



CLEARWATER COUNTY

**Municipal
Development Plan
(MDP)**

May 9, 2023



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BYLAW NO. 1132/22

BEING A BYLAW FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING A NEW MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND REPEALING THE FORMER MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (BYLAW 923/10) IN CLEARWATER COUNTY IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

WHEREAS Section 632 of the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, Chapter M-26, as amended, requires that the council of a municipality adopt a municipal development plan; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act, as amended;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of Clearwater County, in the Province of Alberta, enacts as follows:

1. That the document titled “Clearwater County Municipal Development Plan (MDP)” as described in Schedule “A” and forming part of this Bylaw be adopted;
2. Upon third reading of Bylaw 1132/22, Bylaw 923/10 “Clearwater County Municipal Development Plan (2010)” and all amendments thereto are hereby repealed;
3. That the numbering sequence for the “Clearwater County Municipal Development Plan (MDP)” be determined as appropriate;
4. That this Bylaw shall take effect upon the final passing thereof.

and

5. If any Section, sub-Section, clause or phrase of this Bylaw is, for any reason, found to be invalid by a court, it will be deemed to be severed, and the remainder of the Bylaw will remain valid and enforceable in accordance with its terms.

READ a first time this ____ day of _____, 2022.

REEVE

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PUBLIC HEARING held this ____ day of _____, 2023.

READ a second time this ____ day of _____, 2023.

READ a third time and finally passed this ____ day of _____, 2023.

REEVE

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) sets out a clear and shared vision for growing desirable communities in Clearwater County. Following extensive public consultation, this MDP identifies nine areas of key opportunities to create a balanced approach for the future of Clearwater County.

Our communities are connected by our appreciation for, and stewardship of, our natural beauty, our economic prosperity, our quality living, and the diversity of our wonderful people. The MDP reflects this strategic plan vision and provides a strong foundation for a prosperous community. Clearwater County Council applauds the dedication, passion and hard work of the community members including landowners, residents, local businesses, and corporations who contributed ideas, insight and advice to the development of this plan.

County Council also wishes to acknowledge the project teams in Clearwater County's Planning and Development department, Parkland Community Planning Services and Vicinia Planning & Engagement for their work and dedication to the development of the Plan.

Sincerely,
Clearwater County Council

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	7
1.1	An Introduction to Clearwater County.....	8
1.2	Clearwater County Code and Life in the County	8
1.3	Purpose of the Municipal Development Plan.....	9
1.4	Community Input into the MDP	10
2.0	Legislation and MDP Structure	11
2.1	Legislation	11
2.2	Where does the MDP fit in?	12
2.3	Relation to the County’s Land Use Bylaw	13
2.4	Areas of Planning Jurisdiction with Clearwater County	14
2.5	Organization and Interpretation of the MDP	16
3.0	Vision and Guiding Principles	18
4.0	Natural Capital and Protection of the Environment.....	20
5.0	Agriculture.....	27
6.0	Residential.....	31
7.0	Economic Development.....	37
8.0	Recreation and Special Places.....	45
9.0	Hamlets.....	51
10.0	Subdivision of Land.....	55
11.0	Infrastructure.....	61
12.0	Community and Protective Services.....	67
13.0	Intermunicipal Planning and Liaison.....	71
14.0	Putting the MDP into Effect.....	75
15.0	Definitions.....	84



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 An Introduction to Clearwater County

Clearwater County encompasses 18,691 square kilometres (7,217 square miles) and contains an abundance of agricultural lands, water, forests, rivers and lakes, wildlife, oil, natural gas, coal, sand and gravel. These provide a variety of economic opportunities for farming, industry and commerce, while also being a major attraction for tourism activities on and within lakes and rivers, woodlands and forests, wilderness areas and open plains. Diverse environmental features and ecological areas provide both opportunities and challenges to conserve the environment for future generations.

Located in west-central Alberta, Clearwater County's western boundary borders Banff National Park and Jasper National Park while its eastern boundary lies approximately 50 kilometres from the City of Red Deer. The County encompasses the Town of Rocky Mountain House, the Village of Caroline and the Summer Village of Burnstick Lake. The County is home to approximately 12,000 people.

Generally, the eastern portion of the County is dominated by rolling farmlands, interspersed with streams, ponds, wetlands and pockets of woodlands. Private land ownership predominates. The western portion, often referred to as the 'West Country', is predominantly Crown (public) land consisting of high prairies, foothills and mountains, most of which is forested. These lands are managed for multiple purposes by the Provincial Government, with the exception of defined nodes along the David Thompson Corridor set aside for appropriate development in Nordegg and four tourism nodes. This area provides much of the source water for the North Saskatchewan River and Red Deer River basins.

Because of the diverse nature of the lands, resources and environments there continue to be a variety of land use interests throughout the County. At times, these uses may be competing or conflicting. In accommodating the mix of land uses required by current residents and businesses, the County recognizes the challenge of preparing for future growth and development, while sustaining the environmental, social and economic qualities of community life enjoyed by residents far into the future.

1.2 Clearwater County Code and Life in the County

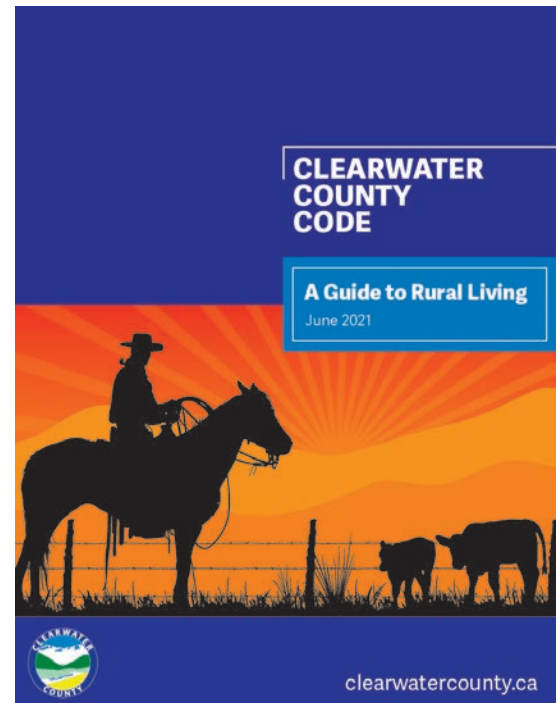
The Clearwater County Code was written to highlight some of the challenges that come with a rural lifestyle. It is a way to give people that have never lived in a rural setting a glimpse at what life in the County might look like.

Clearwater County encompasses a vast area and is home to many different groups of people. Some are generational farmers that have spent all of their lives in the area and were raised to take over the family farm. Some are people that have moved to the County in search of economic prosperity. Some are people that have decided to move away from the hustle and bustle of an urban center.

Agriculture, tourism, forestry, and resource extraction all play a major role in the County's economy, employing many of the County's residents. Different industries have different needs when it comes to County Services and result in different effects and experiences for neighbours, such as traffic, dust, noise, and odour.

The vast size and wide array of geography result in varying County services throughout the County. Some areas may have no Internet or cell phone services while others have excellent service. Some may need to use an industry lease road to access their property while others drive on paved roadways. Some may have to follow a farm implement on their way to work in the morning depending on the time of year. Some may have communal water and wastewater services while others rely on private water well and septic systems.

Understanding and respect are critical aspects of rural living. Different segments of our community have differing needs and wants. From agriculture to industry, we all need to live in harmony, respecting each other and coexisting peacefully alongside one another is the intended result of the Clearwater County Code.



1.3 Purpose of the Municipal Development Plan

The Clearwater County Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is the County's "blueprint" for future land use, development and physical changes. The direction it provides is meant to help us shape our community in the way we wish to see it become many years into the future.

The MDP provides a vision of what the community of Clearwater County desires to be 25 - 30 years from now. The dimensions of the vision are clarified by a series of guiding principles. Directions on how to pursue the vision are provided through a series of land use and community development goals and policies that address environmental, economic and social components.

The MDP covers many topics related to the use and development of land. There are many different aspects that need to be considered in how the County manages the landscape and changes over time. Obtaining balance between these different aspects and perspectives is one of the main challenges for the Plan and those who will make decisions that implement the Plan.

The MDP has been written to strike a balance between the ability of individual landowners to make use of their property and the potential implications for the community. The MDP seeks to provide opportunities that take into account compatibility with neighbouring land uses and minimize conflict between neighbours and users. It also takes into account the possible impacts that use and development may have on the infrastructure and services that are relied upon by the overall community. The MDP recognizes that the right to use and develop property should not be at the expense of or cause difficulty for neighbours and other community members. Use and development of land is therefore expected to occur in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.

The MDP has also been written with trade-offs in mind. This means that achieving some desired long term objectives may mean compromising on another aspect. For example, the desire to encourage a greater range of employment opportunities and opportunities for living in a rural setting requires that some land be allowed to be used for non-agricultural purposes. The MDP provides guidance and tools to address the many scenarios that may emerge over the next 25 – 30 years and which are likely to involve more detailed discussion of trade-offs and balance between competing aims and objectives.

1.4 Community Input into the MDP

The creation of the MDP was supported and informed by a robust public-engagement strategy. This was done to provide the opportunity for voices of county residents to be heard, valued and where appropriate implemented. As the composition of the County changes over time, so too do the values that are important to residents. To ensure that the MDP remains a dynamic document that evolves with the shifts of residents over time, the 2023 version of the plan has been informed by consistently reaching out to the public between 2020 and 2023. The engagement tactics that informed the revisions to the plan can be further explored in the What We Heard Report.



2.0 LEGISLATION & MDP STRUCTURE

2.1 Legislation

The *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) requires all municipalities to adopt a MDP to provide a policy framework for the long-term growth and development of a community. The Act states that a MDP must address such issues as future land use and development in the municipality, the provision of municipal services and facilities, the provision of municipal and/or school reserves, the protection of agricultural operations, and intermunicipal issues such as future growth areas and the co-ordination of transportation systems and infrastructure.

The Provincial Land Use Framework outlines approaches to manage public and private land, including natural resources, and to achieve the Province's long term economic, environmental and social goals. In addressing Alberta's growth pressures it provides a blueprint for land use management and decision making. The Framework was put in place through the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* (ALSA). The Land Use Framework requires municipalities to ensure their plans and decisions are consistent with regional plans. As such, the MDP has been prepared while being mindful of the directions provided in the Land Use Framework. While it is difficult to surmise the provincial directions to be contained in the forthcoming North Saskatchewan Regional Plan, it is believed that the strategies and policies in this MDP should align with these future regional plan directions.

The Clearwater County MDP provides directions for Council, the Subdivision Authority, the Development Authority and County administration in considering land redesignation, subdivision and development proposals. In doing so, the MDP helps the County evaluate the merit of proposals for land use change in context with the community's desired long term future. It also provides direction for the preparation and evaluation of more detailed and local statutory and non-statutory plans that the County may require as a guide to evaluate proposed land use changes on a site or in a broader area.

Importantly, the MDP reflects the collective vision, goals and aspirations of the community. Over a typical 30 year planning horizon this MDP proposes to maintain the qualities of life that residents of Clearwater County currently hold important, while providing for population and economic growth in the context of a sustainable environment in order to progress as a viable, safe and modern community.

The MDP also provides land owners and developers with a policy framework to assist their individual assessment of possible land use changes they may wish to pursue. As well, the MDP provides Clearwater County's requirements, guidelines and directions for the preparation of more detailed local area plans and applications for land use redesignations, subdivisions and developments.

2.2 Where Does the MDP fit in?

The system of land use plans and regulations used by Clearwater County is consistent with provincial requirements and referred to as the “planning hierarchy.” The MDP forms part of the County’s planning system and has been written to be part of this larger system.

The policy diagram (Figure 1) shows the several layers of plans used by the County. Each plan must “fit in” with the vision and direction outlined in the higher level document(s) or the ones above it on the chart. Generally, the level of detail presented in a plan increases as you move down the chart.

Some of the main pieces of Provincial Legislation that shape the County’s plans include the MGA (describes the planning tools that can be used by the County) and the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* (creates system of regional plans). The North Saskatchewan Regional Plan, once created, flows from the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*.

The County has several intermunicipal development plans (IDP) with its neighbouring municipalities. This includes the Town of Rocky Mountain House and the Village of Caroline. Each IDP identifies the positives of joint planning and addresses the potential challenges associated with growth and development near the shared boundary of the two partner municipalities. The County also has Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICF) with all its neighbours.

Below the MDP are area structure plans and area redevelopment plans. These plans identify land use, servicing requirements and infrastructure needs within a select area (i.e. one or more quarter sections). Plans of this level often provide information regarding the proposed sequence and density of development within a given area. Examples in Clearwater County are the Ferrier-Garth Area Structure Plan and the Law Area Structure Plan. Clearwater County also uses outline plans to provide detailed plans for individual quarter sections. An example is the Ridgeland Outline Plan for a residential subdivision in the Ferrier-Garth area.

Figure 1: Policy Pyramid



2.3 Relation to the County's Land Use Bylaw

The Clearwater County Land Use Bylaw (LUB) is the day-to-day regulatory document for controlling land uses and development of individual properties. The LUB establishes land use districts and land use designations that are assigned to various properties and identifies the allowable uses for the lands. This ensures a level of certainty in regards to landowners' rights to develop their lands, as well for adjacent landowners to know what could be developed on neighbouring lands.

The land use designation of a specific property is not changed by the adoption of this MDP.

