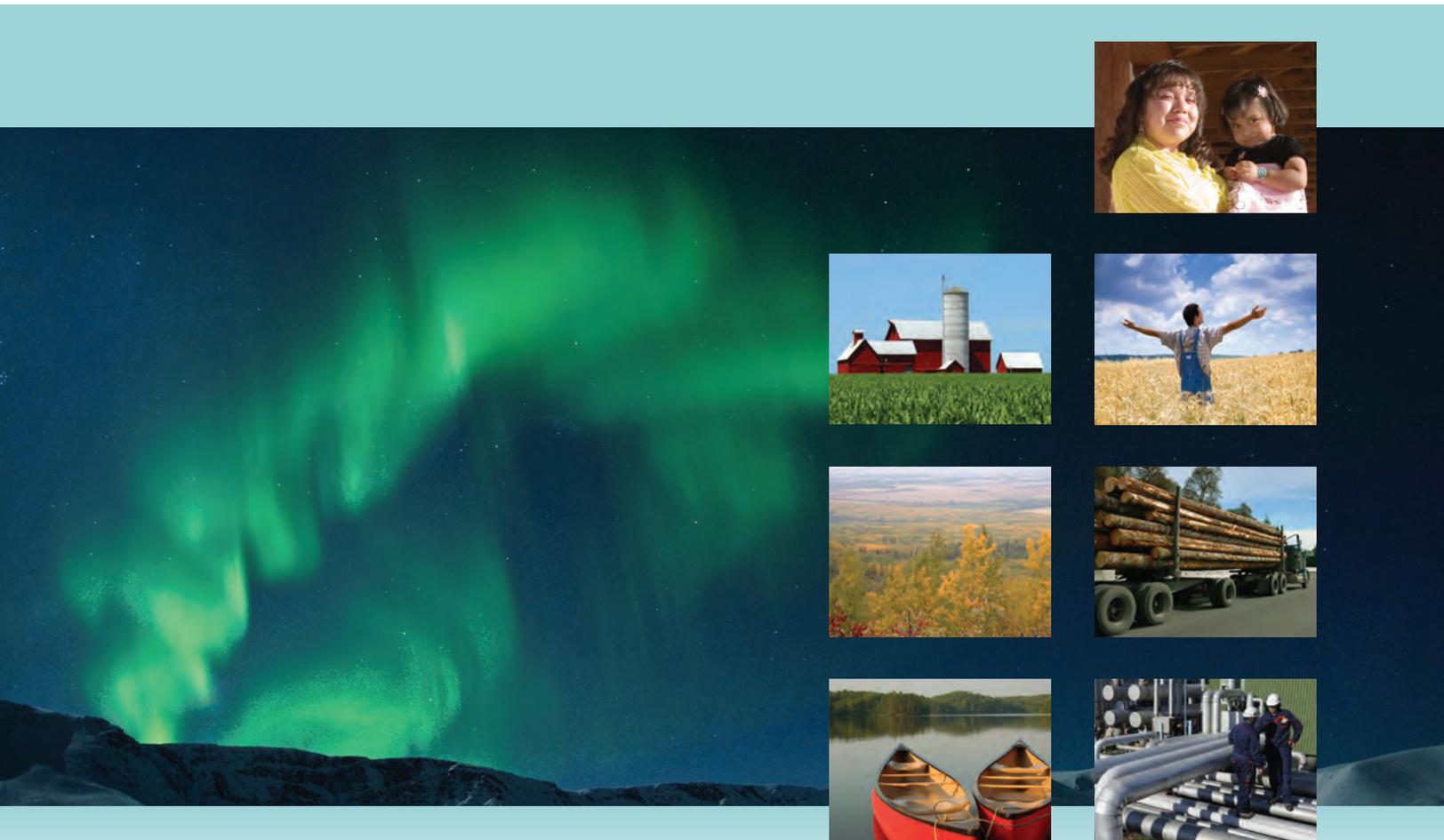


# Mackenzie County

## 4 Step Community Sustainability Plan



**ACTIVATION  
ANALYSIS**  
GROUP INC.

*Experience. Objectivity. Clarity.*

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# Introduction

Mackenzie County's elected Council resolved to undertake the development of a long-term sustainability plan as a means to:

- address its challenge with rapid changes in regional economic growth patterns and their impact on the municipality's long-term sustainability
- provide the County with a viable structured road-map for collaborative long-term planning and decision-making based on community input
- improve County residents' quality of life

The County's ***4Step Community Sustainability Plan*** is a specific type of strategic plan. It outlines the strategies necessary to build a strong economy that protects environmental integrity and contributes to strong social cohesion in this culturally diverse municipal jurisdiction. The strength of these variables are considered fundamental components of a sustainable community.

The primary challenge facing the County is the question of whether it needs or even wants to change. If so, what needs to change and how? These questions are at the heart of "community sustainability" and will be fully explored in the plan. The benefit of such a plan is that it seeks to ensure that incremental decisions about allocation of resources are linked and contemplate the community's long-term viability and sustainability.

In response to an opportunity available through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' *Green Municipal Fund*, Mackenzie County's Council commissioned Activation Analysis Group Inc. (AAGI) in the fall of 2009, to assist them with the development of its ***4Step Community Sustainability Plan***.

An Executive Summary of this report is available in Appendix A. The entire ***4Step Community Sustainability Plan*** with its associated goals and strategies is available in Appendix B.

## Approach

AAGI team members first reviewed a wide variety of documents to orient them to Mackenzie County, its surrounding communities and to other municipal sustainability planning projects in Alberta (see Appendix C).

A Council Committee was established to oversee the project and a senior staff person was delegated as the primary contact person (Director of Corporate Services). Several tools were used to communicate with County residents. These include a web page, a community survey, public meetings, and individual interviews.

The web page included:

- a brief description of the project
- background information on Mackenzie County's demographics
- links to background information on the process of municipal sustainability planning
- a survey on County sustainability

A copy of the web page is available in Appendix D. The survey was advertised at public meetings and in the local newspapers several weeks later. Responses to surveys were insufficient to draw statistically valid conclusions about community perceptions. For this reason, a formal summary of survey results will not be presented. Particularly notable results of the surveys however will be mentioned in the context of their related topics. Anecdotal responses received however, were extremely valuable in providing background information.

Public meetings were held in the following locations. The number of participants are indicated in brackets next to the name of the community.

- La Crete (22): 7:00 p.m., May 3 at the La Crete Heritage Centre
- Blue Hills (63): 7:00 p.m., May 4 at the Blue Hills Community School
- Zama City (22): 7:00 p.m., May 5 at the Zama Community Hall
- Fort Vermilion (14): 7:00 p.m., May 6 at the Fort Vermilion Council Chambers
- Rocky Lane (18): 7:00 p.m., May 7 at the Rocky Lane Agricultural Society Community Hall

The local radio station, CIAM, aired a community announcement about the meetings at least twice each day starting sometime during the week of April 26 and concluding May 7. Community meetings were advertised April 28 in local newspapers, the Northern Pioneer and the Echo. An ad was also included May 1 in a widely

distributed flier called the Big Deal Bulletin. A copy of the print ad is available in Appendix E1.

The PowerPoint presentation used for these meetings is available in Appendix E2. A series of graphs were also presented to participants as a means to portray the County's demographic profile. These are presented in Appendices H5-H16.

Since public meetings were held each evening over the course of one week, team members arranged interviews with business people during the day in each community. Telephone interviews were also held with stakeholders.

Plans had been made to involve grade nine students in a project where they would interview peers on videotape about their vision and hopes for Mackenzie County. A demo tape using a young adult was prepared. Its purpose was to explain to students what was being asked of them and to provide a demonstration of a sample interview. The project would be overseen by a teacher in several County schools. Contacts were initiated with the school board to request formal approval and to move forward with plans. These included letters and discussions with an interested school principal, the Associate Superintendent, the Superintendent, and the Board Chair. While most were receptive to the project, efforts to co-ordinate the approval and implement the project were not successful. It is likely that a combination of privacy issues and organizational changes played a part in the absence of formal approval.

Although the team was unable to make contact with First Nations communities to provide input or to participate in the planning process, the County and the Tallcree Nation commenced negotiations for a service agreement late in the project. The results of this initiative are discussed in the relevant section of the report.

