mutually beneficial opportunities for divesting serviced land where it could benefit the economic activity in rural communities.
- g) The Municipality will work to adopt and encourage the use of the Region's Place Brand Strategy.
- h) The Municipality will engage and collaborate with Indigenous communities and organizations on areas of joint economic interest to ensure economic development will enhance opportunities for Indigenous communities.
- i) The Municipality will advocate and/or support opportunities to expand global market access for all businesses and industry located within Wood Buffalo, including Federal and Provincial investments or private sector initiatives such as new pipelines, railways, refineries, and expanded all-season highway access to Wood Buffalo communities.
- j) The Municipality will continue supporting the development of a "shop local" marketing campaign and establish workshops within the business community to increase marketing acumen and contribute to a strong local brand.

2.1.3 Responsible Natural Resource Development

Wood Buffalo's prosperity is firmly rooted in the oil sands, and the sustained development of these resources in a responsible way is central to the Municipality's long-term economic success. Over the coming years, it is important that Wood Buffalo continues to advocate for innovative approaches to resource extraction and investigate opportunities to build on the potential of all the Region's

resources. At the same time, it is important to ensure these key activities are balanced with thoughtful environmental remediation, maintaining air and water quality throughout the Region, target protection of rare flora and fauna, and protection of other natural/wilderness areas. While the Municipality has a limited role to play, legislatively, in managing the development of its natural resources, it will strive to influence positive outcomes that benefit all residents.

- a) The Municipality will work with resource industries to capitalize on the economic and quality of life opportunities associated with the restoration and reclamation of the natural landscape.
- b) The Municipality will encourage research into the adaptive reuse of resource extraction by-products, such as mine tailings, where the potential exists to support the economy and create new and diverse jobs in Wood Buffalo.
- c) The Municipality will support the development of renewable energy and clean energy projects throughout Wood Buffalo.
- d) To optimize economic benefits, the Municipality will encourage secondary industries related to natural resource development and operation, such as the forestry, oil, and gas sectors, to locate in Wood Buffalo.

70%

of Wood Buffalo's population is employed in industries other than resource-based extraction

Source: 2021 Alberta Municipal Dashboard

PLACE BRAND STRATEGY

In 2020, Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism adopted a new Place Brand Strategy for marketing the Region locally and around the world. The purpose of the brand platform is to tell the story of Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo and how it stands apart from the crowd.

Presented as seven distinct building blocks, the Place Brand Strategy identifies Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo as a place of:

- Incredible Economic Opportunity
- Strong Community Spirit
- Remarkable Indigenous Strength

- Families
- Innovation
- Natural Wonder
- Diversity

Industrial Land Reclamation & Remediation

Syncrude has reclaimed over 4,000 hectares of land since their operations began. Starting in 1993, a herd of 30 wood bison were introduced to one of the reclaimed sectors and this herd has since increased to over 300!

- e) To ensure rural communities are not affected by the industrial activity in their surroundings, and to preserve their rural character, the Municipality will support a greenbelt buffer surrounding rural communities.
- f) The Municipality will assist and expedite approvals for projects that contribute to greater self-sufficiency, economic activity, and energy security in its rural communities.
- g) The Municipality should advocate for supportive plans and programs from senior levels of government that provide clarity for resource extraction operations, to encourage and attract new businesses and economic activity to the Region.

2.1.4 Capitalize on the Outdoors

Wood Buffalo enjoys unparalleled access to nature. With outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, fishing, wildlife viewing, northern lights viewing, and off-road driving easily accessible from the Municipality's many communities, a culture of embracing the outdoors is evident throughout Wood Buffalo. The marketing and development of these outdoor activities is evolving and could create economic opportunities for the rural communities, Urban Service Area, and hinterland. Opportunities such as outdoor sports tourism, waterpark development on lakes, or developing new outdoor recreational facilities are just some of the possibilities. This culture and access to nature should be developed intentionally, responsibly, and meaningfully, with a focus on respect for the environment, land and wildlife, the people who live off the land, and the safety of its users.

- a) The Municipality should support local economic development organizations in developing a comprehensive tourism strategy with economic development and tourism industry stakeholders.

- b) The Municipality will work with the tourism industry, conservation groups, recreation groups, and other industry and interest groups towards strategies that result in the creation of new facilities and services in outdoor areas along with maintaining and improving existing recreation and tourism facilities.
- c) The Municipality will support the development of Indigenous tourism opportunities led by Indigenous communities.
- d) The Municipality will encourage and support new or emerging tourism opportunities such as improving access to industrial tourism, Wood Buffalo National Park, and the burgeoning cabin industry.
- e) The Municipality will support and advocate to senior levels of government for the development of an all-seasons road to Fort Chipewyan to promote greater access to the Municipality's natural amenities and to facilitate greater economic opportunities related to the outdoors in northern Wood Buffalo.
- f) As a northern municipality, the Municipality should develop infrastructure that supports lively and active opportunities to experience the outdoors in all seasons.
- g) The Municipality will support opportunities to celebrate local Indigenous culture and history at festivals and events in rural and Indigenous communities to attract tourism.
- h) The development of Wood Buffalo's natural assets should contribute positively to the Green and Blue Networks, described in Section 5, complementing a comprehensive approach to protecting, celebrating, and accessing nature.

\$1.9B annual domestic revenue from Indigenous tourism in Canada

Source: 2021 Update, Conference Board of Canada

Tourism Strategy

Industry data has shown consistent year-over-year growth in demand from tourists for true wilderness experiences, Indigenous connections, eco-tourism, outdoor spas, and health and wellbeing. Wood Buffalo is advantageously poised to take advantage of these emerging trends provided it acts quickly to develop and execute a strategy for realizing this potential.

As one of the MDP's Action Items, the development of a new Tourism Strategy with economic development stakeholders and stakeholders from the tourism industry is imperative to help this sector contribute to the ongoing diversification of Wood Buffalo's regional economy.

Source: 2021 Destination Canada, Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry



2.2

SUPPORTING SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

Wood Buffalo is a leader in oil sands technology, and the educational attainment and technical training of its residents is a testament to this leadership.

Growing Wood Buffalo in the future means providing even more opportunities for existing and future residents to build the skills and knowledge to live successfully here. Local innovation can be supported through a variety of means and providing the institutional capacity and industrial partnerships necessary to foster this innovation is a critical first step. By ensuring amazing ideas are brought to market here at home, good jobs will remain in the Municipality.

Opportunities already exist for Wood Buffalo's industries to embrace the tech revolution – project accommodation logistics, oil sands mine automation, and the critical mass of engineering expertise all present compelling possibilities for those willing to act on their ideas. Such initiatives must be supported and fostered by all levels of government and industry through their participation and investment. This is time, energy, and money well spent.

It is time to invest in Wood Buffalo's people and build the future with their successes.

2.2.1 Supporting Local Innovation

As a hub of industrial ingenuity and expertise, Wood Buffalo is advantageously positioned to leverage these assets into becoming a centre for industrial excellence and innovation. Indigenous traditional knowledge and natural knowledge also present compelling potential for using the land that sustains us in new and unique ways while also building strong, new opportunities for Indigenous economic development. At the same time, local businesses also have tremendous opportunity to seize new and emerging technologies in the renewable energy sector and green economy, finding a home for these technology-focused industries here in Wood Buffalo. To do this, the local economy must build on its competitive advantage to fuel economic and social growth, providing the right environment for innovation to thrive.

- a) The Municipality will support, where possible, the invention and commercialization of new products, services, and technologies to establish and retain these innovators within Wood Buffalo and increase their profile.
- b) To enable a culture of innovation, the Municipality will support the development of innovation centres for education, research, and product development.
- c) The Municipality will support local economic development organizations in its efforts to attract increased private-sector investment in research and development.
- d) The Municipality will encourage local investment and research in solar and other emerging renewable energy options, leveraging its long summer days and dry, sunny winters. These natural conditions make the Municipality particularly well-suited for the development and implementation of solar technology.

- e) The Municipality should work with local economic development organizations to expand and utilize business start-up incubator space to establish and grow local entrepreneurial opportunities in collaboration with local and provincial institutions.
- f) The Municipality may work with local economic development organizations and business groups to create an entrepreneurship competition where residents with innovative ideas for a business are given the opportunity to compete for funding to help kick-start their idea.
- g) The Municipality will work with local business groups and economic development organizations to enhance supports for Indigenous entrepreneurs to promote their businesses and build employment networks to increase their visibility. 



| Startup YMM

Startup YMM is a small business incubator and technology makers space. It is building a community of inventors, entrepreneurs and mentors by providing ongoing access to skills, space, and mentorship to turn ideas into scalable businesses right here in Wood Buffalo.

Source: www.startupYMM.ca

2.2.2 Building on Our Skills and Knowledge

Wood Buffalo benefits from having one of the most skilled workforces in Canada. For the Region to adapt, grow, and respond to changes in the global economy and the future of the energy industry it is more important than ever to ensure Wood Buffalo retains and grows this expertise. The knowledge base that already exists in Wood Buffalo is highly specialized to the energy industry, and Wood Buffalo’s talent will power the global energy industry for decades to come. Ensuring the Municipality is supporting this knowledge development today and creating the conditions necessary for the Municipality to remain a hub for creating and sharing this expertise tomorrow has far-reaching benefits to the local economy. Similarly, the potential from attracting new Canadians and international students to Wood Buffalo should not be ignored. Collectively, these efforts will contribute towards helping Wood Buffalo retain its youth, expanding the knowledge base of its residents, and becoming a recognized centre for excellence in resource extraction.

- a) Where possible and required as per the plans from such institutes, the Municipality will support efforts to establish new post-secondary institutions or significantly expand existing institutions within the Municipality.
- b) The expansion of local post-secondary institutions should have four primary objectives:
 - i) Providing a broad array of post-secondary disciplines to help retain local students
 - ii) Providing additional extension opportunities for high school students to draw them in to local post-secondary institutions early
 - iii) Capitalizing on Wood Buffalo’s resource extraction industries by creating a centre of excellence for the study and research of resource extraction for provincial, national, and international collaboration and scholarship
 - iv) Attracting a larger population of international students to Wood Buffalo

- c) The Municipality will continue to encourage and support a collaborative approach for the development of required knowledge capital through local post-secondary institutions. This could include investments in developing new engineering facilities at Keyano College, fostering partnerships with other Alberta institutions (e.g. SAIT, NAIT, University of Alberta, etc.) for co-op study programs, or other initiatives to further enhance the Region as an international centre of excellence in resource extraction.
- d) The Municipality should encourage and support initiatives by local institutions and industry to leverage expertise in ecological preservation and restoration.
- e) The Municipality should investigate partnering with educational institutions to provide more opportunities for residents to continue educational development and skill upgrading.
- f) The Municipality will support and encourage partnerships between Keyano College and the local oil sands industry with post-secondary institutions from outside the Region. These partnerships should prioritize enhancing training and education opportunities in Wood Buffalo.
- g) The Municipality will explore innovative technologies to enhance municipal services through community-driven, evidence-based, and collaborative processes.

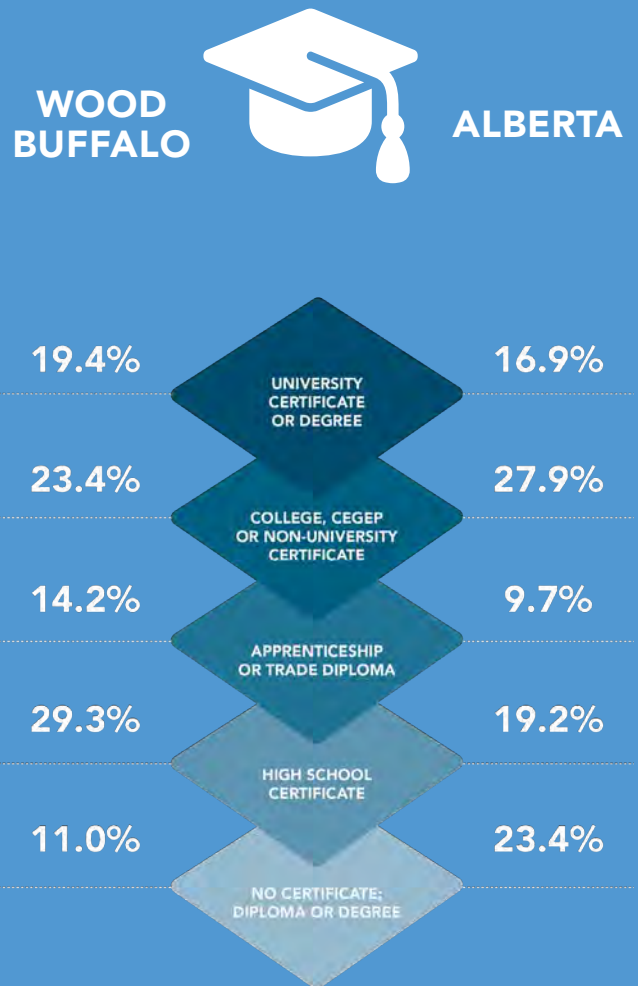


40% of Wood Buffalo residents are taking courses to improve their skills for a current job

Source: FuseSocial The Wellbeing of Wood Buffalo 2019

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Wood Buffalo has one of the most educated populations in the country, with 3 in 5 residents holding a post-secondary degree or diploma.



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

ACTION ITEMS

- Investigate opportunities to streamline processing of Downtown applications for development of commercial, institutional, mixed uses and other developments that support or encourage economic activities
- Prepare and implement an Ease of Doing Business Plan
- Adopt and implement the Region's Place Brand Strategy





TRUTH & RECONCILIATION



Wood Buffalo has since time immemorial been the home of strong First Nations and Métis Nations rich in collaborative spirit and historical, cultural, and economic importance. The Municipality is located within the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 8 Region in Northern Alberta, which includes the Mikisew Cree First Nation, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Fort McKay First Nation, Fort McMurray 468 First Nation, Smith's Landing First Nation, and Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation. Wood Buffalo is also the home of the Chard Métis, Fort McKay Métis Nation, Willow Lake Métis, McMurray Métis, Fort Chipewyan Métis, and Conklin Métis.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The six First Nations and six Métis communities in Wood Buffalo are rich in collaborative spirit and historical, cultural, and economic importance. Wood Buffalo is located on Treaty 8 Territory and is the ancestral and traditional land of the Cree, Dene, and Métis. Prioritizing collaborative dialogue and meaningful relationship building with local Indigenous Partners and communities is central to the MDP and how Truth and Reconciliation will continue to move forward in Wood Buffalo.



HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

3.1

ANSWERING THE CALLS TO ACTION

Understanding the Municipality's Role
Addressing the Municipality's Calls to Action

3.2

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND CREATING MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITY

Building Strong Government Relations
Realizing Economic and Social Opportunities

3.3

HONOURING CREE, DENE, AND MÉTIS HISTORY

Honouring the Past
Growing for the Future

3.1

ANSWERING THE CALLS TO ACTION

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission identified 94 Calls to Action intended to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Truth and Reconciliation in Canada.

These Calls to Action are addressed to all Canadians but require varying levels of action and commitment from different levels of government to appropriately act upon them. Understanding the Municipality's role in addressing these Calls to Action and what must be done to answer them is imperative for moving Wood Buffalo forward on the path of Truth and Reconciliation.

3.1.1 Understanding the Municipality's Role

The Municipality has identified Calls to Action that it can directly act upon. These Calls to Action are identified in Appendix B. Appreciating the dynamic nature of Truth and Reconciliation, this list may be amended, expanded upon, or revised as deemed appropriate or as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's work may evolve over time.

The Municipality's role in advancing Truth and Reconciliation may evolve, particularly as the Calls to Action and work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is concerned. Ensuring proper mechanisms are in place to react swiftly and appropriately to these changes is necessary to keep the Municipality moving forward.

- a) The Municipality will continue to advance Truth and Reconciliation in the Region.



3.1.2 Addressing the Municipality's Calls to Action

The Municipality must commit to ensuring it implements, acts upon, and addresses the considerations made in each of its identified Calls to Action. Incorporating acknowledgment of these responsibilities and a requirement to address them through municipal policy, plans, and strategies is an important first step.

- a) The Municipality will continue to report annually on the status of the municipal response to Truth and Reconciliation in Wood Buffalo. 
- b) The Municipality will continue to support Truth and Reconciliation and efforts to raise awareness in the community while endorsing and providing educational opportunities to create understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation process and why it is important.
- c) Municipal development and planning documents such as bylaws, policies, procedures, and plans will be reviewed through a lens of Truth and Reconciliation with the objective to ensure that Indigenous perspectives are included and valued.
- d) All statutory plans prepared by the Municipality will be amended to include a Treaty 8 land acknowledgment, and new development industry-led plans will be strongly encouraged to do the same. 

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Land acknowledgments are a small but can be a very impactful act of Truth and Reconciliation. In Wood Buffalo, we recognize that the land we are on is Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional land of the Cree, Dene and Métis.

There are many ways that lands can be acknowledged. The front pages of this MDP contain a visual land acknowledgment, while they might have experienced a verbal land acknowledgment before a sports event, conference, or other gathering.

Municipal Government and TRC Implementation

Municipal governments have faced the challenge of implementing the TRC's findings within their limited jurisdiction, compared to the federal and provincial governments. While Municipalities approach the Calls to Action in the context of their own unique circumstances, the TRC was clear in stating that governments must strive to resolve jurisdictional disputes when providing services to Indigenous communities. While municipalities have limited jurisdiction in several areas, including post-secondary education, health care, and justice, it is also true that they, as organizations, have a great deal of influence on the day-to-day lives of communities, and can affect positive change.

Through the MDP, the Municipality reaffirms its commitment to the Principles for a Collaborative Pathway Forward in Wood Buffalo.

Source: A Collaborative Pathway Forward 2021

6

First Nations

6

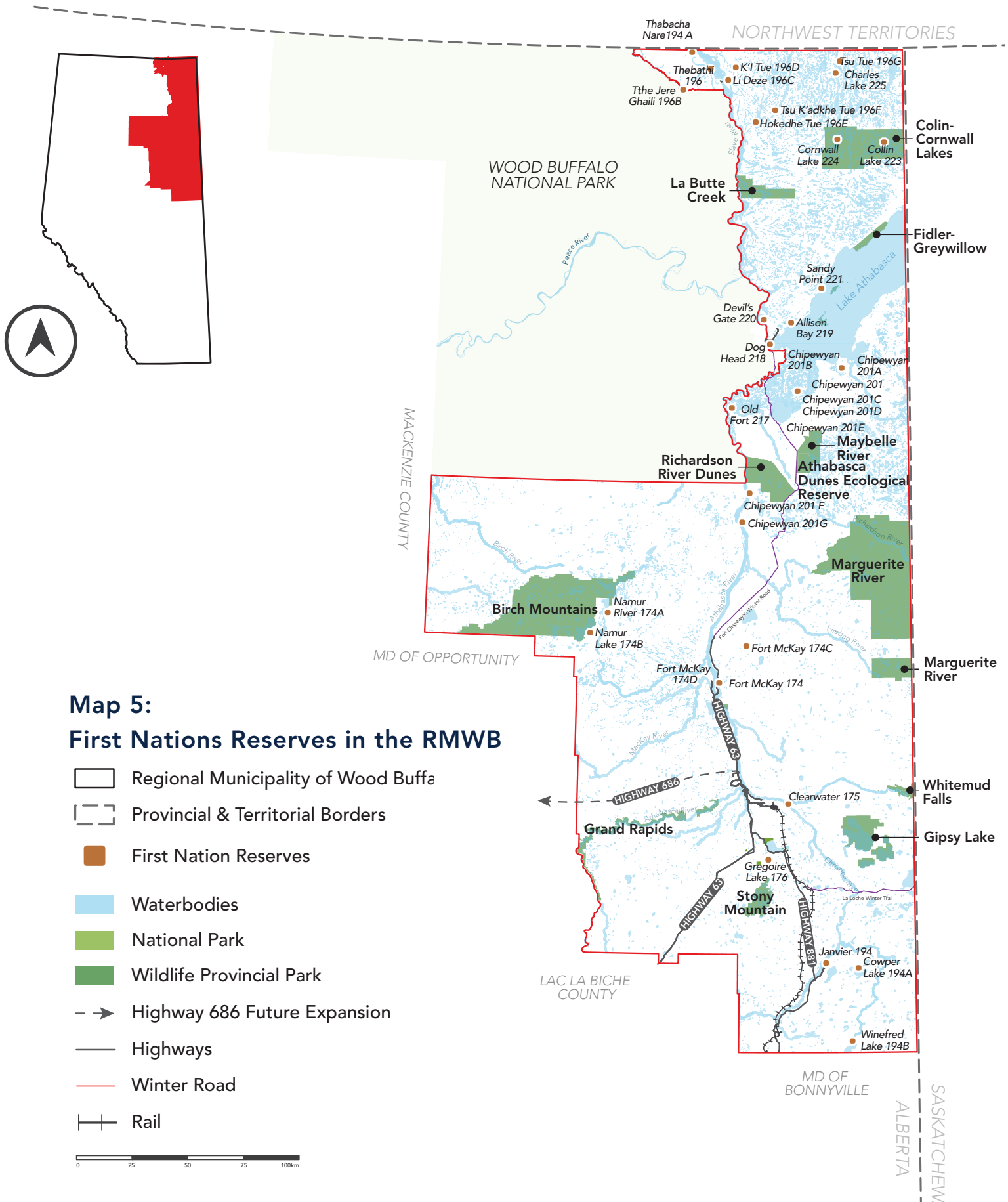
Métis Communities

- e) New statutory plans prepared by the Municipality should incorporate findings from previously conducted Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Studies, should these documents exist, and if consent for public use is given from those Knowledge Keepers.
- f) Identified areas of Indigenous cultural importance will be considered and included as possible in the preparation of local statutory plans.
- g) The Municipality will collaborate with Provincial and Federal governments to advocate for enhanced services in Indigenous communities.
- h) As called for in Action #43, the Municipality will undertake an assessment of implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a municipal framework for advancing Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous communities. The Municipality is committed to developing the necessary policies and bylaws to ensure the implementation of this framework. 🐾

Traditional Knowledge and Land Use

Traditional Knowledge and land use can intersect in many ways, including the use of the land for traditional ways of being important to Indigenous communities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, the collection of plants including berries and traditional medicines, and ceremonial pursuits. It is important for the Municipality to work with Indigenous communities to support the preservation of this cultural heritage and help build the collective knowledge of the indigenous communities.







3.2

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND CREATING MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITY

*Bridging gaps and building strong relationships with local Indigenous communities is important to the Municipality. The Municipality will strive to develop partnerships with local **Indigenous Peoples** and communities that are collaborative and result in meaningful outcomes based on mutually agreed upon priorities.*

3.2.1 Building Strong Government Relations

The Municipality is the Region's largest provider of services and the decisions it makes can have profound impacts on local Indigenous communities. Building good relations and respecting each community's protocol is important to maintain relationship.

- a) The Municipality will continue working with local Indigenous communities to define and improve relationships between the Municipality and Indigenous communities across the Region by upholding protocol agreements with the local six First Nation and six Métis communities. 
- b) The Municipality will continue to provide mandatory Indigenous awareness training for all municipal staff and will make all resources available to the public.
- c) Building on 3.2.1.b, the Municipality will provide education materials developed in collaboration with Indigenous Partners and Elders to public servants on the history of Indigenous Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism. 
- d) The Municipality will continue to acknowledge Treaty and Aboriginal rights declared in the Constitution Act, 1982.
- e) The Municipality will acknowledge and respect First Nation and Métis communities and honour their unique histories and heritage.
- f) The Municipality will support awareness and recognition of First Nation and Métis communities and the importance of respecting Treaty and Aboriginal rights.


3.2.2 Realizing Economic and Social Opportunities

The Municipality should leverage its organizational capacity to act on economic and social opportunities in collaboration with local Indigenous communities to the greatest extent possible.

- a) The Municipality will develop short, medium, and long-term action plans to recognize and support Indigenous traditional knowledge so that it pass down from generation to generation.
- b) The Municipality will seek the advice and participation of Indigenous Partners on issues of mutual interest and promote working collaboratively on these issues between the Municipality and the Indigenous Communities.
- c) The Municipality will create an Urban Reserve Strategy to identify opportunities to support Urban Reserves and Additions To Reserves (ATRs) through Council approved letters of support and servicing agreements. 
- d) The Municipality will help foster a relationship of mutual respect with Indigenous Partners as joint sponsors of regional development initiatives and will work toward increasingly improved engagement processes with Indigenous Partners in municipal decision-making and service delivery.
- e) To increase Indigenous involvement in municipal programs and committees, the Municipality will explore approaches to reducing barriers to participation for Indigenous Peoples. 

| Urban Reserves

Urban reserves are reserves within or adjacent to urban centres. Lands set apart as an urban reserve typically involve a number of agreements that have been negotiated between individual First Nations and the Municipality.

- f) The Municipality will provide more meaningful opportunities for Indigenous Partners and organizations in the Urban Service Area to participate in municipal programs, policies, and services.
- g) In response to the Municipality's identified Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (Appendix B), the Municipality will explore the feasibility of producing documents related to or affecting majority First Nations and/or Métis communities in Cree, and Dene languages.
- h) The Municipality will continue using Cree and Dene languages on new municipal signs and infrastructure, where feasible. 

Honouring Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers

Advancing its ongoing commitment to the TRC Calls to Action and the UN Declaration as the framework for Truth and Reconciliation, the Municipality is continuing its commitment to partner with local Indigenous community's Elders and traditional Knowledge Keepers. Strengthened relationships enrich the Municipality's programs, projects, and activities by imparting traditional teachings and wisdom from Elders and Knowledge Keepers, helping to guide and better inform municipal strategies and initiatives. This also removes barriers by providing opportunities for Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Municipal staff to come together and exchange ideas and approaches, helping to ensure Indigenous ways of knowing form the foundation of Municipal projects, initiatives, programs, and service delivery.

The Municipality respects individual and community specific protocols and recognizes the importance of working with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers in a good way.

3.3

HONOURING CREE, DENE, AND MÉTIS CULTURE

Traditional lifestyles, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and foraging are valued among Métis and First Nations Peoples and communities throughout Wood Buffalo. It is important to respect traditional and historic Indigenous uses of the land as a fundamental element of the Region's cultural identity, and to create opportunities to strengthen the presence and voices of Indigenous cultures and values today.

By honouring the Cree, Dene and Métis history, the Municipality can also play a role in the revitalization and reclamation of local Indigenous culture.

3.3.1 Honouring the Past

Cree, Dene and Métis communities existed in Wood Buffalo long before the Municipality existed. Over their long and storied time here, communities developed their own languages, place names, and histories. Preserving and amplifying these unique cultures is an act of Truth and Reconciliation and is important for all those who call Wood Buffalo their home today to understand.

- a) The Municipality should incorporate opportunities to honour local Indigenous histories and cultures through wayfinding, educational elements, design, and any other means identified in collaboration with Indigenous communities.
- b) The Municipality will learn from First Nations and Métis communities how best to protect, respect, and honour culturally significant lands and incorporate these findings into municipal policy to the greatest extent possible.
- c) The Municipality acknowledges the continued cultural and spiritual connection that Indigenous Peoples have to their lands and may explore opportunities to recognize Indigenous heritage through public art, monuments, and support for community cultural activities.



3.3.2 Growing for the Future

As discussed earlier in this section, the Municipality has an important role to play in moving Truth and Reconciliation forward at the local level.

Promoting, reinforcing, and strengthening the presence of local Indigenous Peoples throughout the Municipality, giving space for these important voices to be heard and shared.

- a) The Municipality will collaborate with Indigenous communities to honour the Cree and Dene languages and will seek opportunities for recognition through naming of subdivisions, municipal facilities, streets, bridges, and other infrastructure through amendments to the Community Identification System Policy.
- b) The Municipality will advocate to Provincial Authorities for the inclusion of all First Nations and Métis communities in Wood Buffalo as recognized communities in any future revisions or rewritings of the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan. 
- c) The Municipality will seek opportunities to partner with Indigenous communities to celebrate and promote the use of Cree and Dene languages through the Municipality's publications.
- d) The Municipality will work with Indigenous communities to assist with recognizing, representing, and reflecting the past, present, and future contributions of Indigenous Peoples.
- e) The Municipality will investigate opportunities to prioritize the inclusion of Indigenous voices on Council-appointed committees.



Recognizing Local Indigenous Languages within Communities

Starting in 2020 the Municipality began installing multilingual stop signs that reflect Cree and Dene languages of Wood Buffalo's many communities. Initiatives such as this will be expanded over the coming years in collaboration with communities and partners to revitalize and strengthen Cree and Dene languages as part of the Municipality's ongoing commitment to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.



Strong Indigenous

Voices

Indigenous communities in and around Wood Buffalo have incredible talent. As these individuals inspire the next generation of strong Indigenous voices throughout Wood Buffalo, the Municipality commits to helping amplify the past, present, and future contributions of Indigenous Peoples to the region, Canada, and the world.

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

ACTION ITEMS

- Continue providing annual reports on the municipal response to Truth and Reconciliation in Wood Buffalo
- Amend statutory plans to include Treaty 8 land acknowledgments
- Undertake a thorough assessment of implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the Municipality's framework for advancing Truth and Reconciliation, and what implementation of the UN Declaration would look like in a municipal context. The RMWB is committed to developing the necessary policy to ensure this framework is implemented.
- Uphold protocol agreements with the six First Nations and six Métis communities in Wood Buffalo
- Continue to support the Elder-in-Residence program
- Continue to expand the use of both the Cree and Dene languages
- Create an Urban Reserve Strategy
- Continue exploring opportunities to reduce barriers to participation for Indigenous Peoples.
- Advocate for inclusion of local First Nations and Métis communities in future LARP revisions and/or rewriting.