Many of the topics of the MDP and the LUB overlap. The big picture, strategic ideas of the MDP require and rely on more detailed rules and regulations contained in the County's LUB.



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2022

2.4 Areas of Planning Jurisdiction within Clearwater County

The map titled “**Jurisdictional Limits on County Land Use Planning Authority**” (Figure 2) gives an overview of Clearwater County and its jurisdictional limits and overall boundaries. Although all the land highlighted in the map falls within Clearwater County’s boundary, there are other agencies and levels of government that have jurisdictional planning control that overrides that of the County.

First, the yellow shaded area in the eastern portion of the County is deeded land and is commonly referred to as the “White Area.” These lands fall within Clearwater County’s planning authority and are under Clearwater County’s development control, with some limitations to properties adjacent to Provincial Highways and provincially claimed waterways and water bodies. Highways and major water bodies and courses are indicated on the map. The map does not show the smaller water bodies and courses due to the scale of the map.

The “Green Area”, which is Crown land, is provincially owned and managed. These lands are untitled or non-patent lands. There are some crown quarter sections that are leased by the province to landowners as grazing leases and may have restricted access to the public.

The Crown Land (Green Area) identified in Figure 2 is subject to Part 17 of the *Municipal Government Act* and is under Clearwater County development control. All proposed development within the Crown Land (Green Area) requires applicants to obtain necessary provincial lease agreements and approvals prior to application to Clearwater County.

Clearwater County has three First Nations Reserves within its boundaries, over which it does not have jurisdiction. These are Big Horn, Sunchild and O’Chiese First Nations. Similarly, there are three incorporated municipalities within County boundaries. These are the Town of Rocky Mountain House, Village of Caroline and Summer Village of Burnstick Lake.

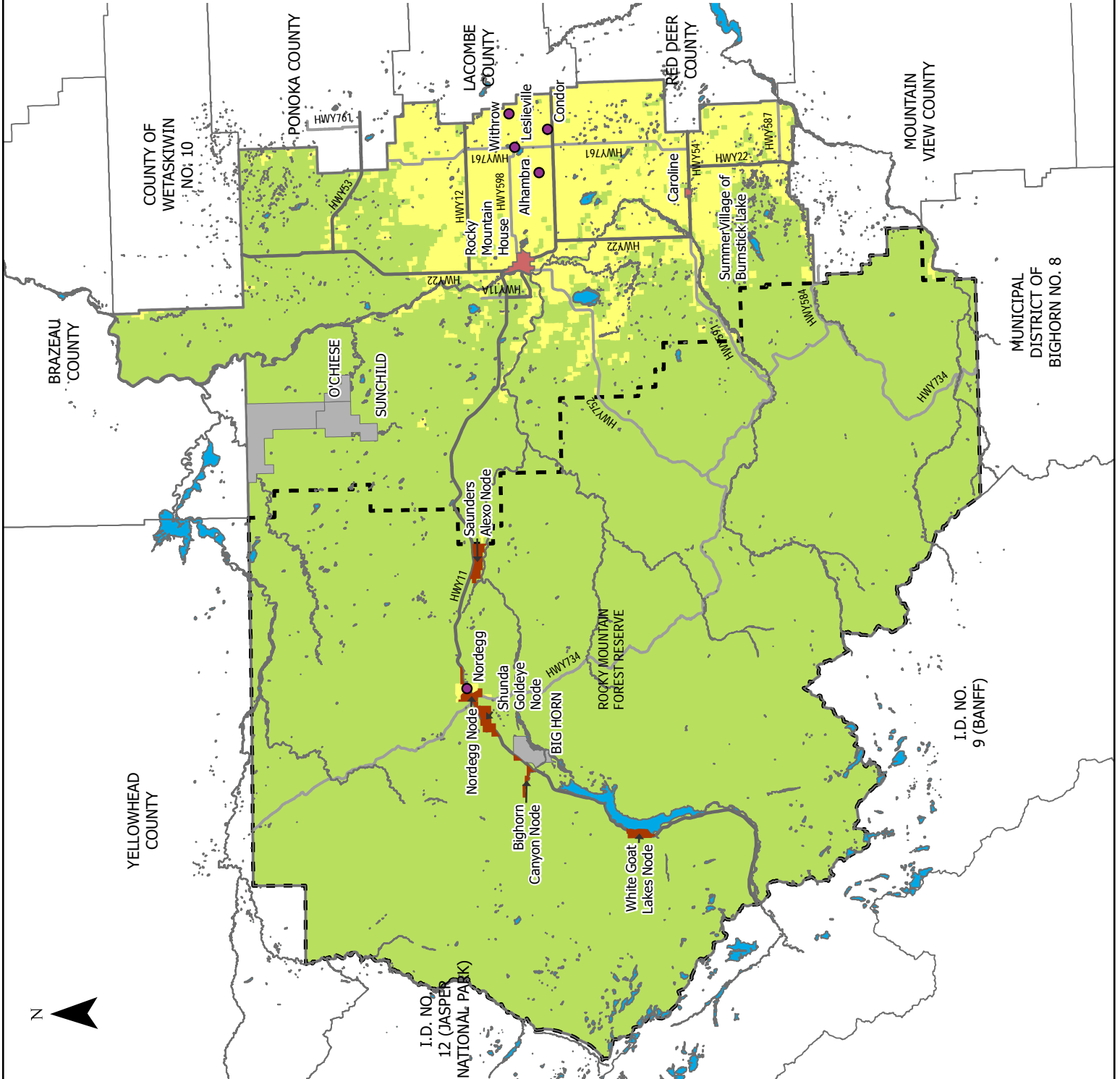


Jurisdictional Limits
On County Land Use
Planning Authority

(Figure 2)

Legend

- Crown Land
- Deeded Land
- Hamlet
- Development Node
- Urban
- First Nations
- Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve
- Primary Highway
- Secondary Highway



2.5 Organization and Interpretation of the MDP

The opening sections of the document contain information meant to give context for the creation of the MDP. These sections are followed by a Vision for the community which is then followed by a series of topic areas. Each topic area addresses matters of concern for future land use planning in the County. Each area has opening background, goals and then specific policy statements. Finally, definitions of terms used in the MDP are found at the back of the document.

This MDP consists of information that:

- (a) gives background and context to the reader about the County setting and various topics; and
- (b) communicates the policy choices that have been selected by Council on behalf of the community.

Items such as the introductory sections of the MDP and the introductory text of individual topic areas, the vision statement, goals, and the definitions are not to be interpreted as policy statements.

Content that is meant to be policy – meaning it has bearing on future land use, planning and development decisions – is listed as individual policy statements within each topic area. Each statement has an identification number, a quick reference description (three to four words), and the policy. The quick reference description does not form part of the policy.

The various policy statements use key words **“shall,” “should” and “may.”** The following describes the meaning of each of these words when interpreting the policy:

“Shall” is a directive that the action or actions within the policy are mandatory and therefore must be complied with. Where the policy applies to a plan or study to be undertaken or required to be undertaken by Clearwater County, the County shall undertake the action as resources are available.

“Should” is a directive that provides direction to strive to achieve the outlined actions within a policy, but such actions are not mandatory.

“May” is a discretionary term which provides notification that the policy in question can be enacted or required if the County chooses to do so.

The order in which topic areas appear in the MDP does not convey any added weight or importance. A topic appearing later in the document is just as important as those appearing in the front part of the document.

When the MDP is applied to a given area of the County or a particular proposal, it is intended that the policies be used as a set and not narrowly selected to advance one point of view. This reflects the often overlapping and interconnected nature of the issues and questions in evaluating a change in land use. Like a complex puzzle, decisions for one topic can have an impact on others. For example, a proposal for residential use needs to be considered in relation to the ability to provide the required infrastructure and the capacity of available community support services. This means applying the direction of several topic areas and policies of the MDP as part of the assessment of whether or not the proposal should be approved.

The interconnected nature of land use planning topics and decisions means that there will be trade-offs. Achieving some desired long term objectives may mean compromising on another aspect. For example, the desire to encourage a greater range of employment opportunities and opportunities for living in a rural setting requires that some land be allowed to be used for non-agricultural purposes. The MDP provides guidance and tools to address the many scenarios that may emerge over the next 25 – 30 years and which are likely to involve more detailed discussion of trade-offs and balance between competing aims and objectives.



Figure 3: Sections of the MDP

3.0 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

For the MDP to be an effective policy framework to guide future land use change and community development, it is important that there is a vision of the community 25 – 30 years from now. This is expressed as the Community Planning Vision for Clearwater County. A related series of guiding principles provides further indication of the desired future.

Our Community Planning Vision

“Clearwater County is a prosperous and highly connected growing community within the naturally beautiful foothills and eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains.”

Our Guiding Principles



Quality of Life

- Opportunities to live, work and play and achieve fulfillment safely.



Community Social Growth

- Chances to explore, meet, and grow strong connections with people and places.
- Variety of living options and choices for different household needs (large or small family), lifestyle preferences (rural or semi-rural setting) and stages of life (retirees or young family).



Agriculture Production

- Opportunities for agricultural operations and the people who make agriculture their livelihood.



Economic Prosperity

- Diverse mix of economic activities and sectors providing employment and wealth creation.



Environmental Stewardship

- Healthy, natural and working landscapes able to sustain wildlife, natural functions and human activities.



Figure 4: Guiding Principles Diagram



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4.0 NATURAL CAPITAL AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2022



The natural capital, being the soils, waters, forests, woodlands, wildlife and amenity areas of Clearwater County, are diverse in form and extremely significant. Sustaining these resources, through their wise use and management, is of considerable importance to maintaining the beauty and economy of the County. The protection of the environment is an important means of sustaining the quality of life within the County. Therefore, human activity within Clearwater County – living, working and playing – needs to be guided by a series of goals and policies which seek to sustain the resources and environments which are of strategic importance to the economic and social well being of present and future residents of the County.

4.1 Goals

- 4.1.1 Promote cooperation in the management of Crown land areas and resources for multiple and public uses.
- 4.1.2 Protect water quality.
- 4.1.3 Conserve wildlife habitats and environmentally significant areas.
- 4.1.4 Manage hazard lands to protect resources and avoid their inappropriate use.

4.2 Policies

<p>Protecting surface water and groundwater resources</p>	<p>4.2.1</p>	<p>In recognizing the importance of protecting water resources, when considering a proposed plan, redesignation, subdivision or development, Clearwater County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) shall consider the impacts of the proposal on surface water including the quantity of water, the quality of water and local and area watershed conditions; (b) shall consider impacts on aquifers, including the quality and quantity of groundwater; and (c) where appropriate, may require provisions to adequately address the conservation of surface water resources and aquifers.
<p>Healthy aquatic ecosystems</p>	<p>4.2.2</p>	<p>In approving a plan, redesignation, subdivision or development, Clearwater County shall seek to retain healthy aquatic ecosystems, and, where appropriate, seek improvements to the aquatic ecosystem.</p>
<p>Riparian lands</p>	<p>4.2.3</p>	<p>In approving a plan, redesignation, subdivision or development for an area which includes or may impact riparian lands, being lands adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands, Clearwater County shall seek to minimize the loss and degradation of riparian lands, and where avoidance is not achievable to mitigate impacts on riparian lands.</p>
<p>Wetlands</p>	<p>4.2.4</p>	<p>In approving a plan, redesignation, subdivision or development for an area which includes a wetland, Clearwater County shall seek to avoid the loss or degradation of wetlands, and where avoidance is not achievable to minimize and mitigate impacts on wetlands in accordance with the Provincial Wetland Policy.</p>
<p>Watershed management plans</p>	<p>4.2.5</p>	<p>Clearwater County shall take into consideration the direction of the integrated watershed management plans for the North Saskatchewan River and Red Deer River watersheds when making land use decisions.</p>
<p>Water conservation</p>	<p>4.2.6</p>	<p>Clearwater County shall consider actions to promote within the County the achievement of water conservation objectives, including those that may be established by the Province or a watershed planning advisory council.</p>

West Country	4.2.7	Clearwater County shall continue to reflect the County's interest in land use and resource development in the West Country by: (a) participating in the Provincial integrated resource plan process, including where the provisions of existing plans require review and assisting the Province in identifying areas where new plans are required; and (b) remaining involved in provincial approval processes by commenting on referrals regarding proposed leases and dispositions involving the development of land.
	4.2.8	While not limited to the following, Clearwater County's interests in the management of lands and resources in the West Country include: managing for multiple uses; maintaining high quality watershed conditions; conserving natural beauty; conserving ecosystems; encouraging and managing responsible public access; and providing a variety of recreation experiences.
	4.2.9	Clearwater County is the development authority on Crown Land (Green Area) as shown in Figure 2 and therefore development in these areas shall comply with the County's MDP and applicable County policies.
Private wooded areas	4.2.10	Clearwater County should encourage private landowners to conserve wooded areas and other appropriate vegetation in environmentally significant areas, including hazard lands.
Wildlife habitat	4.2.11	When approving a subdivision or development, Clearwater County may require the design to minimize impact on wildlife habitat and where appropriate provide for wildlife corridors.
Hazard lands	4.2.12	Clearwater County considers lands having one or more of the following characteristics to be hazard lands: (a) lands susceptible to erosion, subsidence or slumping; (b) lands prone to flooding; and (c) lands in proximity to sour gas pipelines and facilities.