## VISION, OBJECTIVE AND PRINCIPLES

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association defines sustainability<sup>1</sup> in its broadest terms as:

*living in a way that meets our needs without undermining the ability of our children and our children's children to meet their needs. (p. 11)*

A Municipal Sustainability Plan's purpose is:

- to project a picture of what the community expects to look like in the future
- to plan the means to achieve that future

Unlike other planning documents that focus on specific projects and programs, a sustainability plan addresses each of the major influences that build a community. Plans for specific projects and programs are all strategies to achieve the overall sustainability plan. These multiple influences can be summarized in terms of their capacity to influence sustainability in four domains:

- Economic Viability
- Environmental Integrity
- Social Cohesion and Cultural Vibrancy
- Sustainability of Community Infrastructure

A key component of the sustainability plan is its vision statement, one that expresses the nature of the community in which citizens wish to live. An authentic vision statement must have the following characteristics:

- A Measurable Standard - Community-building is a continuous process of incremental decision-making and is subject to short-term pressures and to evolving conditions. Measurable standards provide benchmarks to judge the merit of emerging community decisions. In other words, the vision must be worded in such a way that any future Council decisions being made should be seen as having the capacity to contribute to the advancement of the vision.
- Consistency - The vision must remain consistent over time so that current decisions contribute to, and build upon the outcomes originally envisioned by the community.

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<sup>1</sup> Alberta Urban Municipalities Association. *Comprehensive Guide for Municipal Sustainability Planning*. June 2006.

- Validity - The County’s vision must have long-term validity, although there may be rare situations where the vision needs to be re-examined.<sup>2</sup>
- Authenticity - The vision must have deeply personal meaning for the community’s residents and its commercial sector.
- Actionable - The vision must be worded in such a way that it is possible to develop strategies to reach it.
- Internal to the Community - Individuals from outside of the community cannot impose a vision on its residents. A vision must come from the hearts of members of the community.
- Value-Based - It should be a statement of a community’s values and not a comparison with other communities.

Although cultural values appear to vary significantly, a common link between communities was most evident:

**A community can only be sustained if its residents have access to the resources that sustain a quality family life.<sup>3</sup>**

Even though family values may be defined differently in each community, the priority focus on family life is consistent throughout the County.

Based on discussions with residents during the public meetings, the following vision is proposed:

## Vision

*Mackenzie County is a community of diverse people and cultures who share a common desire to live in an environment that embraces the northern spirit and where family, friends, and faith are the cornerstones of their lives.*

The word “family” in this context is focused on multi-generational units. Besides today’s varying types of nuclear family, it includes parents whose children have left home as well as seniors. Mackenzie’s “diverse communities” are characterized by

<sup>2</sup> Visions do not get tweaked from time to time. Their potential for achieving reality is rooted in a highly consistent, long-term focus. The only circumstance that would warrant a change in vision would be a catastrophic event that necessitates a change of direction for the County.

<sup>3</sup> The resources needed are post-secondary education, health care, social and recreational activities, and employment opportunities to keep young adults in the community.

significant differences in cultural values and in the nature of their respective economic base.

While the vision is a long-term standard against which actions can be measured, the MSP's objective is to deal with the immediate conditions necessary to achieve the vision.

## Objective

*Mackenzie County's objective is to cultivate social, cultural and economic links between the County's various communities so that they unite residents and stakeholders in the achievement of the County's vision.*

The overall focus of Mackenzie's sustainability plan then, is to develop strategies to strengthen relations between communities that will strengthen the County's capacity to make its decisions and to move forward with its initiatives. At the same time, it is essential to maintain the elements that make up the County's unique character.

The County's diversity can be summarized as follows. The residents of the La Crete area focus on productivity. Fort Vermilion residents focus on a quality of lifestyle that is difficult to find elsewhere. The long-term residents of Zama City struggle to ensure the survival of their community (i.e., Will the school be open next year? Will I make it to a doctor in time? What will the volatile economy do to my job?). Residents in the Zama camps temporarily sacrifice quality of life in order to earn an income that meets their individual goals. Those in First Nations communities are vigilant about maintaining their cultural integrity while recognizing that they must better understand the society that surrounds them.

As indicated earlier, what links the long-term residents of all of these communities at the social level is their focus on raising families. What links them at an economic level is their enterprising spirits. The geography of isolation and distance is what links them at an environmental level. There are certainly other common links that have yet to be identified. The importance of these links cannot be understated.

**Only by merging common interests as well as their efforts, will the County's communities join forces to achieve their common goals.**

## Principles That Shape Mackenzie's Sustainability Plan

Four principles serve as the foundation upon which Mackenzie's plan was built: autonomy, cohesion, pride, and change management. These principles are composed of several essential elements to ensure their success.

**Local Autonomy** is needed in County hamlets and settlements because of their diversity of cultures and functions. Local freedom and flexibility provides a forum to take advantage of creative opportunities that face limited encumbrances from regulation. It is also provided by a municipal regulatory framework that is specific to northern conditions.<sup>4</sup>

Optimal local autonomy with equal opportunities provides for the unique cultural, environmental, and economic flavour of each of the County's communities.

This means that local post-secondary education will provide opportunities for the residents to learn skills locally that can be applied locally. It also means that local hiring and training will permit the north to increase its labour self-sufficiency in the unskilled, skilled and professional sectors.

**County Cohesion** requires that geographic distances be bridged to strengthen relationships both within and outside of municipal boundaries. The County could act as a catalyst for this effort by establishing community communication centres in County facilities. These could provide opportunities to learn and to share information both within and particularly between communities.<sup>5</sup>

**Management of change** must be well-planned.

- Moderate yet sufficient population growth will preserve the culture and character of County communities. At the same time, it will permit under-served communities to reach the critical population mass necessary to sustain essential services: educational facilities, daily postal, grocery and fuel needs
- The County's capacity to absorb natural population growth will reinforce the potential for families to age together.
- Moderate and centralized commercial development in under-served areas will create a synergy between businesses that will optimize business sustainability.
- Municipal policy on development density will preserve residents' ability to enjoy wide open spaces.
- Moderate change will permit renewal but will not interrupt the small-town atmosphere and the northern spirit inherent in County communities.

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<sup>4</sup> Opportunities directed at building a local market are often hampered by province-wide regulations that are designed for the southern portion of the province.

<sup>5</sup> Communication centre: various sizes of meeting space, electronic telecommunication resources.

**Community Pride** is about efforts taken to create a positive impression and experience for residents in, and visitors to the community. Because first impressions are so important, a physically appealing community is an essential first step in sending a message that residents care about their community. Taking steps to strengthen community pride then, creates the incentive to attend to community maintenance, cleanliness, and aesthetic appeal.

The County demonstrates its commitment to local autonomy, management of change, County cohesion and community pride by making any necessary changes to the bylaws, policies and daily practices of its staff. This in turn, motivates residents to act on these principles, to live by them and to plan their individual and businesses accordingly, knowing that the County will support these principles.

Because the County's economy is rooted in the resource sector, it tends to react quickly to somewhat volatile trends in the global resource sector. Strengthening the County's economy is a high priority and is the first step in Mackenzie's ***4-Step Community Sustainability Plan***.

## COUNTY PROFILE

Located in the northwestern corner of the province 800 kilometers (km) from Edmonton, Mackenzie County comprises over 12 per cent of Alberta's landmass, or about 80,484<sup>6</sup> square km. Larger than three of Canada's east-coast provinces or any other Alberta municipality, the County's residents are clustered in widely separated geographic areas. Two incorporated Towns and three hamlets are stretched east-west across the County. In addition, there are 18 First Nations communities spread throughout the County most of which are located within 100 km of one of the County's main thoroughfares.<sup>7</sup> Several of these latter communities are not directly accessible by road.

The County's official 2006 municipal population was 10,002. The population encompassed by its geographic boundaries however, would include those in:

- the incorporated Town of High Level (3,887)
- the incorporated Town of Rainbow Lake (965)
- federally designated First Nations communities (6085)
- resource sector shadow population (estimated at 4,000-5,000)

up to 25,000 people during the year.

The region is served by three highways:

- Highway 35 is a paved north-south highway extending from Grimshaw in the south to Alberta's border with the Northwest Territories in the north.
- Highway 58 is an east-west highway which is paved from Rainbow Lake in the west to Highway 88 in the east. An unpaved portion of the highway continues east from Highway 88 to a terminal point northwest of the First Nations community of Fox Lake.
- Highway 88 is a partially paved north-south highway extending from Slave Lake in the south to Highway 58 in the north.

