



West End Growth Management Plan



February 2013

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

Beaver County Council has identified the creation of a Growth Management Plan for the County's country residential land use area as a strategic priority. This Plan area is shown on Figure 1 and encompasses lands in the western portion of Beaver County.

The purpose of the Growth Management Plan is to re-examine the Plan area due to an emergence of potentially conflicting land uses in the context of natural, man-made and agricultural constraints that impact potential development. Different options for managing growth in the Plan area have been considered and resulting Municipal Development Plan (MDP) policy implications have been identified.

1.2 Plan Process

The Growth Management Plan has been prepared under the direction of a nine member Steering Committee. The Steering Committee assisted in refining an approach to managing residential growth on the west end of Beaver County. Committee membership was well balanced to ensure that all interests were fairly represented, and included:

- 2 Beaver County Councillors
 - Bob Young, Reeve
 - Sieko Scott, Councillor
- 2 Neighbouring Councillors
 - Bonnie Riddell, Councillor Strathcona County
 - Wayne Woldanski, Reeve, Lamont County
- 5 Area Residents
 - Carol Bettac, Cathy McRae, Roy Sylyski, Dwayne Metro and Pat Harris

Members of County Administration provided administrative and logistical support.

The following components comprise the process applied in preparing the Growth Management Plan:

1. A Land Use Framework was prepared that included a comprehensive inventory of existing conditions, relevant County plans in the context of a statutory planning framework for the Growth Management Plan, and relevant components of the statutory plans and bylaws of adjacent municipalities. The results of this inventory are described in Section 2, 3 and 4 respectively.
2. To encourage co-operation amongst all participants, a detailed Public Involvement Plan was prepared to direct communications. The purpose of the Involvement Plan was to engage residents in the re-examination of growth and development in the Plan area. To identify new concerns, a survey and two sets of Landowner Information Sessions were held as part of the review process. A summary of the results of the public consultation is provided in Section 5.
3. A draft of the Growth Management Plan was prepared that reflected the contents of Land Use Framework and public input. The policies proposed by the draft were scrutinized by the Steering Committee. These proposed policies are reflected in amendments made to MDP Section 2 - Country Residential.

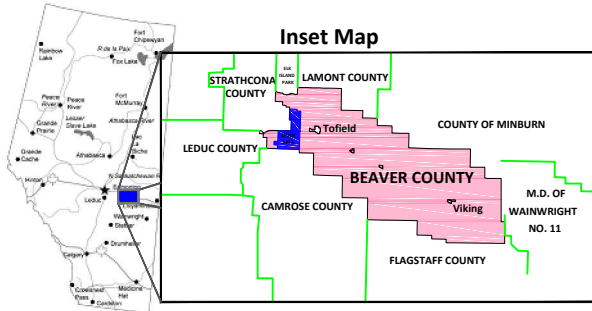


West End Growth Management Plan

Figure 1
PLAN AREA

LEGEND

- High Density Country Residential Area
- Low Density Country Residential Area
- Beaver Hills Moraine Eastern Boundary
- Highway



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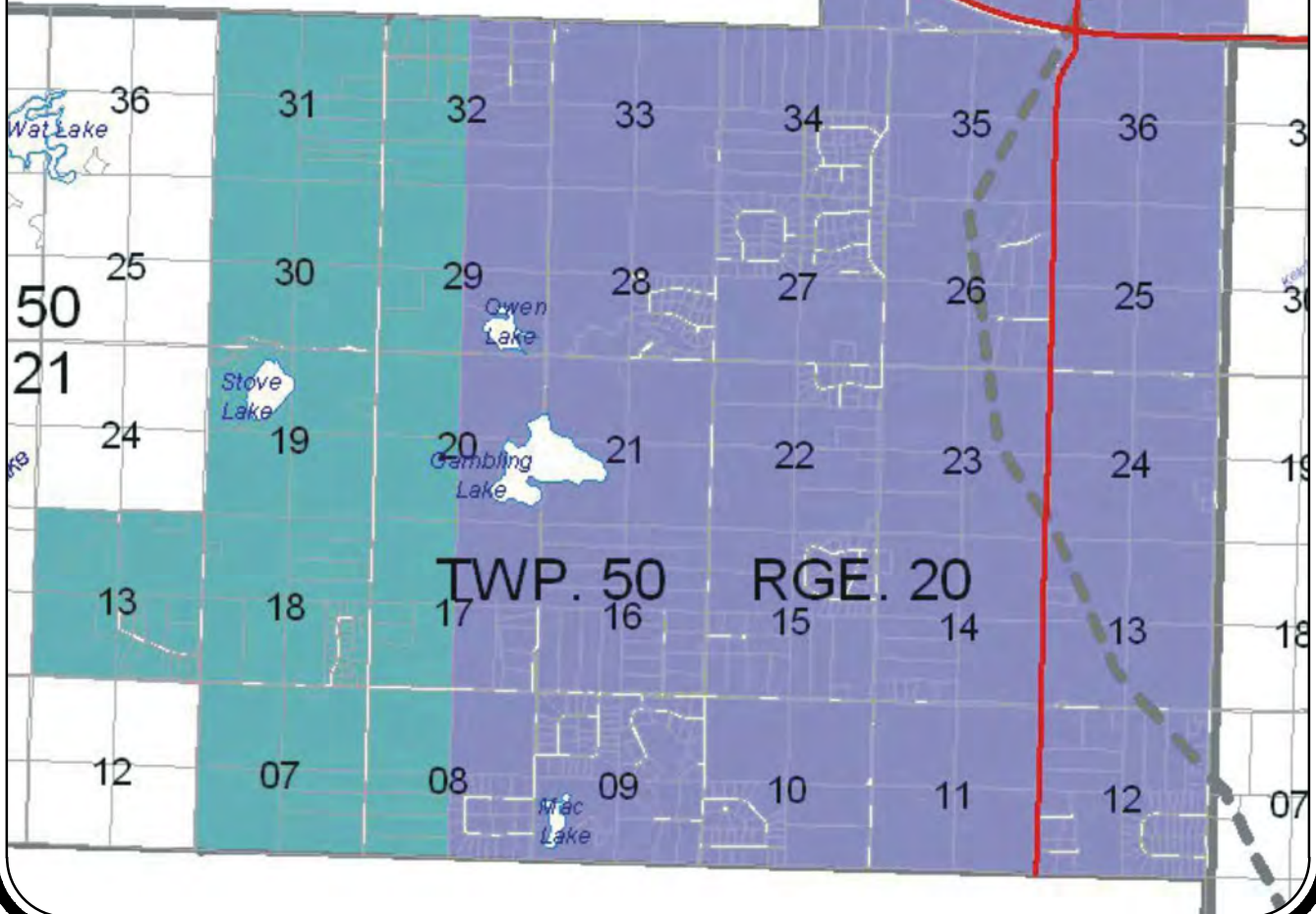
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2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 Location

The Plan area is located adjacent the west boundary of Beaver County and extends some eleven miles to the north and south, and up to seven miles to the east and west. The area conforms to the boundary of the Country Residential Area as designated by the MDP and shown on Figure 1.

2.2 Physical Features

The physical features characterizing the Plan area are shown on Figure 2 – Aerial Photograph. A large portion of the area lies within the Beaver Hills/Cooking Lake moraine, a geomorphological feature that is a distinct regional landmark. The moraine is the material deposited as the last glaciers receded about 18,000 years ago.

The moraine feature occupies all but an arch adjacent the east Plan area boundary and is characterized by knob and kettle topography that gives it a gently to strongly rolling appearance. The knobs range from five to 15 metres in height, and many of the kettles (depressions) contain water. In general, the moraine rises more than 61 metres (200 feet) above the surrounding plain. The eastern and southern portions of the moraine are poorly drained with intermittent and permanent sloughs, and lakes present throughout. Stove, Owen and Gambling Lakes are identified on Figure 2 in the south and west portion of the Plan area. Islet Lake straddles the north Plan area boundary. This lake is partially contained in the Cooking Lake/Blackfoot Recreation Area.

Terrain and soil conditions have limited past agricultural clearing and the Plan area remains extensively forested with aspen and in some areas, spruce woodlands. Soils are marginal for cereal crop production with Canada Land Inventory class 3, 4 and 5 ratings.



The combination of local geomorphology, hydrology, and climate has created

a unique natural ecosystem. The marginal agricultural capability of the moraine area has helped prevent extensive clearing so that natural features are retained. The resulting biodiversity and natural spaces stand in contrast to the surrounding agricultural lands in the central and eastern portions of Beaver County.