	4.2.13	Clearwater County generally considers development on or adjacent to hazard lands to be inappropriate. Limited development may be considered on or adjacent to hazard lands. For any use of land allowed on or adjacent to hazard land, the County may require the development to be designed to mitigate risk.
	4.2.14	Except for agriculture, outdoor recreation and resource extraction, Clearwater County shall not allow any other land uses in a 1:100 year floodway.
	4.2.15	Any development that is allowed in a 1:100 year flood fringe shall be flood-proofed to a standard acceptable to Clearwater County.
Environmentally significant areas	4.2.16	<p>The lands and features considered by Clearwater County to be environmentally significant areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) rivers and streams, including their valleys, ravines and escarpments; (b) lakes and their shorelands; (c) wetlands; (d) riparian lands; (e) hazard lands and features; (f) wilderness areas designated by the Province; (g) ecological reserves designated by the Province; (h) natural areas designated by the Province; (i) provincial parks designated by the Province; and (j) provincial recreation areas designated by the Province. (k) additional lands and features as determined by the Development Authority.

Environmentally significant areas	4.2.17	<p>Where an application for subdivision or development impacts, or may impact, an environmentally significant area, Clearwater County should apply one or more of the following to help conserve the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) directing inappropriate uses away from these areas; (b) requiring development setbacks; (c) permitting a density of development consistent with the capabilities of the area; (d) requiring ample open space, which may include open space corridors; (e) requiring, where appropriate, the conservation of areas of natural vegetation; (f) conserving shorelines, escarpments and other sensitive natural features; (g) dedicating environmental reserve and municipal reserve; (h) applying environmental reserve easements and conservation easements; and (i) applying other measures deemed appropriate by the County.
	4.2.18	<p>Clearwater County may undertake an environmentally significant areas study for the portions of the County in which they have development control and are identified as future growth nodes or corridors, and in doing so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) identify and locate environmentally significant areas; (b) outline the priority for protection of each environmentally significant area; and (c) provide guidelines to be considered in the protection of these areas.

Environmental assessment report

4.2.19

Clearwater County may require the proponent of a proposed area structure plan, outline plan, land use redesignation, subdivision or development to prepare an environmental assessment report prepared by a qualified professional that addresses any or all of the following to the satisfaction of the County:

- (a) a description of the proposed undertaking, including any potential phasing;
- (b) a description of the features and resources contained in the site and of the adjacent and nearby properties that may be affected;
- (c) a description of the sensitivity of these features and resources;
- (d) a description of the predicted effects on the features and resources, including but not limited to the nature of impacts on land, vegetation, water and wildlife;
- (e) a description of the limitations of the criteria used in predicting effects and the persons and agencies consulted;
- (f) the proposed actions to mitigate any adverse effects and actions to monitor the performance of the mitigation actions;
- (g) ongoing monitoring programs; and
- (h) any other matters required by the County.



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2022

5.0 AGRICULTURE



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2022



Agriculture is a major land use throughout Clearwater County. It takes place as crop land and pasture in the eastern portion of the County and grazing and pasture in isolated areas in the West Country. Agriculture helped build our community and continues to support our economic aspirations. It has instilled rural values and has shaped how we define our community. Agriculture continues to play a key role in managing and stewarding land and soils as critical resources vital to nature and human well-being. While agricultural practices and prospects are dynamic and changing, agriculture is expected to continue as a key activity across the County's landscape.

5.1 Goals

- 5.1.1 Promote continued use of land for agricultural purposes as an industry, a way of life, and as a valuable contributor to land and environmental stewardship efforts.
- 5.1.2 Account for a broad variety of agricultural activities, types of farming and size of farms.
- 5.1.3 Recognize that agricultural land is required for uses other than farming, and when approved for other uses to recognize the need to minimize impacts on agricultural land and farming operations.

5.2 Policies

<p>Agricultural land and operations</p>	<p>5.2.1</p>	<p>Clearwater County shall consider agriculture an important land use within the County. In its efforts to plan for agriculture, Clearwater County shall recognize that there is considerable variety in the types of agricultural production and the size of farms and farm operations. The County shall also consider the mutual dependence of agriculture and non-agricultural uses in providing goods and services and opportunities for non-farm income or off-farm employment. Subject to Policy 5.2.3 non-agricultural land uses may be considered on agricultural land.</p>
<p>Right to farm</p>	<p>5.2.2</p>	<p>Consistent with Provincial right-to-farm legislation in the <i>Agricultural Operation Practices Act</i>, Clearwater County recognizes the right to farm and therefore supports diverse farming operations.</p>
<p>Subdivision and development on agricultural land</p>	<p>5.2.3</p>	<p>Each subdivision or development application shall be assessed and decided upon on a case by case basis. In evaluating subdivision or development proposals that affect agricultural land, the agricultural quality of the land is one of a number of factors that Clearwater County will consider. Additional items to be considered include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the nature and extent of farming activities in the local area; (b) the nature and extent of non farming activities in the local area; (c) the Farmland Assessment Rating, or alternative documentation as prepared by a qualified professional and agreed to by the County, of the land within the title to be subdivided or developed and adjacent lands; (d) the proposed use of land; (e) the reasonable availability of alternative locations for the proposed subdivision or development; and (f) additional criteria as determined by the Development Authority.
<p>Agricultural operations</p>	<p>5.2.4</p>	<p>In making decisions on proposed land redesignations, subdivisions or developments in areas of the County where agriculture is the primary use, Clearwater County should seek to limit infringements on agricultural operations except where otherwise provided for in the MDP.</p>

<p>Agricultural operations</p>	<p>5.2.5</p>	<p>Clearwater County encourages the development of agri-business within the County where the following criteria are met to the satisfaction of the County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) legal and year-round physical access is developed to meet the applicable road standards; (b) the proposed subdivision or development can be serviced on-site in accordance with provincial regulations; (c) the proposed subdivision or development is located in a manner that minimizes any potential impacts on natural capital lands and agricultural operations; and (d) all other applicable provisions of this MDP and applicable County policies.
<p>Confined feeding operations</p>	<p>5.2.6</p>	<p>Confined feeding operations are approved pursuant to the <i>Agricultural Operation Practices Act</i> and Clearwater County is not the approving authority.</p>
	<p>5.2.7</p>	<p>Notwithstanding the jurisdiction and independent authority of the Natural Resources Conservation Board, the County shall provide guidance regarding the location of confined feeding operations in accordance with the <i>Agricultural Operation Practices Act's</i> requirement for the Natural Resources Conservation Board to have regard for the County's MDP.</p> <p>Within the following exclusionary zones the County shall indicate its opposition to an application for a new operation and may indicate its opposition to an application to expand an existing confined feeding operation on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) all land within 3.2 kilometres (2 miles) of a corporate boundary of a Town, Village or Summer Village, or as otherwise directed in an intermunicipal development plan adopted by the County; (b) all land within 3.2 kilometres (2 miles) of a hamlet the boundaries of which may be defined in a statutory plan or outline plan approved by the County; and (c) all land within 0.8 kilometres (0.5 miles) of an area contained in an area structure plan that provides for multi-lot residential development.

	5.2.8	Regarding an application to the Natural Resources Conservation Board for an approval, authorization or registration for a new confined feeding operation or expansion to an existing confined feeding operation, Clearwater County shall consider the location, scale of the operation or expansion, the surrounding land uses and the provisions of the MDP and any other applicable County Plan and/or policy in providing comments to the Board.
	5.2.9	In directing and approving land uses that may be incompatible with a confined feeding operation, Clearwater County shall refer the application to the Natural Resources Conservation Board to ascertain the applicable minimum distance separation.
Agriculture master plan	5.2.10	The County may prepare an agriculture master plan to articulate the long term vision for agriculture production in Clearwater County. The plan is expected to explore the future of agriculture production and its related opportunities and set out strategies, policies and actions to realize a positive future for agriculture production in Clearwater County.
	5.2.11	In developing an agricultural master plan, the County may consider consulting with adjacent and nearby counties for research purposes and potential collaboration opportunities through the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework.

6.0 RESIDENTIAL



Image: Clearwater County Rural Beautification Award Submission, 2018



For the purposes of the MDP, residential development refers to residences and residential parcels having residential living as the primary use. In some cases minor agricultural activities may occur, as a secondary use. Living in rural areas is a popular alternative to urban living. As the demand for housing is expected to remain strong and the County supports population growth, Clearwater County recognizes the need to provide for a range of residential opportunities. The MDP facilitates various opportunities for rural residential development as part of a strategy for providing housing diversity and choice.

6.1 Goals

- 6.1.1 Facilitate population growth throughout the County.
- 6.1.2 Encourage appropriately located and serviced residential development to meet the diverse needs of County residents.
- 6.1.3 Minimize the impacts of residential development on productive agricultural lands, natural water sources, and environmentally sensitive areas.

6.2 Policies

General residential development considerations	6.2.1	Recognizing residential development will be required to accommodate future population growth and to help sustain community infrastructure, especially schools, Clearwater County views that residential development which is appropriately located and designed to the satisfaction of the County is compatible within the rural area, including adjoining and nearby agricultural operations and other residences.
	6.2.2	<p>When considering a proposed residential subdivision, Clearwater County will require that the proposed subdivision applicant demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the site has attributes suitable for residential development; (b) is appropriately located and designed such that it effectively embraces, and conserves where appropriate, the visual and environmental qualities of the area, including topography, landscapes, water features, native habitat and biodiversity values; (c) mitigating strategies to minimize impacts on natural resources, including productive agricultural land, water, aggregate and energy resources; and (d) the proposal can be reasonably served by community and physical infrastructure.
	6.2.3	<p>Clearwater County shall require that each parcel to be approved for a residential development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has legal access and year-round physical access developed to meet applicable standards and connected to a Provincial highway or County maintained roadway; (b) has a minimum 0.4 hectares (1 acre) developable area; (c) where a private septic system and a private water system are proposed, there is sufficient area necessary to provide the proposed private system(s); (d) has a water table at a depth of at least 2 metres (6.56 ft), unless a qualified professional can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the County that a water table closer to the surface will not unduly impact the development; and (e) is serviced in accordance with provincial regulations and any applicable County standards or policy.

Buffering	6.2.4	<p>When approving any residential subdivision or residential development, Clearwater County may require provisions to buffer all or part of the subdivision or development from a road or other land use. A minimum 15 metre (50 feet) buffer is desirable and will be determined at the time of application. The County may require a buffer plan prepared by a qualified professional to be submitted that may include any or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the location, spacing, types, size and quantity of existing and proposed trees and shrubs; (b) a buffer maintenance plan endorsed by a person recognized by the County as qualified to do so; (c) the provision of subdivision or building design elements that promote compatibility between land uses (i.e. road layout, building orientation, storm water management, etc.); and (d) any other matter deemed important by the County.
	6.2.5	A buffer shall be on private land or provided by municipal reserve, environmental reserve or conservation easement.

Image A

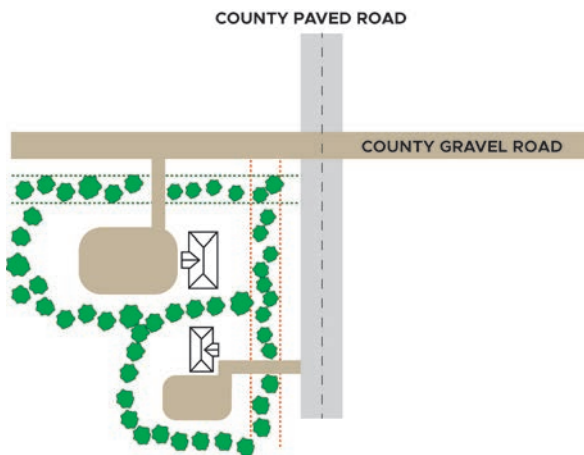


Image B

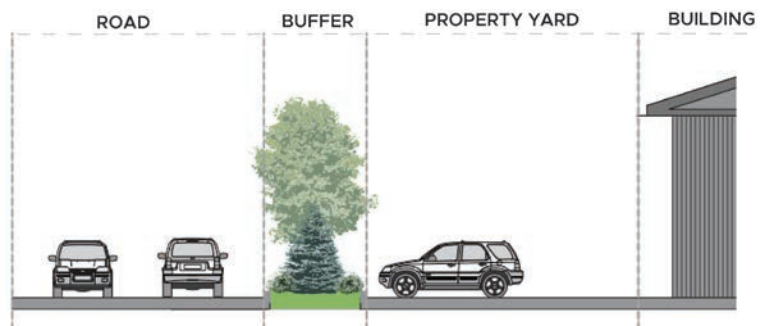


Figure 5: Buffering- these are illustrations of a tree buffer between a County road and a development.

Paving access roads	6.2.6	Clearwater County may establish a policy that requires the developer of a multi-lot residential subdivision to pave the County road that provides access to the subdivision.
Possible additional residential areas	6.2.7	<p>Clearwater County may undertake or require to be undertaken a study of an area considered to have potential for residential development. The study shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) assess the potential for residential development; (b) identify the form or forms of residential subdivision that may be appropriate, including parcel sizes and the methods of water and wastewater services required; and (c) if the study recognizes that forms of residential development may be appropriate, recommend the type of statutory or non-statutory plan that should be used to implement the recommendations of the study and the additional forms of public consultation to be used in the preparation of the plan.
Traditional multi-lot residential subdivisions	6.2.8	<p>Clearwater County may approve a traditional multi-lot residential subdivision provided all criteria in this Plan, including the following criteria, are met to the County’s satisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the proposed subdivision is supported by an area structure plan or outline plan adopted by the County; (b) the access to the proposed subdivision is located within 1.6 kilometres (1 mile) of a paved Provincial highway or paved County maintained road, such distance being measured along the road that provides access to the subdivision; (c) the proposed subdivision is not within 0.8 kilometres (0.5 miles) of an area considered by the County to be a surface resource extraction area or a potential surface resource extraction area; and (d) the proposed development area shall be accessed by minimal approaches to Provincial and/or County roads and each residential parcel shall be accessed by an internal access road.
	6.2.9	Unless site conditions require otherwise, private water and private wastewater services are acceptable forms of servicing for traditional multi-lot residential subdivisions.