CELEBRATING COMMUNITY AND CULTURE



Brimming with community pride, it comes naturally that Wood Buffalo residents find so many ways to celebrate their unique past, vibrant arts, rich culture, and diverse population. These things not only make Wood Buffalo an amazing place to live, but also contribute to an everyday vitality rarely found elsewhere. Quality of life for all is enhanced through opportunities to celebrate the unique cultures of the Region. The promotion of and participation in diverse arts and cultural activities provides educational and growth opportunities that bring people together and foster community belonging.

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Brimming with community pride, Wood Buffalo celebrates its unique past, vibrant arts, rich culture, and diverse population. These are things that not only make Wood Buffalo an amazing place to live but also contribute to an everyday vitality rarely found elsewhere. Quality of life for all is enhanced through opportunities to celebrate the unique cultures within the Region, while the promotion of and participation in diverse arts and cultural activities provide educational and growth opportunities that bring people together and foster community.



HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

4.1

TAKING PRIDE IN WOOD BUFFALO'S HISTORY

Conserve and Celebrate Areas of Cultural and Historic Significance

4.2

PROMOTING VIBRANT ARTS

Support Arts and Cultural Programs, Services, and Facilities
Encourage Public Art Initiatives
Encourage Public Events and Festivals

4.3

CELEBRATING MULTICULTURALISM

Celebrate Cultural Diversity
Provide a Welcoming Environment for Newcomers

4.4

BUILDING REGIONAL PRIDE

Encourage a Richer Understanding of the Region to the World
Promote Community Placemaking and Beautification
Support Young Talent in the Region

4.5

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATING MEANINGFULLY

Foster Transparent Decision-Making
Promote Meaningful Dialogue and Participation
Facilitate Partnerships and Intermunicipal Cooperation

4.1

TAKING PRIDE IN WOOD BUFFALO'S HISTORY

Wood Buffalo's long history builds on the stories of many different people.


The Region's history spans from the First Nations and Métis communities who have known these lands since time immemorial, to the settlers who came with the fur trade in the 1700s to more contemporary exploration, innovation, and development of the area's abundant forests and rich oil sands. These collective histories are woven throughout the Region, in every rural community, Fort McMurray, and beyond.

These histories are worth knowing, understanding, and sharing, and substantial work must be done to ensure they are protected and preserved for generations to come. Care also must be taken to ensure that the modern-day story of Wood Buffalo's contributions to Canada and the world are not lost. Conserving areas of cultural and historical significance and finding ways to tell their stories will help strengthen the ties Wood Buffalo residents feel to their home and help reinforce respect and honour for these pasts.

4.1.1 Conserve and Celebrate Areas of Cultural and Historic Significance

Wood Buffalo has much to be proud of – from prehistoric fossils that are displayed near and far to its long history beginning with Indigenous Peoples as the original stewards and caretakers of the land, from fur trappers and traders to the Region's recent industrial achievements, heritage sites, historical buildings, and culturally significant areas that connect residents and visitors to the Region's past. In some cases, areas of historical significance, including archaeologically and paleontologically important locations, could be used for educational, interpretive, or scientific purposes, while in other places where tangible historical context no longer exists interpretive signage or alternate means of commemoration can be established. While historically significant sites and resources are regulated at multiple levels of government, conservation and celebration must occur throughout Wood Buffalo, recognizing the contributions of all communities to the Region's history.

- a) The Municipality will support heritage organizations, First Nations, and Métis communities in their efforts to develop inventories and other tools to help conserve traditional lands, historic sites, heritage buildings, and cultural knowledge by serving as a repository where these initiatives, from throughout the Municipality, can be collated and accessed by all, when possible.
- b) The Municipality should maintain an updated inventory of heritage properties and sites throughout all of Wood Buffalo, including significant archaeological sites, buildings, and cultural resources.
- c) The Municipality will encourage the conservation and retention of all municipally, provincially, and federally recognized heritage properties, buildings, and sites, ensuring new development is compatible with historic properties and locations.

- d) The Municipality will investigate designated heritage character areas, beginning with Downtown, where further investments in place-making public infrastructure can reinforce and accentuate the existing heritage value these locations provide to Wood Buffalo. 
- e) The Municipality will endeavour to increase the amount of memorial and educational materials throughout the Downtown, with a focus on describing previous historic uses, activities, and events in the area.
- f) The Municipality should support opportunities to expand local expertise or external investment in heritage education, interpretation, or archaeological exploration.
- g) The Municipality will work in alignment with Provincial legislation to ensure that Historical Impact Analyses or archaeological assessments appropriately identify and determine the value of historic sites as well as the measures required to protect them, when required.
- h) Where different names have been used historically for different places, features, or locations throughout Wood Buffalo, the Municipality should endeavour to formally recognize and tell the stories of these names and their meanings.
- i) The Municipality will explore opportunities to showcase the historical record collected in policy (4.1.1.h) above through preparation of interactive digital maps with background information, booklets, signage, and other media platforms.
- j) The Municipality will work with local Indigenous communities to develop opportunities for education and knowledge exchanges of Indigenous culture and history.
- k) The Municipality should work with local historical organizations, First Nations, Métis, and community leaders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, and Elders to develop a comprehensive historical record of the entire Municipality.

WHAT IS HERITAGE?

Heritage can be history, culture, art, environment, stories, biases, prejudices, education, objects, thoughts etc., anything that can be passed down from generation to generation!

The RMWB's new Heritage Resources Management Plan identifies, evaluates, and proposes a management framework for Wood Buffalo's most valued heritage resources.



4.2

PROMOTING VIBRANT ARTS

The arts give life and energy to the world, showing people new ways to see themselves, tell stories, and feel connected to home.

Through increased collaboration with local communities, the Municipality will pursue opportunities to empower people to make their voices heard, express their ideas, and tell their stories. Providing the arts with a dedicated home in Wood Buffalo is an important step in creating a place where they can truly flourish. Such an investment will pay dividends in the social and cultural development of Wood Buffalo for decades to come and create a platform from which the arts can reach out and connect every community within Wood Buffalo.

4.2.1 Support Arts and Cultural Programs, Services, and Facilities

Arts and culture benefit people in many areas of their lives; specifically, research suggests that participation in the arts can increase self-confidence and facilitate the development of creative as well as non-creative skills, such as communication or organizational skills. In some cases, participation in community-based arts projects can empower people to express their ideas and make their voices heard. At the community level, arts and cultural events foster the development of social capital and build bonds between different cultures and generations. Activities such as street festivals and public performances can celebrate the cultures and contributions of the diverse communities across Wood Buffalo.

- a) The Municipality will encourage implementation of the strategies outlined in the Wood Buffalo Culture Plan and Wood Buffalo Public Art Plan.
- b) The Municipality will continue to support and collaborate with the Arts Council of Wood Buffalo to open spaces and promote the growth and success of the arts in Wood Buffalo.
- c) The Municipality will collaborate with stakeholders' and organization who are seeking to explore opportunities to create and attract permanent arts and cultural institutions to the Region, such as art galleries, theatres, concert halls, and museums.
- d) The Municipality will maintain, improve, and expand government-supported facilities, including library services, as required.
- e) The Municipality will place an emphasis on providing multi-purpose government facilities.

- f) The Municipality will encourage the growth of the visual and performing arts sector and support the development of programs to develop new local artists and showcase established artists.
- g) Where creative industries are considering investing in Wood Buffalo, the Municipality will support with their applications for Provincial investments and grants.
- h) The Municipality will work with community stakeholders and Rightsholders to organize cultural events such as Alberta Culture Day, parades, and other special events to recognize and showcase the arts and cultural diversity present throughout the Region.
- i) The Municipality will investigate opportunities to directly incorporate art into public infrastructure.



INCORPORATING ART INTO PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Incorporating public art into everyday infrastructure can decrease vandalism, improve everyday perceptions of a place, and add a sense of uniqueness to the public realm. Most often employed in community gathering places such as a **Downtown** or central squares, these pieces of art can help define the character of a place and reinforce local identity.

Ideas for the community could include things such as wood buffalo-shaped traffic lights or wrapping public utilities with images of our amazing natural landscapes.

Source: Canadian Urban Institute

4.2.2 Encourage Public Art Initiatives

Public art provides an opportunity to share and display the Region's rich heritage, culture, and identity. Public art policies and programs can guide the funding and development of public art that is relevant to the Region, is engaging and interactive, and enriches the quality of public space for all.


- a) The Municipality will incorporate public art into public spaces and public-sector developments, while also encouraging public art within large private-sector developments. 
- b) The Municipality will partner with schools, institutions, community groups, local artists, First Nations, and Métis communities, and the private sector to develop a wide range of public art throughout the Municipality.
- c) The Municipality will encourage the use of local art and artists for public art displays.
- d) The Municipality will work with Indigenous communities to incorporate art and culturally appropriate designs into the design of civic and public spaces, parks, and institutional buildings.
- e) The Municipality will work with community partners, cultural associations, and other groups to incorporate art and other materials or motifs that reflect the cultural diversity and composition of the community into civic and public spaces, parks, and institutional buildings.
- f) The Municipality will continue supporting temporary and permanent art projects, starting in the Downtown and spreading out across the Region over time. Such projects improve the aesthetics of buildings with blank walls, street corners, and underdeveloped areas by adding visual interest and reinforcing a sense of place and community identity. 

Microgrants

A microgrant is a small sum of money distributed to an individual or organization, typically for hundreds or thousands of dollars, with the intent of enabling the recipient to develop or sustain an activity or initiative.

4.2.3 Encourage Public Events and Festivals

Events and festivals range from large-scale performances, such as concerts or operas, to street festivals and small-scale community projects. Each type of activity plays a different but important role in individual and community well-being. Public events and festivals increase exposure to arts and culture among residents and visitors alike and help instill a sense of community.

- a) The Municipality will promote festivals and events that showcase and increase awareness of Wood Buffalo's growing cultural diversity.
- b) The Municipality will promote public events and festivals throughout Wood Buffalo, throughout the year. For example, events can be supported by providing appropriate spaces that enable convenient access to support major attractions, events, and festivals, such as winter carnivals, Métis and First Nations celebrations, and multicultural events.
- c) The Municipality will ensure municipal policies, including the Land Use Bylaw, support and enable street and block parties, local fairs, and other events that promote social interaction and cohesion in communities and neighbourhoods.
- d) To enhance opportunities for socializing, the Municipality will promote the use and beautification of informal gathering spaces, such as sidewalks, streets, small seating nodes, picnic areas, plazas, hills, or slopes through placemaking interventions. These interventions could include art features, tactical urbanism, or showcases of cultural expression.
- e) The Municipality will study the viability of providing "microgrants" to help activate community spaces, promote community building, and inspire community activism. The purpose of this program would be for the Municipality to establish the "social infrastructure" conditions necessary to promote community belonging, foster neighbourhood connections, and improve quality of life. 

Wood Buffalo Public Art Plan

The Municipality's Public Art Plan was approved in April 2021, and is based on the belief that public art inspires artists and communities to rethink the use of public space, allowing for free and creative expression in ways that reflect a community's sense of place and identity.

Its central tenet is a means to explore questions around our relationship to place and what we want that place to be like - it is as much about the built environment as it is about our cultural environment.

Festivals and Celebrations

The Municipality plays host to dozens of festivals throughout the year, ranging from local block parties to region-wide Canada Day festivities. The celebrations don't end with the warm weather either, as WinterPlay is one of the most beloved winter traditions in Wood Buffalo.



4.3



CELEBRATING MULTICULTURALISM

Wood Buffalo is one of the most culturally diverse municipalities in the world, enjoying ethnic diversity at a similar per capita rate as globally recognized multicultural hubs.

Such an incredible array of backgrounds, beliefs, languages, and stories living together gives Wood Buffalo an amazingly vibrant culture and sense of community that is hard to find anywhere else. For these reasons, it is important to celebrate the uniqueness of this place. By finding new ways to celebrate cultural diversity, ensuring the Region continues building inclusive communities, and providing ample opportunities for newcomers to immediately feel they are valued members of the community, the Region will continue to develop and share Wood Buffalo's story around the world.

4.3.1 Celebrate Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity, founded on a rich First Nations and Métis heritage and continuously expanded through new residents from across Canada and the world, gives the Region its unique character. All residents' quality of life is enhanced through opportunities to present and promote these unique cultural heritages. Cultural activities bring people together, address social isolation, foster cultural identity, and facilitate a sense of belonging. Eliminating barriers to participation and celebrating the diversity of Wood Buffalo through education, promotion, and holding community events will create a safe and inclusive sense of place for all.

- a) To foster a sense of pride and local identity for residents, the Municipality will promote local activities, identify and enhance facilities, and implement processes that enable programming to promote and celebrate multiculturalism in Wood Buffalo.
- b) The Municipality will identify priority areas for promoting different community programs and celebrating Wood Buffalo's multiculturalism and diversity. 
- c) The Municipality will identify and address any accessibility or other barriers for diverse cultural groups to access the areas identified in 4.3.1.b. 
- d) The Municipality will prioritize supporting festivals, community activation, programming, and events in identified priority areas that promote cross-cultural and multi-generational learning opportunities and awareness of Wood Buffalo's dynamic cultural milieu.

- e) The Municipality will work with community partners to promote and celebrate cultural experiences in civic and community gathering places and celebrations.
- f) The Municipality will include Indigenous and culturally diverse artists in the planning, development, and implementation of cultural programming, including exhibitions. The Municipality will ensure that appropriate protocols are respected.
- g) To increase public education and awareness, the Municipality will support spreading the word about social non-profit organizations and other groups holding publicly available workshops on topics related to inclusion.
- h) The Municipality will investigate potential training programs to enhance the knowledge of civic employees about the diversity of Wood Buffalo, the needs, culture, and history of Equity-Deserving Groups, and to improve the understanding of how to foster a more inclusive and equitable Region for all.



WHAT IS CULTURAL DIVERSITY?

At its most basic, cultural diversity is the existence of a variety of cultural or ethnic groups within a society. When it comes to cultural diversity, Wood Buffalo punches well above its weight for a municipality of its size!

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>60

countries are represented by Wood Buffalo residents.

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census

22%

percentage of Wood Buffalo residents born outside of Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada Focus on Geography Series 2017

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IMMIGRANT RETENTION

Alberta has one of the highest immigrant-retention rates in Canada, with over 89% of immigrants remaining in the province after 5 years.

Source: Statistics Canada Longitudinal Immigration Database 2021

4.3.2 Provide a Welcoming Environment for Newcomers

Wood Buffalo is a destination of choice, attracting workers from around the world because of its high standard of living, job opportunities, world-class recreational amenities, access to nature, and more. The Municipality is enriched by these newcomers as they settle and raise their families in Wood Buffalo. Wood Buffalo will become a more prosperous community by ensuring everyone belongs. To ensure this, intentional actions must be taken to eliminate barriers so all people, including immigrants, can fully contribute to the success of the Region and thrive. To support the continued success of newcomers choosing to relocate here, the Municipality strives to always improve itself as a welcoming place for everyone the moment they arrive in the community.

- a) The Municipality will endeavour to promote inclusivity and cultural diversity through working with community organizations for the development of a welcome, orientation, and engagement plan for new residents. This plan should connect newcomers with social service providers that operate in the Municipality, ensuring newcomers are aware of and can access social and health programs.
- b) The Municipality will encourage and promote organizations that help newcomers find housing and job opportunities.
- c) The Municipality will continue to support organizations that provide newcomers with programs and initiatives aligned with relevant provincial programs.
- d) Reflecting the unique nature and context of Wood Buffalo's local economy, the Municipality will petition senior levels of government to develop a framework for declaring the Municipality as a unique place of opportunity for special immigration, education, and training-based policies.





4.4

BUILDING REGIONAL PRIDE


Wood Buffalo's tremendous regional pride comes from a love of what people here do and who they are – a tenacious, hard-working group that knows how to come together in times of hardship and joy.

Wood Buffalo residents experience a deep sense of belonging, and this is a story that should be shared with the world.

Committing to the ongoing beautification of the Region, showing the outside world who and what Wood Buffalo really is, and ensuring everyone in the community feels they have opportunity to grow and remain here are critical elements of supporting regional pride for the long term.

4.4.1 Encourage a Richer Understanding of the Region to the World


A cohesive identity founded in regional pride can help communicate a better, more complete understanding of who Wood Buffalo is to the world. At the same time, this communication can help address misconceptions about the Region.

- a) To communicate a complete and richer understanding of Wood Buffalo nationally and internationally, the Municipality will work with agencies and senior levels of government to proactively promote and highlight Wood Buffalo's strengths while establishing and reinforcing its identity through national and global public relation initiatives.
- b) The Municipality will support the use of regional branding initiatives developed by local economic development organizations. These initiatives should emphasize the importance of how the Municipality markets itself, focus on what makes the Region unique, and use language to highlight the assets of Wood Buffalo.
- c) The Municipality will explore opportunities to identify, honour, and celebrate long-term residents in Wood Buffalo, demonstrating the breadth of people who have come to the Region and made it their long-term home. Such a program helps dispel notions of the Municipality as a community of transients and emphasizes the fact that Wood Buffalo is a place to call home. 

4.4.2 Promote Community Placemaking and Beautification

Community placemaking reinforces Wood Buffalo's character by creating a sense of identity, fostering local pride, and improving awareness of the community's context and history. Neighbourhood and community design, which includes public spaces, streetscapes, and built forms, is a major component of the Municipality's expression of identity, as well as an important element in improving overall community safety.

Council initiatives such as those that create a more walkable Wood Buffalo are intrinsically tied to placemaking and beautification. As a result, placemaking and beautification can have a noticeable effect on a community’s image, safety and wellbeing, and the way Wood Buffalo residents see themselves. At the same time, strong placemaking and beautification can inspire civic action and participation, lead residents to coordinate and lead their own events, and directly contribute back to the vibrancy and liveliness of their communities.

- a) The Municipality will promote the creation of vibrant squares, plazas, parks, streetscapes, and waterfronts to offer opportunities for people to gather and interact while contributing to community identity and pride.
- b) The Municipality will build local pride and sense of ownership for residents and visitors through such things as litter control, graffiti deterrence and prevention, sidewalk and road repair, banner installation, tree and flower planting, and ornamental lighting. The Municipality will also continue to support and promote community-driven initiatives such as Adopt-a-Park, Adopt-a-Trail, and Adopt-a-Rink.
- c) The Municipality will create and enhance temporary, seasonal, and permanent public places and spaces throughout Wood Buffalo. These could be used for events and activities such as fairs, food festivals, holiday celebrations, and more, while retaining their underlying uses throughout the remainder of the year. 
- d) The Municipality will work closely with organizations and leaders in each of its rural communities to identify placemaking and beautification initiatives that should be prioritized.

>20

Community gardens across the Municipality, offering residents the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors while they grow their own fruit, vegetables, and flowers.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM

Wood Buffalo has been honoured with several regional and national Communities in Bloom awards over the years, but what many people do not realize is that Communities in Bloom is about more than just flowers. Beautification projects such as public art and community activations such as guided walks and clean-up initiatives also contribute to the overall scoring.

1 in 5

Wood Buffalo residents have lived here for 20 years or longer, a proportion that continues to grow.


Source: Municipal Census Report 2021

4.4.3 Support Young Talent in the Region

Regional pride can build and coalesce around the successes of high-performing individuals and teams. Wood Buffalo has no shortage of internationally successful talent, and highlighting these individuals and groups shines a light on local excellence. As representatives of the future, youth are particularly important.

- a) The Municipality will work with community organizations to support programs that energize Wood Buffalo's youth to aim for outstanding performance in academia, arts, sports, and community service.
- b) The Municipality will encourage local businesses and community groups to establish scholarships and grant opportunities for students choosing to pursue post-secondary opportunities in Wood Buffalo. These scholarships and bursaries could serve a dual mandate of retaining local students in the Municipality while also attracting international students to relocate to Wood Buffalo for their education.
- c) To raise awareness about career opportunities within local government, the Municipality will encourage municipal employees to get involved in local schools and educate students about their municipal roles (such as engineering, planning or recreation management), and their impact within the Region.
- d) The Municipality should investigate opportunities to develop marketing programs aimed at enticing new graduates to move to Wood Buffalo.
- e) The Municipality should partner with school districts, colleges, and universities to investigate opportunities to follow up with local students

two to four years after they graduate from high school. The intention of this program would be to help connect former students with job opportunities in Wood Buffalo if they have left home but are interested in coming back.

- f) The Municipality should invest in mentoring, coaching, and training youth through academic, sporting, and work experience.
- g) The Municipality will improve youth involvement in government by reviewing and updating the Terms of Reference for all municipal boards and committees. Finding more ways to directly integrate youth into municipal decision-making and community building from a young age can inspire civic pride and create a lifetime of commitment to making a difference in their home community. 



MACOY

The Mayor's Advisory Council on Youth (MACOY) is one of the many ways that the Municipality is seeking to build stronger relationships between the community and local government. By empowering youth and directly engaging them on the matters impacting their lives in the community, today's youth are more likely to become tomorrow's leaders.

33

is the average age of Wood Buffalo, making it one of the youngest municipalities in Canada.

Source: Wood Buffalo Municipal Census 2021





4.5

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATING MEANINGFULLY

An informed, involved, and engaged public is necessary for a healthy and functioning democracy.

Wood Buffalo is committed to always improving and building upon its existing relationships with all residents, organizations, stakeholders, and Indigenous Partners throughout the Municipality. While the Municipality is already on the leading edge of many new forms of community outreach and relationship building, the world is constantly evolving. The Municipality is committed to responding to these changes in ways that improve governance, community buy-in, and the overall effective operation of the Municipality.

4.5.1 Foster Transparent Decision-Making

The Municipality is committed in its responsibility to balance overarching interests with the various needs of residents, stakeholders' and Indigenous Partners within it. The needs of residents and other stakeholders can be very different from community to community, and all must work together to define Wood Buffalo's goals and priorities. The Municipality makes decisions about development, infrastructure, programming, and taxes, with Council being the ultimate decision-making authority. Regardless of whether decisions are being made by Council, committees of Council, or Administration, all should be made in a spirit of transparency. Ensuring the community feels meaningfully engaged with and heard by the Municipality is imperative for ensuring that Administration and Council decisions are informed by local knowledge, insight, and experience. Open and transparent decision-making processes and meaningful, two-way communication strategies are fundamental to building relationships and trust.

- a) The Municipality will support the principles of transparency and accountability in governance by continuing to expand its options and opportunities for engaging citizens in open communication and decision-making.
- b) The Municipality will continually improve its reporting mechanisms on service delivery, corporate performance, and municipal-led initiatives throughout Wood Buffalo by establishing a clear reporting framework and consistent messaging for the public.

| Participate Wood Buffalo

Participate Wood Buffalo is the Municipality's online public engagement platform, a powerful tool that allows the Municipality to hear the wide spectrum of opinions and perspectives that exist in the community. Engaged and active citizens make for a more vibrant and welcoming community while also leading to better decision-making.

4.5.2 Promote Meaningful Dialogue and Participation


Meaningful dialogue and participation in municipal decision-making can lead to better community outcomes and encourage a sense of belonging. To encourage meaningful dialogue and participation, it is important to reduce barriers to participation and to meet people where they are (geographically, linguistically, functionally, and more). To participate meaningfully, citizens also require access to reliable, accurate information.

- a) The Municipality will continue enhancing the strategies for increasing levels of community engagement through public participation and two-way dialogues.
- b) The Municipality will support community-based initiatives by directly engaging with initiative leaders. Emphasis should be placed on empowering and enabling leaders to collaboratively effect positive change in their community.
- c) To lower the barriers to participation, the Municipality will encourage the use of different forums and mediums (in-person, online and on-site, where appropriate) for discussion and feedback on municipal direction and decision-making.
- d) The Municipality will commit to a public engagement approach that will help build public trust and be tailored to the specific needs of each community. This approach will also evolve as the communities grow and change over time.
- e) The Municipality will work collaboratively with the Provincial and Federal governments, Indigenous Partners, adjacent municipalities, and the oil sands industry to improve the coordination of community engagement processes.



WHAT'S A RURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

The premise of a Rural Advisory Committee is simple: giving a voice to those who know their community and it's unique needs most. The Rural Advisory Committee would help inform Council and Administration about the challenges and opportunities the rural residents face, and allow decision-makers to proactively address concerns before they become larger problems.

- f) To increase the involvement of rural communities in municipal planning, programs, and service delivery, the Municipality will explore the creation of a Council-appointed “Rural Advisory Committee.” This committee will advise and inform Council on rural priorities and issues. 
- g) The Municipality will maintain its commitment to responsive action on citizen requests through Pulse and consider establishing turnaround times for staff responses or follow-up surveys to gauge citizen satisfaction with the Municipality’s response.

4.5.3 Facilitate Partnerships and Intermunicipal Cooperation

Proactive long-term planning requires collaboration and partnerships with neighbouring municipalities, senior levels of government, Indigenous Partners, and other agencies. As provincial legislation governing intermunicipal relationships continues to evolve, strong partnerships and good working relationships with other governments are more important than ever. These relationships will help to ensure the efficient and cost-effective provision of services within Wood Buffalo, coordinate the planning of natural systems, foster economic development, and ensure compatibility between respective land use policies.

- a) The Municipality will engage in and implement planning requirements of the Alberta Land Stewardship Act. 
- b) The Municipality will advocate for and facilitate the development of partnership agreements that assist in the delivery of programs, services, and facility operation pursuant to the Municipal Government Act’s requirements for Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks and/ or Intermunicipal Development Plans.
- c) Beyond the minimum requirements outlined through the Municipal Government Act for Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks and

Intermunicipal Development Plans, the Municipality will work with adjacent municipalities to act on new and emerging opportunities related to intermunicipal cooperation as they arise, seeking to maximize mutual benefit.

- d) The Municipality will maintain and enhance partnerships with senior levels of governments, neighbouring communities, public agencies, community organizations, businesses, and individuals for the efficient and effective coordination of plans, policies, and initiatives.



Intermunicipal Partners

Wood Buffalo has a lot of borders! Neighbouring not just other municipalities, but also the Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan, the Municipality has a lot of relationships to maintain above and beyond its normal statutory requirements.

The Municipality has a number of formal agreements with its intermunicipal partners, called Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Agreements, and is always open to finding new and innovative ways to collaborate with its neighbours.

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

ACTION ITEMS

- Investigate designating identified heritage sites
- Incorporate public art into public spaces as possible
- Continue supporting temporary art projects throughout Wood Buffalo
- Investigate developing a community activation microgrant program
- Identify priority areas for promoting programming that supports expanded access to cultural groups in these priority areas
- Explore opportunities to celebrate long-term residents of Wood Buffalo
- Create and enhance public places and spaces
- Review board and committee Terms of Reference to ensure increasing youth involvement in local government is reflected
- Investigate creating a Rural Advisory Group
- Implement ALSA planning requirements





CONNECTING TO NATURE



Wood Buffalo's cherished wilderness areas, ecosystems, parks, and waterfronts are hallmarks of the Municipality. Visitors come from near and far to explore the incredible outdoors. Protecting essential ecosystems for generations to come while ensuring these incredible natural amenities are accessible and open for enjoyment today is a balancing act that will help define how Wood Buffalo grows over the coming years.

CONNECTING TO NATURE

Wood Buffalo's cherished wilderness areas, protected ecosystems, parks, and waterfronts are hallmarks of the Region, recognizing Indigenous Peoples as the original stewards and caretakers of the land. Visitors come from near and far to explore the incredible outdoors. Bold new ideas like the Green and Blue Network can create a necklace of integrated trails and pathways throughout the Region with the potential to become the envy of nature-goers around the world. The connection that Indigenous Peoples have to land and water will be upheld while sustained commitments to acting on climate change and sound environmental stewardship will continue to share Wood Buffalo's values with the world.



HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

5.1

PROTECTING HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

Environmental Conservation and Ecological Management
Clean Air and Water

5.2

ACCESSING THE WILDERNESS

Creating a Green Network
Creating a Blue Network

5.3

ACTIVATING PARKS AND RECREATION

Recreation

5.4

ACTING ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Protecting Communities
Supporting Renewable Initiatives
Responsible Waste Management

5.1

PROTECTING HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

With some of the world's most pristine natural wilderness, Wood Buffalo has a special obligation to protect these natural assets and ecosystems.

Sustainable management practices will conserve the Region's natural functions, in turn helping to maintain the high quality of clean air and water residents are used to. Protecting healthy ecosystems is not just good for the environment – keeping these natural systems healthy and functioning also reduces the costs to treat and clean water for residents, while clean air and water can lead to better quality of life and health outcomes.

5.1.1 Environmental Conservation and Ecological Management

Most of Wood Buffalo is forest, in fact, some of the most intact boreal forest in the country. Meandering throughout this sea of trees are expansive pure river networks, while bountiful flora and fauna add texture and vibrancy to this stunning natural ecosystem. This abundant natural capital supports traditional lifestyles and offers a diversity of year-round recreational activities. Appropriately managing development when it impacts Wood Buffalo's intact natural landscapes requires the integration of environmentally responsible practices to protect ecosystems, mitigate the impacts of a changing climate on the Region, and contribute to healthier communities. Conserving the environment's natural functions, particularly where it has been impacted by development, will ensure Wood Buffalo remains a place rooted in and connected to its natural bounty.

- a) The Municipality will adopt policies and develop strategies for meeting or exceeding regulatory standards for Environmental Protection, energy use, and waste management for its own facilities and assets, where appropriate.
- b) Where warranted, due to the presence of significant environmental features, functions, and/or traditional land uses, the Municipality will require developers to prepare studies to assess and minimize the impact of new development on the natural environment.
- c) The Municipality will support provincial and federal government efforts to identify riparian and wetlands areas throughout the Region. Emphasis will be placed on identifying areas that contribute most to managing flooding, reducing erosion, protecting water quality, contributing to natural beauty, and providing food and shelter for wildlife.