BEAVER COUNTY

West End Growth Management Plan

Figure 2
AERIAL PHOTO

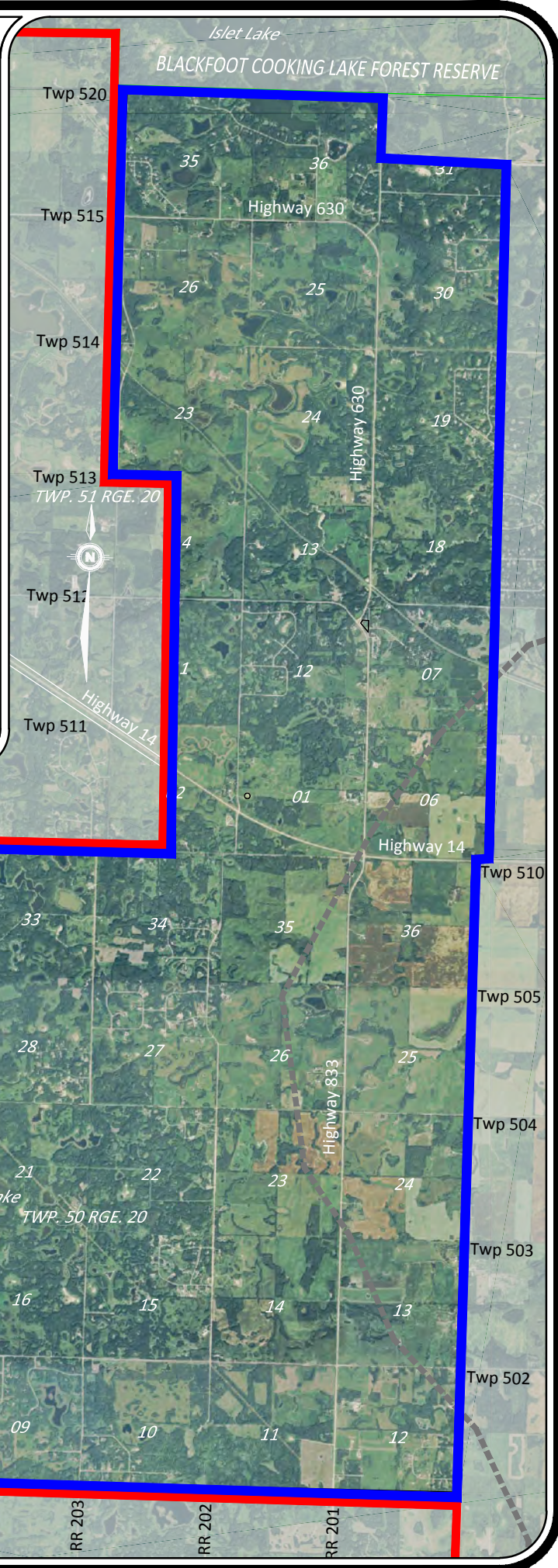
LEGEND

-  County Boundary
-  Plan Area Boundary
-  Beaver Moraine Eastern Boundary

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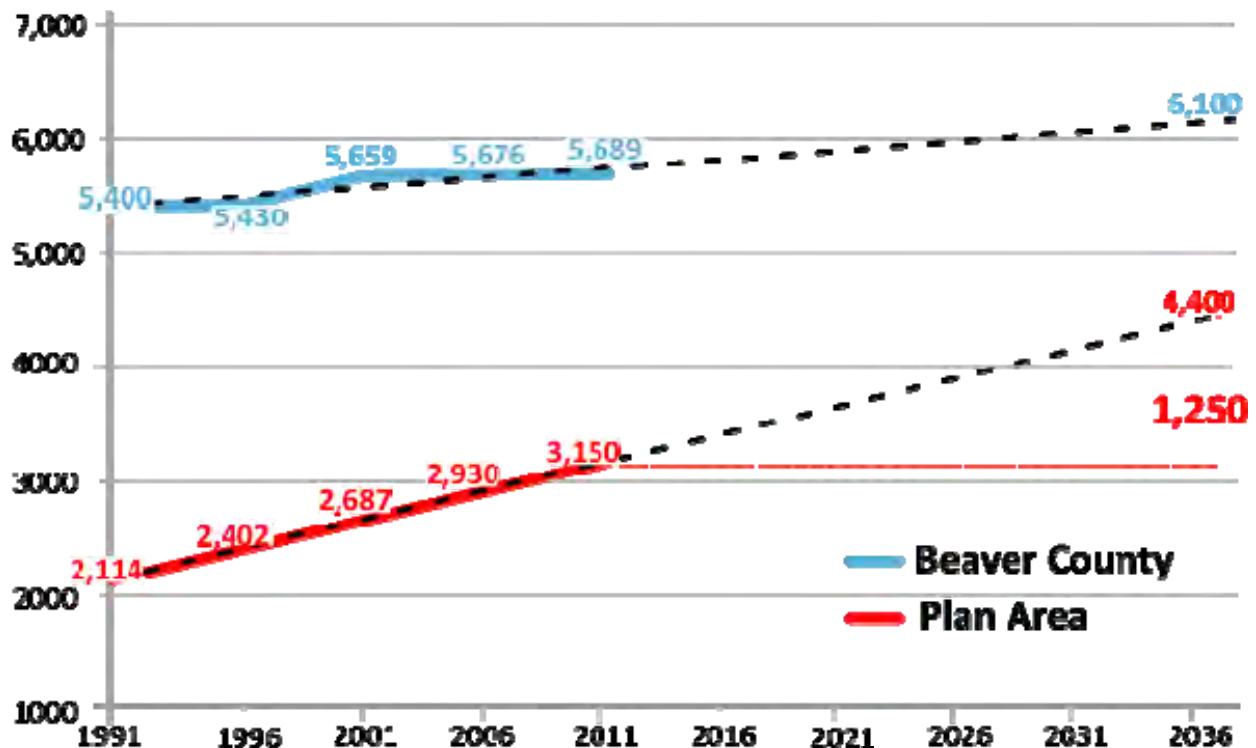


2.3 Population

The population of the Plan area increased by just over a 1,000 persons between 1991 to 2011 as shown on Chart 1. By comparison, the total population for Beaver County increased by about 300 persons for the same time period. The boundary of the Plan area generally corresponds to the boundaries of Divisions One and Two.

The population projections shown on Chart 1 based on historic trends. Modest growth for the next 25 years for the County as a whole is estimated with more robust growth projected to continue to be concentrated in the Plan area. Plan area population is projected to grow by 1,250 persons, from 3,150 in 2011 to 4,400 by 2036.

Chart 1 - Population Projections



The projected Plan area population increase is 1,250 new residents. Assuming an average family size of 2.5 persons, 500 new lots will be required over the 25 year projection horizon to accommodate the estimated increase. This translates into 20 new lots per year.

2.4 Land Use

Table 1 provides a land use breakdown for the Plan Area. The Plan area comprises over 12,000 hectares (30,000 acres) with more than 4,400 hectares (10,880 acres) of the area zoned for country residential use (see Figure 3). The Crown owns 324 hectares (800 acres) while 518 hectares (1,280 acres) are owned by conservation agencies including the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Sherwood Park Fish and Game Association, and the Alberta Fish and Game Association. Conservation easements have been registered on some private holdings. The remaining 6,900 plus hectares (17,000 acres) are zoned for agricultural uses.



West End Growth Management Plan

**Figure 3
EXISTING ZONING**

LEGEND

- County Boundary
- Beaver Hills Moraine (Eastern Boundary)
- Country Residential Area
- Country Residential District
- Agricultural District
- Crown Land
- Conservation Lands
- Hydrology

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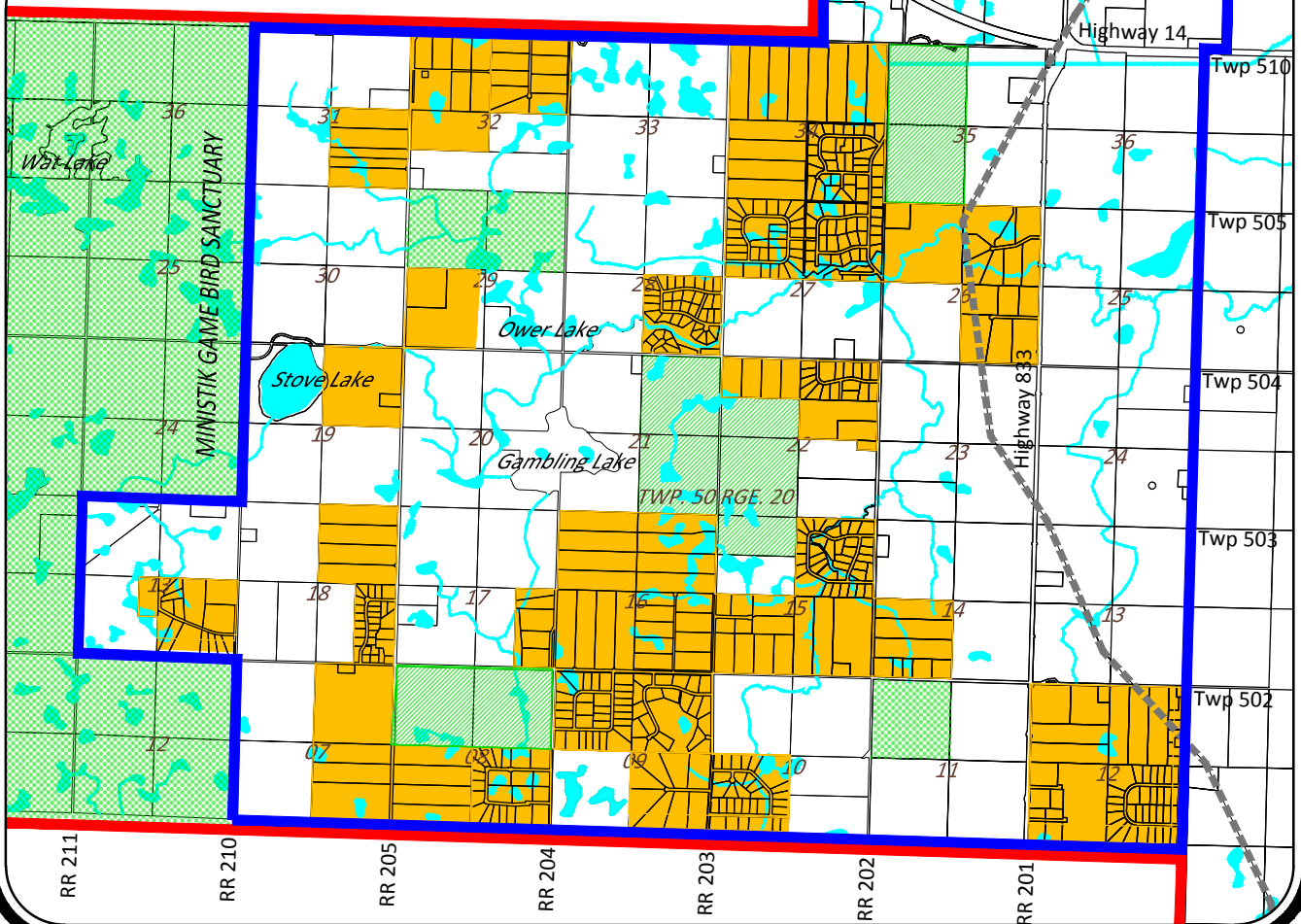
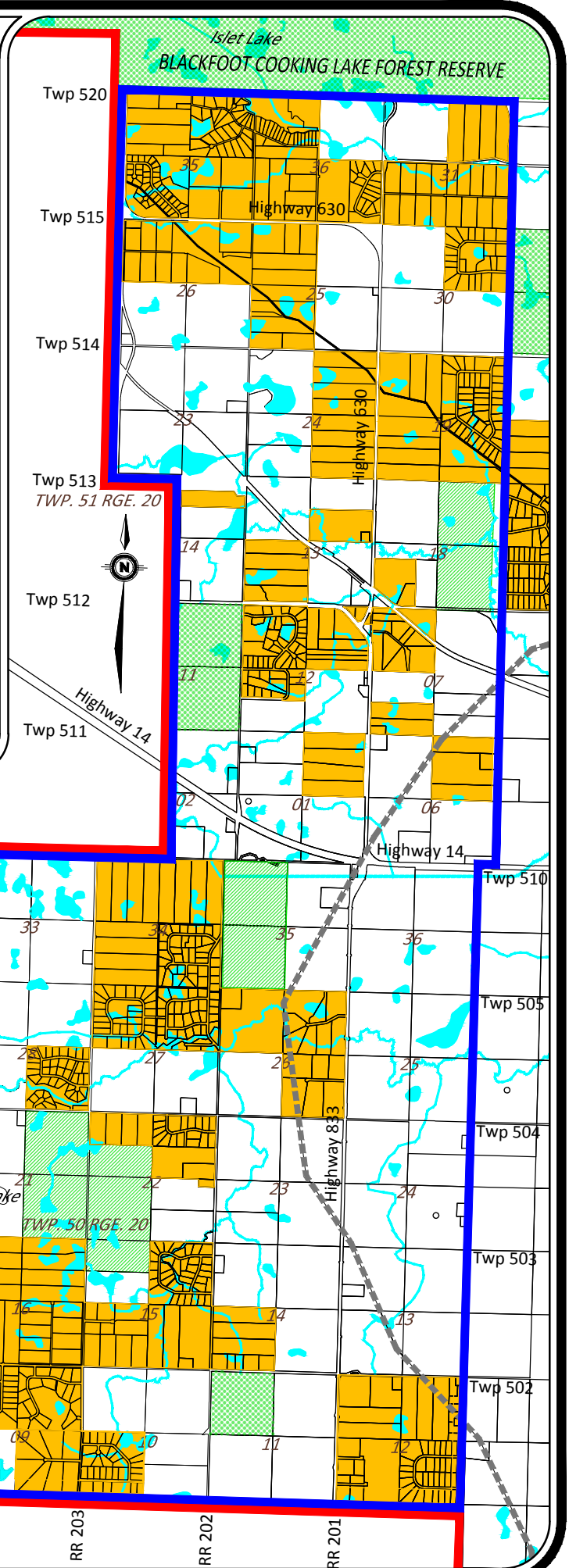


Table 1 - Existing Land Use

Land Use	Acres	Hectares	% of total
Crown Owned	800	324	3
Conservation Lands	1,280	518	5
Country Residential District	10,880	4,400	36
Agricultural	17,120	6,930	56
Plan Area Total	30,080	12,172	100

Subdivision of country residential parcels in the Plan area has been active since the 1970s. The total number of residential parcels created in the area is 993. Some 35 percent (307) of these parcels are undeveloped.

2.5 Infrastructure

2.5.1 Water Services

Most country residences in Beaver County rely on groundwater from wells and/or delivered potable water. Groundwater quality varies but is generally lower than that of piped-in systems.

The Highway 14 Regional Water Services Commission water pipeline crosses the north portion of the Plan Area (see Figure 4). The water line extends diagonally from Highway 630 on the west County boundary southeast to Tofield and beyond. As well, a water line extends from the main line south parallel to Highway 630 to a cluster of subdivisions located south of Township Road 512 near Lindbrook.

The Highway 14 Regional Water Services Commission is a non-profit organization managed by representatives from recipient municipalities, including Beaver County, for the benefit of their residents.

2.5.2 Sewage Treatment

No piped sanitary sewer systems exist within the Plan area. Residents rely on private sewage disposal systems that include pump-outs, field systems or mounds. The density of country residential development must be sensitive to the ability of the land to accommodate on-site sewage treatment. The Alberta Private Sewage System Standard of Practice regulates the installation of all on-site wastewater systems and defines a site's capability to treat wastewater as a combination of the site's ability to accept the wastewater load, meet the separation distances to other features, and possess the depth of suitable soils needed to achieve treatment.