CN rail has one line that runs north-south nearly the full length of Highway 35 within County boundaries.

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<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada. *2006 Community Profiles: Mackenzie No. 23*. Retrieved 2010 08 23 from <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4817095&Geo2=PR&Code2=48&Data=Rate&SearchText=Alberta&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=48&B1=All&Custom=>

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix H1.

The County's general aviation airports are in Fort Vermilion, La Crete and Zama City. Scheduled passenger services are no longer available within the municipality itself, although limited scheduled flights are offered at the High Level airport.

## La Crete

La Crete is a young and rapidly-growing community of pioneers who are predominantly of the Mennonite faith. They have built a vibrant agricultural and commercial community whose residents' first language tends to be German. While keeping the young people in the community is a high priority, there has been no new agricultural land that is available to pass on to them. Many residents then, must travel out of the community to find work, and if they are lucky come home on week-ends.

La Crete is a traditional society where major decisions can be made and implemented by community leaders very quickly. When a high priority need is identified, there is no shortage of initiative to address it and fund-raising efforts can produce a large sum in a very short period of time. The culture is deeply family-oriented. The average family size has been significantly larger than the national or provincial average. The availability and quality of local health services is of particular concern. According to residents, 270 births took place in 2009 all of which were delivered outside of the community.

La Crete residents want to grow their community as a means to strengthen their culture and values. As part of their cultural tradition and historic practices for example, they arranged to assist several thousand Bolivian Mennonites to immigrate to their region several years ago and integrated them into their community.

## Blue Hills

The majority of Bolivians settled south of La Crete and many are now congregated in a new rural area called Blue Hills. The age profile in this area is young since the immigrants were young when they arrived. The language of daily interaction there is German and there is limited use of English. Residents here also value community growth.

La Crete considers Blue Hills to be their own distant "rural suburb" and counts its residents as part of their own population and trade area. Residents in Blue Hills however, sometimes find the distance to La Crete for basic daily services to be long. A local Post Office and convenience store would be appreciated. These may be available in Buffalo Head Prairie 20 minutes from Blue Hills. There are cultural

differences however, between the Buffalo Head Prairie and the Blue Hill communities. The Blue Hills Mennonites choose to drive the longer distance to La Crete for their daily services.

## Fort Vermilion

Fort Vermilion is the County seat and hosts a number of government-related services (e.g., school board, hospital, college campus, provincial court). The hospital serves a catchment area that includes La Crete and approximately 13 First Nations communities in the eastern portion of the County.

Fort Vermilion residents are very satisfied with the lifestyles within their community and are not keenly interested in aggressive economic growth. While modest growth would be acceptable, the lifestyle and the character of the community should not change. The hamlet's population is made up of a blend of public servants, farmers, First Nations peoples living both on and off reserve, and a small commercial service community.

## Rocky Lane

Rocky Lane is a rural area east of Highway 88 near the First Nations community of Boyer. Settled primarily by Ukrainians in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is an agricultural community with a diverse Caucasian population. Although there are no commercial services provided in the community, there is a school offering classes from kindergarten through grade 12. A community hall financed by the County and built by the community opened in May 2010. It has space for events and houses a ski rental shop to support the high-quality, cross-country ski trail network in the area. Residents travel to High Level (30 minutes) or Fort Vermilion (15 minutes) for services.

## Zama City

Zama City is a single-industry hamlet in the County's west end, population 184. Apache Corporation operates the nearby Zama oil field. Company contractors house most of the seasonal workers in camps between October and March. Year-round, permanent employees live in mobile homes with their families. The local school and a multipurpose County building<sup>8</sup> are the hamlet's only permanent structures. Unlike Blue Hills, Zama does have a post office and convenience store, but other business is

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<sup>8</sup> County office, library and community hall

conducted over an hour away in High Level. Zama's tiny, but vibrant community is made up of a number of very committed residents, people who have lived there 13, 19, even 26 years. A family-oriented hamlet, they want to encourage Apache and its contractors to orient its recruitment processes towards bringing in families to settle in the hamlet.

## County Challenges

Distance is the single greatest challenge that the County and its residents face. The distance between settlements and populated areas challenges the County's ability to provide public services. The distance between communities challenges the development of a County-wide perspective on meeting their needs. The County's distance from markets presents challenges to taking advantage of economic development opportunities and to attract people with needed skills.

One example provides a picture of what many face in the County. The County CAO wears many hats. In the past year, in addition to his own responsibilities, he has taken on the high-level work of the Director of Operations (North) and the Director of Planning and Development, since both positions have been vacant. On an ongoing basis he acts as director for agricultural services, safety and environmental services, and supervises the site manager that oversees Public Works and Utility employees for one of the hamlets. The diversity of roles he plays means that he must frequently attend meetings in Edmonton on topical issues. Since there is limited scheduled air service to the County, every two-hour meeting in Edmonton represents a three day absence from the office. The three-hour, one-way trip to Zama for a one-hour visit means a full day out of the office. These time requirements to manage the County mean that he needs a great deal of staff support to ensure that his responsibilities are met. This phenomenon is not unique to the County office, but is part of the reality for anyone living and working in province's northern corner.

The County must put mechanisms in place to compensate for travel times between communities and to destinations beyond its borders. To do so means the County and the province must make significant infrastructure investments to ensure the improvement and effective maintenance of all modes of transportation.

The second major challenge is to build a County-wide identity and perspective. Residents' affinities are drawn to the hamlet that is in close proximity to where they live. They are fiercely protective of that community. In and of itself, this identification with their hamlet is admirable. It does present a challenge however, when it interferes with the need to address broader County interests, especially those that affect the County's long-term sustainability. It will be important for the County

to raise residents' awareness of how individual hamlets' interests affect County sustainability and why such sustainability is important to the hamlet.

**The County's sustainability is inextricably linked to local attitudes. Residents, community leaders and opinion setters must understand that achieving sustainability is not possible without building bridges between contrasting attitudes.**

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

A consistently thriving, local economy:

- makes new and diverse jobs and training opportunities available
- attracts and maintains an adequate and stable workforce to meet the needs of the commercial and institutional sectors
- makes quality land and buildings available to support healthy economic activity and change
- provides for the creation and diversification of businesses and industries
- builds a strong business community that is well-connected with the wider economy

Mackenzie County's economy is founded on the extraction of natural resources (oil, gas, and potential for diamonds), agriculture and forestry. There is also significant potential to expand tourism in the region. To ensure the County's long-term economic sustainability, Council must take measures to close the distance between business and their markets.

For this reason, a discussion of transportation infrastructure will precede the discussion of the County's primary industries, their challenges and gaps. Discussions of the oil and gas, agriculture, and forest sectors underline the reality that cutting edge innovations and new opportunities are carving a new future for the County's economy. Making sound plans for building the necessary infrastructure to expand the tourist industry can only enhance that future. To sustain County growth it must develop and apply sound strategies to manage it and to address significant gaps in the health and post-secondary sectors.

**Goal E1** The County's transportation system:

- reduces travel time and increases safe, comfortable and efficient travel between its communities and between the County and major destinations beyond its borders,
- provides economically efficient access to business and industrial markets outside of County boundaries.

**Strategy E1.1** Maintain a strong and consistent approach with Alberta Transportation to request the completion and upgrade of northern transportation corridors:

- to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods to, from and within the County,
- to strengthen economically, socially and environmentally sustainable opportunities for the movement of people, as well as agricultural and resource sector goods.

## Transportation: Roads and Highways

A detailed description of the region's road system is available in a report on regional infrastructure submitted to the Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for NW Alberta (REDI) in 2009.<sup>9</sup>

The County is served by primary north-south and east-west highways that intersect at the Town of High Level. Highway 35 is the primary north-south route through the County. It connects the area to the Northwest Territories in the north and to Peace River, Grande Prairie and Edmonton which in turn, provides access to points east, south and west.

A second north-south, partially-paved route, Highway 88 runs 420 km from Highway 58 near Boyer and ends at Highway 2 near Slave Lake. The road is hazardous in summer due to heavy truck traffic navigating mud patches when it rains and loose gravel and dust when dry. During spring break-up and the summer, the road can often be impassable.

### Highway 88

**Goal E2** Highway 88 is a fully-paved, two-lane highway with shoulders, passing lanes and rest stops that provides a well-maintained, year-round link between Highway 58 and Slave Lake.