- d) The Municipality will develop and implement policies through statutory plans, regulations, and bylaws to help conserve the ecological health and function of the riparian areas and wetlands identified in 5.1.1.c. Policies should limit development that negatively impacts or impedes the natural function of ecosystems, and instead promote their use as natural areas, parks, trails, and essential utility corridors that do not materially impact the function of the floodway. 
- e) The Municipality will collaborate with senior levels of government, the oil sands industry, Indigenous Partners, and environmental organizations to enhance the Municipality's conservation areas.
- f) The Municipality will work with the province to identify means to implement Provincial environmental regulations in a manner that protects areas of significant biodiversity and ecological sensitivity to the greatest extent possible.
- g) The Municipality will work closely with local First Nations and Métis communities as they identify and protect culturally significant ecosystems and environments for traditional use. Where this work identifies culturally significant ecosystems and environments used for traditional purposes by local First Nations and Métis communities, the Municipality will endeavour to incorporate these findings into policies and plans.

| 24/7/365

The Wood Buffalo Environmental Association monitors the air in the Municipality around the clock, and is one of the most comprehensive and extensive air quality monitoring networks in North America.

Source: Wood Buffalo Environmental Association

QUICK FACTS

>99 percentage of the RMWB that is Crown Land, almost entirely undisturbed from its natural state.

1,923 How far in kilometres the Peace River runs before meeting the Athabasca in Wood Buffalo.

1,231 the length of the Athabasca River in kilometres from the Rockies to Lake Athabasca in Wood Buffalo.

8th Lake Athabasca is the 8th-largest lake in Canada, and the largest and deepest freshwater lake in both Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Source: Canadian Geographic

5.1.2 Clean Air and Water

Clean air and water help sustain the high quality of life enjoyed by the residents of Wood Buffalo. The immediate and lingering impacts of the 2016 and 2024 wildfire on the Region's air and water quality are a painful reminder of how vulnerable these elements can be. Balancing the competing demands of the oil sands industry, recreation, growth, and conservation presents ongoing opportunities for Wood Buffalo to improve its air and water quality. While many facets of water and air quality regulation exist beyond its control with senior levels of government, the Municipality is a stakeholder in protecting Wood Buffalo's air and water quality.

- a) The Municipality will participate in protecting and enhancing the air and water quality in the Region as required.
- b) The Municipality should review its Water and Wastewater Management Plans to reflect the projected growth trajectory and update them if required. 🐃
- c) Acting within its jurisdictional responsibilities, the Municipality will continue best practices to meet regulatory requirements to protect the water quality of waterbodies within Wood Buffalo, particularly discharges from treatment plants and stormwater runoff. Innovations could include reclaiming and reusing treated water and investing in green infrastructure opportunities to mitigate stormwater runoff. To ensure compliance, the Municipality will support water quality monitoring and reporting programs.
- d) The Municipality will work towards reducing emissions that impact air quality by addressing traffic volumes, idling, and congestion through the Transportation Master Plan.

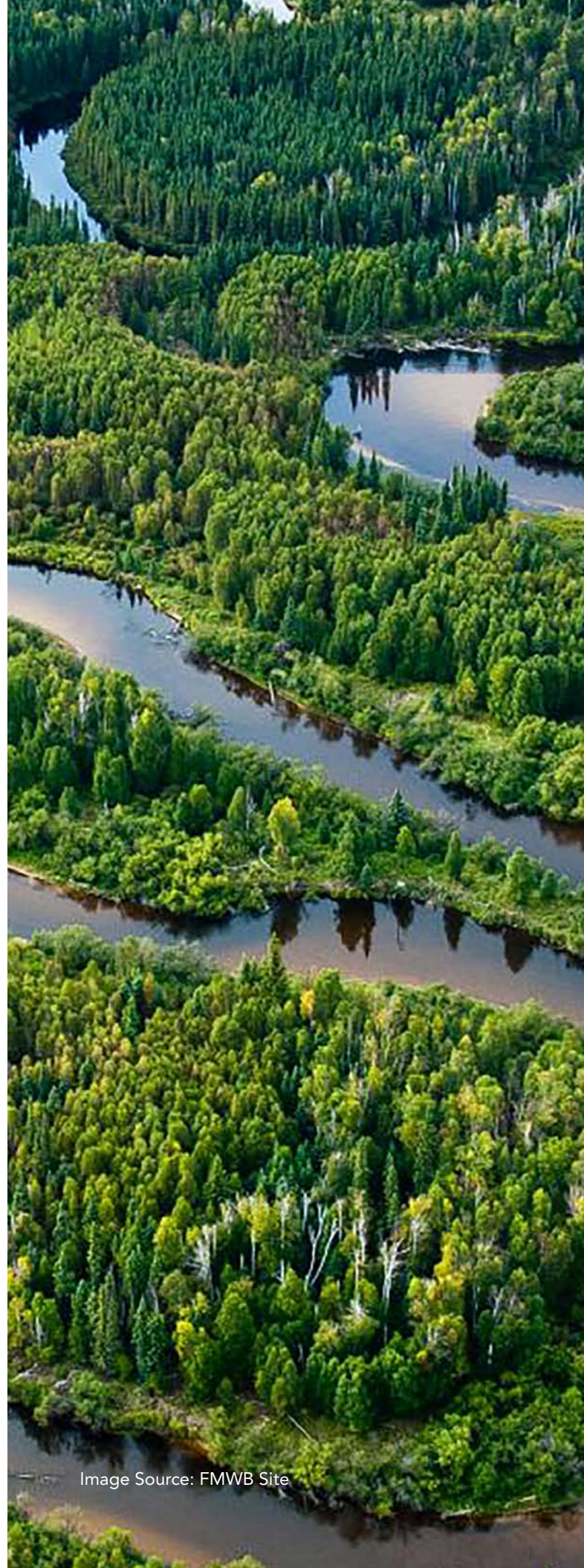


Image Source: FMWB Site

5.2

ACCESSING THE WILDERNESS



Wood Buffalo is a place of untamed boreal forest, expansive river networks, otherworldly sand dunes, and bountiful flora and fauna.

Creating a “Green Network” of interconnected natural areas across the Municipality and a “Blue Network” of waterfronts along Wood Buffalo’s rivers will balance the need to preserve sensitive landscapes with the desire to access these natural wonders throughout the Region for generations to come.

An integrated network of hiking, bike-packing, canoeing, and kayaking trails is an authentic Wood Buffalo opportunity. Such outdoor infrastructure has the potential to become the envy of nature-goers around the world, while sustained commitments to acting on climate change and sound environmental stewardship will continue to share Wood Buffalo’s values to the world.

5.2.1 Creating a Green Network

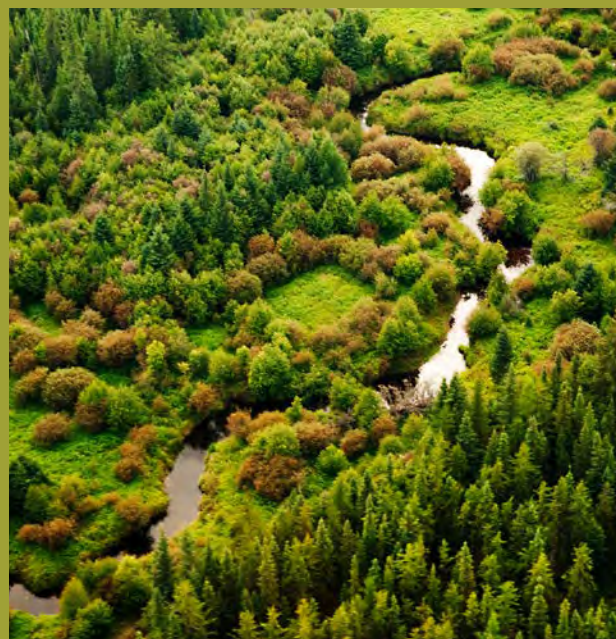
The Green Network will build on the existing trails and pathways throughout Wood Buffalo, establishing a recreational and commuter network for active transportation choices (e.g., walking, cycling, skiing, etc.) year-round. Building connections within Downtown, to other neighbourhoods in the Urban Service Area, and throughout Wood Buffalo’s rural communities along the Region’s extensive natural areas will increase quality of life for all residents. The Green Network will support active transportation choices and connect built-up areas, parks, and nature throughout Wood Buffalo. Working in close collaboration with Indigenous Partners to plan this network, the Green Network will also serve as a catalyst for economic development, as the more complete the network becomes, the greater its attraction to tourists.

- a) The Municipality will prepare a comprehensive Green Network concept for all of Wood Buffalo. The Green Network will be designed as a four-seasons asset accommodating a variety of active transportation options including walking, cycling, cross-country skiing and in-line skating. 
- b) The Municipality will develop the Green Network concept in conjunction with the Blue Network concept (further described in the following section) to ensure each network complements the other, leading to the development of a comprehensive and seamlessly integrated network throughout Wood Buffalo. 
- c) The Municipality will ensure that the Green Network concept builds on the 2019 Parks Master Plan, the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan, and all statutory plans in the Municipality, coordinating with the proposed implementation strategies of these plans to maximize the speed with which a comprehensive network can be developed through already-completed capital expenditure budgeting in the Downtown and throughout the Municipality.

- d) The Municipality should integrate the Green Network concept into the Transportation Master Plan with capital and operational costs planned for and prioritized.
- e) The Municipality should consider developing components of the Green Network, particularly those connecting rural communities over longer distances, as signature single-day or multi-day hiking and biking trails, providing tourism draws that enable visitors to experience Wood Buffalo's untouched natural Boreal forests.
- f) The Municipality should use the Green Network to connect residents with places of employment, providing viable choices to travel to and from work, school, and neighbourhood amenities by building missing links in the active transportation network, and creating new and safer active transportation infrastructure.
- g) The Municipality will explore opportunities to integrate protective "Greenbelts" surrounding urban areas and rural communities within the Green Network to establish a buffer in between industrial development and established communities. 🐃
- h) The Municipality will provide safe staging areas for off-highway vehicles (OHVs) and identify community specific OHV policies to address unique needs and conditions.
- i) The Municipality will investigate integrating OHV staging areas and trails as part of the future Green Network.
- j) The Municipality will support trailhead education and trail safety measures to help ensure the responsible use of OHVs and reduce conflicts with other trail users.
- k) Where possible, OHVs should have separate trails from active transportation (e.g. hiking, biking, skiing, etc.) within a Green Network route to increase comfort for all users.

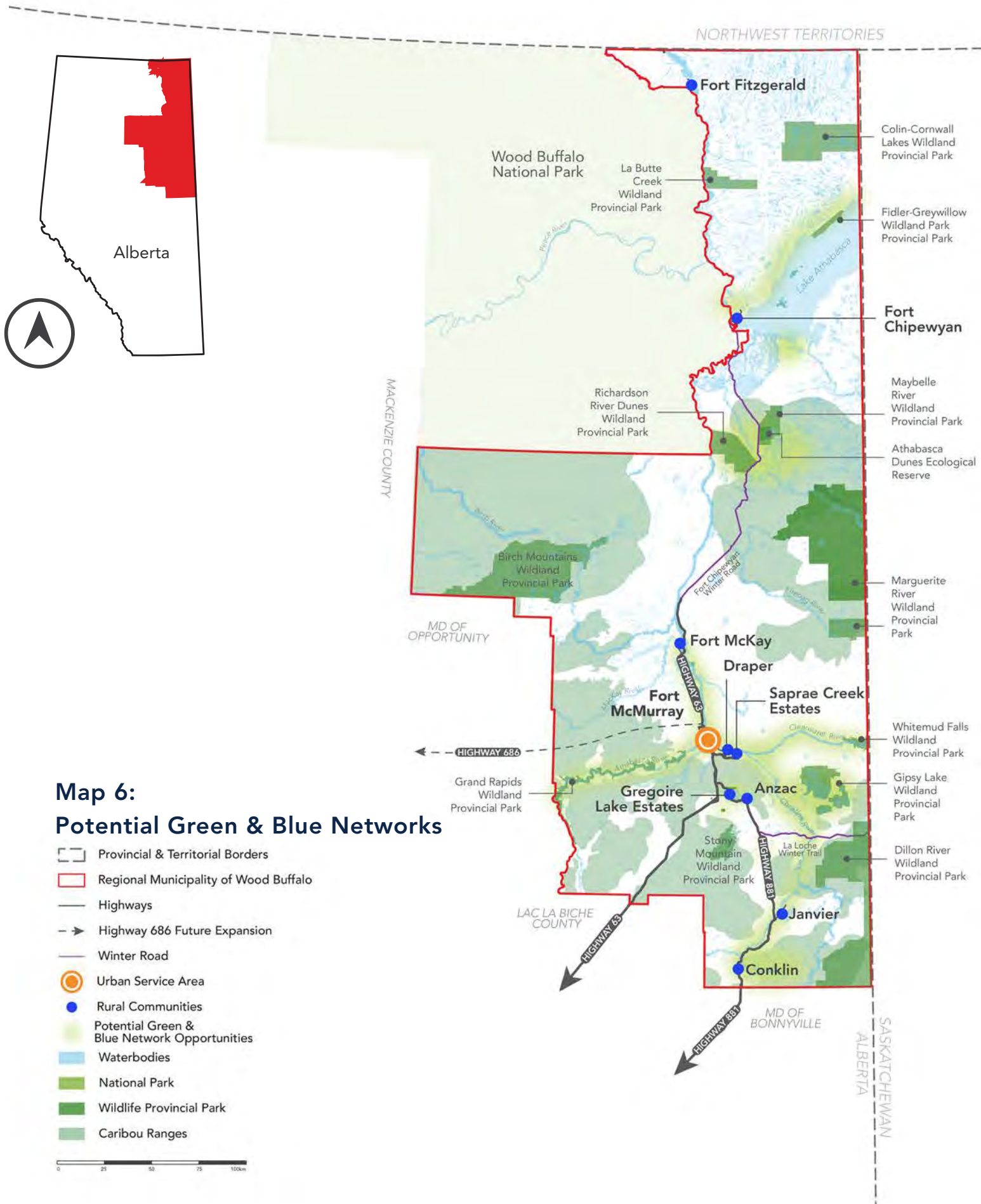
PROTECTING CARIBOU HABITAT

Woodland caribou require intact habitat corridors in order to survive. Wood Buffalo's vast unspoiled wilderness provides exactly what they need to thrive, allowing the woodland caribou who travel through the Municipality easy access to Wood Buffalo National Park and beyond.



WHAT ARE THE GREEN AND BLUE NETWORKS?

Wood Buffalo is a place of untamed boreal forest, expansive pristine river networks, and bountiful flora and fauna. A "Green Network" connecting natural open spaces across the Region will expand and connect existing trails, increase recreation and mobility options, enhance open space, and improve access to natural areas in an environmentally responsible manner. A "Blue Network" of waterfront along Wood Buffalo rivers will use a contextually sensitive approach to create river recreation hubs and improve flood protection, recognizing the historic connection to water many Wood Buffalo communities have. Together, the Green and Blue Networks will balance the need to preserve sensitive landscapes with the desire to access these natural wonders throughout the region for generations to come.





Map 6:
Potential Green & Blue Networks

- Provincial & Territorial Borders
- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
- Highways
- Highway 686 Future Expansion
- Winter Road
- Urban Service Area
- Rural Communities
- Potential Green & Blue Network Opportunities
- Waterbodies
- National Park
- Wildlife Provincial Park
- Caribou Ranges

0 25 50 75 100km

5.2.2 Creating a Blue Network

Wood Buffalo's history is intrinsically tied to its many watercourses. Historically most of its communities were built along waterfronts, and to this day Wood Buffalo residents cherish their ability to access pristine waterbodies throughout the Region. The Blue Network will leverage these waterfronts into recreation, leisure, and conservation opportunities for visitors and residents alike to experience and enjoy. The Clearwater and Athabasca Rivers provide scenic beauty to Fort McMurray, while Willow Lake, Lake Athabasca, and many other water bodies and watercourses accentuate and define Wood Buffalo's communities. The Blue Network is different from the Green Network in that it considers more than just mobility. The Blue Network also identifies new ideas for recreational facilities, developing larger park spaces, improving flood protection, and, where appropriate, promoting sensitive commercialization of these assets. Many components of the Blue Network, particularly river and lakefront trails, will be seamlessly integrated into the Green Network, enabling one comprehensive network across the entire Municipality.

- a) The Municipality will prepare a comprehensive Blue Network concept for all of Wood Buffalo. The Blue Network will be intentionally designed as a four-seasons asset accommodating a variety of recreational facilities, flood protection opportunities, and sensitive commercialization where appropriate. 
- b) The Blue Network concept should be developed in conjunction with the Green Network concept to ensure each complements the other, leading to the development of a comprehensive and seamlessly integrated network throughout all of Wood Buffalo. 

- c) The Blue Network concept should build upon the work completed in existing flood mitigation design, waterfront, and Downtown plans for the Region, coordinating with the proposed implementation strategies of those plans to maximize the speed with which a comprehensive network can be developed within already-completed capital expenditure budgeting.
- d) The Municipality should prioritize Blue Network projects from the Downtown outwards, ensuring Wood Buffalo's commercial heart and its greatest recreational asset, MacDonald Island Park, are the centre of the network.
- e) The Waterfront Master Plans must outline how riverbanks and lakeshores within the Urban Service Area and/or rural community boundary areas are secured for public access and enjoyment. These plans must also define a river trail network along the banks to promote active living while connecting nodes of activity.
- f) When a new recreational facility, parkland, and related recreation amenity need is identified, the Municipality will, where possible, prioritize a Blue Network location to strengthen the connection to the waterfront and generate additional use of these areas.
- g) For any infrastructure located along the Blue Network, the Municipality must consider flood mitigation and safety in its design.
- h) Where identified as feasible through Blue Network concept work completed in policy 5.2.2.a, the Municipality will sensitively introduce recreation opportunities along the Blue Network to protect the ecological health of these areas.

35km

the total length of cross-country ski trails maintained by the Ptarmigan Nordic Ski Club in Fort McMurray.

- i) Wood Buffalo will investigate opportunities to protect riparian areas through the development of linear parks and passive recreation spaces that contribute to the Green Network, helping to further connect Wood Buffalo's communities to their natural surroundings.
- j) Where waterfronts require reinvestment, the Municipality will explore options to transform these areas into either vibrant gathering places or promote their reclamation as natural areas with opportunities for recreation.
- k) In the Blue Network concept identified in policy 5.2.2.a the Municipality will consider some of Wood Buffalo's lakes for outdoors recreational development. Development of these areas will only be permitted after a rigorous public engagement process, environmental impact assessment, and other relevant studies are completed.



THE GREEN AND BLUE NETWORKS ARE FOR EVERYONE!

No matter how you move through nature, the Green and Blue Networks will have something to offer you. They're all about increasing mobility and improving access to nature in a responsible and sustainable way!



5.3

ACTIVATING PARKS AND RECREATION



Parks and recreation areas are important contributors to quality of life throughout Wood Buffalo.

Easy and convenient access to recreation opportunities help residents meet their daily exercise needs and live happy, healthy, active lifestyles. With an abundance of natural areas as well as world-class recreation facilities, Wood Buffalo residents know they have one of the best backyards in the country. However, more can be done to provide greater access for everyone while continuing to enhance these amenities to meet the needs of residents today and into the future.



5.3.1 Recreation

As the Municipality grows, maintenance of existing recreational areas requires strategic planning to adapt to changing preferences, manage these assets, explore new tourism and tourism-related economic opportunities, and sustain the recreational amenities and opportunities that Wood Buffalo residents know and love.

- a) The Municipality will initiate discussions with the Province about opening Crown Land in a coordinated and thoughtful manner to private development, with an eye towards establishing a “cottage country” in Wood Buffalo where residents are able to develop cabins. 
- b) The Municipality should support local economic development organizations in preparing an integrated regional recreational strategy that identifies opportunities for all residents to enjoy the Region’s natural surroundings and recreation facilities. 
- c) The regional recreation strategy should be highlighted in the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan to ensure the Municipality’s interests are appropriately conveyed through this provincial planning document.
- d) The Municipality will work with the oil sands industry to identify preferred contributions by industry towards local recreational assets through community visioning and planning exercises that will inform development of the integrated regional recreation strategy.
- e) The Municipality should explore to establish reserve funds for operating and maintaining recreational assets with targeted minimum balance policies to offset and insulate the Municipality from the cyclical nature of economic swings.
- f) The Municipality will continue to promote the use of MacDonald Island as a major gathering place for public activities and facilities related to sports, recreation, arts, culture, and leisure.



MACDONALD ISLAND PARK

It's all here! From its humble beginning in 1978, the Island has undergone numerous expansions to create what is now known as MacDonald Island Park. Home to the Suncor Community Leisure Centre, Miskanaw Golf Club and Shell Place, the Island has the venues and experience to host large sporting events, concerts, banquets, family programming, camps, and a variety of other community collaborations.

MacDonald Island Park, operated by the Regional Recreation Corporation of Wood Buffalo, a not-for-profit corporation working in collaboration with the Municipality, continues to offer new initiatives, programs and services making it an integral part of the Fort McMurray community.



5.4

ACTING ON CLIMATE CHANGE

While the overall contributions of the Municipality and Canada to emissions globally are exceedingly small, the effects of a changing climate have been profoundly felt by Wood Buffalo over the last decade.

It is important for the Region to play a role in preparing for and taking advantage of innovative opportunities arising from these changes and to step up as a leader in acting on climate change. Already Wood Buffalo contributes significantly to carbon sequestration through its dense boreal forests, environmentally conscious resource extraction, and ongoing commitments to reducing its carbon footprint. Continuing to build and support sustainable communities, promote and support renewable energy initiatives, and responsibly manage waste has the potential to create new economic streams throughout Wood Buffalo.

5.4.1 Protecting Communities

As the global climate continues to change, extreme weather events are becoming more and more common. The 2013 floods, 2016 wildfires, 2020 floods, and 2024 wildfire are a few examples of the extreme weather events Wood Buffalo has experienced in the recent past. Wood Buffalo residents know better than most, the risks, hardships, and costs that these events can bring with them, and it is vital that the Municipality plan for improved community resiliency. Every community within Wood Buffalo is surrounded by large tracts of wilderness. As a result, the safety of residents from natural hazards, such as floods and wildfire, is a critical concern.

- a) The Municipality should comprehensively review its land use and development policy frameworks to ensure development is protected from high-risk areas and protects the well-being and safety of it's current and future residents.
- b) The Municipality will regularly reassess risks of and exposure to future natural disasters, and revisit land use policy, including the Land Use Bylaw and relevant Statutory Plans. These plans will be used to incorporate changes that reduce the level of exposure and mitigate the impacts should a disaster occur, and to incorporate changes recommended by lessons learned from disaster events such that a clear roadmap to "build back better" throughout Wood Buffalo is attained.
- c) Municipally and provincially identified high flood risk areas should not permit future development except when protected by appropriate structural flood mitigation measures or municipally approved statutory plans, bylaws, and flood regulations.



- d) The Municipality will explore opportunities to relocate essential municipal service facilities, at the end of their life span, when hazards, risks, and vulnerability assessments point to the need to move the facility from higher-risk to lower-risk zones in order to avoid future negative impacts from identified hazards and risks.
- e) The Municipality will prioritize retrofitting existing settlement areas and requiring new developments to align with FireSmart best practices.
- f) The Municipality will protect residents from adverse geotechnical conditions by establishing appropriate land uses and setbacks in the Land Use Bylaw as well as leveraging environmental reserve during development applications. 🌿
- g) The Municipality should prioritize acquiring land located in higher risk areas for recreation and conservation purposes and incorporate this land into the Green and Blue Network plans.

5.4.2 Supporting Renewable Initiatives

With Wood Buffalo’s unparalleled depth of energy industry expertise, it is well-poised to diversify its economic portfolio into a broader range of energy sectors. Already innovative partnerships throughout the Region have proven the viability of solar energy initiatives to reduce costs and carbon emissions for rural communities, and sustained innovations in the renewable-energy industry should be promoted and celebrated throughout Wood Buffalo, where financially responsible to do so. The Government of Alberta has recently funded test projects in carbon sequestration that could prove promising for future implementation in Wood Buffalo, while emerging scientific literature has indicated that opportunities exist for Wood Buffalo to help the world meet growing demand for rare earth metals and minerals used in the rechargeable batteries that will power the future.

- a) The Municipality will work with stakeholders and rightsholders in identifying, researching, and developing alternative and renewable energy sources as part of its commitment to act on climate change.



FIRESMART

Since the early 1990s, **FireSmart** Canada has maintained a mandate to reduce the risk that wildfires pose to populated areas, by facilitating inter-agency cooperation to promote education and awareness. Appropriately managing wildfire requires balancing its natural role with the protection of human life, property and economic values. This equilibrium demands comprehensive risk management approaches including an appropriate mix of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. We can manage future risk collectively through the implementation and further development of a national **FireSmart** engagement and education program.

Source: FireSmart Canada

Increasing changes to our climate means natural disasters such as fires are more likely to happen in the future.



- b) The Municipality will support initiatives that implement renewable energy throughout Wood Buffalo, acting as an advocate and supporter for these initiatives to senior government regulators, where appropriate.
- c) The Municipality should establish the baseline for current energy consumption by municipal operations and will develop options to reduce and optimize their consumption while exploring opportunities to increase the utilization of renewable energy options to the greatest extent possible.
- d) The Municipality will encourage new developments to include renewable energy sources such as solar energy, geothermal energy, geo-heat exchange, district heating, and heat recovery systems to the greatest extent possible.
- e) The Municipality supports new industrial initiatives that meet the needs of an emerging global renewable energy economy, including the mining of rare earth metals and minerals.

5.4.3 Responsible Waste Management

Effectively dealing with different forms of waste—solid waste, wastewater, and waste heat—can increase efficiency, create new economic opportunities, minimize environmental degradation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and extend the capacity of infrastructure by minimizing impacts on landfills and treatment facilities.

- a) The Municipality should engage the community through education and awareness campaigns about responsible waste management, prioritizing a rethink of how residents and businesses manage their waste.
- b) The Municipality will endeavour, through periodic reviews of industry best practices and emerging trends in waste management, to manage waste in the most environmentally responsible and cost-effective manner.

- c) The Municipality should explore opportunities to increase the sustainable operation of municipal facilities through innovative approaches to waste management.
- d) The Municipality should remain open to exploring potential partnerships led by local oil sands industry operators to harness energy from waste heat and gas flaring as a means to diversify revenue streams for industry and provide lower-cost heating to residents and other businesses.



Image Source: FMWB Site

Three Nations Energy Solar

Three Nations Energy is an equal partnership of three Fort Chipewyan Nations - the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, the Mikisew Cree First Nation, and the Fort Chipewyan Métis Nation.

The Three Nations Energy Solar farm was launched November 17, 2020 and is the largest solar photo-voltaic system in a remote Canadian community.

Located on approximately 8 hectares of land, the solar farm consists of 6,500 solar modules that produces 2.2 megawatts of electricity and replaces 25% of the diesel-generated electricity in Fort Chipewyan. The solar farm creates local jobs and reduces dependence on trucked-in diesel fuel, a win-win for residents of Fort Chipewyan!

Source: Three Nations Energy, www.3ne.ca.

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

ACTION ITEMS

- Amend statutory plans, regulations, and bylaws to help conserve riparian areas and wetlands
- Review and update Water and Wastewater Management Plans
- Develop a Green Network Concept Plan in conjunction with the Blue Network Concept
- Explore opportunities to formalize greenbelts around Wood Buffalo's communities
- Develop a Blue Network Concept Plan in conjunction with the Green Network Concept
- Initiate discussions with the Province to open Crown Land to recreational development
- Support development of an Integrated Regional Recreational Strategy
- Amend the Land Use Bylaw to protect residents from adverse geotechnical conditions





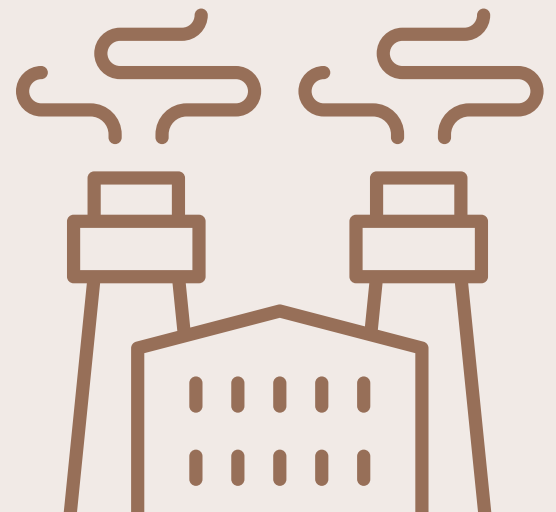
RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT



Communities in Wood Buffalo are connected and provide for residents' daily needs. As a desirable location for all who come to the Region, whether temporarily or for a lifetime, Wood Buffalo grows intentionally. The Municipality will continue to build a continuously evolving and thriving Wood Buffalo, with development that makes life better for all.

RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

The Municipality finds itself advantageously positioned with an abundance of development-ready land throughout Wood Buffalo. In particular, the existing supply of serviced land is more than adequate to provide for Fort McMurray's needs, allowing Wood Buffalo to focus on how regional growth and investment can be responsibly leveraged to support a livable, sustainable, and desirable community for all.



HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

6.1

GROWING AS A REGION RESPONSIBLY

Regional Growth Strategy
Regional Growth Concept
Planning for Developable Land
Regional Mobility
Managing Disaster Risk

6.2

GROWING THE URBAN SERVICE AREA

Urban Service Area Development Concept

6.3

RESPONSIBLY DEVELOPING RURAL COMMUNITIES

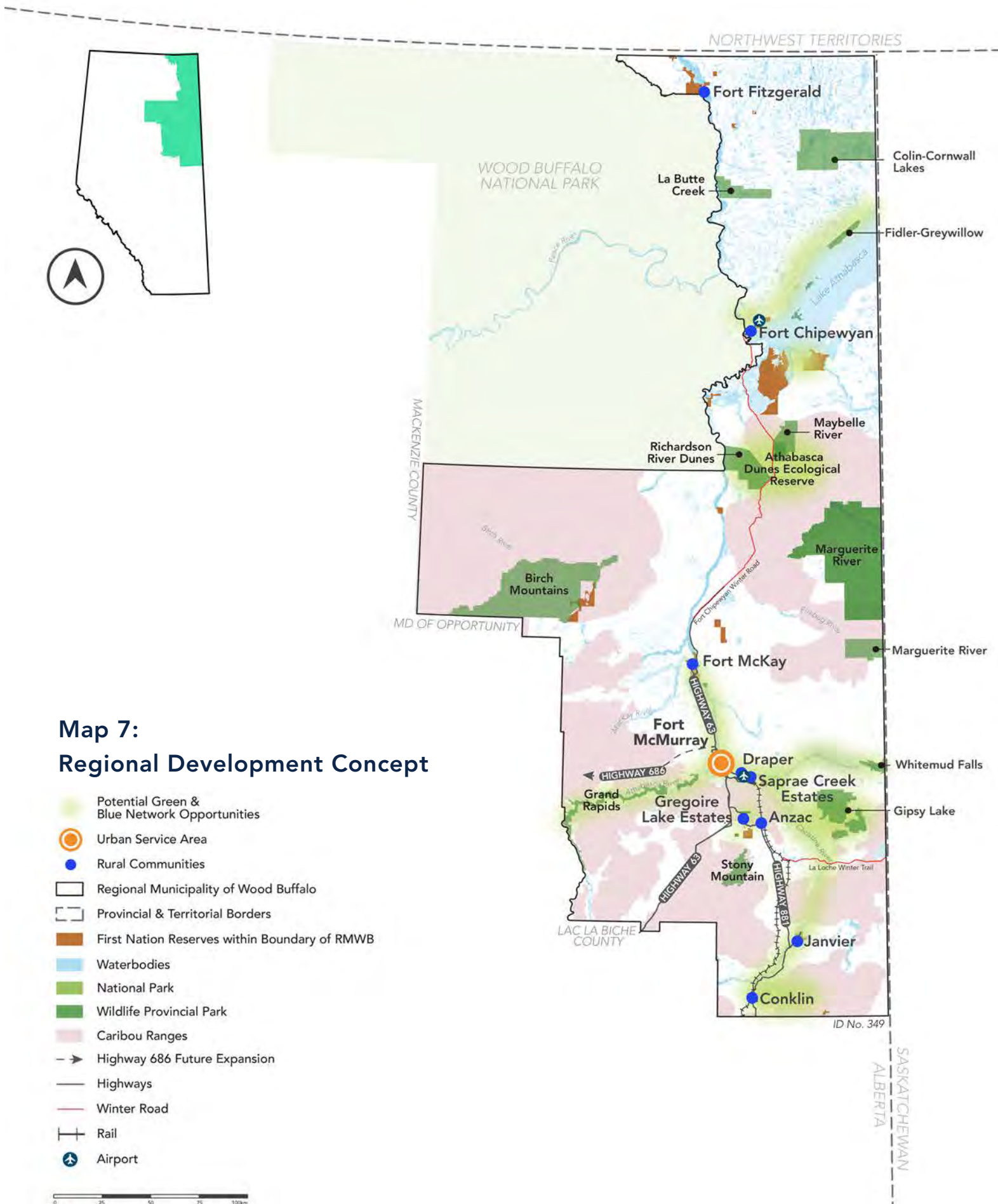
Rural Development
Development Concepts for Rural Communities

6.1

GROWING AS A REGION RESPONSIBLY

As one of the largest municipalities in Canada, the Municipality encompasses pristine natural wilderness, communities large and small, and boundless economic opportunity.

Understanding and planning at a regional scale is an important first step to ensuring the Municipality functions cohesively and is a responsible steward of new growth and investment. The Regional Growth Concept plays an important role in establishing clear responsibilities for the Municipality's communities, finding a balance between ecological preservation and recreational opportunities, and proactively supporting infrastructure projects that benefit the Municipality's industrial development.



6.1.1 Regional Growth Strategy

Wood Buffalo's economy is tied to oil sands. With over 31% of the Region's population employed in resource-based industries, the population of the Region varies based on industry's operational needs. Uncertainties in the oil market makes it challenging to plan conclusively for growth possibilities over the horizon of the MDP.

Fortunately, Wood Buffalo has spent the past two decades building capacity and future-proofing itself in the event unprecedented growth similar to the previous boom re-occurs. The Municipality finds itself advantageously positioned, with surplus serviced land supply available for ground-oriented residential, multi-residential, commercial, and industrial uses through 2044.

Importantly, this means that Wood Buffalo is prepared for any eventuality. This MDP intentionally takes a place-based approach to growth and development, fostering stronger, more livable communities for all. Regardless of what growth rates the Region experiences, the plan is predicated on a clear understanding that Wood Buffalo is prepared.

Growth Objectives

- Prioritize use of existing serviced land for commercial, industrial, and residential growth.
- Promote efficient use of existing infrastructure to help maximize return on investment.
- Foster growth that promotes a more livable, and sustainable Wood Buffalo.

Land Base

The land base in Wood Buffalo must be understood through two distinct lenses. The first is the 'intended use of the land' – this means whether the land is intended to be developed for residential, commercial, or industrial purposes. The second is 'the location of the land'. Demand for land can vary dramatically throughout Wood

Buffalo, so understanding where and how the demand changes from the Rural North to the Urban Service Area to the Rural South is an important consideration.

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo tracks land requirements by four overarching usage types. These are Residential - Ground-Oriented, Residential - Multi-Storey, Commercial, and Industrial. Through the 2044 planning horizon of this MDP, peak demands for each of these uses are not projected to exceed the existing land supply, meaning Wood Buffalo is well-prepared to accommodate any range of future growth across all of these land uses. While this does not mean that the "ideal" or "perfect" parcel of land for any given development interest will always be available, it does indicate that the Municipality finds itself in a strategically advantageous situation where land demand should not outstrip land availability in the way that was experienced during the previous oilsands boom.

Table ;2: Region’s Projected Land Demand by Usage Type (gross ha.) from 2020- 2044

Land Use	Projected Peak Demand (2020-2044)	Estimated Land Supply	Supply Surplus/Deficit
 Residential - Ground-Oriented	307.5	631.6	+324.1
 Residential - Multi-Storey	12.6	23.3	+10.7
 Commercial	112.7	553.4	+440.7
 Industrial*	884.8	999.8	+115.0

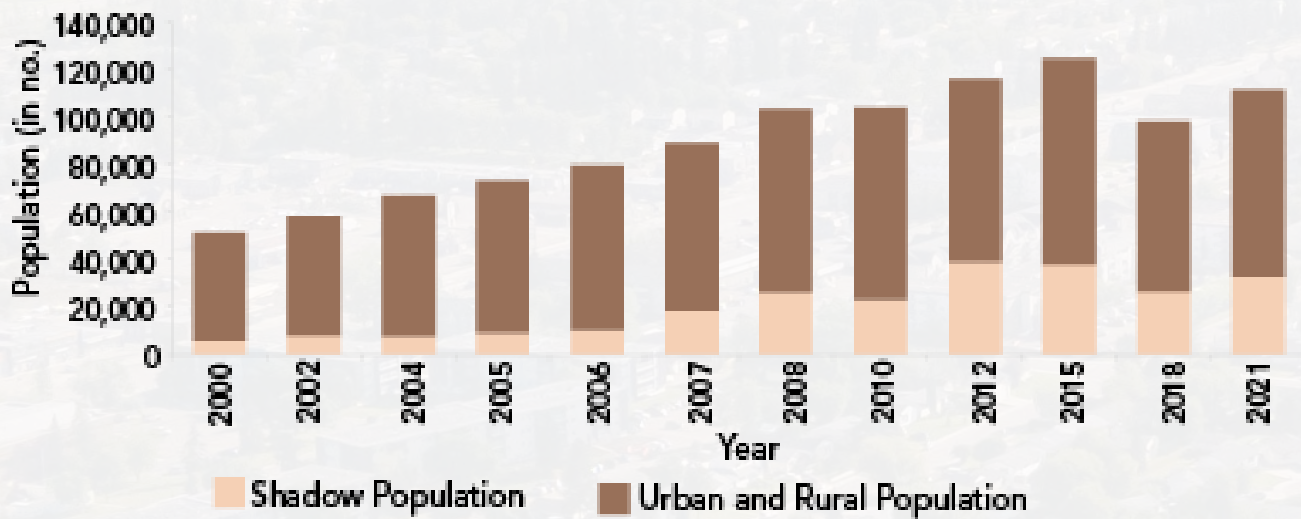
*While RMWB has a surplus total supply of industrial land, demand for industrial land south of the Urban Service Area is 72.9 ha short of projected peak demand (Anzac, Conklin)

Table 3: Region’s Projected Peak Industrial Land Demand (gross ha.) from 2020- 2044

Land Use	Projected Peak Demand (2020-2044)	Estimated Land Supply (RMWB)	Estimated Land Supply (Other)	Supply Surplus/Deficit
Fort McMurray	491.6	773.6	0.0	+282.0
Rural North	94.4	53.2	80.0	+38.8
Rural South	298.9	173.1	41.3	-84.5
Total	884.9	999.8	121.3	+236.3

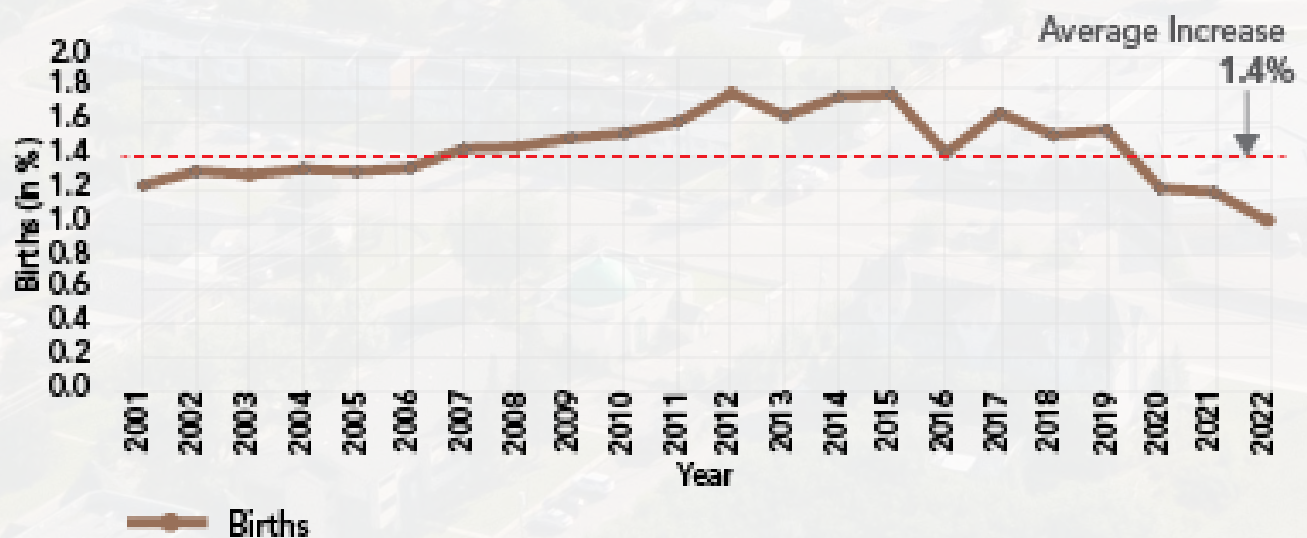
HISTORIC POPULATION

Figure 5: Regional Population Distribution from 2000 to 2021



Source: Municipal Census, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Figure 6: Trend showing Natural Increase in the Region's population from 2001 to 2022



Source: Municipal Census, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections help support the Municipality in planning for anticipated population and employment growth. These are important considerations when allocating where and how future growth should occur and be serviced. Understanding the future infrastructure demands of a growing population ensures the Municipality is adequately prepared for the future.

Economic Outlook

The long-term outlook for the Municipality is for increased production in existing and new mines including replacements for older mines reaching the end of their production life. With replacement mines resulting in limited net new production, most production growth will be in-situ extraction.

Overall future production growth will be at a slower rate than previous periods due to challenges from overall demand levels, pricing and delivery to export markets. While the mines and much of the early in-situ production were in relatively close proximity to the Fort McMurray Urban Service Area (USA) most of the recent and proposed in-situ production is more distant.

Meanwhile, the resident population of both the Urban Service Area and Rural Service Areas, which faced decline for the first time in recent history following the 2016 wildfires, are expected to stabilize and increase steadily in the future.

Due to the uncertain nature of Wood Buffalo's underlying economy, population projections hinge on several key factors. For this reason, a range of projections are provided that contemplate different scenarios ranging from status quo to economic boom. These scenarios reflect factors including historical natural growth, prospective domestic in-migration, and recent changes in international migration.

It is understood across all projections that historically the population of the Municipality has tracked closely to investment in the oil sands, and

that extreme shifts in the price of oil on global markets can have an outsized influence on the population of the RMWB.

While this relationship is anticipated to continue in the coming years, the manner in which it influences growth is expected to change as employment in the oil sands adapts to current and emerging challenges. These challenges include regulatory, market and environmental issues resulting in the delay or outright cancellation of major projects, as well as the realization of increased labour efficiencies in new and existing operations largely through various forms of automation.

Understanding this changing relationship between production and regional growth serves as the basis for planning for population, employment and housing in the Region.

The Projections

The projection scenarios present a range of potential population forecasts for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. The MDP considered three different growth scenarios based on number of variables such as natural growth, domestic and international in-migration, economic fluctuations and even the unforeseen economic boom in the Region. The three growth forecast trajectories for the Region are as follows:

- **1% Growth [Core Projection]:** The historical population data from 2001-2022 shows a natural growth ranging from 1.2% to 1.8% annually. Based on this sustained growth trend, the core projection assumes a minimum 1% annual growth rate through 2044. The population numbers from Municipal Census 2021 have been used as a base for the core projection. It infers natural growth from the population that already calls Wood Buffalo home, and does not contemplate significant growth tied to changing economic conditions.
- **2% Growth:** The medium growth scenarios assumes a 2% annual growth rate from 2021 through to 2044. This projection incorporates natural growth but also allows for greater domestic and international in-migration. As

- infrastructure such as the Trans Mountain pipeline come online, shifting economic conditions could result in localized growth to support expanding production in the area.
- **3% Growth:** The Region experienced an economic boom in early 2000 as a result of a flourishing oil industry. From 2007 to 2015, the population of the Urban Service Area increased from 70,595 to 86,768 recording an average annual growth of about 2.6% for these eight years. While unlikely, this growth scenario considers an exception to the current trends, and projects population for another economic boom considering an unprecedented annual growth rate of 3% for the next 20 years until 2044. While a high-growth scenario is unlikely to emerge as a consistent 3% growth rate through the next

20 years, the intention of this projection is to show a 20-year horizon of potential population should the Region experience an economic boom similar to the early 2000s. This projection contemplates significant growth and investment in the oil sands alongside expanding natural growth as young economic migrants move to the Region to support a growing economy. Under such growth circumstances, shadow population capture could also contribute to an expanding local population base.

Population projections consider several factors, including oil production; existing, in-construction, upcoming, and anticipated oil sands projects; the family structure of oil sands workers; in- and out-migration; labor market analysis; resident population; and natural growth, including birth and mortality rate.

Figure 7: Region’s Projected Population from 2021 to 2044

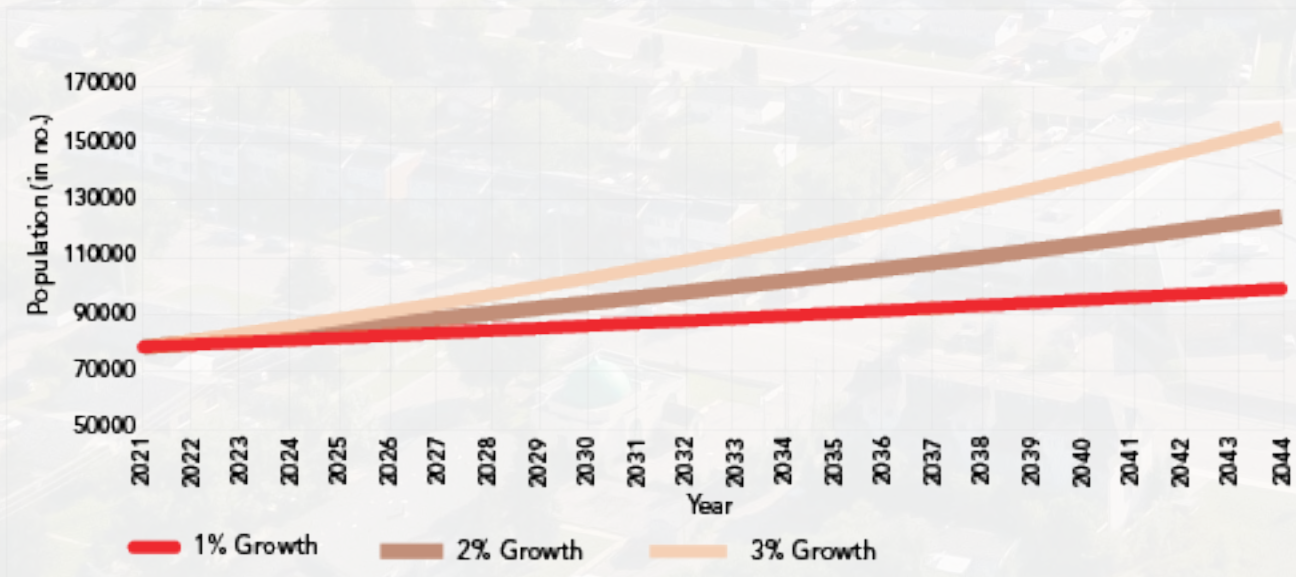


Table 4: Snapshot of Region’s Population Projection Scenarios

Projection Scenario	Projected Population (2044)
Base Population (2021) : 78,746	
1%	98,996
2%	124,174
3%	155,412

Factors such as automation in mines; increase in in-situ projects; limited upcoming oil sands projects; and location of new projects further away from the Urban Service Area; all contribute to limiting population growth in Fort McMurray. However, strategies such as adopting a ‘Place-Based approach’ that focuses on maximizing and building on what we have; in-migration through rural renewal stream and educational institutions in the Urban Service Area; enhancing alternate clean energy solutions; building on tourism; tax and business incentive programs; excellent infrastructure facilities; affordable housing compared to similar sized cities; twice the national average pay; and adopting policies in this MDP, combined have a strong potential to contest factors contributing to negative growth and curve the growth graph to achieve modest growth in the Urban Service Area.

By adopting and acting on action items in this MDP, the Municipality can expect growth identified in core projections. While the 2% and 3% growth scenario are increasingly difficult to

achieve, should that happen, the municipality is well positioned to accommodate and cater to the population increases over time with abundant development-ready lands and infrastructure to support the needs of a growing population.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Employment growth over the coming years is the single statistic that is most directly related to population growth and consequentially infrastructure utilization and land demand. As new employees and their families move to the Municipality, they buy homes, send their children to local schools, consume local goods and services, and contribute to the local economy. Understanding how and when this employment growth is anticipated to happen is intrinsically tied to the large-scale and long-term operation plans for Wood Buffalo’s largest employers in the oilsands industry.

The Municipality is in an advantageous position with municipal services and land supply, and a “wait and see” approach can be employed. By anticipating what peak demands and growth could potentially occur, Wood Buffalo will be able to react accordingly to the global energy markets, while prioritizing a people-first approach to growing Wood Buffalo into an even better place for all, over the coming years.

6.1.2 Regional Growth Concept

The Regional Growth Concept provides a high-level understanding of how the Municipality envisions growth and development to occur at a regional scale. Prioritizing the Urban Service Area as the heart of the Region is an important part of this planning, but care must still be taken to reflect the important role rural communities, parks and open spaces, and transportation infrastructure will play in sustaining and growing the local economy.

Fort McMurray

- a) Fort McMurray is Wood Buffalo's urban hub and will remain the Urban Service Area for the entire Region. Fort McMurray will continue to provide daily and more specialized needs of most residents, such as healthcare, entertainment, retail, and post-secondary education.
- b) The Municipality will advocate for the Province to establish larger-scale institutions in sectors such as healthcare, post-secondary education, the legal system, and industry in Fort McMurray.
- c) Periodic reviews of the Municipality's asset management and cost of servicing studies will identify what costs should be supported by development charges versus what should be funded through taxes and utility rates.

Rural Communities

- d) Rural communities form an integral part of Wood Buffalo's dynamic culture, and each one brings unique perspectives and opportunities. The local identity and community groups of rural communities should be respected and celebrated by the Municipality.
- e) The Municipality will ensure that ASPs are prepared and maintained for each of the rural communities.
- f) The Municipality will engage in periodical reviews of rural community social services, infrastructure, access to municipal supports, and economic conditions to ensure rural communities are receiving appropriate levels of support and services from the Municipality.

Parks and Conservation Areas

- g) Wood Buffalo is comprised largely of untamed boreal forest that provides wildlife habitat, supports traditional lifestyles, and offers a diversity of year-round recreation activities. The Municipality will work closely with the First Nation and Métis communities to identify both sensitive and culturally significant areas for conservation as well as areas of opportunity for Indigenous tourism development.
- h) Where feasible, the Municipality will advocate for the creation of parks, conservation areas, and other uses, as appropriate, on reclaimed industrial lands. This initiative could not only expand the Green Network but also acknowledge industrial history and celebrate and promote oil sands industry's commitment to the environment and local ecology.
- i) The Municipality consists largely of natural areas where there are competing demands for resource development, recreational enjoyment, and ecological preservation. The Municipality will work with the Province to support integrated resource management and planning practices and to identify and establish protected areas.
- j) Consistent with future development of the Blue and Green Network concept plans, the Municipality will regulate development along waterbodies, watercourses, and sensitive wetlands in a way that ensures a balance between conservation, recreation, and tourism opportunities.

Recreation and Tourism Opportunities

- k) As part of ongoing economic diversification initiatives, the Municipality should endeavour to increase access to the rich natural surroundings found throughout Wood Buffalo.
- l) The Municipality will create and implement an integrated regional recreational strategy to provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the Municipality's natural surroundings year-round while expanding the local economy. This strategy could explore expanding many existing

recreational areas and consider opportunities near the Municipality’s lakes and rivers for new recreation use, specifically the potential for cabin development, recreational lodges, boat launches, day use areas and campgrounds. 🐃

- m) The Municipality, through its stakeholders and rightsholders, will investigate on expanding and creating new outdoor recreational opportunities through partnerships, unique business models, and other means. These opportunities should prioritize increasing responsible access to valued natural assets (e.g. lakes, sand dunes, rivers, forests, etc.) throughout the Municipality.

Railway (Future)

- n) The Municipality supports initiatives to help promote and facilitate development of expanded rail connection to and from the Region.
- o) Where appropriate, the Municipality will work with the Province and Railway Authorities to expand freight network throughout the Region.
- p) When no longer required for freight or passenger rail transportation, the Municipality will explore the use of former rail-bed and rights-of-way for alternative transportation options.

6.1.3 Planning for Developable Land

Wood Buffalo’s rural communities and Urban Service Area have a range of land demands. While Fort McMurray has adequate serviced land to support future development, some rural communities struggle with a lack of affordable, developable land. Balancing and addressing the unique needs of each area throughout the Municipality is an important part of planning for developable land.

- a) As Fort McMurray’s existing land develops, the Municipality will continuously monitor market demand and will evaluate whether additional land for development is required. 🐃



SAND DUNES

Did you know that Wood Buffalo has some of the northernmost active sand dunes in the world? This incredible geological feature can be found in several areas in the northern half of the Municipality, but are most famously found along the shores of Lake Athabasca.

RAIL TRAILS

When railways are abandoned they are often turned into shared-use pathways that can help connect places within and between communities. The Municipality has a long history with rail, and while some initiatives seek to expand rail access to new markets, there are other historic rights-of-way, such as the Draper Rail Trail, that may be useful as the foundations of a future Green Network trail system.

64km²

the total area of post-industrial lands that have been reclaimed in the region to date.

Source: CAPP 2022

- b) The Municipality should work with rural communities to understand the land demands impacting each community and work to address the land supply, as required.
- c) When the Municipality acquires new land, these lands should be incorporated into existing comprehensive plans as appropriate. This incorporation should align the direction of local statutory plans (such as Area Structure Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans, and the Land Use Bylaw) with the direction in non-statutory plans such as the Active Transportation Plan, Transportation Plan, and Infrastructure Master Plans.


6.1.4 Regional Mobility

Quality of life and livability throughout Wood Buffalo are directly impacted by how easily people and goods move throughout the Municipality. While significant transportation options are already available to oil sands industry workers by the private sector, there remains more that can be done to facilitate the mobility of all Wood Buffalo residents. As Fort McMurray is the Urban Service Area for the entire Region, it is important that residents throughout Wood Buffalo have access to the services and amenities as efficiently and easily as possible. The Municipality can act on and advocate for a range of initiatives to improve mobility for all throughout Wood Buffalo.

Active Transportation

- a) The Municipality should prepare a comprehensive active transportation plan for the entire Municipality, incorporating the Green and Blue Networks (see Section 5) into a broader network to improve connectivity for all residents.

Transit

- b) The Municipality will comprehensively review municipal transit service in alignment with the Transit Master Plan to meet regional needs and maximize the potential of transit. 

- c) As innovations and changes in transit operations and options arise, the Municipality will explore opportunities to incorporate these sustainable and innovative solutions to provide more efficient service to rural communities throughout the year.

Airports

- d) The Municipality will work collaboratively with the Fort McMurray Airport Authority and local economic development organizations to provide additional regional, national, and international connectivity to Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan.
- e) The Municipality will encourage industry operating within Wood Buffalo to prioritize use of Fort McMurray Airport for their business operations.
- f) The Municipality will collaborate with local economic development organizations and the airport authority to leverage Fort McMurray Airport as a regional intermodal logistics and transportation hub.

Highways

- g) The Municipality should continue lobbying senior levels of government to fund major highway infrastructure projects that support regional goods movement and connectivity to the global economy, as well as the improvement of public safety in times of natural disaster. This could include initiatives such as Highway 686, upgrades to Highway 881, East Clearwater Highway, egress routes for rural hamlets, and all-weather road access for the north.
- h) The Municipality will continue lobbying senior levels of government to support a bypass road project for Fort McMurray, facilitating a Downtown bypass for heavy industrial traffic.

Award-Winning Airport

Did you know that the new Fort McMurray Airport terminal was awarded a Canadian Architect Award of Excellence in 2013? The prestigious honour is awarded to only a handful of projects nationally each year, with the airport beating out over 200 other submissions.





8.5% of commuters in Wood Buffalo travel by bus.

Source: Wood Buffalo Transportation Master Plan 2018

6.1.5 Managing Disaster Risk



Wildfire Risks

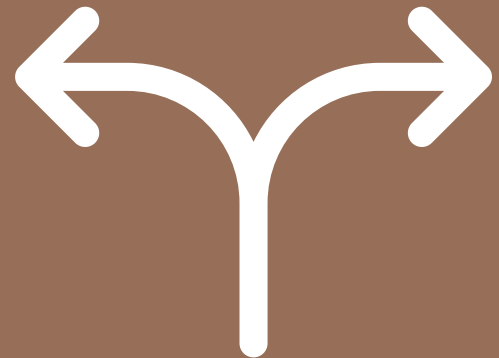
Wildfires pose a very serious and very real risk to the safety and well-being of Wood Buffalo residents. By employing effective approaches to the safeguarding of structures through wildfire prevention, the Municipality can help protect life, property, and the economy before wildfires even begin. Overall preparedness for fires is of critical importance to ensure that the Municipality is protecting not just the safety of residents, but also the overall social, cultural, and economic health of Wood Buffalo. These policies also help to mitigate and minimize the impacts of wildfires when they do occur.

- a) The Municipality will ensure having a policy document to guide new development and subdivision proposals to reduce the impact of wildfire hazard. The document could include but not limited to Wildfire Risk Assessment, and Vegetation Management, and infrastructure development standards. 
- b) To protect against wildfires that are common in the Region, the Municipality will promote FireSmart communities designed in accordance with the Municipality's Wildfire Mitigation Strategy Urban Forest Strategy, FireSmart: Protecting Your Community Manual, and evolving wildfire prevention best practices.
- c) The Municipality should minimize the potential for wildfire damage by providing recreational facilities, such as trails and parks, along the outer perimeter of the development.
- d) The Municipality should minimize the potential for wildfire damage by providing fire guards and using FireSmart vegetation species that will serve as buffers between development and the surrounding areas.
- e) The Municipality should minimize the potential for wildfire damage by constructing trails between development and the surrounding forested land that could be used in emergencies for prevention purposes.
- f) The Municipality will continue to follow and implement identified FireSmart Priority Zones in the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy to avoid the risk of future wildfire hazards. 
- g) The Municipality will monitor and maintain the FireSmart management areas regularly to reduce the risk of future wildfire hazards.
- h) Future new or rebuilt development within or adjacent to high and moderate wildfire risk areas may include conditions that require the implementation of FireSmart principles and fire prevention measures.
- i) The Municipality will also ensure that project accommodations and other remote developments meet the recommendations of FireSmart.
- j) Where feasible, the Municipality will work with the Province to establish a minimum of two access routes in all communities and neighbourhoods and will also provide alternate evacuation routes for new urban neighbourhoods. These routes can improve community connectivity to the rest of the Municipality.