Specifically, the Standard of Practice states that a private sewage system shall not be installed on a property that is less than 1,800 square metres in size, that is not of sufficient size to meet all minimum distance separations required by the Standard for the intended system, and where site conditions are not able to support a self-sustaining private sewage system.

2.5.3 Roadways

The roadways in the Plan area have been classified into four types including: paved provincial highways; paved local roads; oiled local roads; and, gravel local roads.

Highway 14 crosses the central portion of the Plan Area from west to east. This Highway is classified as a major two-lane highway and has restricted access. Highways 630 and 833 provide a continuous north south connection through the central part of the Plan area.



West End Growth Management Plan

Figure 4
EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

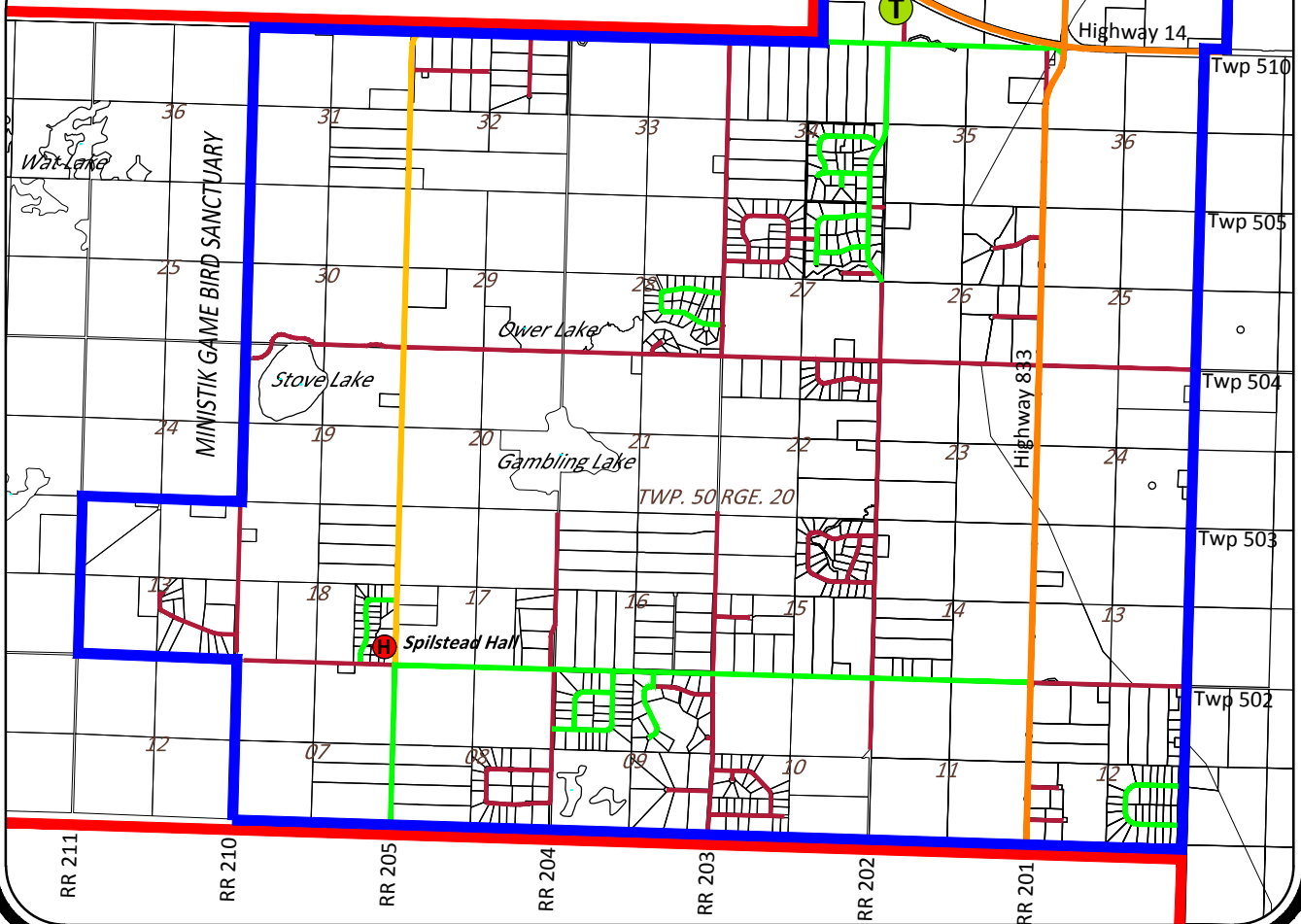
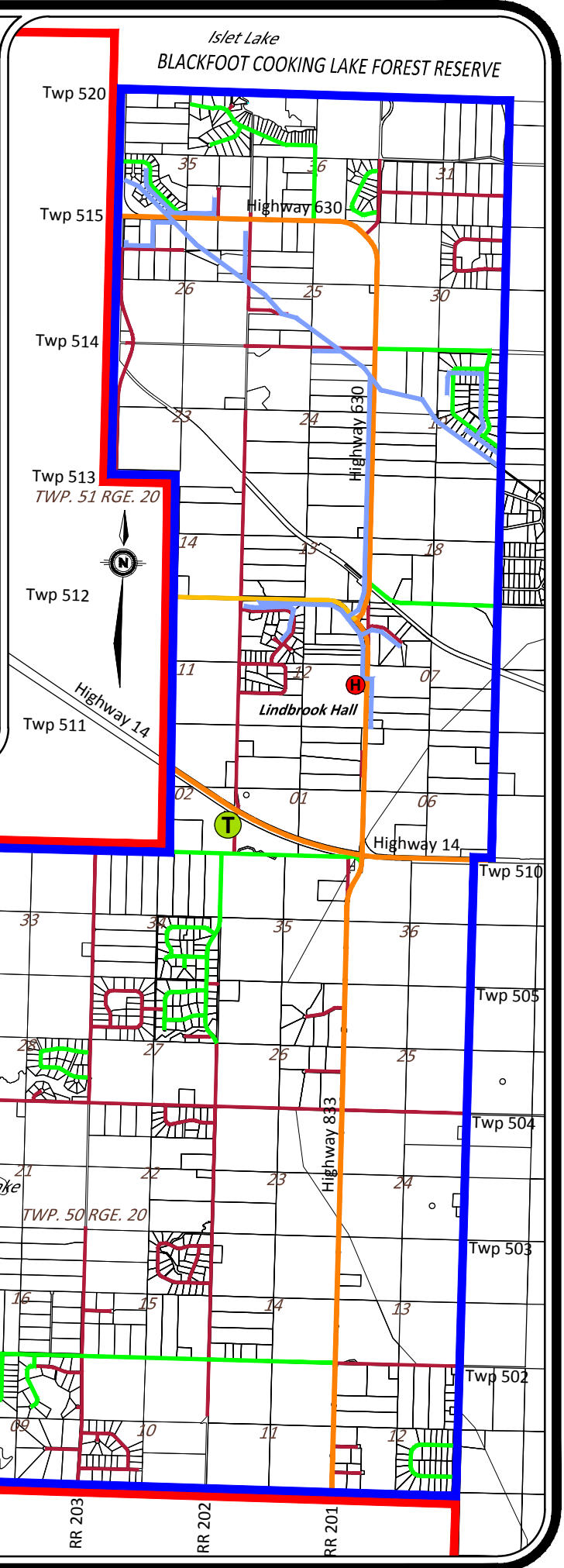
LEGEND

- County Boundary
- Plan Area Boundary
- Existing Water Lines
- Paved Highway
- Paved Local Road
- Oiled Local Road
- Gravel Road
- H Community Hall
- T Waste Transfer Station

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A total of approximately 5.5 miles of paved local roads extend through the Plan area. Township Road 512 from Lindbrook to the west County boundary is paved as is Spilstead Road (Range Road 205) from Township Road 502 north. Spilstead Road extends through Strathcona County to intersect with Highway 14.

The remaining County access roads and internal subdivision roads are either graded gravel or oiled roads. The current MDP requires that internal subdivision roads be paved to County standard.

2.5.4 Waste Management

Beaver County and Beaver Municipal Solutions provide waste management and recycling services to residents of Beaver County and beyond. A waste transfer station and recycling depot are located adjacent the south side of Highway 14, one mile west of the intersection of Highways 630 and 833 (see Figure 4). Regular rural residential pick-up is provided through Beaver Municipal Solutions. The number of available bins is limited resulting in a waiting list for service. Municipal Solutions does not plan to expand the rural residential service to Beaver County residents in the near future.

2.6 Policy Context

Several statutory and non-statutory plans and studies provide policy direction for growth within the Plan area. In addition to those listed below, Alberta's Land-Use Framework provides overall guidance for land use decision making by municipalities.

2.6.1 Provincial Policy Direction

The *Alberta Land Stewardship Act (LSA)* sets out province-wide land use policies. The LSA sets the framework for regional plans and emphasizes conservation and the efficient use of land. The Plan area is included as part of the North Saskatchewan Regional Plan, which is yet to be prepared. The Act also provides conservation and stewardship tools including conservation easements and a structure for Transfer of Development Credits (TDC's).

In 2008, the Minister of Municipal Affairs directed the City of Edmonton and 24 surrounding municipalities to prepare a Capital Region Growth Plan to implement the conservation strategies of the LSA. Although the Plan area is not located in the Capital Region, stricter control over conventional country residential development within the Region may trigger an increase in development pressure in areas adjacent the Capital Region boundary. The Plan area is located along the east side of this boundary.

The Alberta Government has ownership of all the water in the province and all permanent and naturally occurring water bodies. The provincial wetland management policy stresses retention of these features and directs that the Crown be compensated for the loss of naturally occurring water features. The policy is currently being updated and will continue to influence the retention of provincial water bodies in the Plan area.

Groundwater withdrawals and sewage disposal are also regulated by provincial Safety Codes Act and Public Health Act regulations and standards of practice. As well, the Natural Resources Conservation Board and the Energy Resources Conservation Board regulate Confined Feeding Operations and the oil and gas industry, respectively.

2.6.2 Beaver Hills Initiative

The Beaver Hills Initiative (BHI) is a collaboration of many stakeholders with the intent to promote a regional approach to land management in the moraine. The BHI is comprised of several municipal governments, provincial and federal ministries and agencies, and non-governmental organizations. Beaver County is a member municipality of the BHI.

The BHI created a Land Management Framework that provides a sustainable environmental management framework for the area municipalities. However, the non-statutory nature of the BHI means that the intent of the framework must be restated and implemented by the member municipality's in their statutory plans such as the Municipal Development Plan.

Country residential subdivision design considerations listed in the framework are as follow:

- Encourage designs that minimize clearing of natural vegetation, particularly in floodplain areas;
- Minimize or avoid watercourse and wetland disturbance, particularly for those in or near environmentally significant areas and groundwater recharge areas;
- Avoid creating access roads that will cross wetlands or watercourses;
- Maintain a minimum 30 metre wide buffer along water course/wetland edges;
- Confirm soil and groundwater conditions are suitable for proposed septic system; and,
- Confirm shallow groundwater in area, particularly if basements, other excavations and septic fields are proposed.

Some of these considerations are contained in Beaver County's MDP and are referred to as conservation design principles as well as *common sense*.

2.6.3 Municipal Development Plan (Bylaw 98-800)

A Municipal Development Plan is a requirement of the Municipal Government Act. The document is a statutory plan and is passed by bylaw. The Plan guides land use decisions related to the subdivision and development of land. Plan chapters include: Agriculture; Country Residential Development; Resource Extraction; Industrial and Commercial Development; Urban Expansion; Wildlife, Recreation and Green Spaces; Historical Resources; Environmentally Sensitive Areas; Landfill and Composting; and, Transportation and Utilities. Each section contains policies that speak to the requirements that direct or support subdivision and development decisions. The MDP has been amended many times since first created in 1998 with the most recent amendment occurring in 2010.