Highway 88 has the potential to provide a more efficient route than Highway 35 to north-central and northwestern Alberta as well as the NWT. Forest product companies have indicated that it would be a preferred route if it was available year-round. Unlike Highway 43 near Whitecourt, it does not have steep grades. For this reason, it is one to two hours faster to High Level from Edmonton than is Highway 35. This translates to less cost for motor carriers. Paving the remainder of the road will also assist County farmers trucking grain to markets in the Westlock/Edmonton area. During the winter season, it is used extensively by logging trucks, Super-B Trains hauling fuel and oil to the Northwest Territories (NWT), and trucks delivering supplies to oil and gas industry camps in the Zama and Rainbow Lake fields. Time and cost savings also apply for private and health-care-related travel.

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<sup>9</sup> Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for NW Alberta (REDI). *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*. 2009.

Paving Highway 88 will also make the area more attractive for potential developments being considered:

- Diamond mining southeast of Fort Vermilion<sup>10</sup>
- Peace River Bluesky-Gething oilsands deposit southeast of Fort Vermilion
- Improvements to efficient use of forest resources already targeted under existing Forest Management Agreements

Most importantly, there is considerable support for paving the remaining portion of the Highway both at residential and business levels (i.e., business and agricultural communities, and forest industry).

At the end of 2009, 220 km of Highway 88 remained unpaved. The province announced January 28, 2010 that three different segments of the highway will be paved before the end of the 2010-2011 fiscal year, representing an additional 67 km. This provincial commitment has been most encouraging. However, the County must continue to ensure that paving Highway 88 remains a high priority in the province's annual capital plans until it has been completed.

**Strategy E2.1** Encourage the establishment of a coalition of partners to form a Highway Association whose mandate would be twofold:

- to pursue a provincial commitment to pave the remaining 150 km of Highway 88 in a timely fashion,
- to market Highway 88's tourism and economic development potential.

Association members could include representatives from the following organizations:

- Mackenzie County<sup>11</sup>
- REDI
- First Nations communities and Métis settlements serviced by Highway 88
- MD of Opportunity
- Northern Sunrise County
- Town of Slave Lake
- Local business organizations and individual businesses
- Alberta forest industry
- Relevant oil and gas industry organizations
- Other relevant organizations

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<sup>10</sup> Location of Kimberlite deposits are shown in Appendix F1.

<sup>11</sup> It would be most beneficial for the County to request documented support from the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake on specific initiatives.

Examples of Highway Associations that exist in the Province include:

- Yellowhead Highway Association (Highway 16)
- Veteran’s Memorial Highway Association (Highway 36)
- Cowboy Trail Tourism Association (Highway 22)

## Highway 58

**Goal E3** Highway 58 is a paved, two-lane highway with shoulders and passing lanes that extends from the BC border to the Wentzel River at Fox Lake.

Highway 58 runs east-west from John d’Or Prairie in the east, through High Level to Rainbow Lake in the west, ending approximately 20 km east of the Alberta/BC border. The narrow, two-lane highway without shoulders hosts large heavy equipment and significant levels of traffic. For these and safety reasons, it urgently requires widening. The Alberta Government has committed to doing so and several kilometres are being widened each year, but not with sufficient speed to promise a safe highway in the medium-term future.

There have been discussions in the past about extending the highway 20 kilometers from Rainbow Lake to the BC border<sup>12</sup> but Alberta has only been willing to do so if BC extends its road from Fort Nelson to make the connection. The BC government has not been willing to consider it because local politicians fear that Fort Nelson would lose economic activity to Alberta.

Recently however, the province of BC announced<sup>13</sup> that it will spend \$187 million to pave the Sierra Yoyo Desan road (SYD) from Fort Nelson into the new Horn River gas field at Cordova Embayment. This may have the potential to make the inter-provincial link road more attractive to BC.

The value of the link road can be found in the similarity of the Fort Nelson and Mackenzie economic markets. The lack of a road connecting the two areas actually prevents the development of a larger market area that could benefit both provinces and provide the broader region with a spur to achieve its economic potential. Should it be possible to identify concrete and highly attractive incentives for BC to extend its road, Alberta could decide to speed up the widening of Highway 58 to better handle the increased traffic that would result from the link-up.

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<sup>12</sup> Northern Alberta Development Council. *Advancing the Development of the Northern Economy: Position Paper on linking Fort Nelson, British Columbia and Rainbow Lake, Alberta*. 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Roche, Pat. *BC Spending \$187 Million On Road To Shale Gas Area*. Daily Oil Bulletin, March 16, 2009.

*A road connection into BC is key to the long-term economic well being of Rainbow Lake. Being totally dependent upon oil and gas, it is essentially at “the end of the road.” A connection to Fort Nelson would make the town a stop along a continuing road and would certainly facilitate new economic activity....(It) would also provide tourist and commercial traffic with an alternate route to the Yukon and Alaska.<sup>14</sup> (p. 22)*

Once Highway 88 is fully paved and Highway 58 is extended to the border, this combination would provide a shorter alternative into Northwestern BC from Edmonton than the current one along Highway 43 through Grande Prairie. For this reason, it is important that the Highways 88 and 58 initiatives complement rather than compete with one another.

**Strategy E3.1** Undertake comparative research of the NE British Columbia and NW Alberta economies in order to identify potential incentives for BC to extend its NE road system to its border with Alberta.

**Strategy E3.2** Obtain a commitment from the Government of Alberta to encourage the BC government to provide a permanent road link between Fort Nelson and Rainbow Lake and to extend Highway 58 to the BC border.

**Strategy E3.3** Work with relevant organizations and interested parties in northeastern BC to promote the link jointly with the two provincial governments.

**Strategy E3.4** Work with regional stakeholders to pursue a provincial commitment to complete the widening of Highway 58 as soon as possible.

**Strategy E3.5** Work with the region’s MLA, Alberta Transportation and regional stakeholders to assess the best alignment/route for connecting Highway 58 to BC’s paved SYD road.

## Zama Road from Highway 35 to Zama

**Goal E4** Zama Road is a paved secondary highway.

This road runs west from Highway 35 north of Meander River to Zama City, a small hamlet that serves the Zama oil field. The wide gravel road is used primarily to transport oil and gas equipment into the Zama oil field during the winter season. It also provides Zama residents with access to various services and facilities.

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<sup>14</sup> Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta (REDI). *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*. 2009.

An analysis of traffic volumes on the road<sup>15</sup> suggests that its *Weighted Annual Average Daily Traffic* is almost 900 vehicles per day. This rate can be expected to increase in the coming years when enhanced oil recovery (EOR) activities begin. This will particularly be the case if the BC Horn River Gas field is extended into Alberta. Since the province's minimum criteria for paving a road is 200 vehicles per day, the road far exceeds the normal requirement.

**Strategy E4.1** Work with stakeholders to encourage the province to designate Zama Road as a secondary highway and to pave it within a specific period of time.

**Goal E5** Residents of La Crete, Blue Hills and Buffalo Head Prairie have paved access to:

- Highway 35 via a bridge that crosses the Peace River at Tompkins Landing,
- Highway 88 via the County road known as the Highway 88 Connector.

A fourth project involves the construction of a bridge over the Peace River. Given the magnitude of the first three highway priorities, the bridge must be a medium- or long-term objective. Currently the La Crete Ferry provides access to and from the South and West Peace Regions and Southern Alberta. Five sawmills and innumerable farmers use it to bring product to markets. It is also invaluable to residents to access a variety of medical, economic and social needs.

In the spring and fall, freeze and thaw conditions put the ferry out of operation and disrupts soil stability on Highway 88. Residents, farmers and other businesses face extra travel costs and travel time by having to drive north to cross the Peace River at Fort Vermilion. Residents and businesses must be able to plan their schedules around a dependable ferry.

As this report is being finalized, the province announced on August 12, 2010 that the La Crete ferry would be closed until further notice due to low water levels. Water levels would not be expected to increase sufficiently during the summer and fall seasons to warrant the reopening of the ferry. This would suggest that the river crossing at that site may not be useable until the ice road is built in January, i.e., 4.5 months. What is most unfortunate is that the ferry's highest usage period is likely during harvest season, when farmers bring their grain across it to Highway 35 to take it to the Westlock/Edmonton area.