Flood Risks

Wood Buffalo has experienced significant flood events several times over the past decade. As the rate of these catastrophic events increases, it is more important than ever to establish clear and consistent policy supporting structurally stable developments in flood-prone areas, and overall prioritizing development away from flood areas in order to protect residents and the Municipality from further damage and harm. When done intentionally, these initiatives not only protect the Municipality, but can also contribute to building out the Blue Network concept, providing new parks, amenities, and open space for public enjoyment. Land use planning policy and structural protection are considered effective as a means of pre-disaster mitigation, and the following policies are intended to guide future decision-making surrounding development throughout Wood Buffalo.

- k) The Municipality will, where appropriate, set aside lands located below identified flood levels as environmental reserves during subdivision or implement protection through alternative means such as conservation easements. 
- l) The Municipality will prepare a Region-wide flood mitigation strategy that will include, but is not limited to the following areas:
 - i) Riparian areas or zones;
 - ii) Wetlands;
 - iii) Urban Service Area developments on the Athabasca, Clearwater, Horse, Snye and Hangingstone Rivers;
 - iv) Downtown Fort McMurray; and
 - v) Rural communities living on Gregoire Lake, Lake Athabasca, and Christina Lake. 
- m) In the Urban Service Area and Downtown Fort McMurray, the Region-wide flood mitigation strategy will focus on:
 - i) Minimizing the potential impacts of flooding within the Waterfront Area of Downtown Fort McMurray by managing development in line with the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan policies for the Waterfront Area.
 - ii) Supporting new development in areas where existing flood mitigation measures have proved effective, and the risk of flooding is greatly reduced.
 - iii) Establishing criteria for the expansion of existing development or new development in flood risk areas where innovative flood mitigation measures are proposed.
- n) Environmental reserve and other land protections that convey floodwaters and mitigate flood impacts (e.g. meander belts, ground water infiltration) should be incorporated in the Blue and Green Networks.
- o) All new growth must be focused in areas that are safest from flooding and other risks. Promoting safe new growth areas will help to invite new investment and build confidence for those wishing to develop in Wood Buffalo.



SECONDARY ACCESS

Having second routes in and out of communities is critically important for safety in times of natural disaster. Ensuring all Wood Buffalo residents and visitors have access to alternate routes is a high priority discussion point between the Municipality and senior levels of government.

- p) The Municipality may consider the expansion of existing development or new development in flood risk areas where innovative mitigation solutions are proposed.

Mitigating Other Risks

Beyond wildfires and floods there are also many other risks that could impact or influence Wood Buffalo. While some are more likely than others, recently experienced and emerging risks worth considering further include slope instability, pandemics, and earthquakes. According to Natural Resources Canada, Wood Buffalo has a low risk for seismic hazards as presented in Appendix E. The following policies outline steps that can be taken to help mitigate the potential impacts from these risks and help Wood Buffalo to be prepared in the event of other unexpected challenges in the future.

- q) The Municipality may undertake an earthquake safety public awareness campaign focused on how residents can protect homes and property from emerging earthquake risks in the Region.
- r) The Municipality may investigate whether an earthquake-resistant retrofitting program is warranted in the Region due to the emerging risk from earthquakes.
- s) The Municipality may undertake a high-level slope stability assessment and implement the findings of this study through amendments to the Land Use Bylaw that restrict development in high-risk areas.
- t) The Municipality may undertake the development of a public health response plan that identifies key actions to take in the event of an emerging disease outbreak or other healthcare challenge.





| Flood Mitigation Strategy

Flood mitigation strategies outline the management and control of flood waters rather than trying to prevent floods altogether. They also involve the management of people, through measures such as evacuation and dry/wet proofing properties.

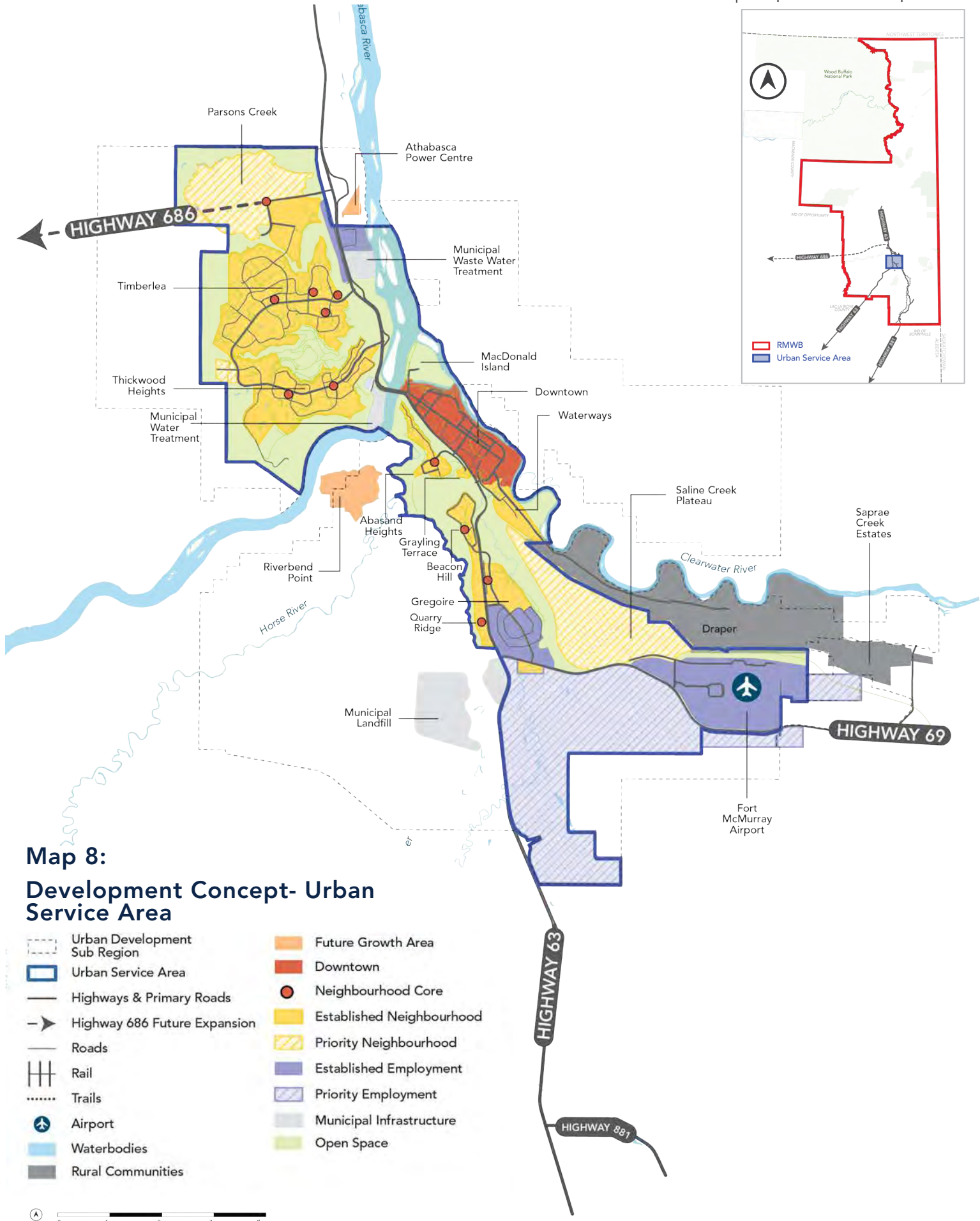
6.2

GROWING THE URBAN SERVICE AREA

As the largest community and the economic centre of Wood Buffalo, the Urban Service Area of Fort McMurray is the heart of the Municipality, a place where culture, amenities, education, and nature all intersect.

A livable Wood Buffalo starts with complete communities throughout the Urban Service Area, where community-driven design, human-centred development, and accessibility are the norm. It is important that the Urban Service Area grows responsibly with an eye to continuously improving the quality of life it offers to residents over the lifespan of the MDP.

Prioritizing investment Downtown while balancing residential and employment lands development throughout the community will help support healthy active lifestyles by enabling more residents to move around via active transportation. Similarly, Fort McMurray must continue to respect and protect its natural areas so that these well-loved green areas remain for years to come as places of respite and recreation for all residents to enjoy.



Map 8:
Development Concept- Urban Service Area

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Urban Development Sub Region | Future Growth Area |
| Urban Service Area | Downtown |
| Highways & Primary Roads | Neighbourhood Core |
| Highway 686 Future Expansion | Established Neighbourhood |
| Roads | Priority Neighbourhood |
| Rail | Established Employment |
| Trails | Priority Employment |
| Airport | Municipal Infrastructure |
| Waterbodies | Open Space |
| Rural Communities | |



6.2.1 Urban Service Area Development Concept

Growing the Urban Service Area from a people and place-based perspective means emphasizing the importance of Downtown as a heart of Wood Buffalo that serves as a hub for the Region's entertainment, commerce, and institutional needs. This strategy also emphasizes and enhances the role of Neighbourhood Cores that are designed to provide for everyday services and amenities to the residents of Urban Service Area.

In developing newer neighbourhoods, a sequential development strategy will be adopted, whereby optimum utilization and usage of serviced lands is prioritized over allowing development of unserviced lands. This would ensure the municipality maintains a reasonable supply of development ready lands and balances the cost of developing and maintaining infrastructure.

Residential

- a) The Municipality will review the Land Use Bylaw to reflect increased ability to develop complete communities with a greater mix of uses than presently exists in Fort McMurray. This includes greater residential, commercial, retail, and institutional uses throughout Neighbourhood Cores, and the Downtown.
- b) New development will be focused in Priority Neighbourhoods. Development in Future Growth Areas will only be considered upon reasonable utilization of lands in Priority Neighbourhoods.
- c) Through the life of this MDP, should Priority Neighbourhoods and Future Growth Areas are utilized, the Municipality will consider allowing development in Reserved Growth Areas identified in Appendix F.
- d) Priority Neighbourhoods will offer a range of housing choices to accommodate higher average densities than Established Neighbourhoods, provide a mix of residential with other uses (e.g., commercial, recreational, institutional etc.), and achieve a compact form.
- e) Priority Neighbourhoods will also offer a range of mobility choices and be developed in a manner consistent with transit-oriented development (TOD) principles, ensuring the integration of land use and transportation decisions by concentrating density in areas well-served by transit, such as Neighbourhood Cores.

Employment Lands

- f) New concentrations of employment uses outside of the Downtown should be focused in the Priority Employment Lands identified in the Urban Service Area development concept.
- g) As Fort McMurray's economy diversifies and the needs of the existing oil sands industry shifts, Priority Employment lands will focus on major industrial developments, business parks, and commercial development.
- h) The Municipality will review the Land Use Bylaw to establish criteria for how large format retail should be accommodated in Established and Priority Employment lands.
- i) The Municipality will review the Land Use Bylaw to limit public sector and institutional uses in Priority Employment lands, instead directing these uses to locate in or near the Downtown/ Neighbourhood Core areas.




8 the number of Neighbourhood Cores identified in the Urban Service Area Development Concept. These Neighbourhood Cores will help ensure all Urban Service Area residents have the ability to access their day-to-day needs within their own community.

- j) The Municipality will only identify new Employment Land areas once existing Priority Employment Lands have been mostly built out.
- k) The Municipality will support and encourage the development of new and diverse industrial and commercial uses and will ensure that lands are available for these developments.

Downtown

- l) Downtown is the economic, social, recreational, and institutional heart of the Municipality. Recognizing this significance and regional importance, the Municipality will prioritize implementation of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan’s recommendations to ensure this important part of the Region continues to thrive and improve the lives of residents for generations to come.
- m) As the hub for regional facilities and services in Northeastern Alberta, including healthcare, post-secondary education, municipal services, and provincial government services, future growth and development of these facilities and services should remain located in the Downtown to leverage synergies between industries and maximize co-location benefits.
- n) As the heart of the Blue and Green Networks and premier recreation destination of Wood Buffalo, the Municipality will strengthen the connections to the waterfront, river, and MacDonald Island, through future redevelopment along the Snye and Clearwater Rivers, in alignment with the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan.
- o) Downtown will be the hub for arts, entertainment, and culture, with the Municipality prioritizing and incentivizing these activities to locate and occur in the Downtown.

Protected Natural Areas

- p) To minimize impacts of incompatible uses in close proximity to residential neighbourhoods, the Municipality will work to establish ‘Greenbelts’ of Natural Protected Areas surrounding residential neighbourhoods. 
- q) The Municipality will incorporate Protected Natural Areas into the Green and Blue Networks, as appropriate, to maximize the accessibility of both networks for all residents.
- r) To ensure access to green space and opportunities for recreational development, the Municipality will minimize accepting cash-in-lieu of municipal reserve options during development, instead maximizing the provision of land accessible for public use within new development areas.

Neighbourhood Cores

- s) Neighbourhood Cores are centres of community life, activity, and commerce. The locations should be developed with careful consideration to their livability, comfort, design, and the mix of uses, promoting their development as local, smaller scale “Downtowns”.
- t) Redevelopment in Neighbourhood Cores must face the street and locate close to the front lot lines to create a consistent, human-scaled street wall over time.
- u) Neighbourhood Cores should allow for a range of retail and commercial uses to facilitate complete communities and meet the needs of individual neighbourhoods.
- v) Large format retail development should be managed so as not to adversely impact the policies for promoting development in the

Park and Ride

Park and Ride programs are a system for reducing traffic congestion where drivers leave their cars at home or in parking lots near rapid transit centres and travel to their destination on public transportation.


Neighbourhood Cores that are intended to be more complete, and livable hubs of neighbourhood activity.

Transportation

- w) Where appropriate, the Municipality will investigate opportunities to develop Park and Ride infrastructure in areas identified for higher-order service in the Transit Master Plan. 
- x) The Municipality will explore the opportunities for bicycle parking at major transit terminals, in secure facilities where feasible through the Transit Master Plan.

- y) The Municipality will explore active transportation networks (sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure) to connect all residents in Fort McMurray to the Downtown and Neighbourhood Cores.

Statutory Plans

- z) Statutory plans in the Urban Service Area will be updated following MDP adoption to implement the goals of the MDP locally. This may be achieved by creating unique action plans for each plan area outlining how the MDP's goals can be realized.
- aa) The Municipality will ensure all lands in the Urban Service Area are appropriately planned for through Area Structure Plans or Area Redevelopment Plans. 

Confluence of Rivers

Fort McMurray's history is intrinsically tied to water as a historic trans-shipment hub to the Mackenzie and confluence of many rivers. In fact, Fort McMurray is a meeting place of several rivers, where the Christina, Snye, Clearwater, Hangingstone, and Horse River all join with the Athabasca on their way north to the Arctic Ocean.





6.3

RESPONSIBLY DEVELOPING RURAL COMMUNITIES


The Rural Communities of Wood Buffalo offer a range of different lifestyles to their residents.

Ranging from bedroom communities near Fort McMurray to isolated communities near the Northwest Territories border without all-season roads connecting to southern Wood Buffalo, there's something for everyone.

The cultures, histories, lived experiences, needs, and interests of each rural community are uniquely different, and each requires special focus to ensure they continue to grow and develop appropriately.



6.3.1 Rural Development

- a) Senior members of the Municipality's Administration will meet periodically with rural community leaders to discuss, better understand, and identify ways to address community social, cultural, and economic concerns. 
- b) Municipal staff will meet periodically with rural community leaders to identify ways to improve access to municipal facilities and services.
- c) The Municipality should review water and waste water management facilities to reflect the growth trajectory in rural communities.
- d) Where a local community development plan has been adopted by a First Nations or Métis community, the Municipality, where feasible, may consider including the outcomes of the Plan for comprehensive planning and development of the area within the jurisdictional authority of the area.

6.3.2 Development Concepts for Rural Communities

Planning for rural communities demands a closer understanding of each community's unique social, cultural, and economic needs. Development Concepts for rural communities are developed considering the challenges each community faces, their aspirations for growth, and their cultural values and practices. This plan adopts a place-based approach focusing on creating complete communities, on a small scale, while still respecting and protecting the residential character of rural communities. The place-based approach aims to address the social and cultural needs of the residents, the development needs of each community, and their need for services and amenities.

While Rural Communities would continue to rely on the Urban Service Area for major services, such as institutional and health, etc., this plan proposes an approach for every community to have a Community Core that promotes a mix of residential, commercial, and mixed-use

developments that should serve the day-to-day needs of the residents. The development concepts for each community also aim to ensure each community’s social needs, such as land for social gatherings, cultural practices, parks and recreation, etc., are addressed.

Rural communities have not shown significant population growth in the past decade. A future growth analysis for rural communities identifies modest growth in line with anticipated natural growth. While an ongoing analysis of factors that can lead to population growth in rural communities is required, given an analysis of the current variables, most communities will have lands available to accommodate modest natural growth. This would allow the next generation to remain within the community and contribute to its growth and success.

To address land needs, Priority Employment Land and Future Growth Areas are identified for new development. To optimally use existing and proposed infrastructure, emphasis will be placed on locating new developments closer to or within the serviced area and in Community Cores. New development areas will be approved based on the availability of services and infrastructure.

Implementation of the Rural Water and Sewer Services (RWSS) project also creates additional land development opportunities in southern rural communities. Where appropriate, residential land supply can also be increased by way of subdivision of existing larger lots, infill, and densification.

While the MDP provides a high-level direction on growth of rural communities, the development in these communities shall be guided by the approved Area Structure Plans, where they exist.



There are **9** Rural Communities in the Municipality.

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

Anzac / Willow Lake

Population 555

Conklin

Population 178

Janvier

Population 77

Fort McKay

Population 57

Fort Chipewyan

Population 847

Saprae Creek

Population 658

Draper

Population 132

Gregoire Lake Estates

Population 217

Fort Fitzgerald

Population 6

Source: 2021 Municipal Census

ANZAC/WILLOW LAKE

Evolving from an important stopover point for fur traders en route between Fort McMurray and Lac La Biche into its present-day role as a lovely lakeside community, the rural community of Anzac is found on the eastern shore of Willow Lake near Gregoire Lake Provincial Park. The Anzac Day Use Area of this park is popular with residents of Wood Buffalo, with many using it in the warmer months for swimming, canoeing, and kayaking. Nearby Camp Yogi is another attraction that takes advantage of this picturesque natural setting. Originally known as Willow Lake, the lake became known as Gregoire Lake in the 1940s to reflect the name of the lake's only outlet, Gregoire River. In 1992 the lake's name was officially changed back to Willow Lake at the request of residents. It was always referred to as "Willow Lake" by the Elders.


The community itself is traditionally known as Willow Lake by the Métis who have called the area home for generations, and this was the original name of the community. Willow Lake was later renamed to Anzac in 1917 for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps who surveyed the area during World War I. This surveying work preceded construction of the rail line to Waterways, with Anzac serving as a stopping point on the Alberta Great Waterways Railway Line. Today, both names are used by residents of the rural community. The surrounding area is home to the Fort McMurray First Nation and the Willow Lake Métis, and the community itself has a small but vibrant Community Core, large recreation centre, a school, and lively community spirit.

According to the 2021 municipal census, there are 555 residents currently living in Anzac.

6.3.2A Anzac / Willow Lake Development Concept

The Municipality

- a) The Municipality will review its processes for providing access to community space with a focus on enabling access to and increasing the

use of the community centre. 

Residential

- b) Priority Residential areas will offer a range of housing choices and encourage higher average densities than Established Residential areas, while remaining contextually sensitive to Anzac's rural character.
- c) Higher residential densities will be encouraged in close proximity to the Community Core.

Employment Lands

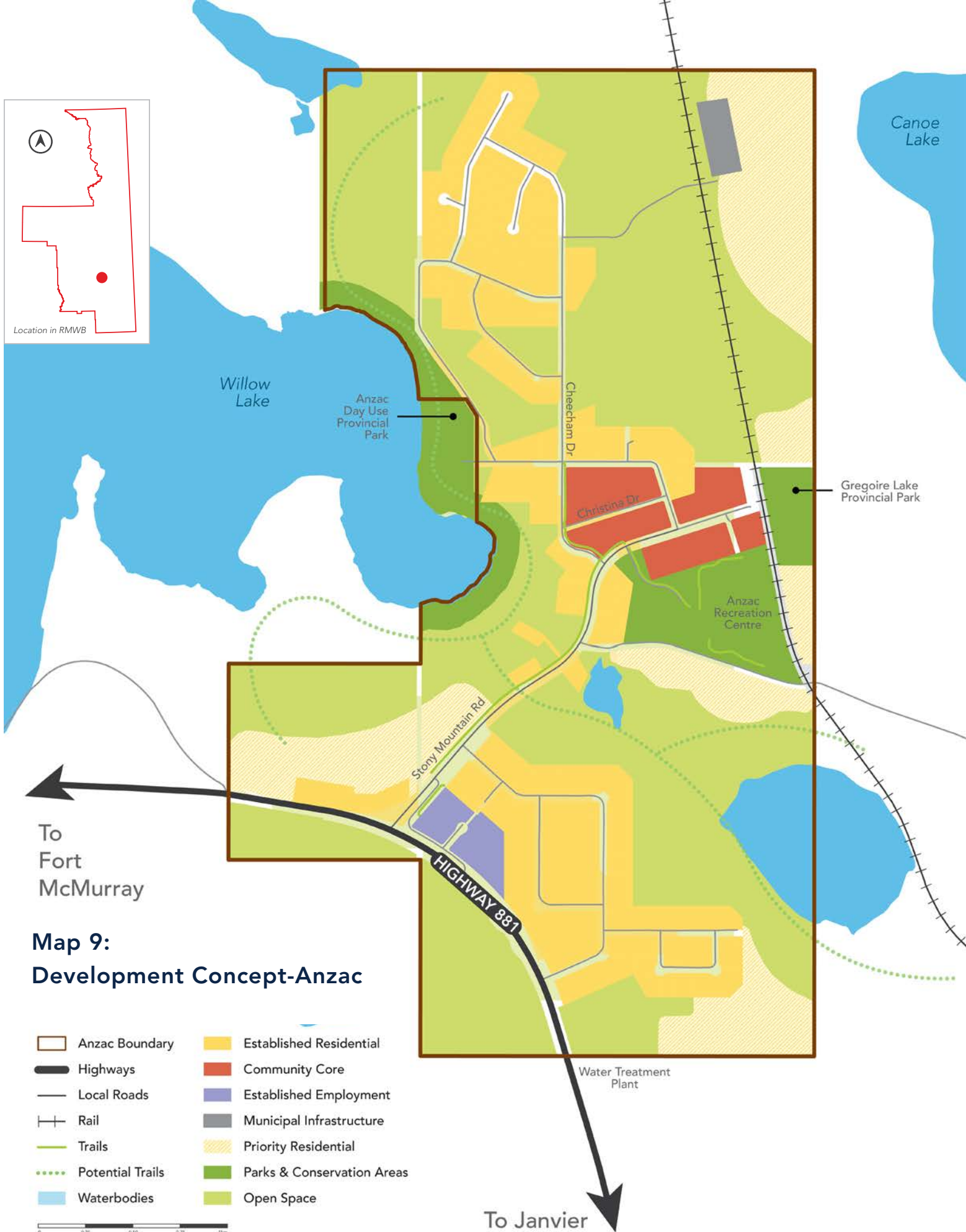
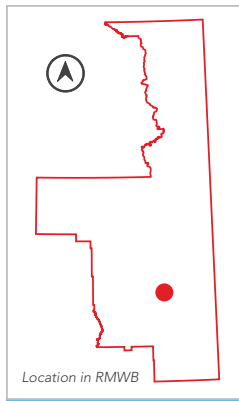
- d) Public sector and institutional uses will not be permitted in Employment Lands and should instead be directed to locate in or near the Community Core.

Community Core

- e) The Municipality will support small-scale retail development, mixed-use development, including residential, commercial, and institutional uses along Stony Mountain Road to create a vibrant Community Core.
- f) The Municipality will explore connecting the eastern end of Stony Mountain Road into a new north/south corridor to the east of the community to enhance the development of the Community Core.

Protected Natural Areas

- g) The Municipality will minimize the encroachment of industrial growth into residential development using greenbelts as outlined in this plan's Green Network concept.
- h) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate this greenbelt into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.
- i) The Municipality will restrict development along watercourses consistent with the greenbelt and Blue and Green Network Concepts.



Map 9:
Development Concept-Anzac

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Anzac Boundary | Established Residential |
| Highways | Community Core |
| Local Roads | Established Employment |
| Rail | Municipal Infrastructure |
| Trails | Priority Residential |
| Potential Trails | Parks & Conservation Areas |
| Waterbodies | Open Space |



CONKLIN

Conklin is the southern most community in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. The rural community of Conklin was named after John Conklin, a timekeeper for J.D. McArthur, who was a railway contractor in the early 1900s. Conklin is located along the former Alberta and Great Waterways Railway. While the railway was operational from 1940 to 1960, Conklin was an important stop for the local fur trade. Mink pelts from several mink farms in the area were transferred by canoe and dogsled to the railway siding at Conklin for shipment to markets. Today, Conklin is a quiet, rural community located approximately 155 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray on scenic Christina Lake.

Christina Lake plays several functions for the community, as it provides fish and wildlife habitat, maintains watershed and water quality functions, and provides many recreation opportunities. The lake and its associated tributaries, including the Jackfish River and Birch Creek, are greatly valued by the community.

The predominantly Métis population appreciate the lake and its surroundings for their ecological value, cultural significance, and the opportunities it provides for practicing traditional land use, including harvesting berries and culturally important roots and medicines.

Commercial facilities in Conklin include a gas bar, a post office, a store and a cafe and lounge, while the Conklin Multiplex provides a space for community gathering and recreation facility.

According to the 2021 municipal census, there are 178 residents living in Conklin, the majority of which are of Métis descent.

6.3.2B Conklin Development Concept

The Municipality

- a) The Municipality should work with community residents and organizations to understand Conklin's land constraints and work to increase the land supply in areas where it is required.

Residential

- b) The Municipality will respect the existing development pattern of single family residential as new residential areas are added strategically.
- c) Notwithstanding policy 6.3.3.b, development near the Community Core will be encouraged to provide a range of housing choices to satisfy the needs of all ages and income levels.

Employment Lands

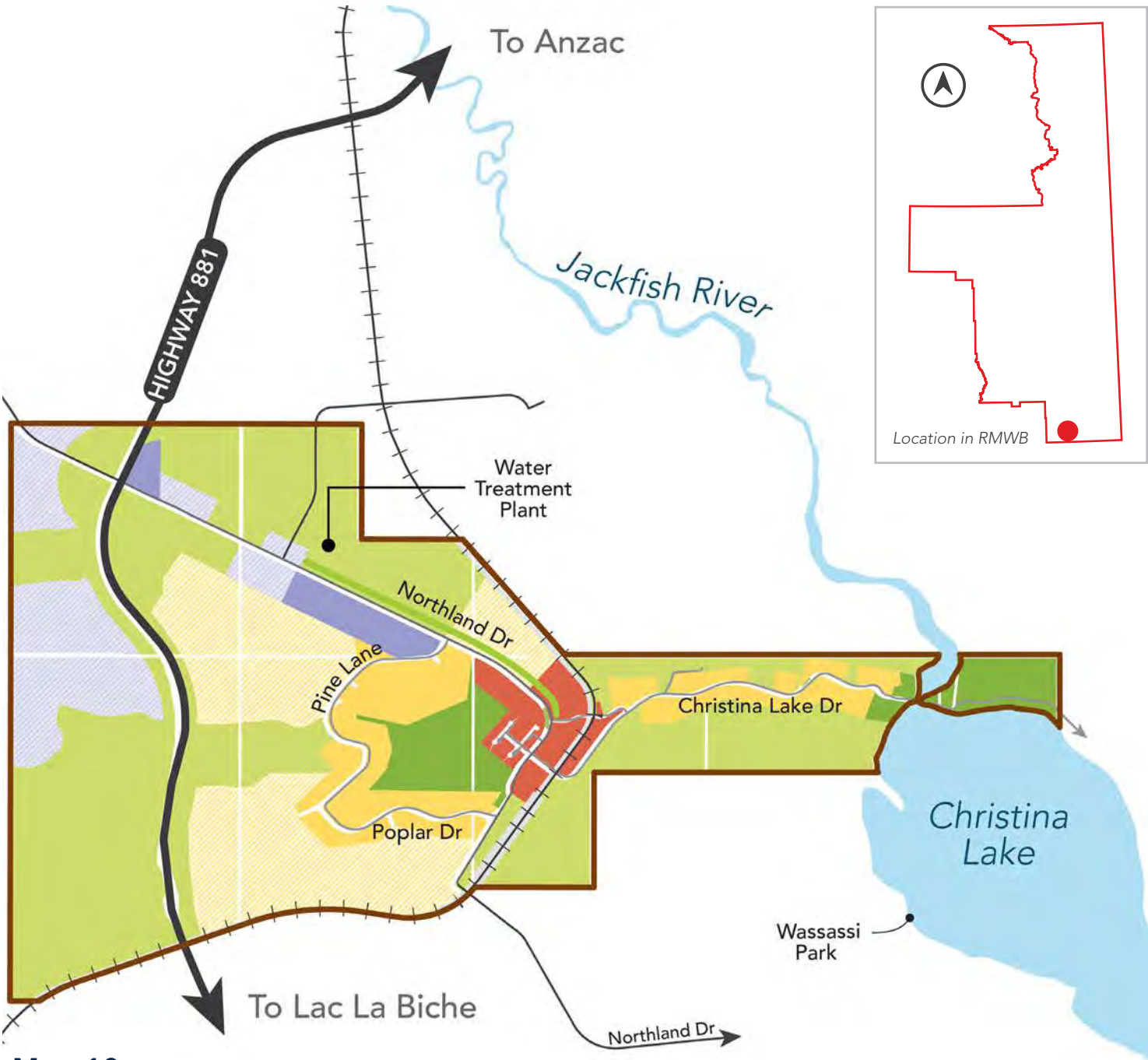
- d) Public sector and institutional uses as well as small scale retail development will not be permitted in Employment Lands and should instead be directed to locate in or near the Community Core.
- e) Highway commercial and light industrial uses will be encouraged to the west of Highway 881.