The overall direction of the Municipal Development Plan is stated in the following goal:

The goal of Beaver County is to conserve and enhance the County's agricultural and rural character while encouraging environmentally sound, sustainable economic development.

The goal is supported through Council leadership and direction in the following areas:

- Conservation of agricultural land and encouragement of diversity in the agricultural and the agricultural service sectors;
- Preservation of wildlife habitats and environmentally sensitive areas; and
- Provision of the infrastructure necessary to encourage sustainable, environmentally sound economic development.

Country residential development is addressed in Section 2 of the Municipal Development Plan. The section provides the following intent:

The intent of this Plan is to allow country residential development in such a manner as to limit the removal of higher capability agricultural land and not cause unacceptable adverse effects on the agricultural economy and community, or the natural environment.

The MDP identifies two subareas within the Plan area allowing for two types of high density country residential (Figure 1). Land within 2.4 kilometres (1.5 miles) of the Ministik Bird Sanctuary is designated Low Density Country Residential with a minimum parcel size of 16.2 hectares (40 acres).

The balance of the Plan area is designated High Density Country Residential with a minimum parcel size of 1.21 hectares (3.0 acres).



The preceding intent for country residential development is further clarified by the following objectives:

- To maintain options for future land use decisions;
- To avoid conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses;
- To discourage development in areas which are susceptible to flooding or groundwater contamination, or are environmentally sensitive;
- To encourage construction of housing in existing subdivided areas, before allowing extensive additional multiple lot country residential subdivision; and
- To minimize the costs of providing municipal and utility services to country residential lots.

The intent and objectives of the MDP are implemented by the following **key** development policies.

Policy 2.1: Developers may be required to enter a development agreement with the County where the developer agrees to pay for all costs associated with the subdivision.

Policy 2.2: Documented evidence of satisfactory sewage disposal.

Policy 2.8: Multi-lot CR subdivisions shall be controlled by LUB bylaw amendment through Council (2.8) and professionally prepared Conceptual Scheme to include:

- proposed subdivision design;
- site description and topographical assessment (including surface drainage and stormwater management);
- soils classification and arability assessment;
- results and interpretation of hydrological testing;
- assessment of vegetation, wildlife, and other environmental features;
- proposed land uses;
- utility servicing;
- traffic impacts; and
- applicable development controls

Policy 2.9:The minimum country residential parcel size is 1.21 hectares (3.0 acres) in a multi-lot subdivision, with the maximum overall density of 32 parcels per ¼ section. The Low Density Country Residential area is restricted to a minimum parcel size of 16.2 hectares (40 acres).

Policy 2.11:Country residential lots may be clustered or grouped to reduce potential land use conflicts and minimize service costs, and preserve environmentally sensitive areas. The parcel sizes of any new development adjacent to an existing country residential development shall be of appropriate size to achieve a transition between lower and higher density development. Buffers may separate transitional land uses.

Policy 2.12:Council’s consideration of Land Use Bylaw amendments for multi-lot country residential use development will include the following criteria:

- The site should possess features such as trees, ravines, hilly terrain or other topographical features which would provide an attractive residential environment. Where a site is fully or partially treed, all possible means will be undertaken to retain the maximum amount of tree cover.
- The density of development shall be directly related to the development capability of the land resources, such as potable water supply, topography, vegetation, soil, drainage, and capacity for sewage disposal. In this regard, development proposals shall include a detailed analysis of any environmental constraints on the site, the means whereby the development will harmonize with the natural environment, and the means whereby any negative impact on the natural environment will be mitigated.
- Access to individual lots shall be provided by paved internal roads developed to standards acceptable to the County. Direct access onto highways, secondary roads, or County roads will not normally be allowed unless such access can be constructed at a location satisfactory to the County, taking into consideration safety to the traveling public.
- Subdivisions with a density of more than 8 parcels per quarter section shall have access to a piped water system. The necessary infrastructure to give access to the piped water system shall be provided at the time of subdivision.

2.6.4 Land Use Bylaw (98-801)

The Land Use Bylaw (LUB) is the implementation mechanism by which MDP and other County policies are implemented. The bylaw was last amended in May 2011 and is organized to regulate all aspects of development. It includes both general development considerations as well as specific regulations for a variety of land uses.

Agriculture is the predominant land use district in the Plan area covering more than half the area (see Figure 3). The subdivision of land in the Agriculture District allows for the separation of two parcels (farmsteads) from a previously unsubdivided $\frac{1}{4}$ Section or the separation of a single residential parcel and the relatively equal separation of the remnant. In order to further subdivide, existing agricultural lands must be rezoned to the Country Residential District. The district regulates the maximum size of parcels and the uses and characteristics of developments.

Although the LUB contains only one Country Residential District, when considered in the context of MDP policies, the development potential and uses of a specific site may differ significantly based on its size, location and physical characteristics.

2.6.5 Highway 14 Corridor Plan

The Highway 14 Corridor Plan is a current non-statutory plan cooperatively undertaken by Beaver County and the towns and villages along the corridor. The area of application extends 1 mile either side of Highway 14. The plan recognizes the country residential designation of the Plan area and states that appropriate setbacks and screening between residential uses and Highway 14 are required and that an Outline Plan must precede subdivision and redevelopment.

2.7 Adjacent Municipal Land Use Planning context

Camrose, Leduc and Strathcona Counties share portions of the Beaver Hill Moraine with Beaver County. Evaluating the intent and content of land use policy documents in these neighbouring municipalities will ensure comprehensive and comparable land use policy for Beaver County.

2.7.1 Camrose County

Municipal Development Plan

The County's MDP was adopted in 2007 and is similar in many respects to Beaver County's MDP that emphasizes the conservation of agricultural land. Country residential policies include:

- An emphasis on reducing conflicts with agriculture and not impacting the environment.
- Concentrate CR development in multi-lot subdivisions.
- Maximum density 24 parcels per $\frac{1}{4}$ section (40 with piped water).
- Pre-subdivision plan required for four or more residential lots.
- Identify and protect groundwater recharge areas.

Land Use Bylaw

Three Camrose County LUB districts apply to lands lying adjacent the south Plan area boundary:

Small Lot Country Residential (CR1) with a minimum parcel size of 0.4 hectares (1.0 acre).

Watershed Protection (WP) with a minimum parcel size of 5.0 hectares (16 acres) with the maximum number of parcels per $\frac{1}{4}$ section set at eight. Provisions in the district also require that no more than 25% of the parcel be cleared of trees.

Agriculture (A) allows subdivision of a farmstead from a ¼ section leaving the agricultural remnant; or the subdivision of the ¼ section into two relatively equal parts.

2.7.2 Leduc County

Municipal Development Plan

Leduc County's 1999 MDP is the oldest of the surrounding municipalities and has been extensively amended. The MDP restricts country residential to poorer agricultural land.

- Minimum parcel is size 1.4 hectares (3.5 acres).
- Maximum density is 35 parcels per ¼ section (50 if condominium).
- Area Structure Plan or Outline Plan may be required.

Land Use Bylaw

The Ministik Lake Bird Sanctuary separates private lands in Leduc County from adjacent Beaver County lands. Leduc's LUB districts adjacent the Plan area include:

Lake Watershed Protection (LW) with a minimum country residential parcel size of 1.0 hectare (2.5 acres) and maximum parcel size of 2.0 hectares (5.0 acres).

- allows for creation of a Residential Woodlot parcel with a maximum parcel size of 8.0 hectares (20 acres)
- encourages the retention of trees cover

Country Residential (RC) with a minimum country residential parcel size of 1.0 hectares (2.5 acres) and maximum parcel size of 2.0 hectare (5.0 acres).

2.7.3 Strathcona County

Municipal Development Plan

Sustainable development is the key theme of the Strathcona County's 2007 MDP.

- Strathcona's MDP discourages any new country residential subdivisions in the Beaver Hills Moraine Policy Area.
- Area adjacent Beaver County is within the Beaver Hills Moraine Policy Area
 - Allows subdivision of a single rural residential parcel from a ¼ section or the subdivision of the ¼ section into two relatively equal parts
 - Exceptions for lands districted Rural Residential/Agriculture
- Multi-lot development policies emphasize application of conservation design principles
 - Area Structure Plan required for redistricting to country residential

Land Use Bylaw The majority of the lands adjacent Beaver County are districted Agriculture with some ¼ sections districted Country Residential and Rural Residential/Agriculture Transition.

Agriculture General (AG) - the intent of this district is to allow two (2) parcels per ¼ section. The minimum parcel size is 32 hectares (80 acres).

Rural Residential/Agriculture Transition (RA) - this large lot residential district allows a maximum of 8 parcels per ¼ section with a minimum parcel size of 8.0 hectares (20 acres).

Country Residential (RC) – this district is applied to only one ¼ section adjacent the south east corner of Strathcona County and allows for a minimum parcel size 0.8 hectares (2.0 acres).

3 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

3.1 Purpose

As is noted in Section 1.2, the purpose of Public Involvement Plan was to engage residents in the re-examination of growth and development in the Plan area. To identify new concerns, a survey and two sets of Landowner Information Sessions were held as part of the review process. A brief article was provided to the Tofield Mercury/Beaver Chronicle at the initiation of the project and prior to each set of information sessions. The releases were intended to promote the project, inform landowners and interested parties of the status of the plan preparation process, and to generate informed comment.

A summary of the input provided is provided below. Detailed consultation results that include all responses are contained in Appendix A.

3.2 Landowner Letter/Survey

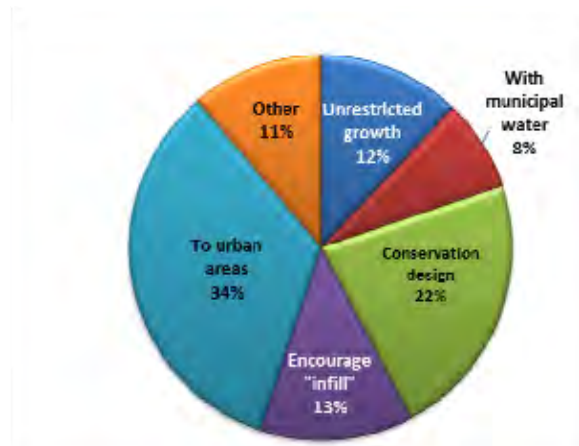
Each of the 1,381 landowners within the Plan area was mailed a copy of a letter introducing the project and inviting them to participate by returning the survey included with the letter and attending one of the two information sessions planned for Lindbrook and Spilstead in September 2012.

As well, a list of 14 stakeholders including school and health authorities, adjacent municipalities and others recommended by the Steering Committee were sent a letter similar to the landowner letter and survey. Ads in the Tofield Mercury/Beaver County Chronicle were used to direct interested citizens to the online version of the questionnaire posted on the Beaver County website.

The seven question survey collected information on specific aspects of rural residential development and was aimed at building awareness as well as cumulating local intelligence. The survey results provided useful insights into County land use issues with the results providing a platform for initial landowner discussion. Some 132 surveys were returned and the responses to the seven questions are summarized as follow:

The graphs below illustrate the results of questions 1 to 7 for the 132 surveys (100 by mail, 32 online) received. As well a summary of the comments and suggestions from Question 8 have also been included.