Residential estate subdivision	6.2.10	<p>Clearwater County may approve a residential estate subdivision provided all criteria in this Plan, including the following criteria, are met to the County’s satisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the proposed subdivision is supported by an area structure plan or outline plan adopted by the County; (b) the access to the proposed subdivision is located within 1.6 kilometres (1 mile) of a paved Provincial highway or County maintained road, such distance being measured along the road that provides access to the subdivision; (c) the access to the proposed subdivision is within a 4.8 kilometre (3 mile) drive of the closest boundary of the Town of Rocky Mountain House, Caroline, Leslieville or Condor; (d) the proposed subdivision is not within 0.8 kilometres (0.5 miles) of an area considered by the County to be a surface resource extraction area or a potential surface resource extraction area; and (e) the proposed development area shall be accessed by minimal approaches to Provincial and/or County roads and each residential parcel shall be accessed by an internal access road.
	6.2.11	<p>The form of wastewater and water services for a residential estate subdivision shall be determined by Clearwater County in consultation with the appropriate Provincial Government departments and the applicant, with these services being one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a communal water system and a communal wastewater system; or (b) a communal water system and private engineered wastewater systems approved by the appropriate Provincial Government department and Clearwater County.

Residential/ Recreation Subdivision	6.2.12	Clearwater County may approve a residential/recreational subdivision that allows for individual parcels intended for a dwelling or for the occupation of recreational vehicles.
	6.2.13	A residential/recreational subdivision may be approved provided all criteria in this Plan, including the following criteria, are met to the County's satisfaction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the proposed subdivision is supported by an area structure plan or outline plan adopted by the County; (b) the proposed subdivision is not within 0.8 kilometres (0.5 miles) of an area considered by the County to be a surface resource extraction area or a potential surface resource extraction area; (c) access to the proposed subdivision is provided by a Provincial highway or a County maintained road; and (d) the proposed development area shall be accessed by minimal approaches to Provincial and/or County roads and each parcel shall be accessed by an internal access road.
	6.2.14	Private water services and/or private wastewater services may be acceptable forms of servicing for residential/recreational subdivisions.
Secondary Suites	6.2.15	Clearwater County shall develop regulations within the Land Use Bylaw to address secondary suites as a residential use.
	6.2.16	Where residential developments have been approved based on bonafide need, the County will endeavour to work with impacted landowners to convert their approval to a secondary suite in accordance with safety code requirements and Land Use Bylaw requirements.
Short Term Rentals	6.2.17	Clearwater County shall develop short-term rental regulations to manage short-term residential rental units.

7.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2022



Clearwater County is endowed with a wealth of natural resources. Agriculture and the resource-based industries, such as oil, gas and forestry serve as the backbone of the County's economy. In addition, the County boasts a variety of natural features due to its proximity to the Rocky Mountains, providing numerous opportunities for its growing tourism industry. Despite the variety and abundance of natural resources available in the County, there is a need to diversify the local economic base as a means to reduce the reliance on resource based industry and sustain the overall economic well-being of the County.

7.1 Goals

- 7.1.1 Continue to recognize existing economic activities throughout the County such as agriculture production, tourism based industry and responsible extraction of natural resources.
- 7.1.2 Promote appropriate economic development activities that enhance and diversify the local economy.

7.2 Policies

General	7.2.1	Clearwater County encourages the retention and expansion of existing business and industry, and the attraction of new business and industry as a means to diversify the County's economic base.
Commercial and Industrial	7.2.2	Through the Land Use Bylaw Clearwater County shall provide for a variety of commercial and industrial land uses within the County, including a variety of locations for these uses.
Business Parks	7.2.3	Clearwater County prefers the development of business parks that are adjacent to or in proximity to the intersection of major roads, these being highways and paved County main roads in or adjacent to a Growth Hamlet, a Town, and/or a Village. The County may require architectural controls regulating the standard of development, including the design and appearance of buildings and screenings in business parks.
	7.2.4	Notwithstanding Policy 7.2.3, Clearwater County may also provide for business parks not in these locations.
	7.2.5	Clearwater County may approve a new business park provided the following criteria are met to the County's satisfaction: (a) the site is suitable for a business park; (b) the proposed design and scale are appropriate to the site and generally compatible with adjacent land uses; (c) provision and design of safe access and egress, including where required to the satisfaction of the Province; (d) application of mitigating measures to reduce impacts from noise, traffic, emissions and run-off; (e) appropriate site design to address land use interface issues with current or future adjacent development by addressing building orientation, internal road layout, landscaping, screening especially of outdoor storage areas and buffering; (f) site servicing in accordance with provincial regulations and any applicable County standards; and (g) any other applicable requirements and criteria in this MDP.

Business Parks	7.2.6	<p>While Clearwater County prefers that industrial and commercial uses that are appropriate for business park locations be located in a business park, Clearwater County may approve a proposal for isolated commercial or industrial sites outside a planned business park provided the following criteria are met to the satisfaction of the County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the proposal adequately demonstrates that an isolated location is required; (b) the site characteristics are suitable for the proposed land use; (c) the type, scale, size, and site design of the proposed land use are appropriate for the area and compatible with adjacent land uses; (d) the development can be serviced on-site in accordance with Provincial regulations; (e) the traffic generated by the proposed land use would not adversely impact the municipal road network or Provincial highways; and (f) any other safety or environmental issues identified by the County and any other applicable provisions of this Plan.
Eco-industrial Parks	7.2.7	<p>Clearwater County encourages the development of eco-industrial parks which are designed to reduce development footprints. Key criteria the County shall take into account when considering a proposed eco-industrial park include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the proposal includes a targeted economic development strategy that seeks to attract on-site or nearby similar business or industry groupings; (b) the proposal identifies opportunities for increased efficiency in reducing environmental impacts through a by-product synergy in which businesses recycle materials and energy; (c) the proposal implements green infrastructure networks; (d) the proposal integrates a networking of shared services, such as marketing, transportation and research; and (e) the proposal is consistent with the other provisions of this MDP.
Forestry	7.2.8	<p>Forestry operations that require approvals from the province of Alberta are not regulated by Clearwater County.</p>

Forestry	7.2.9	Notwithstanding the provincial jurisdiction and authority on forestry operations and recognizing the importance of a continuing, strong forestry sector, Clearwater County encourages forest operations to be undertaken in accordance with a sustainable timber harvesting plan prepared by a qualified professional.
	7.2.10	Clearwater County encourages the development of integrated land management practices as part of all forestry operations.
Linear Infrastructure	7.2.11	Clearwater County shall provide input to the appropriate provincial regulatory agency to encourage energy resource pipelines and high voltage transmission lines to locate away from developed areas including but not limited to hamlets, areas where there are current and planned aggregations of rural residential subdivisions and environmentally significant areas.
	7.2.12	Clearwater County shall provide input to the appropriate provincial regulatory agency to encourage that new energy resource pipelines and high voltage transmission lines be placed within or adjacent to existing right-of-way or planned corridors.
Oil and Gas Operations	7.2.13	Oil and gas operations requiring approvals from the Alberta Energy Regulator are not regulated by this MDP.
	7.2.14	Clearwater County shall refer to the Alberta Energy Regulator subdivision and development applications in the vicinity of energy installations to ensure that all appropriate setbacks are enforced adjacent to wells and pipelines.
	7.2.15	Clearwater County shall provide input to the Alberta Energy Regulator to encourage the development of integrated land management practices as part of all oil and gas operations.

Aggregate and other surface resource extraction	7.2.16	Clearwater County recognizes the critical importance of being able to access aggregate resources such as gravel and sand for buildings and road infrastructure within the County and within the Province. These resources are needed to build the infrastructure that serves communities and to support economic development.
	7.2.17	For areas that the County has development control, Clearwater County should discourage the encroachment of incompatible uses into areas of active and potential extractive resource development.
	7.2.18	Clearwater County encourages the extraction of natural resources in Clearwater County to be conducted in a responsible manner, in accordance with industry best practices and in conjunction with Provincial regulations and approvals.
	7.2.19	Through consultations with resource operators, government agencies and landowners, Clearwater County should establish an accurate and current database on the location of aggregate resources to assist in making informed land use planning decisions and to protect these resources from encroachment by incompatible development.
	7.2.20	Clearwater County shall create a Direct Control District in the Land Use Bylaw that applies to all aggregate resource extraction and processing applications. This tool should enable specific direction to be set for a particular site and decisions to be made using a case-by-case approach. County Council shall be the decision maker for all applications under the Direct Control District in accordance with the MGA. Existing, approved aggregate resource extraction uses shall be redesignated to Direct Control District as part of the Land Use Bylaw Update. Should an application for a new development permit be submitted prior to completion of the Land Use Bylaw Update, the applicant shall be required to redesignate their site to the Direct Control District if and when a new development permit application is submitted.

7.2.21	<p>In order to assess an application for aggregate resource extraction and processing, Clearwater County may require the submission of a report prepared by a qualified professional which addresses any or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) proposed method and phasing of the operation; (b) operating plan, including days of the week and hours of operation; (c) effects on surrounding land uses and proposed methods to mitigate impacts; (d) effects on agricultural land and agricultural operations and proposed measures to mitigate impacts, including the conservation of top soil through storage and return to use; (e) effects on natural capital lands, and measures to mitigate impacts; (f) site accessibility and road suitability to accommodate traffic generated by the development; (g) designation of haul routes and plans to upgrade and maintain the affected roads, and identify measures to mitigate impacts, including but not limited to noise, dust and excessive maintenance problems; (h) the presence of surface water and groundwater, and impacts thereon, and proposed measures to mitigate impacts; (i) a reclamation plan, including proposed land uses; (j) comments by and copies of the necessary permits and approvals from applicable government agencies; and (k) any other information deemed necessary by the County in order to process the permit.
7.2.22	<p>Clearwater County shall require applicants for new or expanded aggregate resource extraction developments to develop a public consultation plan to the satisfaction of the County prior to consideration of the application by the County.</p>
7.2.23	<p>In approving a resource extraction operation, Clearwater County may apply conditions related to any of the considerations outlined in Policy 7.2.21 and any other provisions of this MDP.</p>

Alternative and renewable energy	7.2.24	Clearwater County supports the appropriate development of alternative and renewable energy, including but not limited to wind turbines, solar panels and geothermal.
	7.2.25	Clearwater County supports the provision of electric vehicle charging stations.
	7.2.26	Clearwater County supports the development of appropriately located small scale alternative and renewable energy installations on individual parcels. To enable this, the County may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) establish a Renewable Energy Bylaw; and (b) update the Land Use Bylaw to include regulations pertaining to small scale solar panel and small scale wind turbines installations.
	7.2.27	Clearwater County shall cooperate with the Province in the review of large scale alternative and renewable energy projects. The County shall require public and adjacent landowner consultation to identify issues of concern and identify suitable means to manage potential impacts on surrounding lands and uses. The Land Use Bylaw shall be updated to provide regulations pertaining to large scale solar panel facilities and large scale wind turbines facilities, including reclamation requirements.
Tourism	7.2.28	Clearwater County encourages tourism land uses to locate in the County and may accommodate appropriate tourism land uses in suitable locations. These locations include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) tourism development nodes along the David Thompson Highway; (b) Growth Hamlets; (c) provincial parks and recreation areas; and (d) areas having other amenity values for tourism land uses and appropriate accessibility.

Home-based businesses/ home occupations	7.2.29	Clearwater County may approve home-based businesses/home occupations which: (a) are secondary to the primary use of the parcel of land; (b) limit negative impacts on adjacent land; and (c) do not adversely affect traffic safety.
Farm subsidiary businesses	7.2.30	Clearwater County may approve farm subsidiary businesses which: (a) are secondary to the primary use of the parcel of land; (b) limit negative impacts on adjacent land uses; and (c) do not adversely affect traffic safety.
Direct market sales	7.2.31	Clearwater County shall allow direct market sales on a residential parcel that is not located in a hamlet or on an agricultural parcel, provided the following is met: (a) the sales are not the primary use of the parcel of land; (b) the sales will not unduly impact adjacent land uses; (c) the use does not adversely affect traffic safety; and (d) the applicant demonstrates appropriate measures to mitigate potential negative effects on adjacent and nearby land uses.
Economic Development Strategy	7.2.32	The County shall implement the approved Economic Development Strategy. Periodic review and update of the strategy should take place every five years.
Future Commercial and industrial Areas	7.2.33	The County may prepare a commercial and industrial development master plan as an overarching guide for planning for long term commercial and industrial development within Clearwater County.
	7.2.34	Clearwater County may identify locations desirable for future commercial and industrial areas and may prepare an area structure plan for each desired location.

8.0 RECREATION AND SPECIAL PLACES



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2018



There are numerous areas within Clearwater County that are significant attractions for a variety of recreation and tourism activities in all seasons of the year. Not only is recreation important to the residents of Clearwater County, but recreation and tourism opportunities are a major draw of people to the County, thus contributing greatly to the local economy. Recreation and tourism provide quality of life activities and employment. The West Country, with its views, woodlands, rivers, lakes, mountains and foothills is a large area with diverse opportunities for recreation.