Community Core

- f) The Municipality will support neighbourhood commercial uses in the Community Core to create opportunities for local business and services.

Protected Natural Areas

- g) The Municipality will minimize the encroachment of industrial growth into residential development using greenbelts as outlined in this plan's Green Network concept.
- h) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate this greenbelt into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.
- i) Future development in Conklin will ensure protection of water sources and areas deemed significant to the community such as Christina Lake, the Jackfish River, and Wassassi Park.
- j) The Municipality will restrict development along watercourses consistent with the greenbelt and Blue and Green Network Concepts.



Map 10:
Development Concept- Conklin

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Community Boundary | Established Residential |
| Highway | Community Core |
| Local Roads | Established Employment |
| Rail | Municipal Infrastructure |
| Trails | Priority Residential |
| Waterbodies | Priority Employment |
| Open Space | Parks & Conservation Areas |



JANVIER

Situated west of the shores of Bohn Lake and east of the Christina River, Janvier is situated in a pristine and beautiful natural setting in the southern portion of the Municipality. It is approximately 120 kilometres south of Fort McMurray.

There is a large Métis population in Janvier, and it is home to the Chard Métis and the Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation. Important to local culture are traditional ways-of-life activities, such as trapping, hunting, fishing, and berry picking, while community assets and supports include the Janvier Dene Wood Buffalo Community Association, the Janvier Sekewha Youth Centre, and Father R. Perin School.

According to the 2021 municipal census, there are 77 people living in Janvier.

6.3.2C Janvier Development Concept

The Municipality

- a) The Municipality will work with community organizations and residents to understand the land constraints Janvier is facing, and work to increase the land supply in areas where it is required.
- b) Where a desire and ability to develop municipal land in the short term for housing exists, the Municipality may divest land.
- c) The Municipality will work collaboratively with Janvier residents and community organizations to identify solutions to address the issue of adequate, affordable and safe housing.
- d) The Municipality will work towards providing a community space for the residents of Janvier to use as a place to gather, celebrate, and educate.

Residential

- e) The Municipality will support incremental increases in residential development recognizing that the existing single family residential development pattern will, for the most part, remain the pattern for new development.

Employment Lands

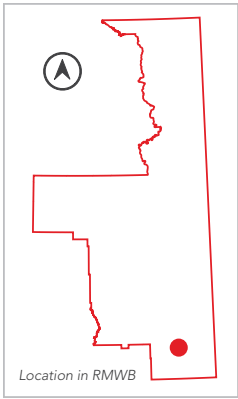
- f) The Municipality will encourage new industrial and commercial development consistent with the desires of the community to facilitate opportunities for local economic development.

Community Core

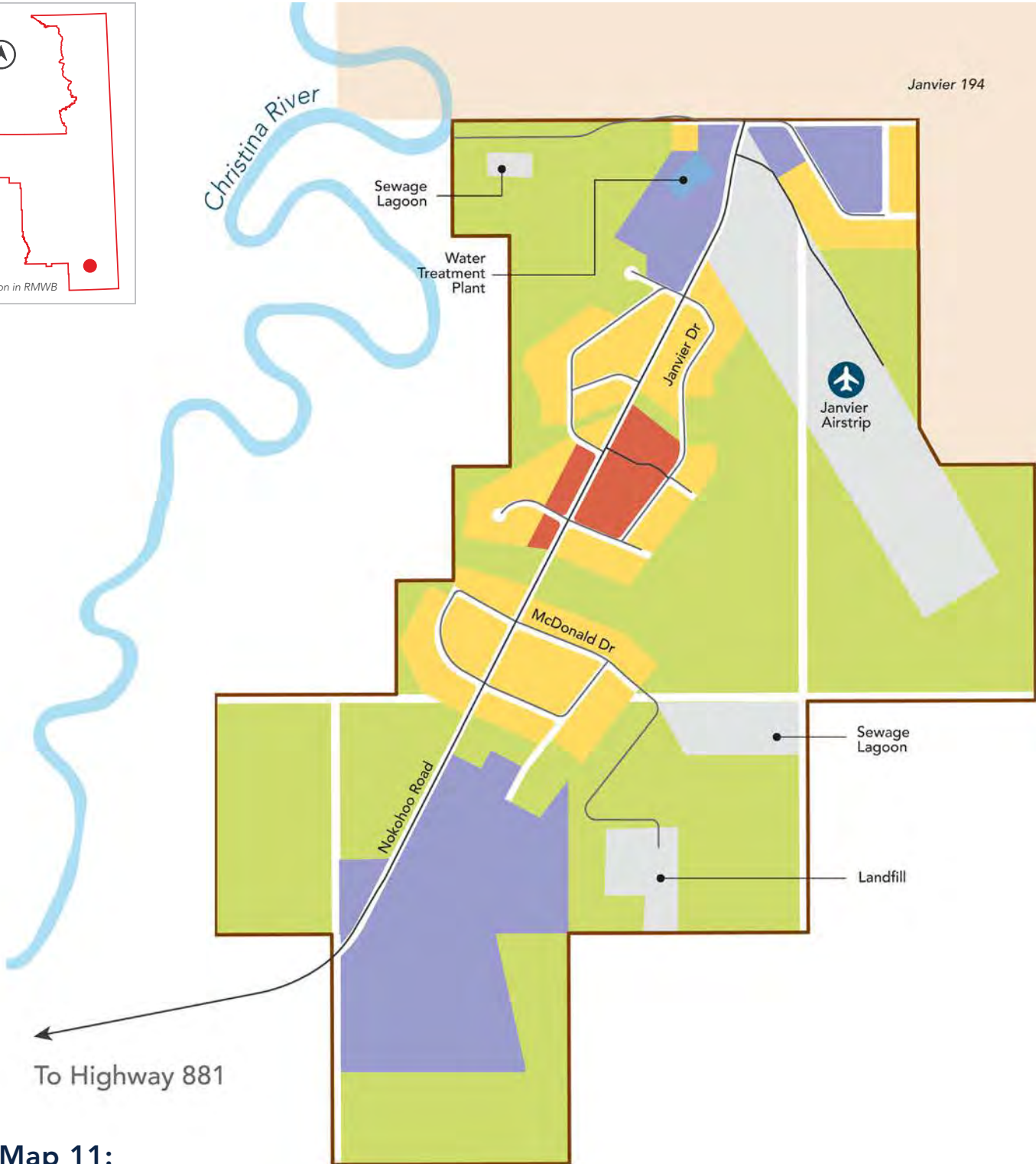
- g) Neighbourhood commercial uses will be supported in the Community Core to create opportunities for local business and neighbourhood services.

Protected Natural Areas

- h) The Municipality will minimize the encroachment of industrial growth into residential development using greenbelts as outlined in this plan's Green Network concept.
- i) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate this "Greenbelt" into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.
- j) The Municipality will also encourage the protection and preservation of the natural environment and areas deemed to be significant to the community.



Janvier 194



To Highway 881

Map 11:
Development Concept- Janvier

- Janvier Boundary
- Local Roads
- Airstrip
- Established Residential
- Community Core
- Established Employment
- First Nation Reserves
- Municipal Infrastructure
- Waterbodies
- Open Space



FORT MCKAY

The rural community of Fort McKay is located on the west bank of the Athabasca River, approximately 60 kilometres northwest of Fort McMurray, and is situated amongst many oil sands operational sites. Fort McKay was established in 1820 by the Hudson Bay Company as a trading post but was not known as Fort McKay until it was named after Dr. Williams Morrison McKay in 1917. While the oil sands industry is the primary employer in Fort McKay, forestry, hunting, and trapping remain key parts of the local economy. Many residents are active members of the Fort McKay First Nation which is part of the Athabasca Tribal Council, and the community is also the home of the Fort McKay Métis Nation.

According to the 2021 municipal census, there are 57 people living in Fort McKay, but the census does not account for transient oil sands workers or residents living on the nearby First Nation community.

6.3.2D Fort McKay Development Concept

Residential

- a) Although large lots with single detached housing will remain the primary residential form, other housing forms and densities will be considered to satisfy the needs of all age and income groups in the community.

Employment Lands

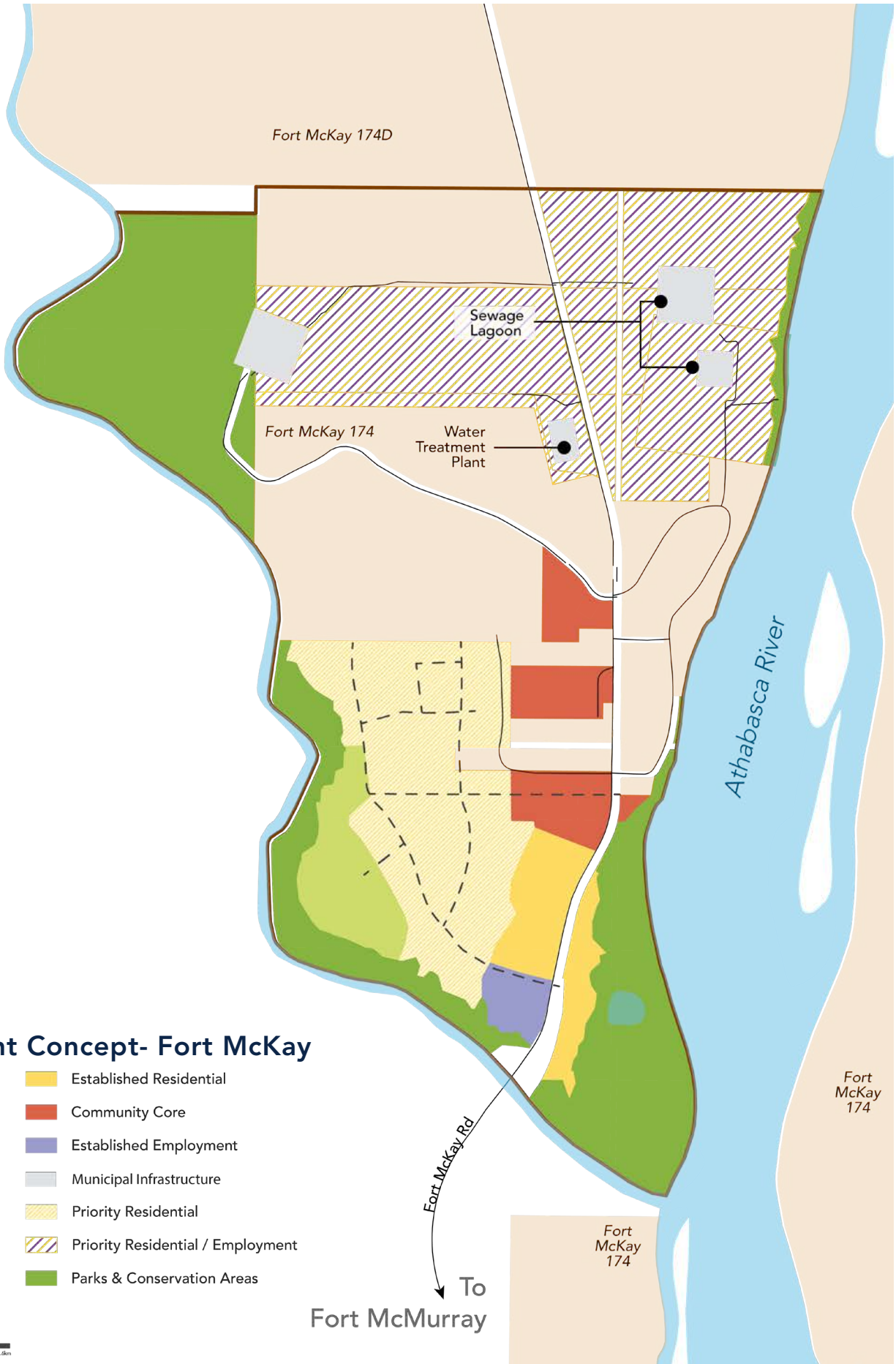
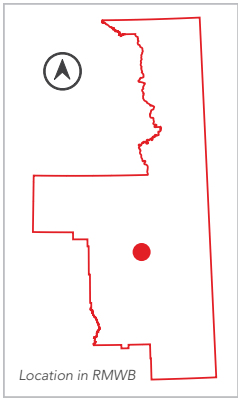
- b) The demand for industrial lands is best accommodated outside the community in locations that allow for greater accessibility while minimizing land use conflicts.

Community Core

- c) The Municipality will support growth on land leased and owned by the Fort McKay Métis to help create a defined Community Core consistent with the local ASP.

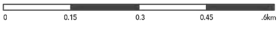
Protected Natural Areas

- d) The Municipality will minimize the encroachment of industrial growth into residential development using greenbelts as outlined in this plan's Green Network concept.
- e) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate this greenbelt into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.



Map 12:
Development Concept- Fort McKay

- Community Boundary
- Local Roads
- Proposed Roads
- First Nation Reserves
- Waterbodies
- Open Space
- Established Residential
- Community Core
- Established Employment
- Municipal Infrastructure
- Priority Residential
- Priority Residential / Employment
- Parks & Conservation Areas



FORT CHIPEWYAN

Nestled on the northwest shore of Lake Athabasca and next to one of the largest national parks in the world, Fort Chipewyan is one of the northern communities in the Municipality. Isolated by nature, Fort Chipewyan is only accessed by plane or boat in summer and ice road in winter.

Fort Chipewyan was named after the Chipewyan people first living in the area. Established as a trading post in 1788 by the Northwest Trading Company, Fort Chipewyan is the oldest settlement in all of Alberta. Trapping and fishing are still enjoyed by residents of Fort Chipewyan. Many of the residents of Fort Chipewyan are Mikisew Cree First Nation, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, and Fort Chipewyan Métis, and these Rights-holding Partners have come together on various initiatives such as the Three Nations Energy Corporation to improve community resiliency and the lives of all residents. Unlike most of the Municipality, oil and gas development has little impact on Fort Chipewyan, with the community historically hosting a bustling commercial fishing industry. Fort Chipewyan is home to 847 residents (2021 Census), making it the second largest community in the Municipality.

6.3.2E Fort Chipewyan Development Concept

The Municipality

- a) The Municipality will work with community organizations and residents to understand and collaboratively address land constraints. Where a desire and ability to develop municipal land for housing is demonstrated, the Municipality may divest the land.
- b) The Municipality should work closely with local organizations, Rights-holding Partners, and other stakeholders to coordinate land swaps, where appropriate, to help consolidate land to promote economic and housing opportunities.
- c) The Municipality will continue to be an active partner for collaboration opportunities to support economic growth in Fort Chipewyan.

- d) The Municipality will support the provision of a range of housing in the community in order to satisfy the needs of all ages and income levels.

Employment Lands

- e) The Municipality is supportive of any initiatives to reestablish commercial fishing industry that historically employed many Fort Chipewyan residents.
- f) Recognizing the tourism potential of Fort Chipewyan, the Municipality supports development of tourism-related industries and infrastructure, including sport fishing, staging for adventure tourism, and recreational boating.

Community Core

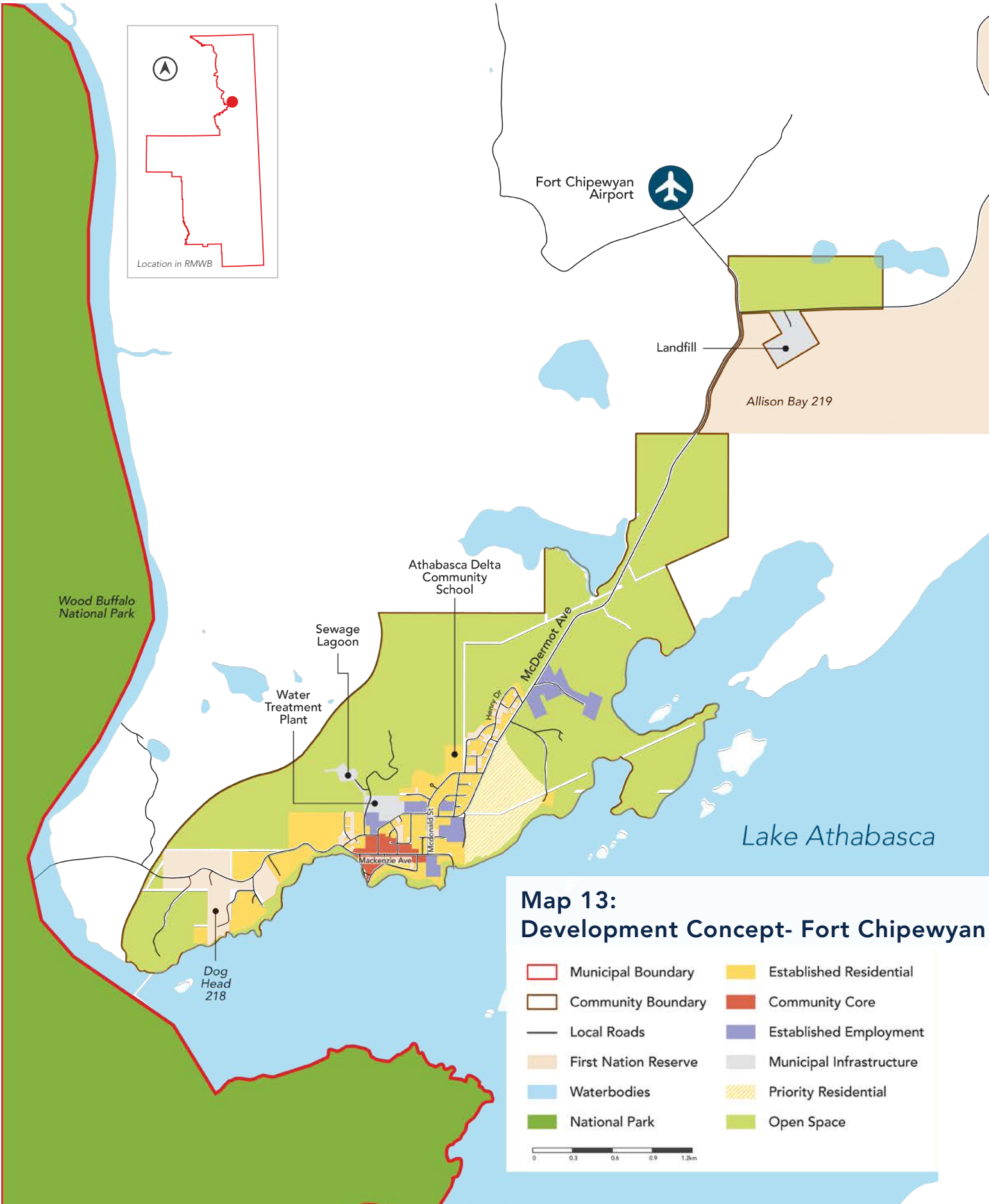
- g) To provide proximity to the services and amenities, new lands for future residential, institutional uses, small-scale retail should be concentrated near the Community Core.
- h) Infill development will be encouraged to make efficient use of underutilized lands both in the Community Core and surrounding areas.

Protected Natural Areas

- i) The Municipality will minimize encroachment of industrial development in residential areas using greenbelts as per the Green Network concept.
- j) The Municipality will work with the community to integrate greenbelt into the Regional Blue and Green Networks
- k) Development in areas significant to the community or environmentally sensitive will be limited to ensure these areas remain protected.
- l) Lakefront areas will be protected, preserved, and made accessible to all.
- m) Local food production will be encouraged to ensure a more self-sustaining community.

Transportation

- n) The Municipality will promote the safe and efficient use of the Fort Chipewyan Airport considering the size and remoteness of the community.
- o) The Municipality will continue advocating to senior levels of government for the development of a permanent all-seasons road to Fort Chipewyan.



DRAPER

Situated on the flood plains of the Clearwater River, Draper is located adjacent to Fort McMurray. Draper Road was named for Thomas Draper who operated an oil sand project there. In 1922, Draper formed The McMurray Asphaltum and Oil Company - he obtained his lease (No. 20) on Oct. 16, 1922. The plant burned down in the summer of 1924. In 1925, he began experimenting with oil sands as a paving material, both treated and untreated and mixed with asphalt. He was one of the most persistent experimenters in the use of oil sands as paving materials and a pioneer of oil sand promotion until production ended in the 1930s.

Since the 1930s, small agricultural and market garden uses occurred in the area, while today the community is primarily made up of acreages built along the banks of the Clearwater River.

The 2016 wildfires aggravated the slope stability issues on the lands located south of Draper road, and the 2020 floods was a reminder that the lands north of Draper road are located in floodplain and are susceptible to flooding. To minimize the risk to life and property, the Municipal Council took several steps such as extending a grant program at dwelling level to enhance flood resiliency, offering property buy-outs, and approving motions to reinstate land use regulations that promote safe developments.

Challenged by flood and slope stability issues, it is imperative that the community maintains a low density rural residential character with large lot acreages aiming to avoid fragmentation of land.

The residents of Draper are tenacious and passionate about their community. As of the 2021 municipal census, it had a population of 132 residents.

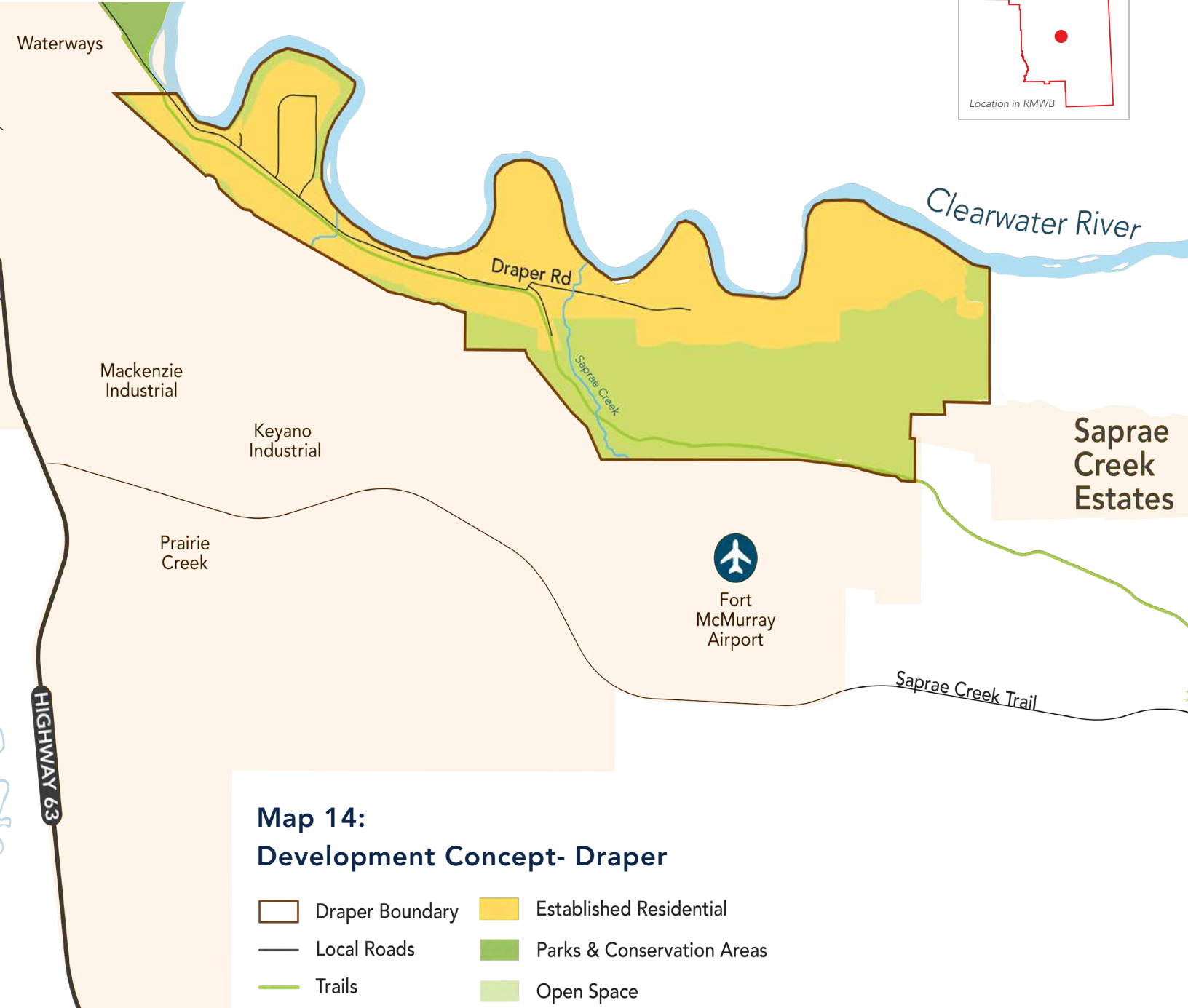
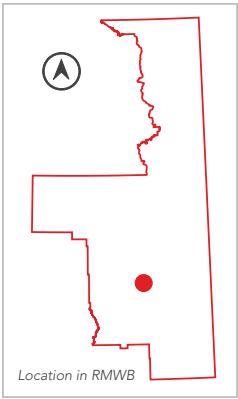
6.3.2F Draper Development Concept

Residential

- a) The Municipality will require that development be compatible with the rural character of Draper and conform to the local ASP.
- b) Country-style development may be allowed subject to technical studies and approval for development by the Municipality in areas that are considered safe from flood, wildfire, slope instability, and slumping risks.
- c) The Municipality may also consider contextually sensitive institutional uses for religious purposes in this area.
- d) To preserve the existing residential character of Draper, the Municipality may, subject to community input, consider other compatible uses within the ASP and the Land Use Bylaw.

Protected Natural Areas

- e) The Municipality will minimize the encroachment of residential growth into industrial development using greenbelts as outlined in this plan's Green Network concept.
- f) The Municipality will also seek opportunities to create a linear greenbelt of Environmental Protection along the Clearwater River.
- g) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate this greenbelt into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.
- h) Emphasis will be placed on protecting and preserving the natural environment.



**Map 14:
Development Concept- Draper**

- Draper Boundary
- Local Roads
- Trails
- Waterbodies
- Established Residential
- Parks & Conservation Areas
- Open Space



GREGOIRE LAKE ESTATES

Located on the shores of Willow Lake, Gregoire Lake Estates is across the lake from Anzac, and close to Gregoire Lake Provincial Park. As an exclusively residential community, residents travel to nearby Anzac for access to services.

According to the 2021 municipal census, there are 217 people living in Gregoire Lake Estates.

6.3.2G Gregoire Lake Estates Development Concept

Residential

- a) The Municipality will protect the existing pattern of development characterized by single family housing.
- b) The Municipality will not accommodate any physical expansion of the community since the community is fully built out and has major constraints on further expansion.

Protected Natural Areas

- c) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate the greenbelt surrounding the community into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.
- d) The Municipality will enhance community access to Willow Lake while ensuring minimal impact on the lake environment and other natural features.



Gregoire Lake Provincial Park

Willow Lake

Gregoire Ave

Aspen Cres

Poplar Cres

HIGHWAY 881

Map 15:
Development Concept-
Gregoire Lake Estates

- Gregoire Boundary
- Established Residential
- Highway
- Waterbodies
- Local Roads
- Parks & Conservation Areas

0 0.2 0.4km

SAPRAE CREEK

The rural community of Saprae Creek is near Fort McMurray and is the third largest community in Wood Buffalo. Situated on the crest of the Clearwater River Valley, Saprae Creek enjoys a close proximity to Vista Ridge, a popular winter recreation facility that offers skiing, snowboarding and downhill tubing as well as an outdoor skate park, playground, ropes course, and golf course in the warmer months.

Established in 1987, Saprae Creek is a forested acreage rural community that serves as a bedroom community to Fort McMurray, and according to the 2021 municipal census, there are 658 residents currently living in Saprae Creek.

6.3.2H Saprae Creek Development Concept

Residential

- a) The Municipality will support the modest expansion of Saprae Creek to the east in a form consistent with current densities.

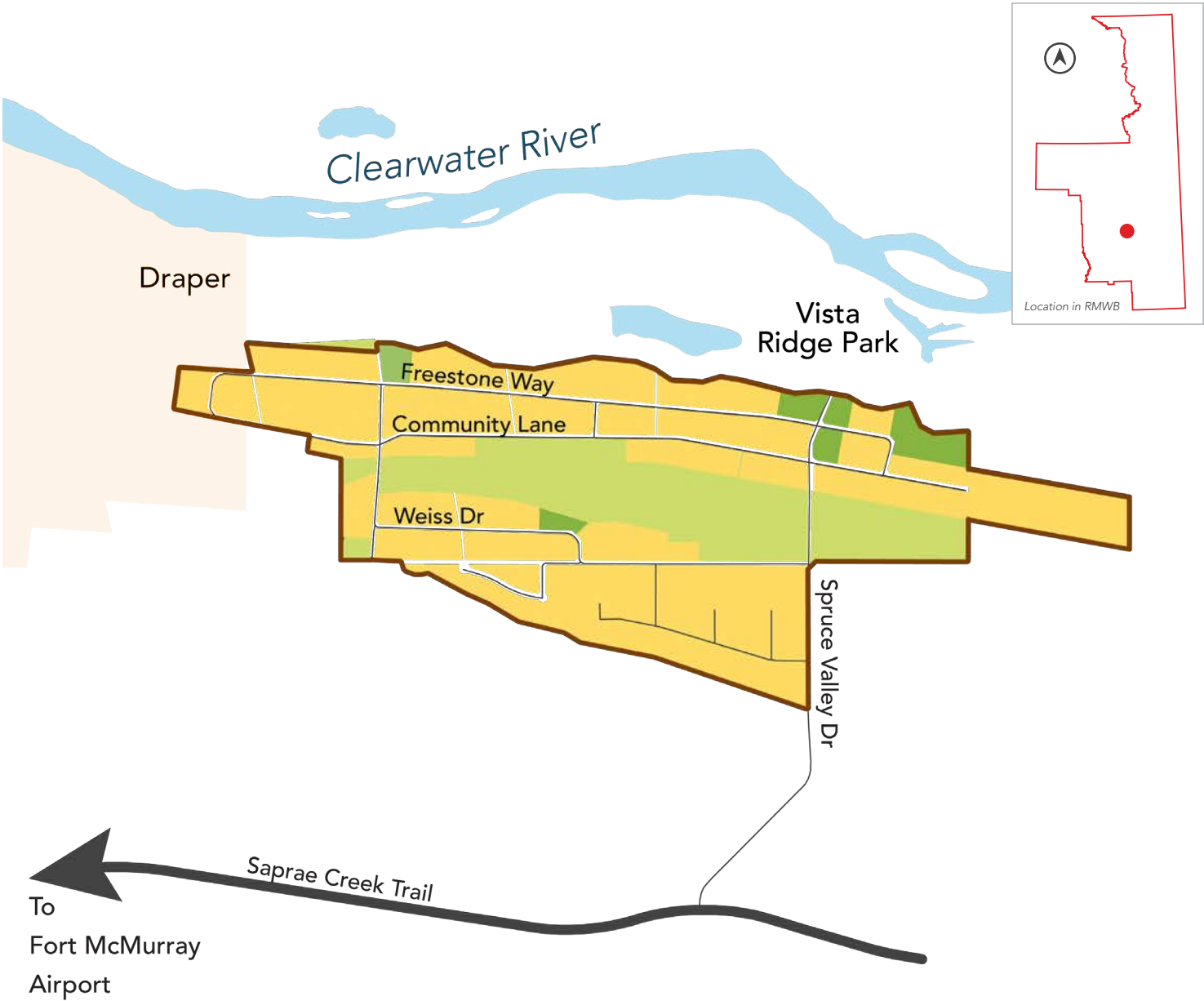
Recreational Amenities

- b) The Municipality will support private investment in Vista Ridge and its lands to develop into a year-round regional recreational amenity and tourism asset.
- c) Future growth in Vista Ridge should be sensitive to the existing community context of Saprae Creek.
- d) The Municipality should investigate opportunities to expand transit and active transportation access to Vista Ridge.