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<sup>15</sup> Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta (REDI). *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*. 2009. p. 24

In 2000, an average of 250 vehicles used highway 697 east of highway 35 every day (i.e., the only place to go is across the ferry). In 2009, that average increased to an average of 380 vehicle every day.<sup>16</sup>

In order to determine the feasibility of building a bridge, a first step would be to request that the province undertake a study to assess the cost for users to drive two hours north to Highway 58, east to Highway 35 and south past Highway 697 when the ferry or ice road is not available. These costs would include the cost per kilometer to drive 380 vehicles a day an extra 200 kilometers as well as the cost of agricultural and other commercial drivers' professional time to do so. This cost would be measured against the benefit of having a year-round bridge. Such a cost-benefit analysis would provide the first data needed to justify the need for a bridge across the river.

The construction of a bridge over the river would significantly improve transportation of goods in the region and provide efficient year-round access in and out of the area. The ferry landing area at Tompkins Landing is the preferred location for a bridge.

**Strategy E5.1** Request that the province assess the costs to users to make a detour when the river crossing at Tompkins Landing is unavailable against the benefit of a year-round bridge across the river.

**Strategy E5.2** Work with the province to establish timely, reliable, year-round crossing across the Peace River at Tompkins Landing.

**Strategy E5.3** Establish priorities and obtain financial assistance to pave hamlet roads under the provincial Streets Improvement Program.

## Transportation: Rail

**Goal E6** County businesses and shippers:

- are satisfied with communications and relationships with the company that provides rail service to the County,
- have access to reliable rail service on a 312-lb mainline standard,
- have access to a sufficient number of grain hopper cars that can be loaded to full mainline standard potential to keep costs down,
- enjoy comparable service to that provided elsewhere on Alberta's mainline.

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<sup>16</sup> Alberta Transportation. *Alberta Highways 1 to 986 Traffic Volume History 2000-2009*. Retrieved 2010 08 16 from <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/2639.htm>

When CN Rail repurchased the Mackenzie Northern Railway in 2006, it created single railroad access from the County to a large portion of the North American continent, and access via a single interchange to the rest of Canada, the US and parts of Mexico. Sixty-five percent of the line's annual 31,000 carloads carry forest products and 20% carry grain to southern markets while 13% carry fuel to the Northwest Territories.<sup>17</sup>

The mainline rail standard has not been upgraded since the line was constructed in the early 1960s which has been a cause for concern for many years. Forest product shippers cannot load cars to their full mainline standard potential resulting in an inefficient use of equipment and increased costs for transportation.

On April 28, 2010, Mackenzie County's Reeve made a written submission to Transport Canada's *Rail Freight Service Review* (see Appendix F2). The review panel's goal is to develop recommendations aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the rail-based transportation logistics in Canada. The County raised the following issues in their submission:

- Car spotting/car supply problems and possible solutions
- CN Rail internal and external communications improvements
- Need for continued infrastructure maintenance and upgrading
- Balanced accountability for both CN Rail and rail users
- Demurrage and ancillary charges
- Monopoly pricing of freight rates
- Division of NW Alberta into two shipping blocks for rail grain car allocation
- Running rights

**Strategy E6.1** Encourage the establishment of a coalition or partnership of rail shippers in the Mackenzie and Peace regions whose mandate would be twofold:

- to work with CN to address gaps in car supply,
- to request that the province encourage CN to upgrade the line to a 286- or 312-lb rail standard.

## Transportation: Air

**Goal E7** Scheduled air passenger services in Mackenzie County reduce the time needed to travel within and beyond County boundaries.

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<sup>17</sup> Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta (REDI). *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*. 2009. p. 31

The County owns and operates three small airports. The Zama airport runway has an oiled surface. The Fort Vermilion airport is paved with asphalt and is being extended in 2010. The La Crete runway's turf surface is being paved in 2010. There are also paved municipal airports in Rainbow Lake and High Level, as well as a privately owned airport at the Zama oilfield.

Fort Vermilion and Zama airports are capable of handling an increase in traffic as economic conditions improve. Although the runway in La Crete is being paved, that airport's capacity is being limited by new land development plans that allow for the construction of new homes on the airport property's eastern boundary. This means that the airport will eventually have to be moved to another location, or it will be necessary for the County to buy back the homes on the airport boundaries in order to expand the airport.

**Strategy E7.1** Before opening up land for purchase or the construction of homes along the airport's boundaries:

- commission a study immediately to investigate whether long term plans for the La Crete airport should involve expansion on its current site or relocation to a new site,
- develop a long-term strategy for the La Crete airport.

As a Medevac centre, lengthening the Fort Vermilion runway will enhance medical service in the County's east end as well as creating the potential for aviation-related economic activity. Zama City's population expands up to 5,000 for a significant portion of the year. The hamlet has no acute-care health service available to serve this "shadow" population and an authorized transportation option for rapid access to such service is critically needed.

Airports are an increasingly valuable part of northern transportation, especially for public services such as health care and professional services where time is critical. Without viable airports capable of all weather service, County residents may continue to be restricted in the level of service that they enjoy in comparison to other regions of the province.

**Strategy E7.2** Continue to support a level of infrastructure for all weather airports in County communities.

**Strategy E7.3** Promote air service providers to create services to, from and between the communities of the region and beyond the County.

**Strategy E7.4** Ensure that both the Fort Vermilion and Zama airports have a safe, accessible heliport and a Medevac service.

## Agriculture

Despite its location at 58.3° latitude, agriculture plays a very important role in the County's economy. A group of largely conservative Mennonites established a farming community in the La Crete area<sup>18</sup> in the 1940's and it has grown to well over two thousand people today. Working with the Fort Vermilion substation of the federal government's Lacombe Research Centre, La Crete farmers have adapted traditional agricultural practices to the area's short growing season and its extra hours of summer sunlight each day, relative to the rest of the province.

The sustainability of agriculture in the area depends on three factors:

- the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices to cultivate new lands acquired from the province's Crown lands through a land exchange
- the continued support of a northern research station to assist farmers to adapt traditionally effective agricultural practices to the northern climate and to the emerging changes in this climate in the coming decades
- the expansion of agribusiness as a means to provide employment opportunities for young adults to find employment in the community rather than having to leave the area to find work

## Land Transfer

**Goal E8** Agricultural lands in Mackenzie County are in optimal health because area farmers use sustainable agricultural practices that are tailored to the needs of the local climate, flora and fauna.

In 1994<sup>19</sup>, the province requested that Mackenzie County return certain 136,320 acres of certain agricultural lands (white zone lands) so that these could be converted to lands protected by the Crown (green zone lands). These included areas such as agricultural lands bordering rivers and other environmentally sensitive areas. The County agreed to the transfer of land between the zone designations with the understanding that it was part of an "acre for acre land exchange." In other words, since the County agreed to white zone transfer to green zone land, the County expected the province to transfer an equal amount of green zone land to the white zone agricultural designation. It has taken over ten years to negotiate which green zone lands the province would agree to transfer. A "land exchange" agreement

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<sup>18</sup> University of Alberta Department of Germanic Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics. *The Mennonites*. Retrieved 2010 07 29 from <http://www.ualberta.ca/~german/PAA/Mennonites.htm>

<sup>19</sup> Correspondence from Mackenzie County to Ted Morton, Alberta Minister of Sustainable Resource Development dated November 4, 2009 re: Mackenzie Region: Green/White Zone Land Exchange

involving over 58,000 acres was finalized in June, 2010 and a map providing details of the transfer is available in Appendix F3.

The new agricultural lands will be auctioned in the summer and fall of 2010. Given that considerable work will need to be done to convert these lands for agricultural use, it would be in the County's best interest to encourage farmers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices for the conversion and ongoing cultivation of these lands because:

- It will be of long-term benefit to farmers and agribusinesses.
- It will keep the door open for future such land zone transfers by demonstrating responsible land management to the provincial and the First Nations communities who have a growing voice in their eventual disposition.

**Strategy E8.1** Encourage the County's Agricultural Services Board to work with the local agricultural societies, the Fort Vermilion substation of the Lacombe Research Centre and the Mackenzie Applied Research Association to identify and implement sustainable agricultural practices.

## Agricultural Research

**Goal E9** Fort Vermilion hosts an applied research centre of excellence that focuses on human and technological adaptations to northern climates in four areas:

- human ecology,
- sustainable resource management/development (especially agriculture),
- energy production/distribution,
- information technologies.

While the success of agriculture in such a northern climate is due primarily to the farmers' intent to make it work, their partnership with a local research station has made a significant contribution. The primary focus of the Lacombe Research Centre's substation in Fort Vermilion is to adapt pertinent agricultural technologies to northern climates.<sup>20</sup> Area farmers formed the Mackenzie Applied Research Association to create a formal link to the centre that could serve to organize educational and related activities.