There are a series of special places that are attractive to recreation and tourism activities and development. These large and special places need to be managed to sustain quality, satisfying recreation experiences far into the future. Particular facilities, both private and public, need to be encouraged and accommodated to add to the variety of experiences available within the County in manners compatible with the environment.

8.1 Goals

- 8.1.1 Support the development of recreational opportunities and nodes throughout the County.
- 8.1.2 Encourage the Province to increase the number of provincial recreation places and facilities within the County.
- 8.1.3 Work with appropriate partners to identify and maintain historic resources and sites.

8.2 Policies

Historical resources	8.2.1	Clearwater County may support the undertaking of a study to identify historic resources and sites.
Provincial and national special places	8.2.2	Significant public environments and areas, including but not limited to, wilderness areas, wildlands, ecological reserves, natural areas, provincial parks, provincial recreation areas, the Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site and the Nordegg Mine National Historic Site are recognized by Clearwater County as special places for conservation and recreation.
	8.2.3	For these special places, Clearwater County shall implement or shall encourage provincial and federal agencies to implement a management framework to protect these special places from inappropriate use and encourage their appropriate use in manners compatible with their characteristics and capabilities.
	8.2.4	Clearwater County shall seek to protect these special places from encroachment by inappropriate land uses on nearby or adjacent lands.
Provincial parks and protected areas	8.2.5	To better meet the existing and growing demand for a variety of recreation activities, Clearwater County shall encourage the Province to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) review the use and capacity of existing provincial parks and recreation areas within the County; (b) improve and expand existing facilities where appropriate; and (c) establish, manage and operate additional provincial parks and recreation areas in the County, especially in the West Country.
	8.2.6	Further to Policy 8.2.5, Clearwater County may explore with the Province opportunities and locations within the County for new provincial parks and provincial recreation areas, as well as new parks and recreation areas.

<p>David Thompson development nodes - recreation and tourism</p>	<p>8.2.7</p>	<p>In recognizing the David Thompson Development Nodes as special areas for recreation and tourism development, Clearwater County shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) undertake required plans for the use and conservation of lands and resources in each of the nodes in accordance with the David Thompson Corridor Local Integrated Resource Plan; and (b) prepare more detailed plans for portions or all of each node to further define land use development to accommodate recreation and tourism activities, as well as other compatible land uses in accordance with the David Thompson Corridor Local Integrated Resource Plan.
<p>Other recreation nodes and areas</p>	<p>8.2.8</p>	<p>Clearwater County may undertake a study to identify other locations within the County that demonstrate significant opportunities for tourism and recreation development, both private and public. These may be in the vicinity of existing tourism and recreation developments or in new locations.</p>
	<p>8.2.9</p>	<p>If locations for significant tourism and recreation development are identified, Clearwater County should encourage and cooperate with local and regional economic development agencies and committees to establish a strategy to identify and pursue appropriate development in these locations.</p>
	<p>8.2.10</p>	<p>When an inquiry or proposal is made to the County regarding the potential development of a tourism or recreation land use, Clearwater County may direct the land use to identified recreation nodes and areas, especially if the proposed land use would benefit from a location there and the objectives of the recreation node or area would be served by the establishment of the land use at that location.</p>
<p>Campgrounds and recreational uses</p>	<p>8.2.11</p>	<p>Clearwater County recognizes the potential and contributions that campgrounds and recreational uses have for economic development and social interaction opportunities.</p>

Campgrounds and recreational uses	8.2.12	<p>The County may allow the development of large-scale provincial and/or commercially operated campgrounds and recreational uses at appropriate locations subject to their ability to meet the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw and obtain any required approvals. These activities may be permitted subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) safe and functional access to a Provincial highway or a County maintained roadway; (b) adequate water and wastewater servicing systems; (c) adequate buffers and separation to manage potential impacts on adjacent properties and uses; (d) adequate measures to manage any potential undesirable offsite impacts that may be caused by activities related to the camping and recreation activities; and (e) additional criteria as required by Clearwater County at the time of application.
Trails	8.2.13	<p>In recognizing the large and growing demand for recreational trail opportunities, Clearwater County shall continue to collaborate with the Province and stakeholders to increase the network of trails for various uses in the County, especially in the West Country. In doing so, the County shall continue to stress the need for the adequate management of trails, including education and enforcement to promote and enforce the appropriate use of trails to satisfy recreation experiences while minimizing negative impacts on the environment.</p>
	8.2.14	<p>Further to Policy 8.2.13, Clearwater County shall continue to study, with the Province and stakeholders, the development of a system of interconnected trails between Rocky Mountain House and Nordegg.</p>
Recreation facilities	8.2.15	<p>Clearwater County may partner in the development of regional recreation facilities.</p>
River valleys and lake shorelands	8.2.16	<p>Clearwater County recognizes river and stream valleys as important open space and conservation corridors. The priority uses within river and stream valleys should be agricultural operations, recreation, forestry and resource extraction, each where appropriate and in manners that seek to retain the character and integrity of the valley, including natural habitat.</p>

**River valleys
and lake
shorelands**

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 8.2.17 | Clearwater County recognizes the importance of lakes and their shorelands, including riparian areas, as important open space and conservation features. The priority uses for lake shorelands should be for recreation and public access, where these uses are appropriate, or for the conservation of natural habitat. |
| 8.2.18 | In approving a subdivision or development within a valley or adjacent to a lake or permanent wetland, public access shall be provided into areas appropriate for public use in a manner that minimizes the potential for intrusions onto private land. |



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2022



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9.0 HAMLETS



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2018



Clearwater County contains five hamlets. Four of the hamlets - Alhambra, Condor, Leslieville, and Withrow - are located in the eastern portion of the County in close proximity to Highway 11/David Thompson Highway. Nordegg, the fifth hamlet, is located in the West Country and straddles the Highway 11/David Thompson Highway. It is recognized that hamlets offer significant opportunities to accommodate future residential growth in a compact, sustainable fashion that will help to reduce the overall footprint of development on natural capital lands and minimize conflicts between residential and farming uses. This policy section encourages infill and new development within and surrounding existing hamlets. The water and/or wastewater infrastructure within Condor, Leslieville, and Nordegg render these three hamlets to be most capable to accommodate more extensive hamlet development in the immediate future.

9.1 Goals

- 9.1.1 Encourage development within and around hamlets that is complementary to the function and character of the hamlet.
- 9.1.2 Focus appropriately scaled development within hamlets as a means to minimize land taken out of agricultural production.
- 9.1.3 Focus infrastructure development and expansion within hamlets as a means to revitalize existing communities.

9.2 Policies

General	9.2.1	Clearwater County encourages site and development improvements within hamlets to enhance the amenity and liveability of hamlets. To promote this Clearwater County may review and improve development standards within hamlets.
	9.2.2	Clearwater County encourages infill and redevelopment within hamlets for uses that strengthen the social and economic fabric of the hamlet as a community centre for the surrounding areas.
	9.2.3	Development in and around hamlets should continue to promote the compact nature of hamlets.
Growth Hamlet	9.2.4	Condor, Leslieville, and Nordegg are considered by Clearwater County as Growth Hamlets capable of accommodating additional development within their existing boundaries, as well as residential development and other compatible development on their peripheries. This is primarily due to available investment in water and/or wastewater infrastructure in each of these hamlets.
Hamlet community plan	9.2.5	Clearwater County shall create and adopt an area structure plan or outline plan for each Growth Hamlet and may create and adopt an area structure plan or outline plan for other hamlets to guide community development within the hamlet and around the hamlet. Support studies such as infrastructure assessment and market study may be required to support the area structure plan or outline plan.
	9.2.6	Clearwater County encourages the development of a range of locally appropriate housing types within hamlets, in accordance with an adopted area structure plan or outline plan, to help meet the various lifecycle, social, and income requirements of the County's residents.

Servicing	9.2.7	Development in hamlets requiring water and/or wastewater services shall be serviced by communal water and wastewater where these services are available. Where these services are not available, the County may require that either or both services be extended or provided to serve the development. Servicing strategies shall be identified in future area structure plans and more detailed information shall be provided at the time of subdivision and/or development permit application.
	9.2.8	Clearwater County may invest in infrastructure within a Growth Hamlet in order to encourage and facilitate hamlet growth and development.
Hamlet tourism potential	9.2.9	Clearwater County shall continue to promote tourism oriented development that enhances Nordegg as a year-round destination point.
	9.2.10	Clearwater County shall seek opportunities to incorporate historically and culturally significant features of Nordegg into an overall County tourism strategy.

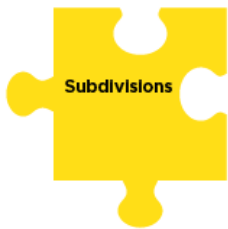


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10.0 SUBDIVISION OF LAND



Image: West Country Estates Website <<https://westcountryliving.weebly.com/>>



Subdivision of land is a significant policy area within the MDP. Subdivision applications are made to the County at the sole discretion of the landowner. Applications for subdivision may be made to accommodate a variety of uses including agriculture, residential and non residential uses. In reviewing subdivision applications, Clearwater County considers the suitability of the land for the intended use, the existing environmental considerations, the ability to safely and efficiently access the parcel, the method in which

services including, but not limited to water and wastewater will be provided to the parcel.

In reviewing subdivision applications it is important that Clearwater County considers the merits and potential implications of each unique subdivision proposal.

10.1 Goals

- 10.1.1 Provide opportunities for a variety of parcel sizes to accommodate agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and other uses in a fair and consistent manner.
- 10.1.2 Facilitate the creation of additional parcels to accommodate housing options to serve the diverse needs of a growing population.

10.2 Priorities

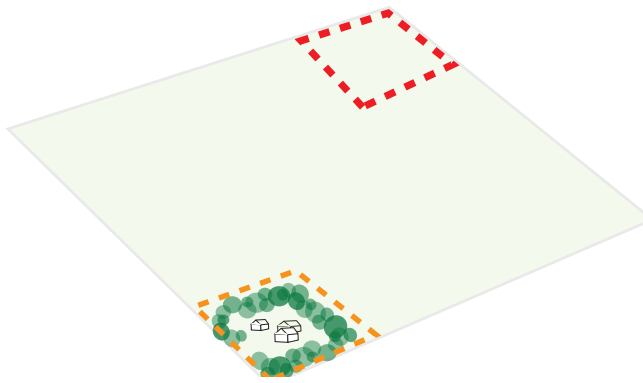
Number of Permitted Parcels in Quarter Sections Designated Agriculture District	10.2.1	<p>In a quarter section designated Agriculture District as per the Land Use Bylaw:</p> <p>(a) the maximum number of titled parcels that are allowed to be created in a quarter section shall be two (2). This number includes one (1) additional parcel and the balance or remainder of the quarter section.</p>
	10.2.2	<p>Notwithstanding 10.2.1, Clearwater County may approve one additional subdivision in a quarter section for residential or non-residential use subject to the proposed parcel being redesignated to the designation applicable to the use under the Land Use Bylaw. The land use redesignation must be approved prior to the subdivision application being approved.</p> <p>(a) The non-largest agricultural parcel on a quarter section may be entitled to a land use bylaw amendment and subsequent subdivision. An application within the non-largest agricultural parcel shall be evaluated by Council at the time of the land use bylaw amendment.</p>
	10.2.3	<p>When evaluating the land use redesignation which may provide additional subdivision options Clearwater County shall take into consideration:</p> <p>(a) the impact on roadways, access and potential for additional traffic;</p> <p>(b) potential impacts on adjacent lands including existing uses, possible nuisances and land use incompatibilities; and</p> <p>(c) The applicable residential policies contained In Section 6 and 5.2.3 of this MDP.</p>
	10.2.4	<p>For a residential parcel in the Agriculture District of the Land Use Bylaw that includes all or part of an existing farmstead, the parcel size shall be no less than 1.01 hectares (2.25 acres) and no greater than 2.83 hectares (7 acres) unless a larger parcel size is deemed necessary by the Subdivision Authority to:</p> <p>(a) encompass existing residential amenities and facilities, such as shelter belts, wastewater and water services and driveways associated with the farmstead; or</p> <p>(b) to accommodate a subdivision based on fragmentation.</p>

Legal and physical access	10.2.5	All new parcels created shall have safe and functional access to a Provincial highway or a County maintained roadway.
Pan-handle shaped residential parcels	10.2.6	The Subdivision Authority may accept pan-handle shaped residential parcels where necessary or desirable to achieve a satisfactory location of a parcel in consideration of Policy 10.2.10. The area required for the pan-handle shall be no wider than 15.24m (50 ft) to contain a private driveway, shoulder/ditches, and planted wind break. The length of the pan-handle shall be kept to the minimum necessary to create a direct route between the parcel and the closest public roadway. The area of the pan-handle shall not be counted against the minimum or maximum parcel size requirements of this Plan.
Multi-Lot Residential Subdivisions	10.2.7	The number of parcels that may be created in a multi-lot residential or multi-lot non-residential subdivision shall be determined by Council through and an approved area structure plan or outline plan, land use redesignation and subdivision and must be in accordance with all relevant statutory documents including the requirements of the Land Use Bylaw. Multi-lot subdivisions shall consist of any proposal for four (4) or more titles per quarter section.
Agricultural Small Holding Parcels	10.2.8	Agricultural small holdings will be a discretionary use within the Country Residence Agricultural District within the Land Use Bylaw.