1. **If residential growth is to occur in the west end of Beaver County, which of the following approaches do you feel the County should pursue?**



2. How would you describe the current number of country residential subdivisions?



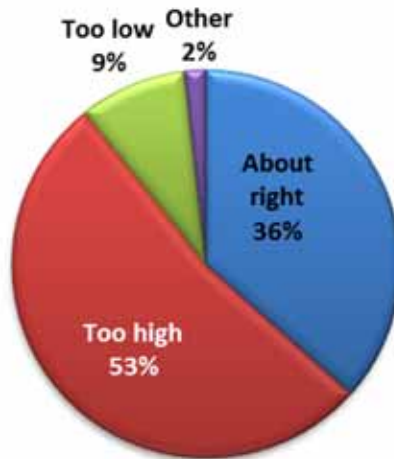
3. The minimum size of a country residential parcel should be:



4. The maximum size of a country residential parcel should be:

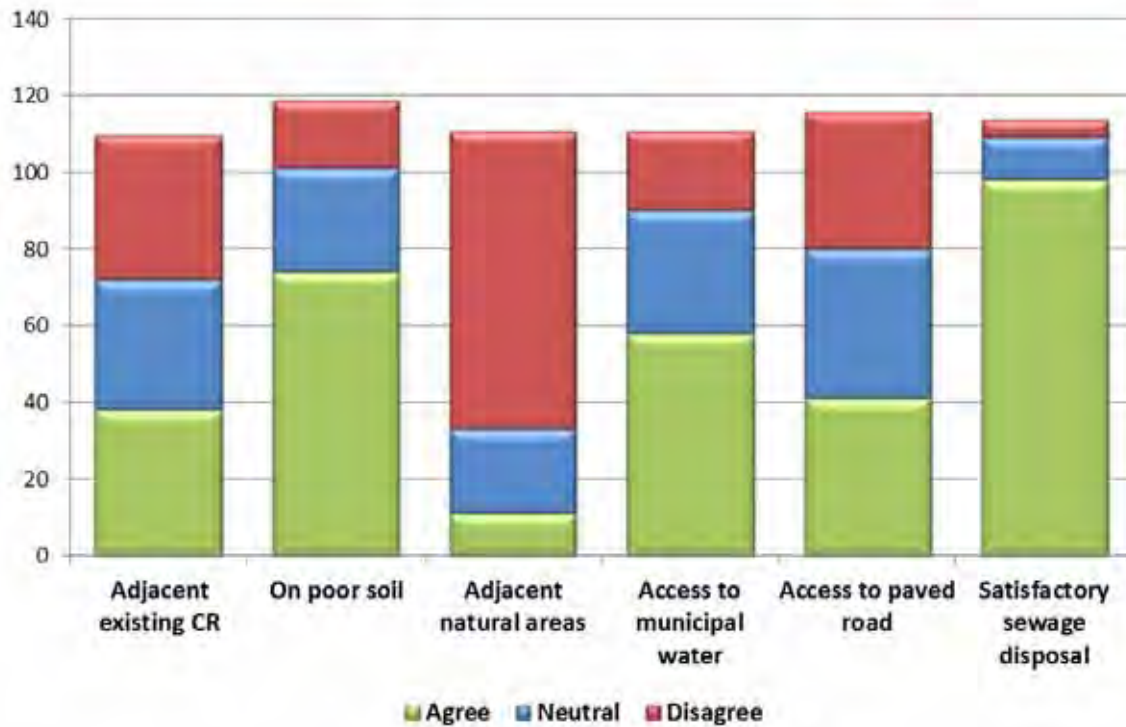


5. The current country residential density permitted by the County's Municipal Development Plan is 32

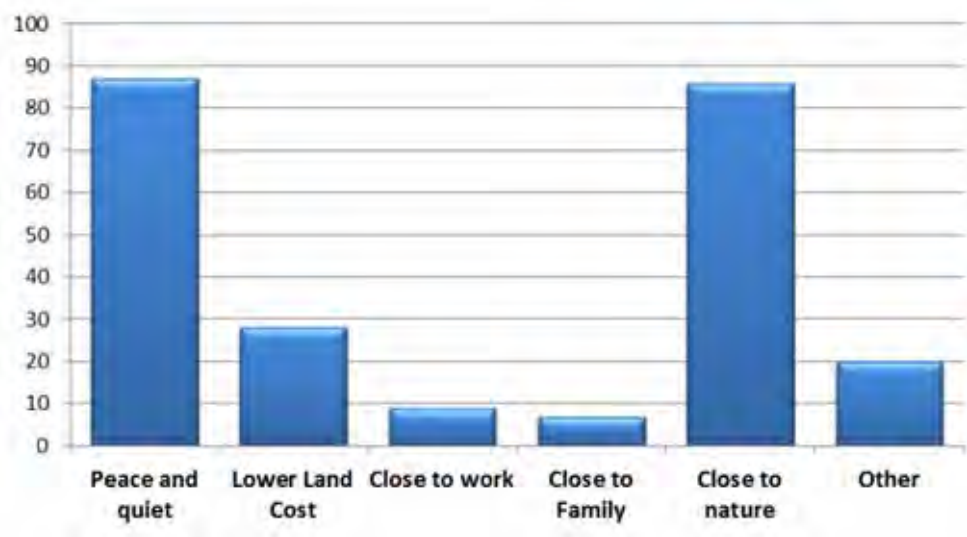


lots per quarter section. Is this density:

6. New multi-lot country residential subdivisions should be located:



7. I choose to live in the study area because:



3.3 First Set of Information Sessions

Information sessions at Lindbrook and Spilstead Community Halls were held in September 2012 near the start of the project to inform Plan area landowners about the Growth Management Plan process, to obtain direct input on land use and related issues, and to consider the approaches to managing growth. Both sessions were well attended with an active exchange of information. Highlights from the comment sheets provided to each participant are listed below. The discussions generally reflect the comment sheet responses.



Lindbrook Community Hall



Spilstead Community Hall

1. Do you support orderly growth in the Plan area?

Most participants recognized that growth will occur but would prefer that the growth be orderly and that the County follow its own rules in approving new subdivisions. Some 75 percent of the comment sheet responses echoed this input and also stated that the integrity of the environment should be a high priority.

2. The current minimum country residential parcel size of 3.0 acres is too large, just right or too small.

About half of participants and comment sheet responses felt that the current minimum parcel size is too small while half felt the current minimum size is just right or too large. Support for smaller lot sizes was minimal.

3. The current maximum parcel density of 32 parcels per ¼ Section is too many, just right, too few.

A significant number of participants considered the 32 parcels per ¼ section to be too many. This position is reflected in the comment sheets in that 58 percent responded that 32 is too many. However, 42 percent support the current maximum or even higher densities.

4. Roads within country residential subdivisions should be paved.

Support for paved roads in country residential subdivisions is high at 75 percent based on comment sheets. However, concern was expressed that taxes are not increased as a result of paving and that paving of roads should be the responsibility of the developer.

5. Other comments.

Discussion and general input focused on the following:

- Agriculture and the environment must be top priority.
- Grow with respect for natural areas.
- Enforce current bylaws on existing development before going ahead.
- No support for development if my taxes are raised.



3.4 Second Set of Information Sessions

The second set of Information Sessions was held in November 2012 and used the same venues to provide an opportunity for landowners to comment on the draft growth management approach prior to finalizing the document in preparation for the MDP amendment process. All study area landowners were invited to attend and comment sheets were provided. Again, the sessions were well attended and the discussions generally reflected the comment sheet responses. Landowner input and comment sheet responses are summarized below.

1. Do you support orderly growth in the Plan area?

The majority of participants support orderly growth with appropriate provisions to protect the environment and to respect the existing character of the area. The emphasis on protecting the environment was particularly important to most and included protection of wetlands. Preserving the unique character of the West End was frequently noted as being a priority. Some noted that growth needs to be well planned to be orderly.

2. Do you support the policies proposed for the Ministik Buffer Area?

The policies proposed were

First, the area within 2.4 kilometres (1.5 miles) of the Ministik Lake Bird Sanctuary shall be designated as the Ministik Buffer Area in the MDP; and,

Second, that a maximum of four parcels with a minimum parcel size of 40 acres be permitted within this buffer area.

Support for these policies was virtually unanimous.

3. Do you support the policies proposed for the subdivision of land zoned Agricultural in the CR area (4 parcels per ¼ section)

Again, support for this policy was strong since it was seen as a means of protecting the rural lifestyle. However, concern was expressed that lands zoned Agricultural be allowed to be rezoned to the Country Residential District.

4. Do you support the policies proposed for the subdivision of land zoned CR in the CR area?

The major policies proposed included:

First, that the minimum lot size remain at 3.0 acres with requirements for a conceptual scheme and a biophysical analysis;

Second, that the maximum number of lots per ¼ section be either eight or sixteen (proposed to be reduced for the current 32 based on input provided at first set of landowners meetings); and,

Third, clustering of lots on a ¼ section should be encouraged.

Most supported the current 3.0 acre lot size as long as the conceptual scheme demonstrates that the land can sustain this size and environmental features are retained. Support for eight lots per ¼ section was somewhat higher than for 16 lots. Responses regarding clustering were ambivalent although participants expressed general support.

5. Do you support Bonusing to encourage clustering of residential developments (permitted in Camrose County)?

The concept of bonusing was not well supported. Many concerns were expressed regarding the subjectivity of allowing for bonus lots.

4 COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL PLAN AREA POLICIES

4.1 Statement of Intent

Beaver County has experienced a substantial amount of country residential development, particularly in the west end of the County. This may impact existing and future land use, and the social, economic and environmental welfare of the County.

The Plan realizes that country residential living should be encouraged as one of the “lifestyles” in the County, in an organized and controlled fashion. The intent of this Plan is to allow country residential development in such a manner as to limit the removal of higher capability agricultural land and not cause unacceptable adverse effects on the agricultural economy, on the community, and on the natural environment.

The Plan also recognizes the existence of the Beaver Hills Moraine as a significant and sensitive environmental feature. While country residential development will be allowed in this area, environmental sensitivities will be a higher priority and development will take into consideration the conservation, protection, and restoration of natural areas.

It is important to note that the policies proposed in this section reflect the direction of the Steering Committee and will be used to amend Section 2 of the MDP – Country Residential. In particular, the Steering Committee does not support allowing four parcels per ¼ section for lands zoned Agricultural without rezoning to the Country Residential District. The County recently approved allowing three parcels per Agricultural ¼ section and the Committee felt it may be confusing and perhaps inequitable if four parcels were to be permitted only within the Plan area.

Goal

Beaver County supports the orderly growth of appropriately located and serviced country residential subdivisions which recognize and protect the environmental integrity of the Beaver Hills Moraine.

Objectives

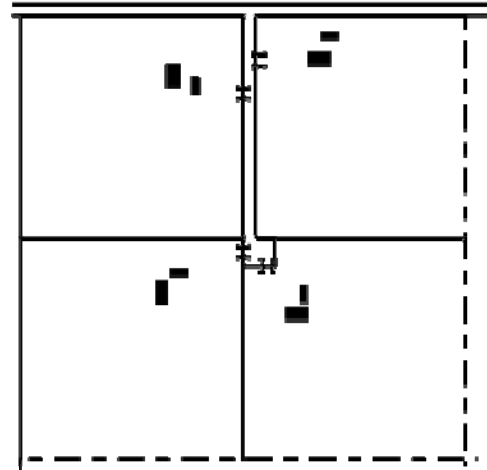
- To provide lifestyle options and development opportunities for current and future residents
- To retain the character, amenities, and quality of life aspects of existing country residential subdivisions.
- To ensure that country residential development conforms to environmental and public health guidelines and regulations.
- To avoid conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses;
- To restrict development in areas which are susceptible to flooding or groundwater contamination, or are environmentally sensitive;
- To encourage construction of housing in existing subdivided areas, before allowing extensive additional multi lot country residential subdivision; and
- To minimize the costs of providing municipal and utility services to country residential lots.

4.2 Ministik Buffer Area

Ministik Buffer Area The area within 2.4 km (1.5 miles) of the Ministik Lake Game Bird Sanctuary shall be designated as the Ministik Buffer Area (see Figure 5).

Density A maximum overall density of 4 parcels per $\frac{1}{4}$ section or the proportional equivalent of the titled area may be permitted in the Ministik Buffer Area. The maximum overall density may be reduced with consideration for:

- the adequacy of groundwater;
- provisions for sewage disposal; and,
- the protection of environmentally sensitive areas.



Size of Parcels The minimum parcel size in the Ministik Buffer Area shall be 16.0 ha (40.0ac) and generally equal in length and width.

LUB Amendment The fourth parcel to be subdivided out of an Agricultural $\frac{1}{4}$ section shall require that all four parcels in the $\frac{1}{4}$ section be redistricted to Country Residential. Multi-lot country residential subdivisions shall be controlled by County Council through the process of a Land Use Bylaw amendment to the Country Residential District. A Conceptual Scheme shall be submitted in support of a Land Use Bylaw amendment.