*Our mission is to serve producers within our region by meeting the special needs that result from our unique climatic, geographic and soil conditions and to facilitate the transfer of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to producers on reducing production costs,*

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<sup>20</sup> Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. *Lacombe Research Centre*. Retrieved 2010 07 24 from [http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1180634888974&lang=eng\\_djfdkas](http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1180634888974&lang=eng_djfdkas)

*marketing strategies, alternative practices and environmental sustainability.*<sup>21</sup>

Among tentative research trials and area educational activities targeted for 2010<sup>22</sup> are:

- Most suitable weed management practices
- Conventional vs organic vs intensive farming
- Manure management
- Dugout water testing

Area farmers so appreciate their collaboration with the research centre that, during the economic downturn, a concern arose about the potential for federal cutbacks to target the research centre, now or in the future. This concern led to a series of discussions about ways to prevent or moderate the impact of such cutbacks and to anchor the future of an applied research presence in the County. This was one of the reasons that the County initiated a fact-finding mission to a Russian Okrug in Khanty Mansyisk. The tour was financed under an agreement between the Canadian International Development Agency, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and Activation Analysis Group Inc.

The study tour's purpose was to learn about the UGRA Research Institute for Information Technology in Khanty-Mansyisk. This would provide the County with a model of how such an institute is structured. The institute was chosen for two reasons:

- an opportunity emerging from a co-operation agreement established in 1995<sup>23</sup> between the Province of Alberta and the Khanty-Mansyisk Autonomous Okrug (KMAO)
- the two areas' common geographic, social and economic characteristics.

Appendix F4 outlines a summary of proposed next steps following the study tour.

To ensure the sustainability of northern climate research in the region, the County should assess a variety of options before making a decision on a strategy to pursue.

- Would the Lacombe Research Centre be interested in expanding its agricultural research activities in Fort Vermilion to acquire a more interdisciplinary focus in areas of interest to the County and its stakeholders? (e.g., northern climate innovations in: a - energy production/distribution,

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<sup>21</sup> Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta. *Mackenzie Applied Research Association*. Retrieved 2010 08 02 from [http://www.areca.ab.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=121&Itemid=91](http://www.areca.ab.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=121&Itemid=91)

<sup>22</sup> Iqbal, Nasal. *Research and Extension Activities at Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA), 2009*. PowerPoint presentation.

<sup>23</sup> Alberta International and Government Relations. *Khanty Mansii-Alberta Relations*. Retrieved 2010 08 02 from [http://www.international.alberta.ca/documents/International/Khanty\\_Mansii-AB.pdf](http://www.international.alberta.ca/documents/International/Khanty_Mansii-AB.pdf)

b - sustainable resource management/development, c - information technologies, d - human ecology)

- Would the University of Alberta be interested in expanding the role of its “Campus-Community Partnerships<sup>24</sup>” to establish an interdisciplinary, northern climate research centre of excellence in Fort Vermilion that would study areas of interest to the County and its stakeholders?
- Could the UGRA Research Institute establish an English-language, satellite campus in Fort Vermilion that would share research activities with its home-base in Khanty-Mansyisk and would address study areas of interest to the County and its stakeholders?
- Could several of these institutions work in partnership to establish this northern climate research centre of excellence?

**Strategy E9.1** Explore options to establish an applied research centre of excellence in Fort Vermilion whose interdisciplinary focus would be on adaptation to northern climates.

Negotiations with any of these organizations would benefit significantly from an incentive offered by the County to participate. Since research institutions are highly dependent on grant funding, the County may wish to consider building a significant research fund that would use its accrued interest to grant funds for northern climate research projects.

**Strategy E9.2** Establish a research fund that would use accrued interest to grant funds for northern climate research projects.

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<sup>24</sup> University of Alberta. *Community-University Partnership*. Retrieved 2010 08 02 from <http://www.cup.ualberta.ca>

## Agribusiness

**Goal E10** Youth have sustainable employment opportunities that enable them to continue to live and work in the County.

Employment opportunities for youth in the La Crete area is especially important because of the strong family values held in area households. The achievement of this goal is hampered by several obstacles. The first relates to the limited availability of land which has been dealt with previously in this report. The second relates to limitations placed on value-added agricultural activities.

Area farmers could establish labour intensive agribusinesses in the area that would provide employment and business opportunities for young people. Agribusiness products are marketed through marketing boards however, and are subject to regulations and controls that are not adapted to the unusual characteristics of farming at 58.3° latitude. La Crete's remote location leaves its farmers far from other farmers and out of the agricultural mainstream. This makes it most difficult to "get into the system."

The area farmers' advantage is that they could supply local markets more inexpensively than other suppliers in the south. In this context, "local" would mean NE and NW Alberta, the Northwest Territories, NW Saskatchewan and, if the link road between Alberta and BC was built on Highway 58, even NE British Columbia.

Area farmers know their market and they know their constraints. Their challenge is to find ways to overcome the bureaucratic, regulatory and infrastructure constraints to become part of the system. This may involve the need for funding, for some adjustments to the bureaucracy, and possibly even for exemptions from certain regulations.

The farmers must identify sources of strategic expertise and assistance to foster the changes that they need. One potential source of assistance could be the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC). When there are regulatory barriers to economic development in Northern Alberta, the NADC can be a good starting point to develop an advocacy program.

**Strategy E10.1** Work with the Northern Alberta Development Council to identify external sources of strategic expertise/assistance necessary to advocate for the establishment of agri-businesses that will be eligible to participate fully in provincial marketing boards as a means to distribute their products.

## Oil and Gas Production and Distribution

**Goal E11** Non-renewable resource companies operating in Mackenzie County are able to make profits while minimizing their environmental footprint by:

- operating to an acknowledged environmental standard,
- optimizing the recovery or distribution of the resource with which they are working,
- applying environmental remediation and restoration strategies when a site has been exhausted that will accelerate the recovery of the affected ecosystem (health, integrity and sustainability).

Revenues from the energy sector in Mackenzie County account for its largest source of tax revenues. The western portion of the County hosts two major oil fields.<sup>25</sup> Husky Oil operates near the Town of Rainbow Lake and:

- manages active, light crude oil and gas wells
- has a 50% interest in and operates a large natural gas plant
- co-owns/operates a co-generation facility with ATCO Electric

Apache Canada operates some 400 producing wells in the Zama oil field near the hamlet of Zama City and operates three gas plants.

The municipal assessment value of the pipelines/wells for 2010 is slightly over one billion dollars. This year's municipal levy revenue is \$11.6 million dollars representing 50.4 % of the County's total levy revenue for 2010. Oil and gas activities are essential to Mackenzie County's sustainability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Fortunately, the oil fields hold a significant percentage of Alberta's total conventional oil capacity and have the potential to sustain the County's economy well into the next century, as new technologies come on line.

Production from these oil fields has been declining in recent years due to the need for new technologies to extract the oil. The County's sustainability was briefly threatened in late 2008 when Apache advised the County that it would be shutting down operations. The province of Alberta had refused to support a request that would have enabled the oil producer to use a proven new technology to capture carbon from its oil extraction processes in NE British Columbia, sequester it in a pipeline to NW Alberta, and use the captured carbon to assist in the extraction of previously inaccessible oil (trapped in pinnacle reefs).

The County acted as a liaison to assist the company to renew negotiations with the province and the signs are now promising that they will arrive at an agreement before

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<sup>25</sup> See Appendix F5

the end of 2010. The life of the remaining conventional oil in the Zama field has only about five years left, while the proposed new technology will extend the field's capacity at least 40 years. In addition, the sequestration of carbon from the oil extraction process will result in a significant reduction of greenhouse gases in NE British Columbia over that period.

**Strategy E11.1** Continue to advocate for enhanced oil recovery (EOR).

**Strategy E11.2** Continue to advocate for the use of environmentally sustainable production and distribution practices in the County oil and gas fields.

**Strategy E11.3** Continue to support Apache Corporation in its efforts to implement responsible carbon sequestration processes.

**Strategy E11.4** Research the long-term prognosis for the life of the Rainbow Lake oil and gas field and identify a role that the County can play to support Husky Energy and Imperial Oil to develop new technologies to increase the life of their field and to practice environmentally sustainable production and distribution.