Location of parcels	10.2.9	Clearwater County shall require a proposed new parcel to be located to minimize impacts on natural capital and agricultural operations within the quarter section and on adjacent lands.
	10.2.10	The preferred location of new residential parcels shall be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) any portion of the quarter section that is separated from the balance of the quarter section by a fragmented feature; (b) the portion of the land that has the lowest agricultural capability within the quarter section based on the Provincial farmland assessment rating or alternative rating prepared by a qualified professional and acceptable to the County; (c) locations in the quarter section that use the least amount of cultivated land or land cleared for pasture as possible; and (d) locations abutting existing residential parcels or existing residences.
	10.2.11	The Subdivision Authority shall endeavour to ensure that each parcel has sufficient developable area to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) accommodate the intended means of servicing including provision of water and wastewater services; and (b) accommodate principal and accessory buildings to meet all applicable yard and setback requirements of the applicable Land Use Bylaw District.
	10.2.12	For parcels in any District other than the Agriculture District of the Land Use Bylaw, the size of parcel shall be in accordance with the requirements set out in the applicable Land Use Bylaw District.

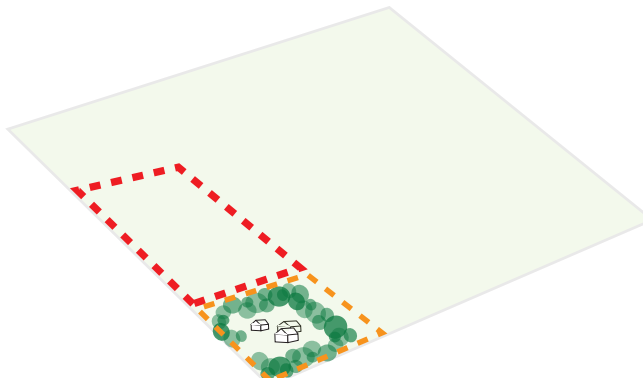
Figure 6: Subdivision Examples

The follow are examples of how Section 10 could be utilized to create an additional subdivision in Clearwater County should they obtain a redesignation to the applicable district under the Land Use Bylaw. The intent is to show an example of what could be approved by Council.



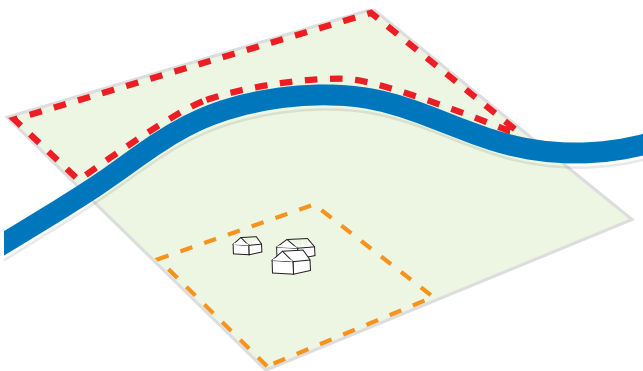
Example 1

Proposed second parcel in the opposite corner of the quarter section. Each parcel could be 7 acres.



Example 2

Proposed second parcel adjacent to the existing first parcel out. One parcel could be 5 acres and one could be 7 acres.



Example 3

Proposed second parcel subdivided by a fragmenting feature such as a river. The second parcel could be 30 acres in size.



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11.0 INFRASTRUCTURE



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2019



Roads, railways, airports and utilities within Clearwater County facilitate the effective functioning of the County's economic and social realms. Within the County, roads and railways are the most significant transportation infrastructure for the movement of people, goods and the delivery of services. The airports have importance for managing the resources and activities in the West Country including emergency situations, and for recreational flying. A good road network is vital for access to homes, schools and jobs, as well as to link the County with other economic and social centres throughout the Province and Canada. In addition, roads are important gateways to the wealth of recreational opportunities that County residents and visitors enjoy. The proper provision of utilities is vital in homes, work places, schools and other public facilities and places. There is a need to ensure that developments are adequately serviced to enhance the function of the land use and to help ensure public health and safety. Thus, Clearwater County requires appropriate levels of infrastructure services for each development and land use for the benefit of the County's residents, businesses and environments.

11.1 Goals

- 11.1.1 Promote a safe and efficient roadway system.
- 11.1.2 Promote public safety in and near to airport and rail facilities.
- 11.1.3 Require the provision of infrastructure to adequately services development.
- 11.1.4 Provide for environmentally responsible solid waste management.

11.2 Policies

Airports	11.2.1	Clearwater County shall restrict development in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountain House Airport (Federally registered as CYRM) that may compromise the safe operation of the airport in accordance with Transport Canada regulations.
	11.2.2	Clearwater County shall maintain an Airport Development Plan and airport regulations in the Land Use Bylaw for the Rocky Mountain House Airport.
Railways	11.2.3	Clearwater County shall require subdivision and development approvals to provide adequate setbacks from rail lines and sight lines at rail crossings.
Road network	11.2.4	Clearwater County may consider the implementation of a County Road Network Maintenance Plan.
	11.2.5	Clearwater County shall encourage the Province to maintain and enhance the provincial highway system within the County.
	11.2.6	Clearwater County shall work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities to promote the continuity of roads between communities.
Road access requirements	11.2.7	In accordance with the Subdivision and Development Regulation, Clearwater County shall not allow the development of a discretionary use, the subdivision of lands, and/or the redesignation of lands where the subject lands do not have access to a Provincial highway or a County maintained roadway.
	11.2.8	<p>A county maintained roadway is defined as a roadway which is designated by Council to be included in Clearwater County’s road inventory. In general, county maintained roadway does not include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) isolated access roads, which are not constructed to a full municipal standard but are built on undeveloped road allowance; and (b) industry access roads which are constructed by Industry to provide access to natural resource extraction points located in remote areas of the County.

Development adjacent to roads	11.2.9	When approving a subdivision and/or development permit, Clearwater County may place conditions to increase the attractiveness of development, especially along a highway and a County main road.
	11.2.10	A development adjacent to or near a road, especially a highway or County main road, may be required to implement appropriate screening or buffering to the satisfaction of the County.
	11.2.11	Clearwater County requires development that will generate higher traffic volumes to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) legal road access; (b) physical road access; (c) be located at an appropriate location along or near a highway or a County maintained road in accordance with other applicable provisions of this Plan; and (d) the developer shall pay all costs associated with road upgrades required by the County.
Subdivision and development requirements	11.2.12	Through the subdivision and development approval processes, Clearwater County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) shall require the provision of road right-of-way, including road widening for adjacent public roads and area required for road embankments and cuts; (b) shall require the construction of roads and accesses to County standards, and where the development is private the cost is to be the responsibility of the developer; (c) shall limit the number and proximity of access points; (d) shall require adequate setbacks to protect roads from encroachment; (e) shall require adequate sight lines to be maintained at intersections of roads; and (f) may require the upgrading of County roads at the developers expense that provide access to the site being subdivided or developed.
	11.2.13	Clearwater County may require internal roads for clustered residential and industrial subdivisions to be paved and may require the road(s) leading to the development to be paved.

Visual and Noise Attenuation	11.2.14	In approving development adjacent to roads and railways, Clearwater County may apply conditions that enhance noise attenuation, including but not limited to fencing, berming and/or vegetative buffers, and to visually screen development from the road and/or railway.
	11.2.15	When considering land uses that are more sensitive to the effects of traffic, Clearwater County may direct these uses away from roads or require them to be set back a suitable distance from the road and provide noise attenuation measures.
Haul routes	11.2.16	Clearwater County may require natural resource extraction and/or processing operations and other major development to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) establish defined access roads to which general traffic to and from the development should be limited; (b) where applicable, provide and implement a haul route plan to the satisfaction of the County; and (c) enter into a road use agreement, which may include conditions for road maintenance and upgrades based on the size of the operation or development in accordance with the County Road Policy.
Water and wastewater services	11.2.17	Clearwater County shall require all development to meet provincial standards and regulations respecting the provision of water and wastewater services.
	11.2.18	Clearwater County shall require all water and wastewater services for private developments to be at the cost of the developer, unless the County deems it in the greater community interest to provide or share in the provision of these services.
	11.2.19	Unless otherwise required by the County, Clearwater County shall require the development of a parcel to be individually serviced by an on-site private water well or an alternate supply of potable water.

	11.2.20	Unless otherwise required by the County, Clearwater County shall require the development of a parcel to be individually serviced by an on-site private wastewater system. In order, the County's preferences for individual on-site wastewater systems are: on-site treatment where the site is large enough; on-site septic tank and tile field system; on-site approved organic systems; and on-site holding tank. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Clearwater County may accept an engineered wastewater system that has been approved by the appropriate Provincial Government Department.
	11.2.21	Pursuant to Policy 6.2.12, Clearwater County shall require a residential estate subdivision to have at least a communal water system but may require a residential estate subdivision to have both a communal water system and a communal wastewater system. The ownership and operation of the system shall be determined by the County at the time of subdivision or development approval. The County may require other multi-lot subdivisions for residential or other land uses to have a communal water system, communal wastewater system or both.
	11.2.22	Clearwater County may require a deferred servicing agreement as part of a subdivision or development approval where municipal infrastructure may be required at a future date or is planned for future installation.
Water supply sufficiency	11.2.23	Clearwater County shall not approve a subdivision or development pursuant to the <i>Water Act</i> if the intended supply of water is groundwater, and a study, prepared by a qualified professional, indicates the groundwater resources are insufficient for the subdivision or development, or the use of the groundwater may unduly affect groundwater users already in the area.
	11.2.24	Notwithstanding Policy 11.2.23, should alternate means of water supply or ancillary water supply be proposed and acceptable to the County, the subdivision or development may be approved.

Stormwater management	11.2.25	As a condition of approval Clearwater County shall require clustered subdivisions and major developments to implement stormwater management plans prepared by a qualified professional to manage stormwater so that run-off does not exceed pre-development rates.
Waste disposal and setbacks	11.2.26	Clearwater County shall ensure that the siting of any waste disposal and recycling facility shall be in accordance with setbacks in Provincial legislation.
Setbacks from waste disposal and wastewater facilities	11.2.27	Clearwater County shall not allow inappropriate forms of development within setback distances of landfills, waste disposal and wastewater treatment facilities identified in Provincial regulations, unless a variance is approved by the appropriate Provincial department.
	11.2.28	Clearwater County shall advise the appropriate provincial department to protect any regional landfill in the West Country from encroachment by incompatible development and land uses.
Waste Management	11.2.29	Clearwater County shall continue to monitor the viability of a waste recycling management program.
High speed Internet	11.2.30	Clearwater County shall encourage telecommunication providers to expand and improve access to high speed internet throughout the County. The County may facilitate access to high speed internet through direct investment in infrastructure.
Dark sky	11.2.31	Clearwater County encourages a dark sky practice.
	11.2.32	Clearwater County may develop regulations to limit light pollution in the Land Use Bylaw and/or future area structure plans.

12.0 COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES



Image: Condor Public Services Building



The availability of health care, protective services, education and recreation services enhances the quality of life of residents of Clearwater County. A number of these services are provided by other authorities, but it is important that Clearwater County encourages and collaborates with these other authorities to provide facilities and programs that meet the desires and aspirations of a growing population throughout the County. The vast expanse of the County presents a number of challenges for the provision of necessary services, but it remains incumbent on the County to regularly review the availability of these services and to encourage their orderly and effective provision.

12.1 Goals

- 12.1.1 Encourage the provision of health, education, recreation and social facilities and programs to effectively serve a growing and dispersed population.
- 12.1.2 Promote ongoing relationships with service providers and nearby municipalities in order to provide the necessary range of protective and emergency services that will ensure the safety of the County's citizens and businesses.

12.2 Policies

Health care services	12.2.1	Clearwater County may monitor the existing supply of health facilities, services and programs available to its residents. If a need is identified by Clearwater County Council, Clearwater County shall encourage the health care authorities to undertake actions to address identified needs.
Education services	12.2.2	Clearwater County may work with the education service providers to monitor the availability of education facilities and programs for preschool and school age children residing in the County.
	12.2.3	Clearwater County may encourage improvements and additions to education facilities and programs as the population increases and needs expand.
	12.2.4	To maintain viability of existing schools, Clearwater County may direct residential growth to areas in proximity to existing schools.
Adult education	12.2.5	Through dialogue with educational service providers, Clearwater County may encourage an increase in opportunities for its adult education upgrading, certificate programs and apprenticeships.
Police and ambulance services	12.2.6	Clearwater County, in partnership with the RCMP, may monitor the ability of police resources to provide effective services throughout the County and encourage an increase in policing resources as needs and the population grow.
	12.2.7	Clearwater County shall advocate with Alberta Health Services to monitor the ability of ambulance and 911 services to respond in a timely and effective manner to the emergency and health care transportation needs throughout the County.
	12.2.8	Clearwater County shall continue to support and provide the Community Peace Officer program.