West End Growth Management Plan

Figure 5
PROPOSED PLAN AREAS

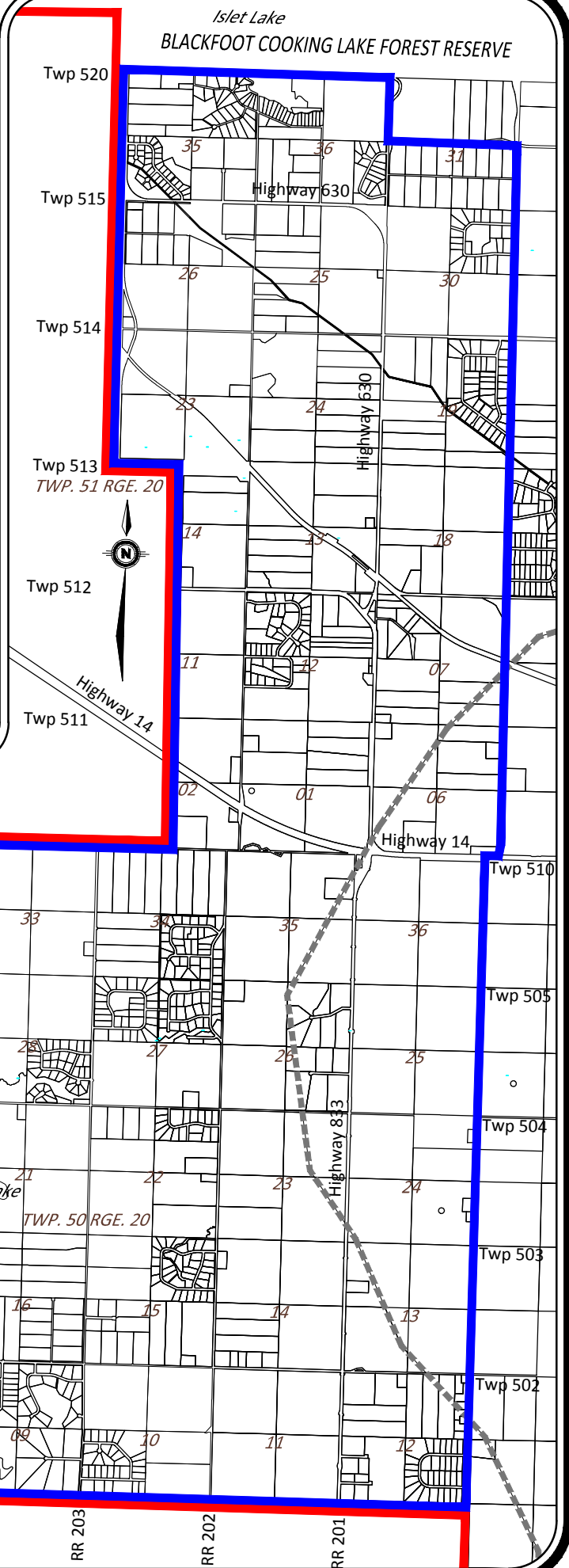
LEGEND

-  County Boundary
-  Beaver Hills Moraine (Eastern Boundary)
-  Ministik Buffer Area
-  Moraine Residential Area

February 2013

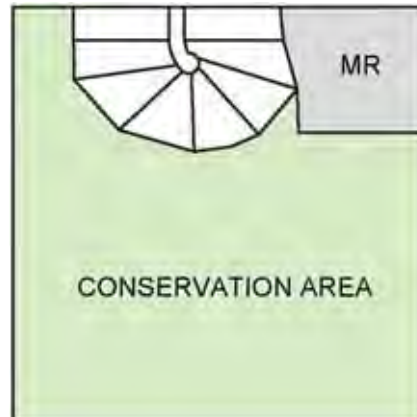
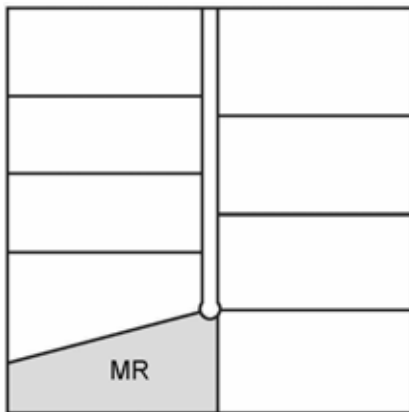
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Lovatt
Planning Consultants Inc.



4.3 Moraine Residential Area

Moraine Residential Area	The Moraine Residential Area is identified on Figure 5. Multi-lot subdivision may be permitted within this area.
Multi-lot Country Residential Defined	A multi-lot country residential subdivision shall be considered to be any subdivision which will create four or more titled parcels of land on a ¼ section including the balance of the ¼ section and fragmented parcels.
Outside the Moraine Residential Area	Notwithstanding the above, multi-lot subdivisions may be considered as identified by an Intermunicipal Development Plan as per the provisions of the Intermunicipal Development Plan.
Country Residential Location	The development of country residential subdivisions will be restricted in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – predominantly agricultural areas; – areas subjected to excessive levels of noise from industry, transportation facilities or other sources; or – environmentally sensitive areas or on hazard lands (steep slopes or lands prone to flooding or subsidence).
Density	A maximum overall density of 8 parcels, including fragmented parcels, per ¼ section or the proportional equivalent of the titled area may be permitted in the Moraine Residential Area. The maximum overall density may be reduced with consideration for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the adequacy of groundwater; – provisions for sewage disposal; and, – the protection of environmentally sensitive areas.
Size of Parcels	The minimum parcel size in a multi-lot subdivision shall be 1.2 hectares (3.0 acres).



LUB Amendment Multi-lot country residential subdivisions shall be controlled by County Council through the process of a Land Use Bylaw amendment to the Country Residential District. A Conceptual Scheme shall be submitted in support of a Land Use Bylaw amendment.

Conceptual Scheme Adoption	A Conceptual Scheme may be adopted by a resolution of Council or by bylaw as per the provisions of the Municipal Government Act and amendments thereto.
Conceptual Scheme	<p>A Conceptual Scheme prepared by a qualified professional shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – proposed subdivision design (including designation of Municipal and Environmental Reserves); – site description and topographical assessment (including surface drainage and stormwater management); – a biophysical assessment; – confirmation that each lot can be serviced with an on-site water (well or cistern) and a private sewage disposal system; – confirmation that each residential parcel contains 0.4 hectare (1.0 acre) of contiguous developable land for a building site; – shallow utilities including gas, electricity and communication lines are available; – traffic impacts; – surrounding land uses within 1.6 km of the site including the number of vacant parcels; – documentation from ERCB identifying the presence or absence of abandon wells and confirmation that all lots can comply with the setback requirements of ERCB Directive 79 and amendments thereto; and, – development controls if required by the County.
Subdivision Design	<p>The subdivision design shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – minimize the fragmentation of higher capability agricultural land; – be directed to land that is determined to be of lesser environmental significance; – ensure wildlife corridors and habitat linkages remain intact via the use of green infrastructure; – conserve the existing natural landscape; – consider internal road access; – consider additional road access for fire evacuation purposes; – identify the location of the development envelope; – demonstrate that lot sizes are appropriate for the character of the existing country residential area.
Biophysical Assessment	<p>A Conceptual Scheme prepared in support of a multi-parcel residential subdivision will include a Biophysical Assessment prepared by a qualified professional if the site contains natural features such as sloughs or extensive tree cover. The Assessment shall consider, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – site description; – historical aerial photos dating to at least 1950; – wetlands classification;

- vegetation assessment;
- wildlife identification, including species-at-risk;
- identification of other environmental features;
- conservation recommendations via environmental reserve or reserve easements, municipal reserve, conservation reserve or easement, etc.

Cluster Subdivisions Encouraged	Cluster country residential subdivisions that conserve significant natural features as identified by the Biophysical Assessment shall be encouraged.
Internal Subdivision Roads	<p>Access to individual lots shall be provided by internal roads developed to standards acceptable to the County. Direct access onto highways, secondary roads, or County roads will not normally be allowed unless such access can be constructed at a location satisfactory to the County, taking into consideration safety to the traveling public.</p> <p>Internal road standards will be of a quality equal to or higher than, the road to which it is linked. For example, where internal roads link to a paved or oiled road, the internal roads will be constructed and paved or oiled to County standards. Where internal roads link to a gravel road, internal roads will be constructed and may be graveled, oiled, or paved to County standards.</p>
Municipal Services	Development adjacent to a municipal water and/or sewer system will be constructed with the necessary infrastructure to connect to the municipal utility system.
Development Agreement Required	Where a subdivision for country residential purposes is proposed, the developer will be required to enter into a development agreement with the County wherein the developer agrees to be responsible for all the costs associated with the subdivision, including infrastructure and servicing improvements, which may include offsite levies.
Public Consultation	Prior to first reading of the Land Use Bylaw amendment, the Conceptual Scheme shall be presented to the public at a public meeting. The public meeting must be advertised in a local newspaper for a minimum of two (2) consecutive weeks prior to the meeting, and adjacent landowners notified by regular mail. The summary of the consultation and views expressed at the public meeting shall be submitted to Council with formal presentation of the Conceptual Scheme.
Subdivision of Existing Parcels	Country residential parcels located in the Country Residential Area may be further subdivided if the subdivision application meets the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw. A Conceptual Scheme and Biophysical Assessment may be required at the discretion of the County.
Support for Alternate Building Methods	The County supports alternative building methods which meet the Alberta Building code in order to encourage the development of more sustainable housing projects including, but not limited to, methods that reduce energy use and increase water efficiency through such elements such as xeriscaping, innovative individual wastewater technologies, water use reduction and solar and geothermal heating.

Fire Smart

Multi-parcel subdivision proposals shall be required to implement wildfire mitigation measures as contained in the Partners in Protection Program FireSmart: Protecting Your Community from Wildfire.

Mitigation measures include the following:

- Buildings should be located, designed, and constructed in a manner to minimize the possibility of ignition from a wildfire and to minimize the spread of a structural fire to the surrounding wild land.
- New development should utilize fire retardant roofing and exterior wall materials such as, but not limited to, tile, metal or asphalt shingles (for roofs) and stucco, stone veneer, cement fiber, wood clapboard, brick, engineered wood, aluminum and seamless steel (for exterior walls).
- Wooden shakes and shingles should not be used as roofing material and vinyl siding should not be used on any new structure.

APPENDIX A – PUBLIC INPUT

Landowner Letter

Each landowner within the study area was mailed a letter in June 2012 introducing the project and inviting them to participate by returning the survey included with the letter and attending one of the information sessions planned for Lindbrook and Spilstead on September 19 and 20, respectively.

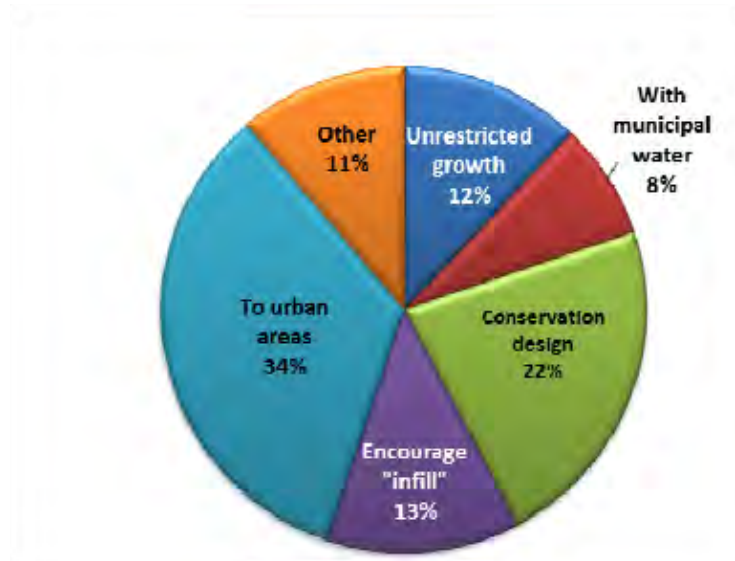
Survey

The seven question survey collected information on specific aspects of rural residential development and was aimed at building awareness as well as cumulating local intelligence. The survey results provided useful insights into County land use issues with the results providing a platform for initial landowner discussion.