**Strategy E11.5** Keep informed about and/or explore:

- the evolution of the plans for two proposed Arctic pipelines including the Mackenzie Valley pipeline,
- other exploration opportunities planned for the southern Northwest Territories,
- their impact on the County's environment (e.g., need for roads/tributary lines),
- the implications for economic development opportunities in the County.

To minimize their disruption to the environment, the County must co-ordinate the establishment of the infrastructure necessary to maintain the oil and gas pipeline(s). When Alberta Sustainable Resource Development advises the County for example, that they have received an application to build a private road to an industrial site, the County should match the request against:

- its own long-term strategic plans
- long-term plans being made by other oil and gas producers, pipeline operators, forest management agreement holders, telecommunications and cable television providers, and electrical power transmitters in the area
- opportunities for future development of wilderness recreational opportunities

Such coordination may be able to reduce the number of roads being built through wilderness areas.

**Strategy E11.6** Develop a procedure to co-ordinate plans for the establishment of new infrastructure being made by commercial, government and public service organizations in rural and wilderness areas.

## Forestry

**Goal E12** Timber that has commercial value in Mackenzie County is harvested in a manner that is:

- as environmentally sustainable as possible,
- legally allowable,
- physically possible,
- financially feasible,
- optimally productive.

Mackenzie's geography offers a blend of flat, arable land with boreal forest. Approximately 24% of the County's 1.9 million hectares is forested with mature timber. Footner Forest Products and Tolko Industries hold Alberta's largest joint Forest Management Agreement (FMA)<sup>26</sup> with an area of more than 3.5 million hectares (35,000 square km). Daishowa Marubeni International harvests the deciduous timber in that area as well. Tolko's High Level site was successfully audited to the ISO 140001 International Environmental Management Standard in 2004 and continues to support the corporately held certification. The world's largest single-line, continuous press operation producing Oriented Strand Board (OSB) and North America's largest three-line sawmill are both operated in the County.

Changes in the forest industry in the past decade, in combination with the recent global recession, have certainly had their impact on the County. Footner Forest Products (a joint venture between Grant Forest Products and Ainsworth Lumber) shut down its operations in late 2008 and has not yet reopened its doors. Tolko closed its site for several months in 2008-2009, but reopened and has been in production again for over a year. La Crete Sawmills was able to stay open throughout the recession.

Tolko recently negotiated two major agreements with China. The first was signed in November 2009 and the second in May 2010, both for product in BC.<sup>27</sup> While there will be no immediate impact on Alberta's market resulting from these agreements, there may be some room for optimism about a more long-term impact given that Tolko has entered a new and very large market.

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<sup>26</sup> See Appendix F6.

<sup>27</sup> British Columbia Office of the Premier. *News Release: Tolko Reaches Major Lumber Agreement with China*. May 16, 2010. Retrieved 2010 08 13 from [http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2010PREM0103-000567.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010PREM0103-000567.htm)

The potential for other growth arising from a resurgence in the County's forestry sector may not be immediately apparent for the industries operating in Mackenzie County. The Forest Products Association of Canada offers the industry new directions in its recent report *Transforming Canada's Forest Industry*.<sup>28</sup> The report outlines emerging opportunities to convert wood fibre into bio-fuels and bio-chemicals. It describes Canadian market readiness and investigates bio-mass economics. It strongly recommends that traditional forest product industries capitalize on emerging global opportunities to integrate with emerging bio-technology.

Unfortunately, to maximize the value of bio-mass products for energy purposes, these must be produced fairly close to their point of origin. To ship these products long distances uses energy and incurs costs that significantly reduce the products' value. There may be potential, although limited, to use locally-produced bio-mass products for local energy requirements.

Directions that the County should take to support the industry are not clear at this time. Monitoring developments in the forest industry at global and national levels as well as developments in BC, Alberta and the local area will keep the County poised to act early to support the industry as new opportunities emerge.

One opportunity that recently presented itself relates to the newly acquired Crown lands. The County could encourage farmers who have purchased the land to sell the lumber that they will clear from these properties to forest companies. This could represent an expression of farmers' support for the local industry.

**Strategy E12.1** Promote the direct sale of lumber cleared from the Alberta/Mackenzie County land exchange to local forest companies.

## Public Services

### Public Services: Health Care

**Goal E13** The quality of and access to health services offered in the county is comparable to or exceeds those of other rural health regions in the province.

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<sup>28</sup> Forest Products Association of Canada. *Transforming Canada's Forest Industry: Summary of findings from the Future Bio-Pathways Project*. February 2010. Retrieved 2010 08 04 from <http://www.fpac.ca/index.php/publications/publication-viewer/392/>

High Level has a relatively new hospital with 60 acute and 10 continuing care beds. While services in High Level are structured for eight physicians, there was only one in 2009.<sup>29</sup>

Fort Vermilion has an aging hospital<sup>30</sup> with 26 acute and 10 continuing care beds. Services in the hamlet are structured for two physicians one of whom would spend several hours each day at a clinic in La Crete. In 2009, there was one physician and five others that visited on a rotating basis. La Crete's medical clinic handled visits from a physician once every month.

Residents have been extremely dissatisfied with the services available for some time and are very concerned about the province's capacity to address them in a timely way. The La Crete Health Care Review Committee was established to address service delivery concerns in that community. The committee undertook several research projects and put significant pressure on the province to address their concerns. In late 2009, Premier Stelmach visited La Crete with the provincial Minister of Health and Wellness as well as senior officials from Alberta Health Services, the provincial health authority responsible for service delivery.

Since the restructuring of the provincial health system in 2009, Alberta Health Services has been working on health service planning in the Mackenzie area as part of the development of its provincial strategy. There are plans to get back to the community in the near future to present a status report on the plans that are in development.

While the shortage of physicians is a very significant challenge across the province, Mackenzie County is at the top of the province's priority list for physician recruitment. A second doctor started in High Level in spring 2010. Another started recently in La Crete. This represents a small beginning to restore services to the level at which the region is structured.

A County physician recruitment committee would be very useful to assist the province with certain aspects of the recruitment process. Its purpose would be to develop innovative, locally appropriate strategies to promote the recruitment and retention of rural physicians. A targeted recruitment strategy is sought. The committee would not act on behalf of a specific community in the County but in the interests of a model of health service delivery provided throughout the region. The

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<sup>29</sup> Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta (REDI). *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*, 2009. p. 39-42.

<sup>30</sup> "Besides its own population and that of the La Crete area, the hospital in Fort Vermilion (St Theresa General), serves several thousand residents of First Nation communities. According to a senior health official, the health conditions presented at that hospital by these latter patients are much, much more serious than those presented by any other patients in any facility in the region." Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta (REDI). *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*, 2009. p. 40-41

Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan has developed tools to assist and facilitate community participation in recruitment and retention and under certain conditions funds may be available to assist the committee in its work.<sup>31</sup>

The province is committed to the development of a new model that more appropriately addresses Mackenzie County's unique needs. Innovative strategies may also be needed to recruit nurses. Alberta Health Services (AHS) is concerned about the very high cost of temporary, "agency" nurses. It is also their priority to reduce this cost which can only benefit the County by enhancing continuity of service. Consideration is also being given to expanding the use of nurse practitioners and the types of work that they do, not to replace doctors but to share the workload. Finally, AHS is open to considering cost-sharing for health services that are already being provided by oil companies in the region if any, in order to be able to offer them to local residents.

**Strategy E13.1** Establish or strengthen a municipal physician recruitment and retention committee targeted at health services for residents in hamlets, rural areas, First Nations communities and the local "shadow" population.

- Ensure that the committee's membership is composed of a representative who is capable of speaking on behalf of the interests of each of these core target groups.
- Ensure that the Region 1 Community Health Council has a direct line of communication with the physician retention and recruitment committee.
- Use the committee to facilitate the establishment of innovative partnerships that could enhance service delivery in the region (e.g., partnerships with resource companies' occupational health teams, with property owners that have space available for lease, with an enhanced research centre of excellence, with an existing or newly-created society that co-ordinates volunteers to work in health programs and facilities).
- Use the committee to monitor evolving health service developments around the province and the country on an ongoing basis in order to familiarize its members as well as those of the Community Health Council with alternative models and strategies that might be adaptable to the region's services.
- Establish a working relationship with the High Level Health Services Committee and its Health and Safety Committee to ensure that goals and strategies of mutual interest are supported and not in competition with one another.