Fire and emergency rescue services	12.2.9	For areas in which it has development control, Clearwater County: (a) shall monitor the ability of fire suppression and emergency rescue services and facilities; and (b) from time to time may replace and add to fire and rescue equipment and infrastructure.
	12.2.10	Clearwater County shall continue a cooperative approach with the Province regarding fires and emergencies when a combined response will be the most effective for a fire or emergency in areas where either the Province or the County has responsibility.
	12.2.11	Clearwater County will continue to work with regional partners in support of the Clearwater Regional Fire Service Agreement.
Emergency management	12.2.12	Clearwater County shall continue to provide emergency management programs, services and facilities to safeguard County residents and/or property from disasters and respond to emergency situations.
Joint Services	12.2.13	Clearwater County may explore opportunities to share protective and emergency services with adjoining municipalities through Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework agreements.
Recreation Facilities	12.2.14	Clearwater County shall consult with the Town of Rocky Mountain House, the Village of Caroline, and the Summer Village of Burnstick Lake and residents within each Recreation Area that have been established by the County to seek mutual collaboration to enhance regional recreation facilities through the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework process.
	12.2.15	Clearwater County shall consult with the province to seek mutual collaboration to enhance provincial recreation facilities.
	12.2.16	Clearwater County encourages the expansion of existing and the construction of new managed provincial and/or private camping facilities and trails to better meet the recreation demands of residents and visitors.
	12.2.17	Clearwater County promotes residents of local communities to maintain and operate community halls.

Social Services	12.2.18	Clearwater County encourages the Province and social agencies to monitor the availability of housing for seniors and individuals who require assisted care.
	12.2.19	Clearwater County encourages senior and assisted living housing to be located in or close to urban services and amenities, including but not limited to stores and health care facilities and providers.
	12.2.20	Clearwater County encourages the provision of transportation services for seniors and the disabled.
	12.2.21	Clearwater County encourages and supports the ongoing delivery of preventative social and mental health programs through Clearwater Regional Family and Community Support Services (FCSS).

13.0 INTERMUNICIPAL PLANNING AND LIAISON



Image: Rocky Regional Recreation Centre, Rocky Mountain House



Clearwater County has thirteen municipal neighbours. They are the Town of Rocky Mountain House, the Village of Caroline, the Summer Village of Burnstick Lake, the Counties of Lacombe, Red Deer, Mountain View, Brazeau, Yellowhead, Wetaskiwin, and Ponoka, the Municipal District of Bighorn and Improvement Districts No.9 and No. 12. Municipalities share many common interests, including but not limited to watersheds, rivers, roads, economic systems, schools, hospitals, and a desire for sustained growth and continued quality of life. Intermunicipal cooperation

is important to further the beneficial use of resources and infrastructure to conserve the environment and to integrate economies. There are three First Nation reserves within the County, being the Big Horn First Nation, the Sunchild First Nation and the O’Chiese First Nation, so it is important that the County maintain lines of communication with these First Nations.

13.1 Goals

- 13.1.1 Promote cooperation through reciprocal referral mechanisms with adjoining municipalities on planning and development matters of common interest.
- 13.1.2 Participate in joint plans with neighbouring municipalities in areas of common interest.
- 13.1.3 Identify and use mechanisms to resolve a dispute with a neighbouring municipality that may arise from time to time.
- 13.1.4 Liaise with First Nations having lands and interests within Clearwater County.
- 13.1.5 Liaise with Provincial and Federal Governments on matters affecting lands and interests within Clearwater County.

13.2 Policies

Referrals of matters of mutual interest	13.2.1	Clearwater County shall work cooperatively with its adjacent municipalities, the National Parks, Provincial Parks and First Nations within the County to secure and implement arrangements regarding lands of mutual interest for the referral in accordance with the relevant intermunicipal development plan.
Intermunicipal collaboration frameworks	13.2.2	Clearwater County shall maintain intermunicipal collaboration frameworks with adjacent municipalities with respect to municipal services benefitting residents of each municipality.
Town of Rocky Mountain House	13.2.3	Clearwater County recognizes the Town of Rocky Mountain House as an economic and social hub within the County.
	13.2.4	Clearwater County shall manage growth and land use change in the area around Rocky Mountain House in accordance with the Rocky – Clearwater Intermunicipal Development Plan.
Village of Caroline	13.2.5	Clearwater County recognizes the Village of Caroline as an economic and social hub within the County.
	13.2.6	Clearwater County shall manage growth and land use change in the area around Caroline in accordance with the Caroline – Clearwater Intermunicipal Development Plan.
Summer Village of Burnstick Lake	13.2.7	Clearwater County recognizes the Summer Village of Burnstick Lake as a seasonal recreational community surrounded by Crown Land where the Province has agreed that no intermunicipal development plan is required.
	13.2.8	Clearwater County may refer to the Summer Village of Burnstick Lake any planning matter affecting land within 1.6 kilometres (1 mile) of the Summer Village.

Adjoining rural municipalities	13.2.9	Clearwater County shall enter into and maintain an intermunicipal development plan with each of its adjoining rural municipalities where the two municipalities agree to have an intermunicipal development plan in place.
	13.2.10	Where an intermunicipal development plan is in place, Clearwater County shall manage growth and land use change in the Plan Area identified within the intermunicipal development plan.
	13.2.11	Where an intermunicipal development plan is not in place, Clearwater County shall refer to an adjoining rural municipality proposed statutory plans, outline plans, land use bylaw and amendments thereto affecting land within 0.8 kilometres (0.5 mile) of the rural municipality.
	13.2.12	Where an intermunicipal development plan is not in place, Clearwater County may refer to an adjoining rural municipality a major development affecting land within 0.8 kilometres (0.5 mile) of the rural municipality.
Liaison with first nations and other orders of government	13.2.13	Clearwater County shall endeavour to liaise and cooperate with First Nations on matters of mutual land and infrastructure planning interests.
	13.2.14	Clearwater County shall endeavour to liaise and cooperate with Provincial and Federal departments and agencies on matters of mutual interest.
	13.2.15	If an action being considered by another municipality, government department or government agency that may affect the County, Clearwater County may respond or intervene to forward the views of the County.

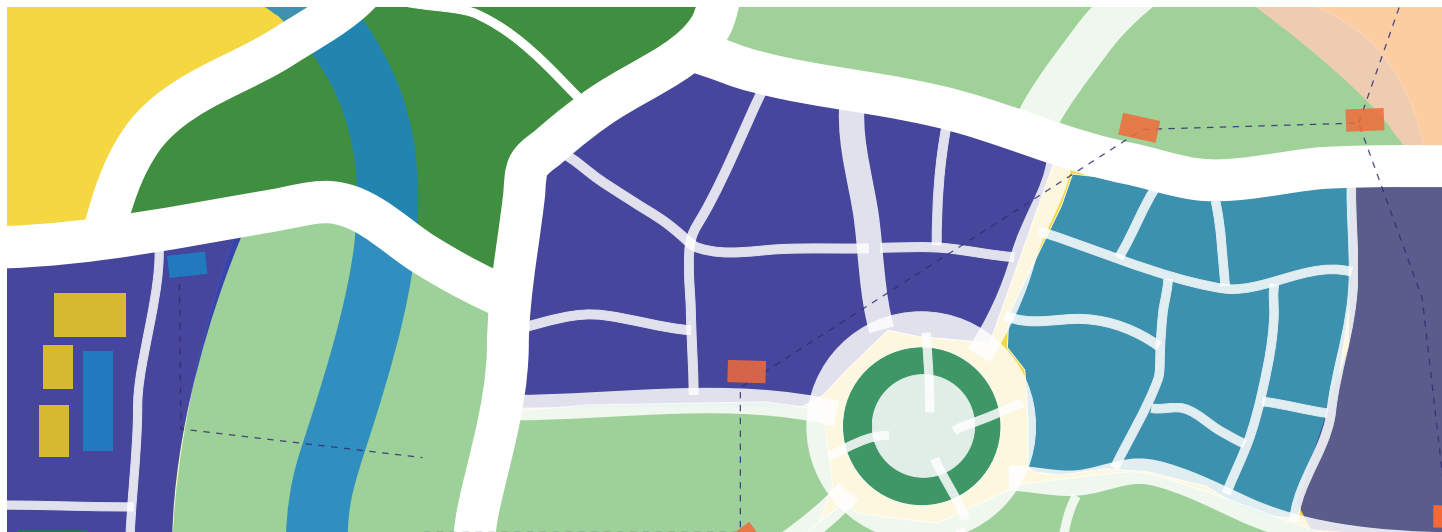
Regional plan input

13.2.16	During the preparation of the regional plans for the North Saskatchewan and Red Deer regions pursuant to the Provincial Land Use Framework, Clearwater County should participate as often as possible in the formulation of these regional plans to communicate the County's vision, goals and policies contained in the MDP.
13.2.17	When the regional plan for the North Saskatchewan River is approved, Clearwater County shall review the MDP and consider, if necessary, the adoption of amendments to achieve consistency between the MDP and the regional plan.



Image: Clearwater County Photo Contest Submission, 2018

14.0 PUTTING THE MDP INTO EFFECT



The MDP is most effective when it is implemented judiciously and with consistency. A variety of short and long-term actions are required in order for the Plan to be successfully implemented. The purpose of this section is to identify mechanisms that will facilitate the transition of MDP policies into tangible results on the ground, thus promoting the achievement of the community vision for Clearwater County.

14.1 Goals

- 14.1.1 Apply the policies of the MDP in the processes to approve the subdivision, development and use of land.
- 14.1.2 Apply the policies of the MDP when collaborating with the provincial government, municipalities and other agencies and groups.
- 14.1.3 Communicate to all residents and businesses the predominant rural nature and values of Clearwater County.
- 14.1.4 Prepare more detailed plans for areas in the County that may be most subject to or sensitive to growth and change.
- 14.1.5 Require an area structure plan or outline plan for larger multi-lot subdivisions and major developments.

14.2 Policies

<p>Rural Code</p>	<p>14.2.1</p>	<p>Clearwater County shall maintain and distribute a Clearwater County Rural Code that addresses “need to know” matters regarding living and working within Clearwater County, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) agricultural land and operations; (b) sensitive lands; (c) resource operations; (d) roads and access; (e) services; (f) care of properties and the environment; and (g) any other matters the County desires to include.
<p>Plans to support a proposed major redesignation, subdivision or development</p>	<p>14.2.2</p>	<p>To consider a proposed redesignation, subdivision or development for a large multi-lot subdivision, major development or other form of land use change as determined by the County, Clearwater County may require the applicant to prepare for consideration of approval by the County an area structure plan or outline plan.</p>
	<p>14.2.3</p>	<p>Clearwater County may require an area structure plan or outline plan to address any or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) site suitability; (b) design and density; (c) impacts on natural capital and the environment; (d) effects on land uses in the vicinity; (e) provision of roads and utilities; (f) traffic impacts; (g) provision of open space; (h) protective and emergency services; (i) access to and impacts on education and health services; (j) FireSmart provisions; (k) BearSmart provisions; (l) measures to mitigate effects; and (m) any other matters required by the County to be addressed.

Redesignation, subdivision, and development	14.2.4	Clearwater County shall implement the policies of the MDP when making decisions on any proposed redesignation, subdivision, or development application and on any proposed statutory plan or outline plan.
	14.2.5	To provide information relevant to a proposed redesignation, subdivision or development of land, Clearwater County may require the applicant to have prepared and submitted by a qualified professional any or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a geotechnical study; (b) a traffic impact study; (c) a water supply study addressing domestic use and fire supply; (d) a wastewater servicing study; (e) a stormwater management plan; (f) an environmental assessment; and (g) any other study or plan required by the County.
	14.2.6	Clearwater County shall consider, where applicable, the following when evaluating an application to redesignate, subdivide or develop land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) impact on adjoining and nearby land uses; (b) impact on natural capital and agricultural land; (c) impact on the environment; (d) scale and density; (e) site suitability and capacity; (f) road requirements and traffic impacts, including access and egress considerations, including Subdivision and Development Regulations related to land in the vicinity of a highway; (g) utility requirements and impacts; (h) open space needs; (i) availability of protective and emergency services; (j) FireSmart provisions; (k) BearSmart provisions; (l) impacts on school and health care systems; (m) measures to mitigate effects; (n) County responsibilities that may result from the development or subdivision; and (o) any other matters the County considers relevant.

FireSmart principles

14.2.7

For subdivision and development applications in locations that have a substantial portion of woodlands, the County shall require that FireSmart principles and fire prevention details are included as part of the application. In these areas, any approval of an application shall include conditions that require the implementation of FireSmart principles and fire prevention details.



Figure 7: FireSmart diagram of home ignition zones

BearSmart Principles

14.2.8

Clearwater County should actively pursue education efforts related to bear and wildlife awareness in partnership with the province, relevant agencies and municipal neighbours.



Off site levies

14.2.9

Clearwater County may investigate the development of an off-site levy bylaw in accordance with the MGA.

Municipal reserves	14.2.10	As a condition of subdivision approval, Clearwater County shall require that the full 10 percent of developable lands be dedicated as municipal reserve as provided for in the MGA.
	14.2.11	Municipal Reserves shall be taken as cash in lieu on every residential parcel being created within a previously subdivided quarter section.
	14.2.12	Notwithstanding 14.2.11, Municipal reserves shall be taken as cash in lieu or dedicated as a municipal reserve or deferred against the remainder of the parcel for every proposed multi lot subdivision. Deferred reserve caveats shall be registered on title.
	14.2.13	Municipal Reserves may be deferred against the proposed parcel on every fragmented parcel of 10 acres in size or larger being created within a previously subdivided quarter section as required by section 663 of the MGA. Deferred reserve caveats shall be registered on title.
	14.2.14	Municipal Reserve cash-in-lieu values shall be determined based on current market value which shall be reviewed every two years.
	14.2.15	Land dedicated as Municipal Reserve shall be developable or have qualities suitable for community open space.
	14.2.16	Cash-in-lieu of land shall be retained by Clearwater County in the Municipal Reserve trust fund and shall be used in accordance with the provisions of the MGA.