Protected Natural Areas

- e) The Municipality will minimize the encroachment of industrial growth into residential development using greenbelts as outlined in this plan's Green Network concept.

- f) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate this greenbelt into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.
- g) The Municipality will encourage development in harmony with the natural setting.



Map 16:
Development Concept- Sapræ Creek

- Community Boundary
- Local Roads
- Rail
- Waterbodies
- Urban Service Area & Rural Communities
- Established Residential
- Parks & Conservation Areas
- Open Space



FORT FITZGERALD

Located on the Alberta/ Northwest Territories border on the Slave River, Fort Fitzgerald is the northern most rural community in Wood Buffalo. Fort Fitzgerald was originally named Smith's Landing until 1915 when it was renamed to honour the late Inspector Francis Joseph Fitzgerald of the North West Mounted Police. The nearest community is Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, which is 25 kilometres to the north. Residents of this remote community must travel to Fort Smith to shop or attend school, as there are no supporting services except electricity.

Situated at the beginning of four sets of impassible rapids, Fort Fitzgerald was once a major portage point for barges transporting goods to Fort Smith and the north. The Fort Fitzgerald region is also home to Smith's Landing First Nation.

According to the 2021 municipal census, there are six people currently residing in Fort Fitzgerald.

6.3.2I Fort Fitzgerald Development Concept

The Municipality

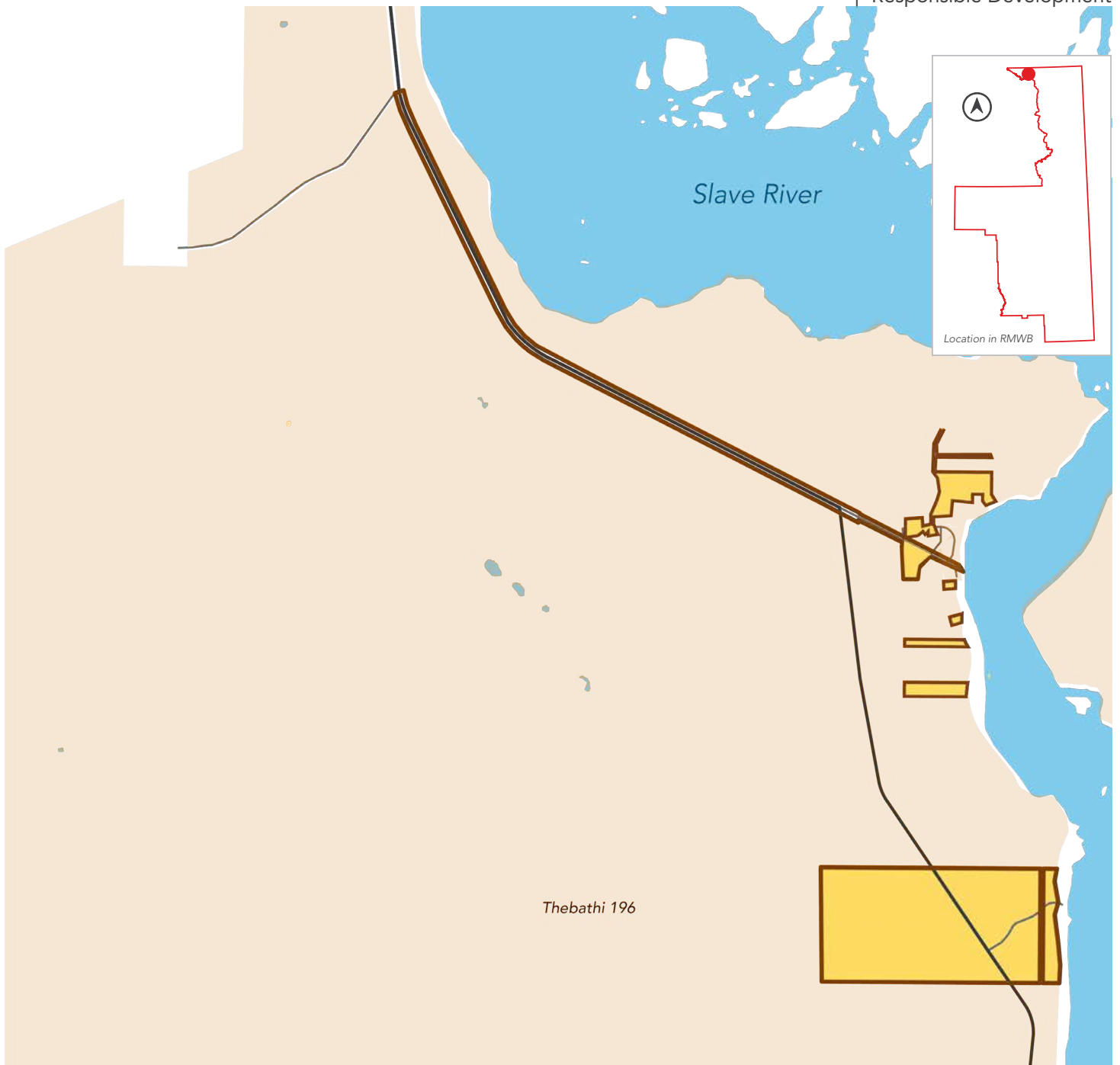
- a) The Municipality commits to representing Fort Fitzgerald's interests in intermunicipal and inter-provincial/territorial relations, given the community's unique context and relationship with Fort Smith.

Residential


- b) The Municipality will support minimal increases in population in line with the existing pattern of residential development.

Protected Natural Areas

- c) With support from the community, the Municipality will identify ways to integrate Fort Fitzgerald into the broader Regional Blue and Green Networks.



Map 17:
Development Concept-
Fort Fitzgerald

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Municipal Boundary |  First Nation Reserves |
|  Community Boundary |  Established Residential |
|  Local Roads |  Parks & Conservation Areas |
|  Waterbodies | |



HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

ACTION ITEMS

- Monitor market demand for developable land
- Review municipal transit service to align with Transit Master Plan
- Explore opportunities to formalize greenbelts around Wood Buffalo's communities
- Investigate opportunities to develop Park and Ride infrastructure
- Review existing statutory plans to identify lands in the Urban Service Area that have policy directions
- Formalize periodic meetings between rural community leaders and RMWB Administration
- Review community space access policies
- Institute Disaster Risk Management
- Implement the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy's FireSmart priority zones
- Develop a Region-wide Comprehensive Flood Mitigation Strategy for the Municipality









IMPLEMENTATION



IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND AMENDMENTS



The MDP will be implemented through a clear framework that prioritizes action items, assigns responsibility for each policy, and regularly evaluates implementation and performance based on a series of indicators. The MDP may be amended or updated to reflect changing circumstances, to ensure it remains an effective tool for achieving the goals and objectives of Council, as well as the aspirations of the entire Municipality. The implementation measures ensure that the MDP's policies are effectively enacted and updated, as necessary.

7.1




ACTION ITEMS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The MDP proposes substantial new policy direction, which requires the coordination of all municipal departments.

Primary among these new policy directions are several action items that represent the most important, visible, or transformational ideas that are integral to realizing the MDP's vision and goals. These action items require the most effort, energy, and focus from the Municipality.

Beyond these action items, several steps are necessary for implementation to guarantee the MDPs short and long-term success. It is important to note that in addition to the implementation actions, the achievement of the goals and objectives of the MDP rely on capital, operating, and maintenance resources, which are subject to budgetary considerations by Council on an annual basis.

7.1.1 Action Items

- a) The MDP identifies action items throughout the document that represent the most impactful, important, and visible initiatives the Municipality must undertake to realize the MDP's vision and goals. These Action Items are collated in Appendix C and assign responsibility to municipal departments for their effective implementation. Each municipal division should work collaboratively with other divisions to ensure the implementation of the action items.
- b) Before starting any actions identified in Appendix C, Administration will summarize the action item and its implications, including an assessment of its budget impacts, in a report and present it to Council for approval. 
- c) Following adoption of this MDP, Council will undertake a prioritization exercise identifying when and how action items should be implemented over time. 
- d) Review and revise the Land Use Bylaw to encourage to reflect the policy directions. 

7.1.2 Implementation Responsibility and Budgeting

Departmental responsibility for implementing policies requiring action by the Municipality is detailed in Appendix C.

- a) The Municipality will coordinate the funding of the MDP's action items through ongoing annual budget submissions identified by the departments responsible for the initiative's implementation.
- b) Council and Administration should prioritize funding action items aligned with Council's prioritization exercise outlined in section 7.1.1.c.

7.2

MONITORING

Under the Province of Alberta's Municipal Government Act, all statutory plans in the province are living documents.

While the MDP has been written to maintain flexibility and responsiveness to a variety of changing economic, social, and environmental conditions, it is still likely that unforeseen circumstances could arise that impact its effectiveness. Periodic MDP review and monitoring will establish a framework for revisiting the MDP to ensure it is achieving its goals to the greatest extent possible, and that the Municipality's actions continue to be aligned with the MDP.

The monitoring framework includes a suite of performance indicators that can be used to evaluate the success of the MDP's implementation, as well as inform a reporting and MDP review structure to communicate how the MDP is achieving its objectives.

7.2.1 Performance Indicators

The performance indicators measure progress towards the goals and policies in the MDP starting from a baseline. These indicators can be used to determine MDP success and effectiveness over time.


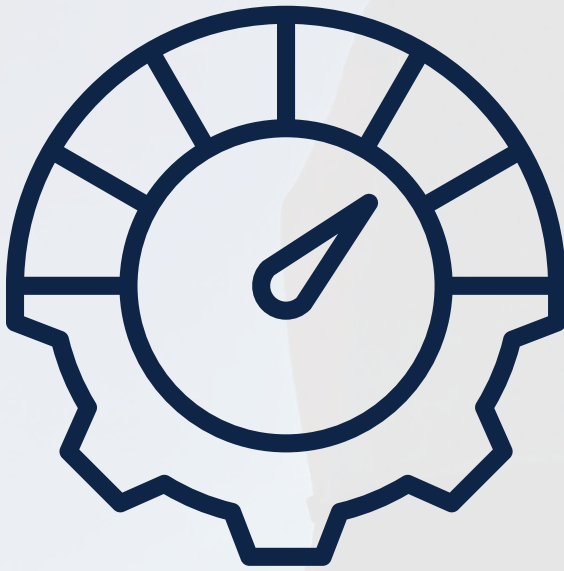
- a) The Municipality will develop a framework for implementing the performance indicators identified in Figure 8, which should be comprised of baseline measures, and a methodology of measurement for the indicators. 
- b) These indicators, and their associated targets and measurements, may be re-examined and redefined (as needed) on an annual basis.

FIGURE 8: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance indicator targets and metrics will be finalized following final review of the draft MDP with residents, Council, and administration.



HOME AND BELONGING

- Number of crimes per 1,000 residents by type of crime
- Resident's rating of overall feeling of belonging
- Amount of newcomer services offered
- Number of programs and services offered to supporting at-risk populations
- Demographics of settled residents
- In-migration data
- Percent of Equity-seeking individuals who identify feeling welcome in Wood Buffalo

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INNOVATION

- Population / jobs ratio
- Building vacancy rate by use
- Number of distinct businesses
- Number of businesses by sector
- Changes in job classification
- Oil and gas industry growth
- Commercial development permits issued
- Number of post-secondary students
- New jobs
- Number of out-of-Region shopping trips residents take per year

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

- Number of Calls to Action actively being implemented
- Number of meetings between Municipal Administration and Indigenous Partners.
- Percent of regional road signs in Indigenous languages
- Actions taken towards developing an urban reserve strategy

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

- New areas for arts and cultural space (institutions, performance studios, etc.)
- Number of cultural events held annually
- Number of festivals held annually
- New programs supporting arts and culture
- Multicultural groups operating in the Municipality
- Residential Diversity Index
- Number of residents attending festivals and events
- Percent of regional publications offered in additional languages

CONNECTING TO NATURE



- Total kms of multi-use pathway
- Total kms of Blue and Green Network developed and maintained
- Number of tourists using the Blue and Green Network
- Number of accessible lakes
- Number of residents using parks and trails
- Hectares of protected natural areas
- Number of development permits issued for cabins

RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

- People per hectare (Urban Service Area)
- Population of Neighbourhood Cores, Community Cores, and the Downtown
- Land Use Diversity in Neighbourhood Cores, Community Cores, and the Downtown
- Housing inventory by typology and affordability
- Land analysis for different land uses
- Available developable land
- Vacant lots
- Amount of reclaimed industrial lands
- New build starts
- Overall transit ridership
- Overall transit ridership per operating hours
- New businesses in the Downtown
- Number of projects with confirmed risk assessment and reduction strategies

7.2.2 Reporting and MDP Review

The MDP will be monitored and regularly reviewed based on the performance indicators identified in section 7.2.1 as well as any additional criteria identified by the Municipality. Beyond ongoing MDP reporting, it is best practice to establish timeframes for a broader review and update of the MDP's overall effectiveness and applicability to the current context. To this end, a clear framework for major MDP reviews is an important tool.

- a) The Municipality will monitor and review the MDP on an ongoing basis. 
- b) The Report will evaluate the MDP's policies, and their effectiveness based on the series of performance indicators identified in section 7.2.1 and shown in Figure1: Performance Indicators.
- c) The Report will provide recommendations for changes to policy or implementation, if necessary.
- d) If the Report recommends that extensive changes are necessary, then a more thorough review of the MDP may be undertaken.
- e) Notwithstanding the previous policy, the Municipality will complete a comprehensive internal MDP review every 5 years to consider administrative updates, emerging trends, implementation progress, and policy gaps. 
- f) Should the Administration identify significant gaps or shortcomings in the MDP's effectiveness, the Municipality should assess whether these issues can be addressed with a simple MDP update exercise or if they require a comprehensive rewrite.
- g) Administration should report on the findings of this review to Council as part of MDP reporting.





REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO



7.3

INTERPRETATION AND AMENDMENT

This section provides guidance and clarity around the interpretation of MDP policy and MDP amendment.

7.3.1 Interpretation

- a) The MDP consists of a series of goals, strategic directions, and policies. Throughout the document, supporting text, anecdotes, and explanations are provided as insets, graphics, or callouts. This ancillary information is intended to aid in the interpretation of the MDP's policies, and while not a part of the statutory text, should be used to help guide future decision-making related to interpreting the spirit and intent of the MDP's policies.
- b) The MDP contains "will," "should," and "may" policies, which are to be interpreted as follows:
 - i) **Will:** Indicate policies for the municipality to work on based on available resources, administrative priorities, and Council's direction.
 - ii) **Should:** Indicates policies that require compliance in principle but can be varied where unique or unforeseen circumstances provide for courses of action that would satisfy the general intent of the policy, subject to the discretion of the applicable authority on a case-by-case basis.
 - iii) **May:** These policies indicate that the applicable authority will determine the level of compliance required. "Will" policies must be complied with.
- c) Where, over time with changing conditions in the Region, certain sections of the MDP may come into conflict with one another, a hierarchy of priorities should be understood to exist where Strategic Directions prevail over specific Policies, and Goals prevail over Strategic Directions. Where equally weighted elements of the MDP are found to be in conflict, interpretation should be made by a Registered Professional Planner (RPP), or amendments to the text made.

- d) Where the Municipality is committed to certain actions as outlined in the MDP, the Municipality must comply with this text unless circumstances make this impractical or impossible. In such cases, the MDP should be amended.
- e) Growth Concepts and other mapping components presented throughout the MDP are intended to be interpreted as broad and generalized, presenting a conceptual understanding of the future development intent of the Region, Urban Service Area, and rural communities. These maps do not provide site-specific guidance or development directions.

7.3.2 Amending the MDP

- a) Changes to the intent of the MDP will be carried out through an amendment process in accordance with the MGA.
- b) Opportunities for broader public and stakeholder engagement may be necessary, depending upon the nature of the proposed MDP amendment, potential impacts, and/or anticipated level of public interest generated by the change. Administration will assess and determine the appropriate engagement processes for each future MDP amendment on a case-by-case basis.
- c) The Municipality or any landowner may initiate an amendment to the MDP. Within the application to amend the MDP, the following will be addressed:
 - i) The rationale for the proposed amendment
 - ii) The impact of the proposed change on the achievement of the goals and policies of the MDP
 - iii) Compliance with other policies in the MDP
 - iv) Compliance with other relevant statutory documents in the Municipality
 - v) Alignment with the Municipality's strategic plan
 - vi) The effect of the proposed amendment on adjacent land uses

vii) The effect of the proposed amendment on municipal infrastructure, services, and finances

viii) Proposed public and stakeholder consultation, if necessary.

- d) In cases where the amendment may result in significant impacts, the Municipality may require the submission of additional information to assess the suitability of the proposed change, such as the assessment of:
 - i) Fiscal impacts
 - ii) Environmental impacts
 - iii) Disaster Risk Impacts
 - iv) Servicing and infrastructure impacts
 - v) Impacts on the local economy

The scope of the required information will be determined through consultation with Administration and the applicant.





APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DEFINITIONS

Accessibility

The removal of barriers to enable someone regardless of ability to operate more independently, preserve dignity, and meaningfully participate in daily life.

Additions to Reserve (ATR)

Following the signing of the Treaties, several outstanding land debts are still owed to First Nations across Canada. An Additions to Reserve (ATR) is a parcel of land added to a First Nation's existing reserve land or that creates a new reserve. Land added through an ATR can either be adjacent to or separated from existing reserve land and in either rural or urban settings. ATRs are an important way for First Nations to address historic and unjust loss of reserve and treaty land. They also contribute directly to improving the treaty relationship, advancing Truth and Reconciliation, and are critical for accommodating growing First Nations' populations and supporting a community's strategic and economic development opportunities.

Blue Network

The Blue Network is an integrated network of waterbodies, watercourses, and waterfront lands throughout the Municipality that provides a range of environmental, recreational, social, and economic benefits to residents of Wood Buffalo. In conjunction with the Green Network, the Blue Network serves to balance the need to preserve sensitive landscapes with the desire and economic opportunity associated with improving access to nature.

Community Core

Community Cores are the major centres of community life, activity, and commerce in the Municipality's Rural Communities. Not every rural community has a Community Core, but each

Community Core is distinct and requires its own framework for future growth and development, where desired by the community.

Complete Community

A community where people live, work, and play and have the ability to meet all of their daily needs by active transportation.

Disability

An impairment (physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, neurological, communication, sensory, etc.) that can be temporary or permanent that interacts with barriers to prevent people from meaningfully participating in daily life.

Diversity

The variety of identities found within an organization, group or society.

Downtown

Downtown refers to the Downtown of Fort McMurray, the heart of the Urban Service Area and all of Wood Buffalo. Because of its regional significance, Downtown is a priority area for investment, development, and improved connectivity throughout the MDP. The boundaries of Downtown are identified in the Urban Service Area development concept.

Disaster Risk Management

Disaster risk management is the application of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies to prevent new disaster risk, reduce existing disaster risk and manage residual risk, contributing to the strengthening of resilience and reduction of disaster losses.

DEFINITIONS, CONTINUED

Emergency Preparedness

The measures taken, resources allocated, and procedures in place to support timely Emergency Response.

Emergency Response

The immediate action taken to abate a crisis, such as fire suppression, rescue service, and/or medical care.

Environmental Protection

Environmental Protection lands are those specifically designated as environmentally sensitive. No development should occur on these lands.

Equity

The principle of considering people's unique experiences and differing situations, and ensuring they have access to the resources and opportunities that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes.

Equity-Deserving Groups

A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society, and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes.

In Canada, groups generally considered to be equity-deserving groups include women, Indigenous Peoples, people with disabilities, people who are part of 2SLGBTQI+ communities, religious minority groups and racialized people. The types of equity-denied groups may vary based on factors such as geography, sociocultural context or the presence of specific subpopulations.

Established Employment Lands

Established Employment Lands are locations where major employment uses currently exist.

Established Neighbourhood

Established Neighbourhood refers to developed residential lands including small to medium scale commercial, recreational, and institutional areas.

Established Residential

Established Residential areas are the currently existing built-out residential areas throughout the Municipality. They contain a mix of housing, institutions, parks, and businesses.

FireSmart

FireSmart is a national program that is used by communities across Canada to reduce the risk of future wildfire damage.

Future Growth Areas

Future Growth Areas are areas where the municipality has approved Area Structure Plans, however, the developability of these lands is yet to be assessed.

Green Network

The Green Network is an integrated body of natural areas and trails across the Municipality that serves to increase recreation and active transportation mobility options, enhance parks and parkland through the Municipality, and improve access to natural areas in a sustainable manner. In conjunction with the Blue Network, the Green Network serves to balance the need to preserve sensitive landscapes with the desire and economic opportunity associated with improving access to nature.

Greenbelts

An area of open land around a community in which development is limited or restricted to preserve the natural growth occurring there and buffer the community from development further away.

Inclusion

The practice of using proactive measures to create an environment where people feel welcomed, respected, and valued, and to foster a sense of belonging and engagement. This practice involves changing the environment by removing barriers so that each person has equal access to opportunities and resources and can achieve their full potential.

DEFINITIONS, CONTINUED

Inclusivity

Inclusivity is the practice or policy of identifying and addressing barriers rooted in historical and ongoing oppression and segregation processes to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all people. The lack of Inclusivity prevents people from fully participating in social and economic life, which is detrimental to all.

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous Peoples are unique communities with shared ancestral connections to the territories and natural assets where they reside, inhabit, or from which they have been displaced. Indigenous Peoples possess social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the settler colonial societies in which they live. Spread across the world from the Arctic to the South Pacific, they are the descendants - according to a common definition - of those who lived in a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived. In Canada three distinct groups are recognized, namely, First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

Local First Nation Communities

Smith's Landing First Nation, Mikisew Cree First Nation, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Fort McKay First Nation, Fort McMurray 468 First Nation, and Chipewyan Prairie First Nation.

Local Métis Communities

Fort Chipewyan Métis Nation, Fort McKay Métis Nation, McMurray Métis Local 1935, Willow Lake Métis Nation, Chard Métis Nation, and Conklin Métis Local.

Neighbourhood Core

Neighbourhood Cores are minor centres of community life, activity, and commerce. These locations should be developed with careful consideration to their livability, comfort, design, and mix of uses, promoting their development as local, smaller scale "Downtowns."

Open Space

Open Space are lands that remains in its natural state and allows for the protection of environmental features and wildlife. The area must be left in its natural state.

Parks & Conservation

Parks and Conservation areas are those set aside for community use, enjoyment, and conservation. They are distinct from designated environment protection lands.

Priority Employment Lands

Priority Employment Lands are locations where all new greenfield employment land development should be prioritized.

Priority Neighbourhood

Priority Neighbourhood refers to development ready lands with approved policy framework, zoned with defined densities and some level of installed infrastructure.

Priority Residential Areas

Priority Residential Areas are locations where all new greenfield residential development should be prioritized.

Region

Refers to the geographical location of the RMWB, which includes the First Nations located within it. When the MDP mentions the Region, it acknowledges the municipal understanding of the term. It recognizes and respects the autonomy of the First Nations, noting that while First Nations Reserves may be geographically within the Region, they are not legally part of it. The MDP does not have jurisdiction over First Nations Reserves.

Reserved Growth Areas

Reserved Growth Areas are areas identified in the 2011 MDP for growth and expansion. These areas are identified at a conceptual level and the statutory planning framework and developability of these lands is yet to be assessed.

Responsible Development

Responsible development means focusing and leveraging regional growth and investment so that it supports a livable, sustainable, and desirable community for all.

distinction with the Government of Alberta in the way that program delivery and grant eligibility is determined.

Rights-Holding Partners (Rightsholders)

Indigenous Peoples who have constitutionally protected rights and vested interest in their lands, including decision-making, governance, jurisdiction, legal traditions, and fiscal relations associated with those lands.

Rural Communities

Rural Communities are designated areas of development outside the Urban Service Area. These include Anzac, Conklin, Draper, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Fitzgerald, Fort McKay, Gregoire Lake Estates, Janvier, and Sapræ Creek.

Transit Corridors

Transit Corridors are the routes where higher-order transit primarily services, and therefore benefits, from a higher degree of connectivity to other parts of a Region.

Transit Nodes

Transit Nodes are high concentration areas of transit interconnectivity. These are locations where rapid transit service is prioritized and often where intermodal connections can be easily or quickly made (such as to inter-regional bus service, domestic and international flights, taxis, or active transportation networks).

Universal Design

Universal Design is the design of buildings, products, or environments to make them accessible to all people, regardless of age, disability, or other factors.

Urban Service Area

Urban Service Area refers to Fort McMurray, the regional heart of Wood Buffalo. As the urban service hub that most Wood Buffalo residents come to for healthcare, education, government services, and recreation, Fort McMurray plays many different roles. For this reason, it holds a special

APPENDIX B

THE MUNICIPALITY'S CALLS TO ACTION

1. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by:

- i) Monitoring and assessing neglect investigations.
- ii) Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside.
- iii) Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools.
- iv) Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing.
- v) Requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school.

3. We call upon all levels of government to fully implement Jordan's Principle.

5. We call upon the federal, Provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

8. We call upon the federal government to eliminate the discrepancy in federal education funding for First Nations children being educated on reserves and those First Nations children being educated off reserves.

11. We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.

12. We call upon the federal, Provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.

13. We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights.

14. We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

- i) Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.
- ii) Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties.
- iii) The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation.
- iv) The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.
- v) Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.

THE MUNICIPALITY'S CALLS TO ACTION, CONTINUED

16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.

17. We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school Survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five years for the name-change process and the revision of official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.

22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.

23. We call upon all levels of government to:

- i) Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field.
- ii) Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities.
- iii) Provide cultural competency training for all health-care professionals.

31. We call upon the federal, Provincial, and territorial governments to provide sufficient and stable funding to implement and evaluate community sanctions that will provide realistic alternatives to imprisonment for Aboriginal offenders and respond to the underlying causes of offending.

40. We call on all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal-specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms.

43. We call upon federal, Provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

47. We call upon federal, Provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

53. We call upon the Parliament of Canada, in consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to enact legislation to establish a National Council for Reconciliation. The legislation would establish the council as an independent, national, oversight body with membership jointly appointed by the Government of Canada and national Aboriginal organizations, and consisting of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members. Its mandate would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i) Monitor, evaluate, and report annually to Parliament and the people of Canada on the Government of Canada's post-apology progress on reconciliation to ensure that government accountability for reconciling the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown is maintained in the coming years.
- ii) Monitor, evaluate, and report to Parliament and the people of Canada on reconciliation progress across all levels and sectors of Canadian society, including the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.
- iii) Develop and implement a multi-year National Action Plan for Reconciliation, which includes research and policy development, public education programs, and resources.
- iv) Promote public dialogue, public/private partnerships, and public initiatives for reconciliation.

55. We call upon all levels of government to provide annual reports or any current data requested by the National Council for Reconciliation so that it can report on the progress towards reconciliation. The reports or data would include, but not be limited to:

THE MUNICIPALITY'S CALLS TO ACTION, CONTINUED

- i) The number of Aboriginal children—including Métis and Inuit children—in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, the reasons for apprehension, and the total spending on preventive and care services by child-welfare agencies.
- ii) Comparative funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves.
- iii) The educational and income attainments of Aboriginal peoples in Canada compared with non-Aboriginal people.
- iv) Progress on closing the gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in a number of health indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.
- v) Progress on eliminating the over-representation of Aboriginal children in youth custody over the next decade.
- vi) Progress on reducing the rate of criminal victimization of Aboriginal people, including data related to homicide and family violence victimization and other crimes.
- vii) Progress on reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the justice and correctional systems.

57. We call upon federal, Provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

64. We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.

66. We call upon the federal government to establish multi-year funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation and establish a national network to share information and best practices.

75. We call upon the federal government to work with Provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried. This is to include the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.