Each of the 1,381 landowners received a copy of the survey. As well, a list of 14 stakeholders including school and health authorities, adjacent municipalities and others recommended by the Steering Committee were sent a letter similar to the landowner letter and survey. Ads in the Tofield Mercury/Beaver County Chronicle were used to direct interested citizens to the online version of the questionnaire posted on the Beaver County website.

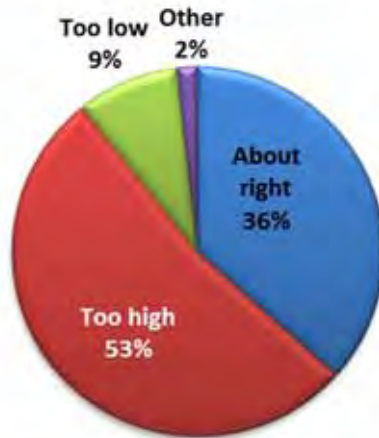
The following graphs illustrate the results of questions 1 to 7 for the 132 surveys (100 by mail, 32 online) received. As well a summary of the comments and suggestions from Question 8 have also been included.

1. If residential growth is to occur in the west end of Beaver County, which of the following approaches do you feel the County should pursue?



Other responses included: Resist create new lots; growth should occur east of plan area; growth must occur; fill vacant lots; 40 to 80 acres lots; 5 ac minimum and protect environmental values

2. How would you describe the current number of country residential subdivisions?



3. The minimum size of a country residential parcel should be:



Other responses included: 10 ac(x2); 30 ac; 5 ac; service dependent; larger than five ac with protection of environmentally valued areas

4. The maximum size of a country residential parcel should be:



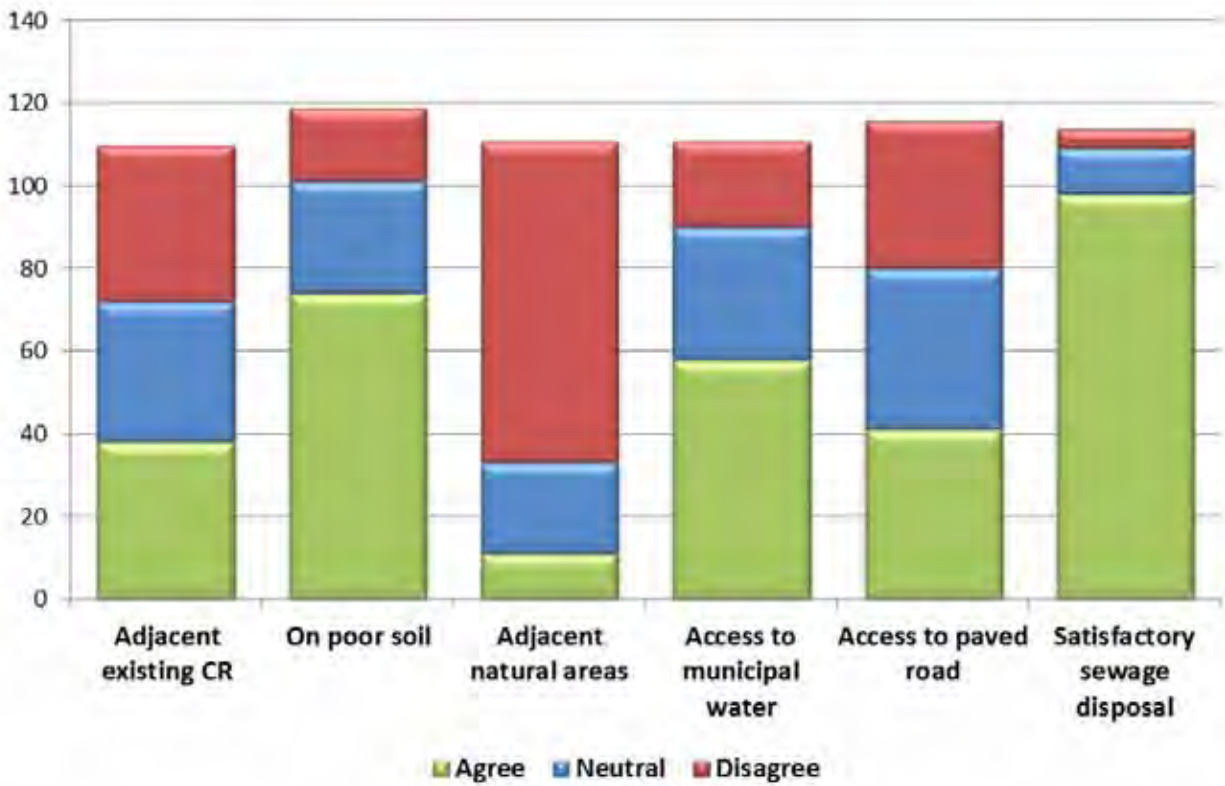
Other responses included: 30 ac; unlimited; 40 ac (x6); 20 ac; 40 to 80 acres; no maximum

5. The current country residential density permitted by the County's Municipal Development Plan is 32 lots per quarter section. Is this density:



Other responses included: uncertain; between 3 and 40 acres

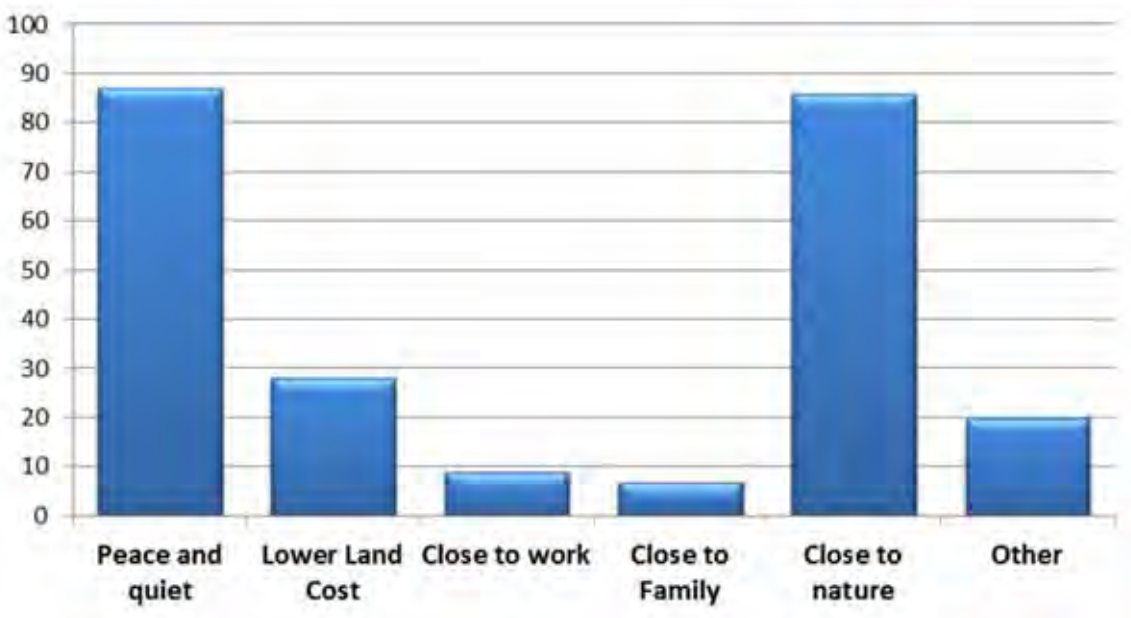
6. New multi-lot country residential subdivisions should be located:



Other responses included: adjacent to a highway; minimize impact on wildlife corridors; adjacent the

Town of Tofield

7. I choose to live in the study area because:



Other responses included: ATV bylaws; horses; space (x3); inherited; stars/air quality; shopping; wildlife

First Information of Sessions

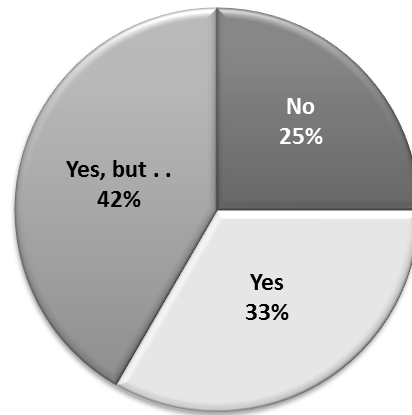
Information sessions at Lindbrook and Spilstead Community Halls were convened to inform study area landowners about the Growth Management Plan process, to obtain direct input on land use and related issues, and to consider the approaches to managing growth. All study area landowners were invited to attend. A summary of the Information Sessions and the feedback obtained from comment sheets are included below.

- Lindbrook Hall September 19
 - 81 signed in (head count - 100 attended)
 - 16 comment sheets returned
- Spilstead Hall September 20
 - 45 signed in (head count - 60 attended)
 - 22 comment sheets returned

Total of 38 comment sheets returned.

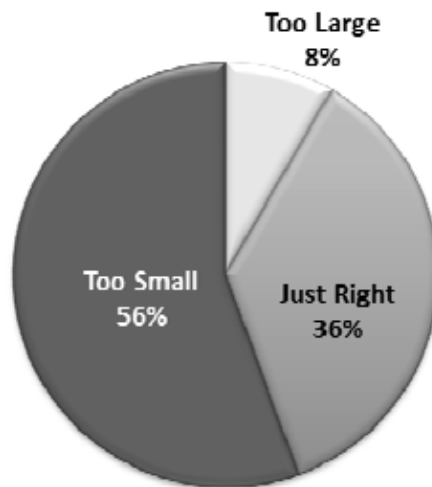
– Do you support orderly growth in the Plan area?

Yes	Yes, but . . .	No
12	15	9



- 75% support
- Yes but - want environment as highest priority
- Key word is orderly – follow the rules
- Others express a range of opinion from no growth to pro-growth
 - “Too many in area as is”
 - “I would like to see residential and commercial development”
- The current minimum country residential parcel size of 3.0 acres is?

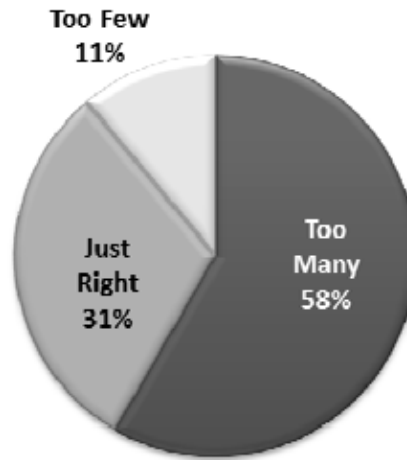
Too Large	Just Right	Too Small
3	13	20



- Majority favour larger lots
- “Smaller parcels mean less privacy . . . More conflicts”
- Concern that parcel can be serviced on site
- No support for smaller lots

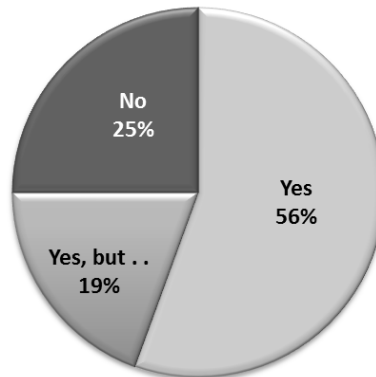
- The current maximum parcel density of 32 parcels per ¼ Section is?

Too many	Just Right	Too few
21	11	4



- 58% too many
 - "Too many neighbours"
- 42% support current maximum or higher density
 - Roads within country residential subdivisions should be paved.

Yes	Yes, but . . .	No
20	7	9



- Most want paved roads but are concerned about increases in taxes
 - "Dirt roads are part of country life. Keep taxes down"
 - "At the expense of the developer"
- Do you have any additional comments?
 - "Agriculture and Environment must be Top Priority"
 - "Grow with respect for natural areas"
 - "Enforce current bylaws on existing development before going ahead"
 - "No support for development if my taxes are raised."