School reserves	14.2.17	Clearwater County shall enter into and maintain a joint use and planning agreement(s) with the School Boards that serve residents of Clearwater County to address routine communication and coordination of services, planning for future schools, and sharing of facilities between the County and the School Boards.
	14.2.18	Until joint use and planning agreements have been put in place, Clearwater County should consult with the school authority regarding the need for land for schools within the County as needed. Should subdivision occur in an area where new or enlarged school lands are needed or planned, these lands may be provided in whole or in part as School Reserve land as a condition of subdivision approval.
Disposal of municipal reserve	14.2.19	Clearwater County may consider disposing of municipal reserve land that serve no current or potential future community open space purpose.
	14.2.20	Clearwater County may dispose of Municipal Reserve only: (a) if the proposed use of the land is compatible with surrounding land uses; and (b) after consultation with affected land owners in the area.
	14.2.21	Money obtained from the sale or lease of Municipal Reserve land shall be allocated to the Municipal Reserve trust fund and shall be used in accordance with the provisions of the MGA.

Environmental reserves and environmental reserve easements	14.2.22	In accordance with the provisions of the MGA, Clearwater County should require the dedication of an Environmental Reserve or Environmental Reserve Easement where provided for in the MGA for a subdivision that contains or is adjacent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a swamp, wetland, gully, ravine or natural drainage course; (b) land that is subject to flooding; (c) land that is considered unstable; and (d) land abutting the bed and shore of a lake, river, stream or other permanent body of water.
	14.2.23	Where Clearwater County requires Environmental Reserve and public access to the Environmental Reserve is not required, the area identified as Environmental Reserve shall be protected through an Environmental Reserve Easement. Where Clearwater County requires Environmental Reserve and public access is required, the area identified as Environmental Reserve shall be dedicated as a parcel of land.
	14.2.24	Where an environmental reserve parcel or environmental reserve easement is required to be provided by Clearwater County, the minimum width from the bank of the North Saskatchewan River, Clearwater River, Red Deer River and James River shall be no less than 30 metres (100 feet) and for all other rivers and streams shall be no less than 20 metres (66 feet). Clearwater County may increase the width depending on site conditions, including but not limited to slope and environmental sensitivity. The County may require the applicant to provide an appropriate study prepared by a qualified professional to determine the setback requirements.
	14.2.25	Where an environmental reserve parcel or environmental reserve easement is required to be provided by Clearwater County, the minimum width from the bank of a lake and a permanent wetland shall be no less than 10 metres (33 feet). Clearwater County may increase the width depending on site conditions, including but not limited to slope and environmental sensitivity. The County may require the applicant to provide an appropriate study prepared by a qualified professional to determine the setback requirements.

	14.2.26	Clearwater County may not require an environmental reserve or an environmental reserve easement for a first parcel subdivision from a quarter section. However, where an environmental reserve or an environmental reserve easement is not to be taken, the first parcel should be set back from the water or wetland feature in such a manner that if a future subdivision occurs on the quarter section an environmental reserve or an environmental reserve easement can be dedicated as per policies 14.2.24 and 14.2.25.
Other plans	14.2.27	Clearwater County may undertake or require to be undertaken statutory plans, outline plans and concept plans in accordance with the policies of this MDP. All statutory plans, outline plans and concept plans adopted or approved by Clearwater County following the adoption of this MDP shall be consistent with this MDP.
Land Use Bylaw	14.2.28	Clearwater County shall undertake a review of the Land Use Bylaw and shall amend the Bylaw where required so the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw are consistent with this MDP.
Review of the MDP	14.2.29	Clearwater County shall require that the MDP be reviewed at least every ten years to promote its relevance and effectiveness.
	14.2.30	Clearwater County shall monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the MDP in the preparation and review of other statutory plans and outline plans, in the processing of redesignation, subdivision and development applications, referrals regarding Crown land and Crown land policy and referrals from adjoining municipalities.

Amendment of the MDP	14.2.31	Clearwater County Council or Administration may initiate an amendment of the MDP.
	14.2.32	A person or persons having an interest in land in Clearwater County may request an amendment to the MDP.
	14.2.33	When an amendment is requested by someone other than Council or administration, prior to the bylaw amendment process Clearwater County may require the person requesting the amendment to provide a report and any other relevant information prepared by qualified professionals to support the amendment.
	14.2.34	When considering an amendment to the MDP, Clearwater County shall refer the amending bylaw to any adjoining municipality, school authority, provincial department and agency, and any other persons or agencies the County determines the amendment may affect.
	14.2.35	In considering an amendment to the MDP, the provisions of the MGA pertaining to notifications and holding a public hearing shall be followed.
	14.2.36	Any proposed amendments to the MDP must follow Clearwater County's Public Participation Policy.



15.0 DEFINITIONS

The definitions provided are for use in understanding the concepts and ideas discussed in the context of the MDP. Where a definition listed below is different than the one provided in the MGA, the MGA definition shall be used.

Agri-business is used to describe a diversified business in food production. Agri-business means a business engaged in assisting the operations of farming, the production and distribution of farming equipment and supplies, and value adding through complementary processes and procedures.

Alternative and Renewal Energy is the generation of electricity through technologies such as photovoltaic energy conversion or wind power conversion.

Aquatic Ecosystems is an ecosystem that is located in a body of water.

Area Redevelopment Plan is a statutory plan prepared pursuant to Section 634 of the *Municipal Government Act*. It provides a framework for the preservation, rehabilitation, removal and replacement of buildings and for the construction of new buildings.

Area Structure Plan is a statutory plan prepared pursuant to Section 633 of the *Municipal Government Act*. It provides a land use framework for more detailed subdivision and development, including the staging of development, densities and infrastructure matters.


Communal System means a water system or a wastewater system common to parcels within a subdivision or an area of development; the ownership and operation of a system may be municipal or private or a combination thereof.

Conservation Easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and government or conservation agency, designed to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the land by restricting the landowner's right to develop the land.

Confined Feeding Operations (CFO) as defined by the *Agriculture Operation Practices Act* means fenced or enclosed land or buildings where livestock are confined for the purpose of growing, sustaining, finishing or breeding by means other than grazing and any other building or structure directly related to that purpose but does not include residences, livestock seasonal feeding and bedding sites, equestrian stables, auction markets, race tracks or exhibition grounds.

County or the County means Clearwater County.

County Maintained Roadway is defined as a roadway which is designated by Council to be included in Clearwater County's road inventory. In general, county maintained roadway does not include the following: isolated access roads, which are not constructed to a full municipal standard but are built on undeveloped road allowance; industry access roads which are constructed by Industry to provide access to natural resource extraction points located in remote areas of the County.



Dark Sky is a movement aimed at reducing light pollution in order to reduce energy consumption and the effects of unnatural lighting on the environment, allowing more stars to be visible at night.

Deferred Servicing Agreement places an obligation on future individual lot owners through a registered caveat on the title which requires future connection to municipal services when they become available.

Direct Control District is a type of Land Use Bylaw designation that can be used to create specific use and development regulations for a particular parcel of land to manage unique aspects of a proposed use or the characteristics of the property being developed.

Eco-Industrial Park is a subdivision or development of various industrial businesses that strive for improved economic and environmental performance by sharing infrastructure, resulting in decreased energy consumption, waste production, and increased economic performance.

Engineered Wastewater System is an engineered wastewater disposal system approved by an appropriate Provincial Government department and Clearwater County.

Environmental Reserve (ER) is land designated as environmental reserve for environmental conservation or public access in accordance with Section 664 of the MGA.

Environmental Reserve Easement is an agreement registered against a title for the protection and enhancement of the environment yet remains as private land rather than dedicating land as public

environmental reserve, according to Section 664 of the MGA.


Farmland Assessment Rating (FAR) indicates the land's capability for producing agricultural products, using factors such as soil quality, topography, etc., and using a number of modifiers to calculate a final ratio. The Alberta Government mandates that the Farmland Assessment Manual shall be used when preparing farmland assessments.

Farmstead means a single improved building site on a parcel of land used for farming, and served by a common electrical power transformer, and containing a habitable dwelling and may include other dwellings, various ancillary buildings, improvements and a shelter belt.

Floodway refers to the inner portion of a flood risk area where the risk of flood is greatest and floodwaters are usually the deepest, fastest and most destructive.

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

Fragmentation means a portion of land completely severed from the balance of the quarter section by a developed registered public road plan, an active railroad, a deep ravine, a permanent water course, or a permanent water body. For a permanent water course or a permanent water body to apply there must be written confirmation from the appropriate Government of Alberta department that the title of the bed and shore of the permanent water course or water body is vested in the Crown in the right of Alberta.



Green Infrastructure includes a wide range of natural and semi-natural landscapes. These include natural areas, parks, other open space recreation areas, public and private conservation lands, and trail networks. Green infrastructure may also be incorporated into built landscapes, such as storm ponds, drainage swales and constructed wetlands. Typically, green infrastructure is a permanent land use which provides direct and indirect value to the ecology (quality of surface water, groundwater, and air) and may be used as public amenities (e.g. parks or trails).

Hamlet as defined by the *Municipal Government Act*, means an unincorporated community consisting of five or more buildings as dwellings, a majority of which are on parcels of land smaller than 1850 square metres, has a generally accepted boundary and name, and contains parcels of land that are used for non-residential purposes.

Hazard Land is land that is prone to flooding, erosion, slope instability or other natural or man-made hazards and land in proximity to sour gas facilities.

Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) is a statutory plan prepared pursuant to Section 631 of the *Municipal Government Act*. It is applied to lands of common interest among two or more adjoining municipalities, usually in proximity to the boundaries between the municipalities.

Main Road refers to a paved County road that acts as a thoroughfare within the County's transportation network.

May is a discretionary term which provides notification that the policy in question can be enacted or required if the County chooses to do so.

Multi-Lot Subdivision means any single subdivision application that proposes to create four (4) or more parcels.

Municipal Development Plan or MDP means the Clearwater County Municipal Development Plan and any amendments thereto, prepared pursuant to Section 632 of the MGA.

Municipal Government Act (MGA) refers to the second-largest piece of legislation in Alberta and governs 352 municipalities across the province. It regulates how municipalities are funded and how as local governments they should govern and plan for growth. The Act focuses on three areas: governance and administration; assessment and taxation, and planning and development.

Municipal Reserve is land dedicated as part of a subdivision to be used for park/trail or school purposes, according to Section 666 of the MGA. A maximum of 10% of developable lands shall be provided as municipal reserve, either in the form of land, as cash-in-lieu or a combination of the two.

Natural Capital means the County's renewable and non-renewable resources including air, water and environmentally sensitive lands that anchor the County's quality of life and also support economic activity.

Outline Plan is a non-statutory plan prepared to a standard similar to an Area Structure Plan but adopted by Council resolution instead of by bylaw.

Permanent Wetland is a naturally occurring and enduring bog, fen, marsh, slough, muskeg, swamp or pond, but does not include ephemeral wetlands.

Qualified Professional means individual(s) who have met approved or recognized degree, certification, accreditation, licensure, registration or other requirements that apply in the areas in which the individuals are providing services. Services may include, but are not limited to, providing advice, analysis, identification, evaluation, and/or education.

Recreation Area refers to the one or more areas established through bylaw by Clearwater County for the purposes of establishing a local board tasked with the development of a broad range of recreation services for residents of the local area.

Redesignation refers to the process to consider and approve a change in zoning or land use bylaw designation on a property.

Residential Estate Subdivision is a multi-lot residential subdivision, located outside a hamlet setting, consisting usually of three or more residential parcels that have either or both common water and wastewater services, unless an alternate standard of servicing is approved by the appropriate Provincial Government department.

Residential Development refers to residences and residential parcels having residential living as the primary use. In some cases minor agricultural activities may occur, but only as a secondary use.

Riparian Land refers to the area of land immediately adjacent to a river and stream. Riparian lands act as natural buffers, protecting aquatic ecosystems from excessive sedimentation, runoff and erosion.

Shall is a directive that the action or actions within the policy are mandatory and therefore must be complied with. Where the policy applies to a plan or study to be undertaken or required to be undertaken by Clearwater County, the County shall undertake the action as resources are available.


Should is a directive that provides direction to strive to achieve the outlined actions within a policy, but such actions are not mandatory.

Surface Resource Extraction Area is an area where there are active, municipal, provincial or private, operations or the potential for operations for the removal of sand, gravel, bentonite or other extractive resource, as may be determined by the County.

Traditional Multi-Lot Residential Subdivision means a rural residential subdivision for traditional country residential and/or traditional country residential agricultural parcels with each parcel usually having private (individual) water and wastewater services.

Unsubdivided Quarter-Section is defined pursuant to the definition provided in the *Subdivision and Development Regulation (AR 43/2002)*, and in addition may mean the remainder of a quarter section of at least 32.4 hectares (80 acres) in size out of which a fragmented parcel or parcels for public use have been subdivided.

Vision refers to how the community views the future of Clearwater County and what the community aspires to be or become in the future.



West Country is a locally used term that refers generally to that part of the County that is west of the Highway 22 corridor and encompasses the Eastern Slopes of the Rocky Mountains.

Wetland refers to land having water at, near or above the land surface, or which is saturated with water long enough to promote wetland or aquatic processes as indicated by poorly drained soils, hydrophytes vegetation and various types of biological activity that are adapted to the wet environment.

Working Landscape refers to lands that are actively used and manipulated for various human activities such as agriculture, forestry, resource extraction, recreation, commerce and industry.