77. We call upon Provincial, territorial, municipal, and community archives to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system, and to provide these to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

79. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to:

- Amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its Secretariat.
- Revising the policies, criteria, and practices of the National Program of Historical Commemoration to integrate Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada's national heritage and history.
- Developing and implementing a national heritage plan and strategy for commemorating residential school sites, the history and legacy of residential schools, and the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada's history.

THE MUNICIPALITY'S CALLS TO ACTION, CONTINUED

82. We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

87. We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.

88. We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for Provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.

92. We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous Peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
- Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
- Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

APPENDIX C

ACTION ITEMS

The following table summarizes the MDP’s Action Items, identifies high-level timelines for completion, and highlights where responsibility for implementation ultimately lies within the Municipality’s administration. Over time as conditions change it may become necessary to reconsider and revisit prioritization and responsibility for specific Action Items. To provide the flexibility necessary for the MDP to remain responsive to these changes this table is included as a revisable appendix to the MDP.

Each Action Item’s prioritization for implementation has been determined through one of four priorities:

Immediate: These projects should begin within 6 to 12 months after adoption of the MDP.

Medium: These projects should begin within 5 to 10 years after the adoption of the MDP.

Short: These projects should be commenced within 1 to 4 years after adoption of the MDP.

Long: These projects are longer-term ambitions that will likely not begin until 11 to 20 years after adoption of the MDP.

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
CHAPTER 1				
1.1.1.b	The Municipality will integrate safe, high-quality, human-scaled, multi-use public spaces, such as parks, plazas, and squares, as part of development or redevelopment projects. The mechanism for requiring this in private and public development projects will be determined through future study.	Conduct studies to identify mechanisms for integrating safe, high-quality, human-scaled, public spaces into new development.	Short	Planning & Development, Public Works, Organizational Support Services
1.1.1.d	The Municipality will encourage and promote the development of distinctive and attractive Community Cores and Neighbourhood Cores with safe, accessible public spaces that align them with the Municipality’s Design Guidelines and supportive funding programs.	Develop and Implement Region-wide Design Guidelines	Short	Planning & Development
1.1.1.e	The Municipality will encourage and promote pilot programs in Downtown that allow cafés, restaurants, and stores to spill out into the public realm. These pilot programs should activate streets and sidewalks in a more lively, vibrant manner.	Develop and implement Downtown public realm activation pilot programs.	Immediate	Organizational Support Services, Planning & Development, Public Works

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
1.1.2.a	The Municipality will develop new Design Guidelines that support walkability and safety in all seasons.	Develop and Implement Region-wide Design Guidelines	Immediate	Planning & Development
1.1.2.c	The Municipality will prioritize active transportation projects that connect neighbourhoods to the Downtown. All residents should have several options for accessing Wood Buffalo's hub for employment, shopping, services, education, arts, culture, and recreation.	Develop and implement an Active Transportation Master Plan that focuses on Downtown connectivity	Short	Public Works, and Organizational Support Services
1.1.3.a	Within the Municipality's Urban Design Guidelines, a Four Seasons Strategy should be developed that acknowledges not just that Wood Buffalo is a winter region, but that it has potential year-round.	Develop and implement a Four Seasons Strategy	Short	Planning & Development
1.1.4.c	c) Where possible, the Municipality will support new housing choices, experimental designs, and sustainable building practices. These projects should help advance local knowledge and inspire continued innovation in the housing market.	Review and revise the Land Use Bylaw to encourage and facilitate mixed-use development.	Medium	Planning & Development
1.2.2.a	The Municipality will identify and maintain a list of organizations involved in community safety.	Prepare and maintain a list of community organizations involved in safety.	Short	Community Services, and Regional Emergency Services
1.2.2.f	The Municipality will work alongside Equity-Deserving Groups to develop and implement an Equity Framework to guide the organization in embedding equity and inclusion into daily operations and Municipal initiatives, projects, and plans.	Develop and implement an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy for the Region.	Medium	Community Services
1.2.4.f	The Municipality is recognized as an Age-Friendly Community by the Province of Alberta and will continue to explore initiatives in collaboration with community groups that support an age-friendly region. Emphasis should be placed on ensuring public space design is safe and easy to navigate for seniors.	Maintain the Municipality's status as an Age-Friendly Community, recognized by the Province of Alberta, and continue to explore initiatives in collaboration with community groups that support an age-friendly region.	Long	Community Services

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
1.2.5.a/b	a) The Municipality will establish thresholds to inform the expansion of fire services to service the anticipated future growth levels of the Urban Service Area and Rural Communities.	Establish thresholds for fire service expansion.	a) Short	Regional Emergency Services
	b) Following preparation of the thresholds outlined in 1.2.5.a, the Municipality will ensure its capital budget implements these service increases at the appropriate time.		b) Medium	Regional Emergency Services and Corporate Services
1.2.5.h	The Municipality will explore opportunities to create a Transit Evacuation Plan that identifies vulnerable populations (i.e. seniors, children at school, childcare facilities, low-income population) requiring evacuation assistance during emergency events.	Explore opportunities to develop a Transit Evacuation Plan	Medium	Public Works, and Regional Emergency Services
1.2.5.i	The Municipality will collaboratively develop and share Emergency Action Plans with key businesses and institutes throughout the Region for use during times of emergency.	Develop Emergency Action Plans	Medium	Regional Emergency Services
1.3.2.b	The Municipality will prepare a new long-term comprehensive housing plan to address homelessness, building on the work done in the Municipality's 2010-2020 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness.	Prepare new Long-Term Housing Plan	Immediate	Planning & Development, and Community Services
1.3.3.c	The Municipality will maintain an inventory of existing and required community support services, with the intention of understanding the changing needs over time, and streamline and improve the efficacy of advocacy work with other levels of government.	Develop and maintain an inventory of existing and required community support services	Short	Community Services
1.3.4.e	The Municipality will review the Land Use Bylaw, statutory plans and other development regulations and propose amendments, as appropriate, to expand the locations where health services can locate and streamline their approvals.	Review and revise the Land Use Bylaw to encourage and facilitate mixed-use development.	Medium	Planning & Development

CHAPTER 2

2.1.1.c	The Municipality will investigate opportunities to prioritize development approvals for new or expanding local businesses Downtown that meet or exceed the objectives of the Downtown Area Redevelopment Plan.	Investigate opportunities to streamline processing of Downtown applications for development of commercial, institutional, mixed uses and other developments that support or encourage economic activities.	Immediate	Planning & Development
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POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
2.1.1.i	The Municipality will endeavour to retain existing businesses and attract new businesses by preparing an “Ease of Doing Business” plan in collaboration with the local economic development agency.	Prepare and implement an Ease of Doing Business Plan	Short	Planning & Development, and Corporate Services
2.1.1.k	The Municipality will support community partners and local economic development organizations in the delivery of business retention and expansion programs that strengthen local business.	Prepare and implement an Ease of Doing Business Plan	Short	Planning & Development, and Corporate Services
2.2.1.g	The Municipality will work with local business groups and economic development organizations to enhance supports for Indigenous entrepreneurs to promote their businesses and build employment networks to increase their visibility.	Adopt and implement the Region's Place Brand Strategy	Immediate	Planning & Development, and Organizational Support Services

CHAPTER 3

3.1.2.a	The Municipality will continue to report annually on the status of the municipal response to Truth and Reconciliation in Wood Buffalo.	Continue providing annual reports on the municipal response to Truth and Reconciliation in Wood Buffalo	Ongoing	Indigenous and Rural Relations; and Organizational Support Services
3.1.2.d	All statutory plans prepared by the Municipality will be amended to include a Treaty 8 land acknowledgment, and new development industry-led plans will be strongly encouraged to do the same.	Amend statutory plans to include Treaty 8 land acknowledgments	Ongoing	All Departments
3.1.2.h	As called for in Action #43, the Municipality will undertake an assessment of implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a municipal framework for advancing Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous communities. The Municipality is committed to developing the necessary policies and bylaws to ensure the implementation of this framework.	Undertake a thorough assessment of implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the Municipality's framework for advancing reconciliation, and what implementation of the UN Declaration would look like in a municipal context. The RMWB is committed to developing the necessary policy to ensure this framework is implemented.	Short	Indigenous and Rural Relations
3.2.1.a	The Municipality will continue working with local Indigenous communities to define and improve relationships between the Municipality and Indigenous communities across the Region by upholding protocol agreements with the local six First Nations and six Métis communities.	Uphold protocol agreements with the six First Nations and six Métis communities in Wood Buffalo	Immediate	Indigenous and Rural Relations

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
3.2.1.c	Building on 3.2.1.b, the Municipality will provide education materials developed in collaboration with Indigenous Partners and Elders to public servants on the history of Indigenous Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.	Continue to support the Elder-in-Residence program	Ongoing	Indigenous and Rural Relations
3.2.2.c	The Municipality will create an Urban Reserve Strategy to identify opportunities to support Urban Reserves and Additions To Reserves (ATRs) through Council approved letters of support and servicing agreements.	Create an Urban Reserve Strategy	Long	Indigenous and Rural Relations; and Legal Services
3.2.2.e	To increase Indigenous involvement in municipal programs and committees, the Municipality will explore approaches to reducing barriers to participation for Indigenous Peoples.	Continue exploring opportunities to reduce barriers to participation for Indigenous Peoples	Short	Indigenous and Rural Relations
3.2.2.h	The Municipality will continue using Cree and Dene languages on new municipal signs and infrastructure, where feasible.	Continue to expand the use of both the Cree and Dene languages.	Short	Indigenous and Rural Relations
3.3.2.b	The Municipality will advocate to Provincial Authorities for the inclusion of all First Nations and Métis communities in Wood Buffalo as recognized communities in any future revisions or rewritings of the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan.	Advocate for inclusion of local First Nations and Métis communities in future LARP revisions and/or rewritings.	Ongoing	Indigenous and Rural Relations; and Planning & Development

CHAPTER 4

4.1.1.d	The Municipality will investigate designated heritage character areas, beginning with Downtown, where further investments in place-making public infrastructure can reinforce and accentuate the existing heritage value these locations provide to Wood Buffalo.	Investigate designating identified heritage sites.	Medium	Community Services
4.2.2.a	The Municipality will incorporate public art into public spaces and public-sector developments, while also encouraging public art within large private-sector developments.	Incorporate public art into public spaces as possible.	Medium	Community Services; Public Works; and Organizational Support Services

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
4.2.2.f	The Municipality will continue supporting temporary and permanent art projects, starting in Downtown and spreading out across the Region over time. Such projects improve the aesthetics of buildings with blank walls, street corners, and underdeveloped areas by adding visual interest and reinforcing a sense of place and community identity.	Continue supporting temporary art projects throughout Wood Buffalo	Ongoing	Community Services; Public Works; Organizational Support Services; and Planning & Development
4.2.3.e	The Municipality will study the viability of providing "microgrants" to help activate community spaces, promote community building, and inspire community activism. The purpose of this program would be for the Municipality to establish the "social infrastructure" conditions necessary to promote community belonging, foster neighbourhood connections, and improve quality of life.	Investigate developing a community activation microgrant program	Short	Community Services; and Corporate Services
4.3.1.b/c	b) The Municipality will identify priority areas for promoting different community programs and celebrating Wood Buffalo's multiculturalism and diversity. c) The Municipality will identify and address any accessibility or other barriers for diverse cultural groups to access the areas identified in 4.3.1.b.	Identify priority areas for promoting programming that supports expanded access to cultural groups in these priority areas	b) Short c) Short	Community Services Community Services
4.4.1.c	The Municipality will explore opportunities to identify, honour, and celebrate long-term residents in Wood Buffalo, demonstrating the breadth of people who have come to the Region and made it their long-term home. Such a program helps dispel notions of the Municipality as a community of transients and emphasizes the fact that Wood Buffalo is a place to call home.	Explore opportunities to celebrate long-term residents of Wood Buffalo	Medium	Community Services; Planning & Development; Indigenous and Rural Relations; and Organizational Support Services
4.4.2.c	The Municipality will create and enhance temporary, seasonal, and permanent public places and spaces throughout Wood Buffalo. These could be used for events and activities such as fairs, food festivals, holiday celebrations, and more, while retaining their underlying uses throughout the remainder of the year.	Create and enhance public places and spaces	Medium	Community Services; Public Works; and Planning & Development

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
4.4.3.g	The Municipality will improve youth involvement in government by reviewing and updating the Terms of Reference for all municipal boards and committees. Finding more ways to directly integrate youth into municipal decision-making and community building from a young age can inspire civic pride and create a lifetime of commitment to making a difference in their home community.	Review board and committee Terms of Reference to ensure increasing youth involvement in local government is reflected	Short	Organizational Support Services; and Legislative Services
4.5.2.f	To increase the involvement of rural communities in municipal planning, programs, and service delivery, the Municipality will explore the creation of a Council-appointed "Rural Advisory Committee". This committee will advise and inform Council on rural priorities and issues.	Investigate creating a Rural Advisory Group	Short	Indigenous and Rural Relations Planning & Development; Legislative Services; and Organizational Support Services
4.5.3.a	The Municipality will engage in and implement planning requirements of the <i>Alberta Land Stewardship Act</i> .	Implement ALSA planning requirements.	Long	Planning & Development

CHAPTER 5

5.1.1.d	The Municipality will develop and implement policies through statutory plans, regulations, and bylaws to help conserve the ecological health and function of the riparian areas and wetlands identified in 5.1.1.c. Policies should limit development that negatively impacts or impedes the natural function of ecosystems, and instead promote their use as natural areas, parks, trails, and essential utility corridors that do not materially impact the function of the floodway.	Amend statutory plans, regulations, and bylaws to help conserve riparian areas and wetlands.	Medium	Planning & Development
5.1.2.b	The Municipality should review its Water and Wastewater Management Plans to reflect the projected growth trajectory and update them if required.	Review and update Water and Wastewater Management Plans	Short	Environmental Services

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
5.2.1.a/b	a) The Municipality will prepare a comprehensive Green Network concept for all of Wood Buffalo. The Green Network will be designed as a four-seasons asset accommodating a variety of active transportation options including walking, cycling, cross-country skiing and in-line skating.	Develop a Green Network Concept Plan in conjunction with the Blue Network Concept Plan	a) Medium	Public Works; and Organizational Support Services
	b) The Municipality will develop the Green Network concept in conjunction with the Blue Network concept (further described in the following section) to ensure each network complements the other, leading to the development of a comprehensive and seamlessly integrated network throughout Wood Buffalo.		b) Medium	Public Works; and Organizational Support Services
5.2.1.g	The Municipality will explore opportunities to integrate protective "Greenbelts" surrounding urban areas and rural communities within the Green Network to establish a buffer in between industrial development and established communities.	Explore opportunities to formalize Greenbelts around Wood Buffalo's communities.	a) Long	Planning & Development; Engineering; Public Works; Indigenous and Rural Relations; Environmental Services; Regional Emergency Services; and Organizational Support Services
5.2.2.a/b	a) The Municipality will prepare a comprehensive Blue Network concept for all of Wood Buffalo. The Blue Network will be intentionally designed as a four-seasons asset accommodating a variety of recreational facilities, flood protection opportunities, and sensitive commercialization where appropriate.	Develop a Blue Network Concept Plan in conjunction with the Green Network Concept Plan	a) Long	Organizational Support Services; and Public Works
	b) The Blue Network concept should be developed in conjunction with the Green Network concept to ensure each complements the other, leading to the development of a comprehensive and seamlessly integrated network throughout all of Wood Buffalo.		b) Long	Organizational Support Services; and Public Works
5.3.1.a	The Municipality will initiate discussions with the Province about opening Crown Land in a coordinated and thoughtful manner to private development, with an eye towards establishing a "cottage country" in Wood Buffalo where residents are able to develop cabins.	Initiate discussions with the Province to open Crown Land to recreational development	Medium	Public Works; and Planning & Development

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
5.3.1.b	The Municipality should support local economic development organizations in preparing an integrated regional recreational strategy that identifies opportunities for all residents to enjoy the Region's natural surroundings and recreation facilities.	Support development of an Integrated Regional Recreational Strategy	Short	Public Works; Organizational Support Services; and Planning & Development
5.4.1.f	The Municipality will protect residents from adverse geotechnical conditions by establishing appropriate land uses and setbacks in the Land Use Bylaw as well as leveraging environmental reserve during development applications.	Amend the Land Use Bylaw to protect residents from adverse geotechnical conditions	Medium	Planning & Development

CHAPTER 6

6.1.1.l	The Municipality will create and implement an integrated regional recreational strategy to provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the Municipality's natural surroundings year-round while expanding the local economy. This strategy could explore expanding many existing recreational areas and consider opportunities near the Municipality's lakes and rivers for new recreation use, specifically the potential for cabin development, recreational lodges, boat launches, day use areas and campgrounds.	Create and implement an Integrated Regional Recreational Strategy	Short	Public Works; Organizational Support Services; and Planning & Development
6.1.2.a	As Fort McMurray's existing land develops, the Municipality will continuously monitor market demand and will evaluate whether additional land for development is required.	Monitor market demand for developable land	Ongoing	Planning & Development
6.1.3.b	The Municipality will comprehensively review municipal transit service in alignment with the Transit Master Plan to meet regional needs and maximize the potential of transit.	Review municipal transit service to align with Transit Master Plan	Short	Public Works
6.1.4.a	The Municipality will ensure having a policy document to guide new development and subdivision proposals to reduce the impact of wildfire hazard. The document could include but not limited to Wildfire Risk Assessment, and Vegetation Management, and infrastructure development standards.	Institute Disaster Risk Management	Medium	Planning & Development; and Regional Emergency Services
6.1.4.f	The Municipality will continue to follow and implement identified FireSmart Priority Zones in the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy to avoid the risk of future wildfire hazards.	Implement the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy's FireSmart priority zones.	Medium	Regional Emergency Services; Planning & Development; Organizational Support Services; and Public Works

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
6.1.4.k	The Municipality will, where appropriate, set aside lands located below identified flood levels as environmental reserves during subdivision or implement protection through alternative means such as conservation easements.	Develop a Region-wide Comprehensive Flood Mitigation Strategy for the Municipality	Ongoing	Planning & Development; and Regional Emergency Services
6.1.4.l	The Municipality will prepare a Region-wide flood mitigation strategy that will include, but is not limited to the following areas: i) Riparian areas or zones ii) Wetlands; iii) Urban Service Area developments on the Athabasca, Clearwater, Horse, Syne and Hangingstone Rivers; iv) Downtown Fort McMurray; and v) rural communities living on Gregoire Lake, Lake Athabasca, and Christina Lake.	Develop a Region-wide Comprehensive Flood Mitigation Strategy for the Municipality	Ongoing	Planning & Development; and Regional Emergency Services
6.2.1.p	To minimize impacts of incompatible uses in close proximity to residential neighbourhoods, the Municipality will work to establish 'Greenbelts' of Natural Protected Areas surrounding residential neighbourhoods.	Explore opportunities to formalize Greenbelts around Wood Buffalo's communities.	a) Long	Planning & Development; Engineering; Public Works; Indigenous and Rural Relations; Environmental Services; Regional Emergency Services; and Organizational Support Services
6.2.1.w	Where appropriate, the Municipality will investigate opportunities to develop Park and Ride infrastructure in areas identified for higher-order service in the Transit Master Plan.	Investigate opportunities to develop Park and Ride infrastructure	Long	Planning & Development; Public Works; Engineering Services; and Organizational Support Services
6.2.1.aa	The Municipality will ensure all lands in the Urban Service Area are appropriately planned for through Area Structure Plans or Area Redevelopment Plans.	Review existing statutory plans to identify lands in the Urban Service Area that have policy directions	Medium	Planning & Development
6.3.1.a	Senior members of the Municipality's administration will meet periodically with rural community leaders to discuss, better understand, and identify ways to address community social, cultural, and economic concerns.	Formalize periodic meetings between rural community leaders and RMWB administration	Short	All Departments

POLICY #	POLICY	ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY
6.3.2.a	The Municipality will review its processes for providing access to community space with a focus on enabling access to and increasing the use of the community centre.	Review community space access policies	Short	Public Works; and Community Services

CHAPTER 7

7	Full set of policies	Review and revise the Land Use Bylaw to reflect the policy directions.	Ongoing	All Departments
7.1.1.b	Before starting any actions identified in Appendix C, Administration will summarize the action item and its implications, including an assessment of its budget impacts, in a report and present it to Council for approval.	List and Summarize the Action Items	Short	Planning & Development
7.1.1.c	Following adoption of this MDP, Council will undertake a prioritization exercise identifying when and how action items should be implemented over time.	Prioritize action items in alignment with Council's Strategic Plan	Immediate	Organizational Support Services
7.1.1.d	Review and revise the Land Use Bylaw to encourage to reflect the policy directions	Review and revise the Land Use Bylaw to reflect the policy directions.	Ongoing	All Departments
7.2.1.a	The Municipality will develop a framework for the implementing the performance indicators identified in Figure 8, which should be comprised of baseline measures, and a methodology of measurement for the indicators.	Develop a reporting framework for ongoing MDP monitoring	Medium	Planning & Development
7.2.2.a	The Municipality will monitor and review the MDP on an ongoing basis.	Report to Council on findings from ongoing MDP monitoring	Ongoing	Planning & Development
7.2.2.e	Notwithstanding the previous policy, the Municipality will complete a comprehensive internal MDP review every 5 years to consider administrative updates, emerging trends, implementation progress, and policy gaps.	Conduct 5-year MDP reviews	Ongoing	Planning & Development

APPENDIX D

LIST OF ACRONYMS

2SLGBTQI+: Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Question, Intersex Plus

ALSA: *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*

ARP: Area Redevelopment Plan

ASP: Area Structure Plan

ATR: Additions to Reserves

FIFO: Fly-in fly-out

ICFA: Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Agreement

IDP: Intermunicipal Development Plan

LARP: Lower Athabasca Regional Plan

LUB: Land Use Bylaw

LUF: Land Use Framework

MDP: Municipal Development Plan

MGA: *Municipal Government Act*

OHV: Off-Highway Vehicle

RACIDE: Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality

RMWB: Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

TOD: Transit-Oriented Development

TRC: Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UN: United Nations

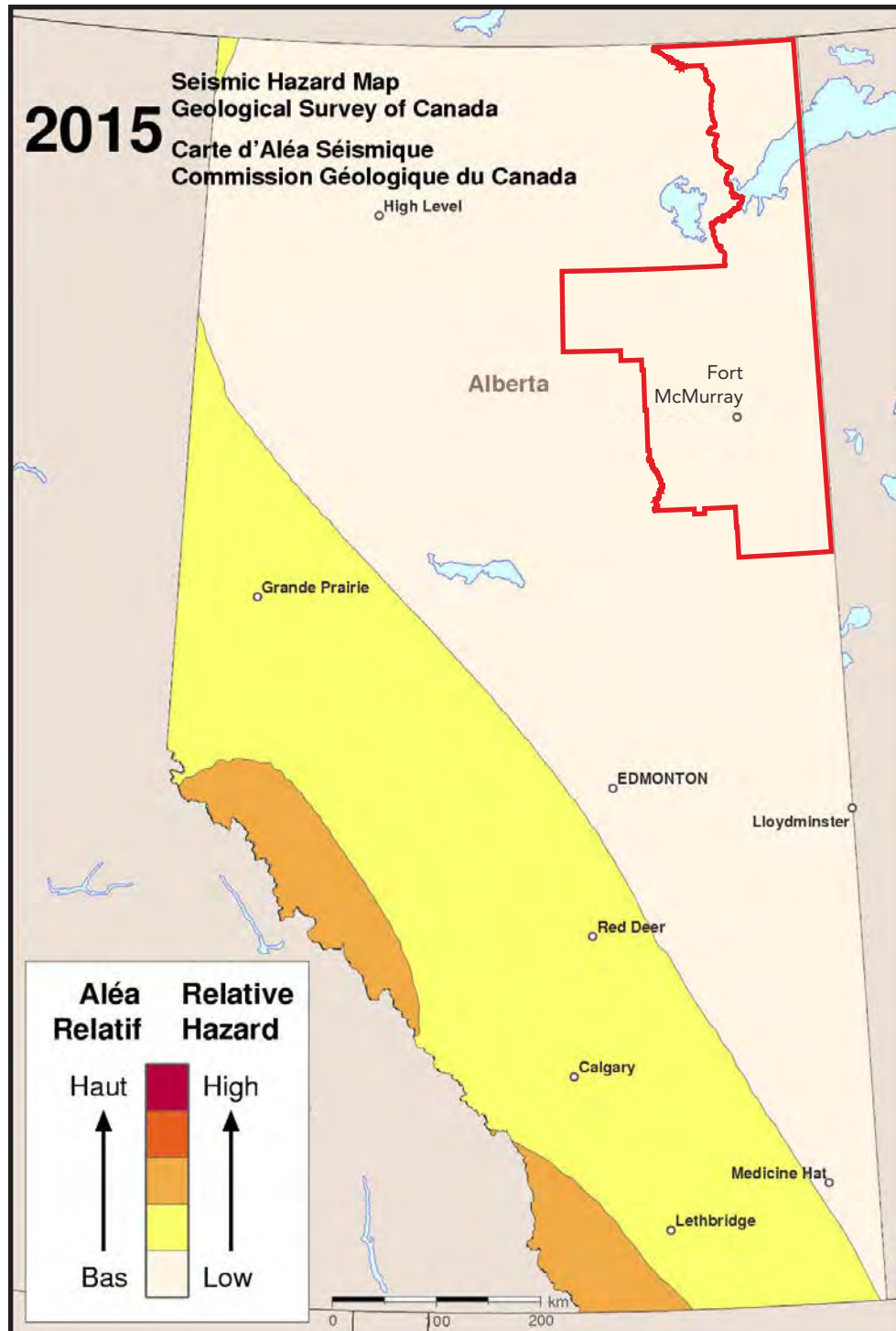
UNDRIP: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

USA: Urban Service Area

YMM: The airport code for Fort McMurray International Airport

APPENDIX E

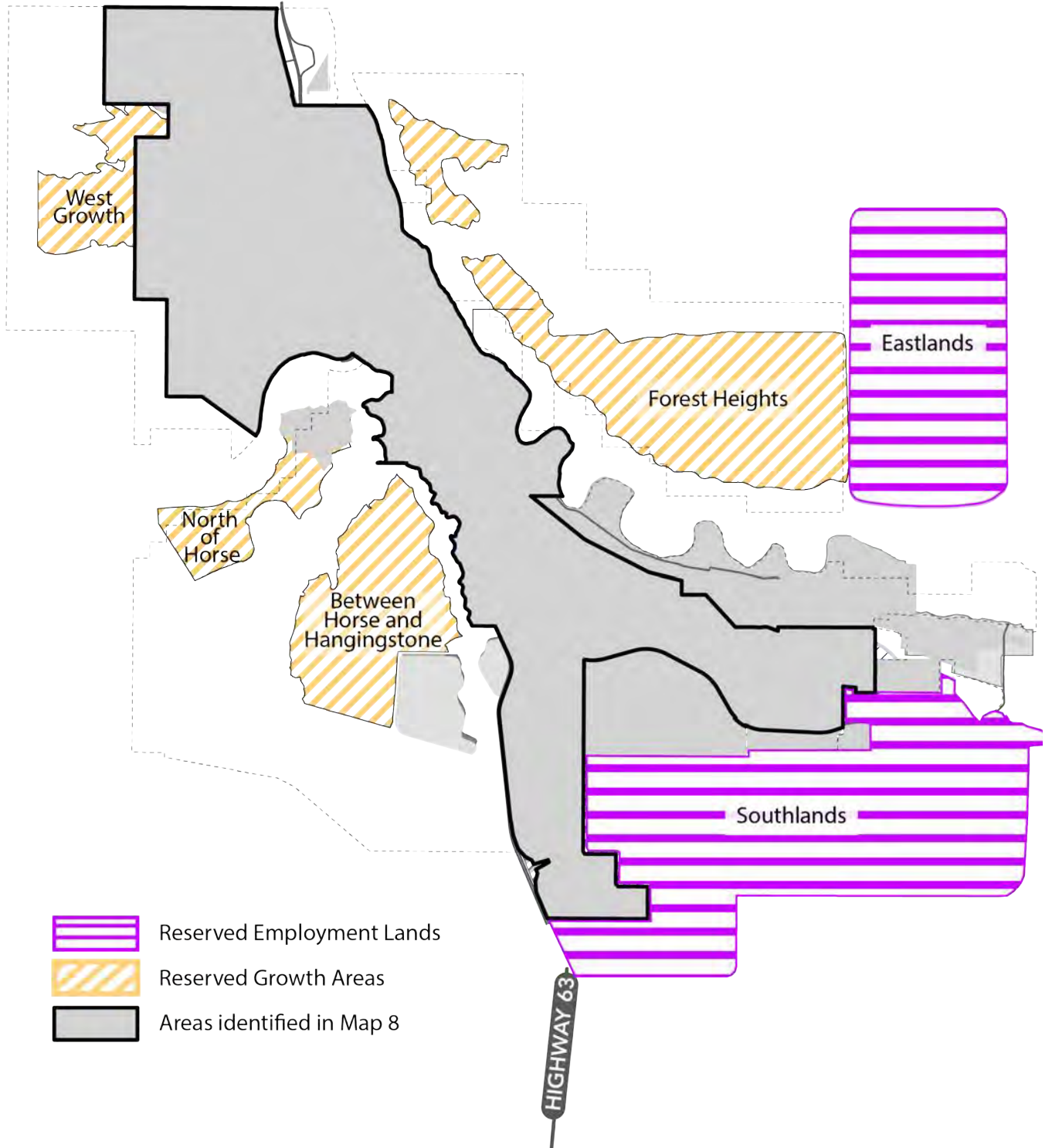
SEISMIC RISK IN RMWB



Source: Natural Resources Canada, 2015

APPENDIX F

RESERVED GROWTH AREAS







REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF **WOOD BUFFALO**