Second Set of Information Sessions

The second set of Information Sessions used the same venues to provide an opportunity for landowners to comment on the draft growth management approach prior to finalizing the document in preparation for the MDP amendment process. Again, all study area landowners were invited to attend and the sessions. A summary is contained below.

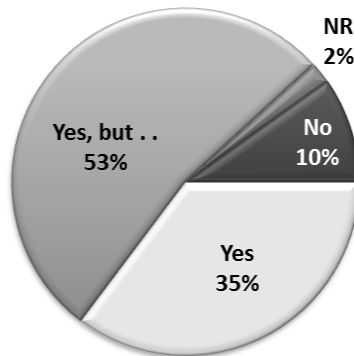
- Lindbrook Hall November 19
 - 42 signed in
 - 15 comment sheets returned
- Spilstead Hall November 21
 - 46 signed in
 - 12 comment sheets returned

By Mail: (includes faxed, emailed and by mail - 24

Total of 51 comment sheets returned.

1. Do you support orderly growth in the Plan area?

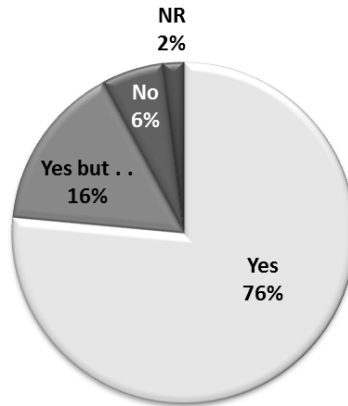
Yes 18	Yes, but . . . 27	No 5	No Response 1
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- Most support orderly growth with appropriate provisions to protect the environment and respecting the existing character of the area.
 - Yes – outstanding initiative. I respect the minds that are executing the plan and public meetings. Count me in the environmental/conservation camp. It must be the highest priority.
 - Keep acreages larger.
 - Wetlands need to be protected for water fowl as well as ground water discharge.
 - Too much growth will destroy the unique character of the area which is why we came here in the first place.
 - But if growth is going to happen anyway then it is better to have plans in place to control.

2. Do you support the policies proposed for the Ministik Buffer Area?

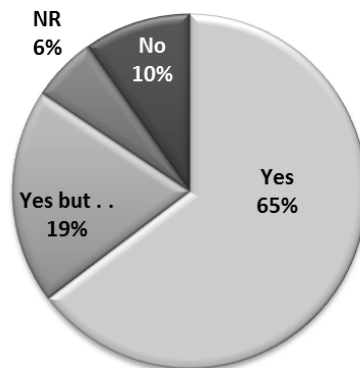
Yes 39	Yes, but . . . 8	No 3	No Response 1
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- Strong support for the area with 2.4 km of the Ministik Bird Sanctuary
 - Buffer – little development – Yes.
 - Yes, but no further subdividing.
 - As I do not own property in the buffer zone one area but I might feel differently if it was directly affecting me. Is there not already a buffer zone factored into the bird sanctuary and other conservation areas as well?
 - Very good.

3. Do you support the policies proposed for the subdivision of land zoned Agricultural in the CR area? (4 per ¼)

Yes 33	Yes, but . . . 10	No 5	No Response 3
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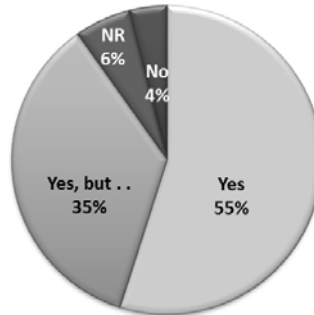


- Majority support allowance for subdivision of a maximum of four 40 acres parcels from and agricultural ¼ section
 - Great – It preserves agricultural possibilities for the future – great idea.

- With the proviso that the landowner can apply for rezoning. The Ag in question may actually be marginal for agriculture.
- This plan allows families ample space to enjoy the farm lifestyle.
- As long as it does not mean that it cannot be rezoned for CR in the future.

4. Do you support the policies proposed for the subdivision of land zoned CR in the CR area?

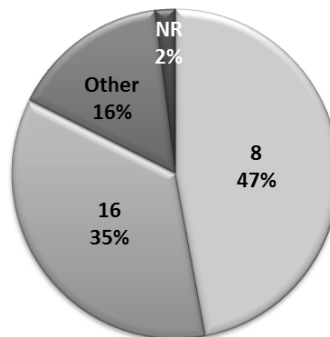
Yes	Yes, but . . .	No	No Response
28	18	2	3



- Most support minimum country residential parcel size of 3.0 acres with requirements for a conceptual scheme and biophysical assessment if required
 - No smaller than 3 acres, no larger than 5 acres.
 - Utilizing both the 10 ac or 3 ac depending on particular quarter.
 - The policies need to be enforced.
 - Do not allow subdivision already approved and in place to be further broken down thereby destroying the historic integrity and quality of life of residents already established in these subdivisions.
 - I agree with all the policies and will be diligent in making sure council also abides by all the policy requirements. Policy is only good if adhered to.
 - Still too much development being proposed.

5. The maximum number of lots permitted per ¼ Section zoned CR in the CR area should be?

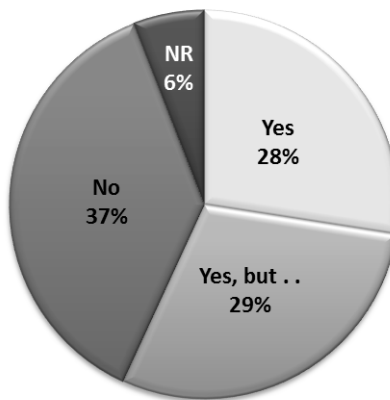
8	16	Other	No Response
24	18	8	1



- No clear consensus on lot size, although fewer lots appear to be favoured.
 - Allowing enough room to warrant a country acreage.
 - Less than 8. With conservation area as the bulk of the remainder of the land.
 - Promoting clustering to improve natural green space.
 - Clustering is an option with some bylaws in place regarding environmentally sensitive or proven wildlife corridors within the “conservation area”.
 - 8 in a cluster.

6. Do you support Bonusing to encourage clustering of residential developments?

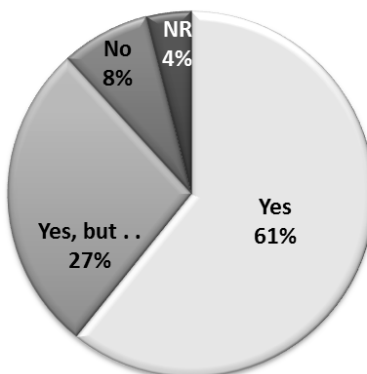
Yes	Yes, but . . .	No	No Response
14	15	19	3



- Bonusing not well supported. Many concerns regarding the subjectivity of the bonus.
 - What will the criteria be?
 - I think there would be pressure to further subdivide the land in future.
 - As long as the conservation area is well defined of what it can be used for.
 - Just make it a requirement.

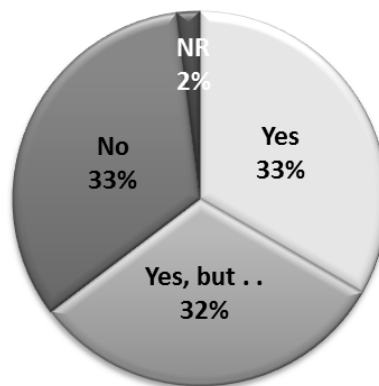
7. Do you support construction of a water truck filling station south of Highway 14?

Yes	Yes, but . . .	No	No Response
31	14	4	2



- Good support for water truck filling station south of Highway 14. Concern expressed regarding the impact on taxes.
 - Not interfering with existing land owners – transfer station – contamination?
 - Yes – transfer station – great idea. Also near Lindbrook store – if locals can support that. Seems like a great spot to build a small commercial hub – and other amenities.
 - As long as taxes don't effect someone not needing station.
 - Good idea to put it at or near the transfer station.
 - Would be nice but big bucks!
 - Consider road load.
 - Get it across Highway 14 as soon as possible. Lindbrook transfer station site.
8. Should local commercial development be encouraged in the CR area?

Yes	Yes, but	No	No Response
15	13	16	1



Lindbrook

- Development has to follow rules and regulations & be appropriate for the area.
- Home based only. Encourage that. Again noise issues – businesses do not have the right to intrude on quiet residential areas.
- Beneficial to the area. Not a detriment. Noise and traffic to be considered.
- Absolutely – in well placed – well locally-supported locations. Even consider incentives for locals and the business to support small clusters.
- Farmers market.
- Depending on what type of commercial.
- More people = more services needed. Ie a convenience store/gas station in Spilstead. Encourage local home based businesses to cluster to draw business.
- Good info. Shirley and I own 40 acres, 2 ½ miles north of Lindbrook store. We purchased this land in 1971 and cut a 600' road in by hand.
- Respect other uses.

Spilstead

- Only along paved roads.
- An eye on increased traffic, hazardous chemicals, should be kept.
- Keep it small.
- Noise consideration, pollution.
- Examples and clarity required.
- Should be considered, not necessarily encouraged.

9. Do you have any additional comments?

Lindbrook

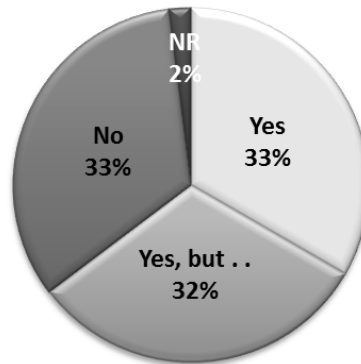
- No clusters if you can't police it & protect the people from quads and snowmobiles and the resulting crime waves that accompany them. Peace and quiet is a right! It positively affects quality of life.
- Keep up the good work!
- Very impressed with the process and the accomplishments.
- I don't understand how subjective land use goals "try to ensure environmental sensitive areas" help us legally. Could it be worded more concretely? I guess it is a fuzzy guideline but seems to fuzzy.
- Building restrictions should be implemented in all subdivisions.
- No further subdivision of existing acreages into smaller 5acre lots.
- This has been a great information session! Please keep us informed.
- Corridors for wildlife between residences, parks, sanctuaries.

Spilstead

- Higher density means less disturbance to natural spaces and conservation areas. Higher density is a good thing!
- The economics for 16 lots is not viable. No increase in density means no increase in taxes.
- Good job. Tough questions. Some not answered well but you can't know it all. City versus Country life.
- Would it apply to existing subdivisions – biophysical assessment.
- Too much 'text' in the presentation. It would be easier to speak around pictures to better understand the presentation. I will review the published material and provide additional feedback by Nov 27.

10. Should local commercial development be encouraged in the CR area?

Yes 15	Yes, but . . . 13	No 16	No Response 1
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- Although many support the encouragement of commercial developments, concern over the type and extent of commercial development
- Home based only. Encourage that. Again noise issues – businesses do not have the right to intrude on quiet residential areas.
- Absolutely – in well placed – well locally-supported locations. Even consider incentives for locals and the business to support small clusters.
- Respect other uses.
- Examples and clarity required.
- Should be considered, not necessarily encouraged.
- This is country living. Tofield is not that far.
- A general store would provide a spirit of neighbourhood and give social sense of community for the residents.
- If people wanted to live in commercial areas they would stay in the townsites. Industrial and commercial growth would bring in too much non-residential traffic leading to higher crime rates and too high a demand on our water supplies.

11. Do you have any additional comments?

- Keep up the good work!
- Very impressed with the process and the accomplishments.
- I don't understand how subjective land use goals "try to ensure environmental sensitive areas" help us legally. Could it be worded more concretely? I guess it is a fuzzy guideline but seems too fuzzy.
- This has been a great information session! Please keep us informed.
- Corridors for wildlife between residences, parks, sanctuaries.
- Higher density means less disturbance to natural spaces and conservation areas. Higher density is a good thing!
- The economics for 16 lots is not viable. No increase in density means no increase in taxes.
- Good job. Tough questions. Some not answered well but you can't know it all. City V. Country life.