**Strategy E13.2** Work with community stakeholders to establish a strong voice with both the department of *Alberta Health and Wellness* and *Alberta Health Services*,<sup>32</sup> to ensure that ongoing provincial planning meets local health needs.

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<sup>31</sup> Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan. *Community Recruitment and Retention Grants*. Retrieved 2010 08 09 from <http://www.rpap.ab.ca/rha/community.htm>

<sup>32</sup> *Alberta Health and Wellness* is the provincial government department overseen by a Minister of Health and Wellness, and charged with the establishment of health policy. *Alberta Health Services* is the provincial health authority overseen by a board and CAO, and charged with delivering health care services throughout Alberta.

## Public Services: Post-Secondary Education

**Goal E14** Residents can remain living in the County while pursuing post-secondary educational opportunities in the fields of service, technology and the trades.

To keep youth and young adults studying and employed locally, residents have prioritized the need for post-secondary opportunities to be offered in the region. Alberta Health Services has indicated that it would be feasible to make Health Care Aides and Licensed Practical Nurse programs available locally through remote and on-site courses using linked learning centres. Because of the cost of the technical diagnostic programs, it would be necessary to offer these in a more centralized location such as Grande Prairie in order to attract a sufficient number of students.

A centre for apprenticeship training could be offered in the County through a partnership between the school division and Northern Lakes College. This would target high-school graduates, adults and Registered Apprenticeship program graduates.

It is inevitable that the region will not be able to provide post-secondary programs in all of its potential students' interest areas. For this reason, those involved in planning for post-secondary education in the region must consider what it would take to increase the attractiveness of distance-learning to regional residents. Obstacles faced by students involved in distance learning include:

- loneliness
- the need for a structured study environment
- the need for relationships with others who are going through similar experiences
- the lack of understanding of how to apply a remote learning format to one's own learning style

What can the County do to facilitate the establishment of support and social opportunities for such students? Highly creative strategies are needed to address the reality that distance education must be a viable and attractive option for residents of remote communities.

**Strategy E14.1** Develop a detailed plan to advocate for equitable provincial post-secondary funding for the County that is based on a recognition of the County's unique demographic profile.

**Strategy E14.2** Identify and facilitate the implementation of strategies that would increase the attractiveness of distance learning in the region.

**Strategy E14.3** Expand the availability and local awareness of high quality distance learning opportunities.

## Public Services: Telecommunications

**Goal E15** All County residents and businesses have access to the most current telecommunication technologies to permit them to participate in global opportunities.

Because Mackenzie County is remote and sparsely populated, there can sometimes be a tendency to place it low on the priority list for the installation of new telecommunications infrastructure. This is most unfortunate, since the County has an urgent need to be able to communicate with the world beyond its boundaries with the best available technologies.

Telus, Rogers, NorthwesTel and the County's rural gas co-operative are the primary telecommunication service providers in Mackenzie County. Residences and businesses are reasonably well-served in the region, but there are significant gaps in unpopulated areas. According to the Alberta SuperNet web page<sup>33</sup>, high speed Internet is available to County communities via the following services:

- Fort Vermilion: SIS Strategic Information Systems Inc
- High Level: SIS Strategic Information Systems Inc; WisperNet
- La Crete: SIS Strategic Information Systems Inc
- Rainbow Lake: Rainbow Lake Cable TV; ENMAX Envision Inc.
- Rocky Lane: SIS Strategic Information Systems Inc
- Zama City: SIS Strategic Information Systems Inc

Both Rogers and Telus plan to make major new infrastructure investments following announcements in 2009.

REDI's<sup>34</sup> 2009 report of the benefits and needs for regional infrastructure reported that:

*Alberta Health Services reported during interviews that most of their facilities in the REDI region have videoconference capacity. Several high schools in the region's School Division also have such capacity. Community Futures in High Level provides public access to video conferencing facilities and has the capacity to connect directly to the SuperNet. The value of these tools cannot be underestimated for remote communities in the province's north.*

<sup>33</sup> See Appendix F7 for a map of broadband coverage in Mackenzie County.

<sup>34</sup> Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta (REDI). *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*, 2009.

*Improvements in audio-video Web technology however, will soon reduce the need to establish new videoconference facilities. Telecommunications companies such as Telus and Rogers are now providing a variety of options for Web conferencing directly from personal computers. Some require that additional software be installed and others do not. Conferencing options are described on their respective websites. (p. 33)*

Given its remote location, the availability of world-class telecommunications technology and timely enhancements to it are essential in Mackenzie County to maintain productive links with major centres. Business and service representatives must be very well-versed in its use in order to ensure that County products and services maintain a highly competitive edge with those offered elsewhere.

**Strategy E15.1** Use the County's rural gas co-operative to continue using a systematic approach to expand broadband coverage throughout the County and its First Nations communities.

## Business Climate

**Goal E16** The County's business communities can provide local products and services to meet consumer demand.

Running profitable businesses in Mackenzie County can be a considerable challenge. It is important to understand two factors. Firstly, its businesses must compete with those in High Level, Rainbow Lake and the Internet. Secondly, and much more importantly, the County's relatively small population is spread over a large area. This means that the target market for most types of small business can be very limited. In fact, with the inclusion of its First Nations' communities and the shadow population, Mackenzie County's market is probably equivalent in size or even exceeds the market service area for a town such as Taber in Southern Alberta. While Taber's market has the capacity to sustain a store such as Walmart however, this would not be possible with the County's configuration. A large proportion of the population would have to travel too far to get there. They would certainly go, but not regularly enough to keep such an enterprise viable.

Survey respondents were asked what obstacles an entrepreneur would face in attempting to establish a new business in the County. The top three responses to this question related to:

- standards and regulations that do not fit into the context of a remote business community

- the high cost of bringing in products
- the low customer base

When asked to grade the County as a place to do business, 50% of respondents offered a C or D rating and 42% offered a B or A rating. The remaining respondents offered even lower ratings.

This means that in order to succeed, local entrepreneurs must maintain a high degree of creativity on an ongoing basis to manage their operations.

**Strategy E16.1** Consult with the County’s business community to identify strategies that would strengthen the municipality’s “open-for-business” attitude.

**Strategy E16.2** Undertake an assessment to determine if and how the County may be of assistance or can provide support to businesses operating under County business licenses.

**Strategy E16.3** Develop strategies to attract small- and medium-sized enterprises that provide support to the County’s existing businesses and industries.

**Goal E17** Mackenzie County:

- is an attractive destination for non-residents to visit or to decide to relocate, and
- remains an attractive home for County residents at all stages of their lives.

Mackenzie County requires a sustained rate of modest or moderate growth in order to achieve the critical level of population that will assure viability for the services and businesses that residents would like to see. This is not an insignificant objective.

To promote growth in a remote area of the province, it is essential to be able to convey the nature of the community’s unique and most attractive qualities as articulately as possible. Given the unique identities of each of the County’s hamlets however, Mackenzie County itself has yet to develop a unique identity that distinguishes it from other rural Counties. Residents of each of the hamlets however perceive that their community is one that places a high value on family life. Most other communities also advertise their family orientation. To compete, Mackenzie County must convey what is authentic, unique and special about its family orientation.

On the basis of its unique identity, Mackenzie County can build a marketing plan that authentically represents its vision. Its best marketing resource is its residents: people encouraging good friends to come and live there. They are the ones that can

communicate what makes the area such an attractive place to live. The friends in the 45-50 year old age group are not as likely to be in the market to move to a new community as the friends of those in the 25-35 year old group would be. They are often first-time home buyers and are beginning to think about raising families.

It should be noted that it is imperative that the quality of service delivery in the County's health sector improve substantially in order to attract and sustain new residents. All County promotion plans and programs must factor this variable into all timing considerations for the implementation of strategic initiatives.

**Strategy E17.1** Develop a promotional program for relocation targeted at the employees/contract workers with families that are working in the Zama oil and gas field.

**Strategy E17.2** Work in partnership with regional organizations to develop strategies to promote the County including a program to involve community members in promoting the area to distant friends and family.

**Strategy E17.3** Develop a detailed plan to advocate for a substantial enhancement of health service delivery models in the County.

Another strategy to promote the County is to initiate and support a "Buy Local" initiative. The first place to start is at home with residents that are producing products that appeal to the local population (e.g., fresh produce for a farmer's market in all three hamlets and other services that might meet resident's daily needs).

**Strategy E17.4** Encourage the establishment of, promote and support "Buy Local" initiatives.

## Tourism

**Goal E18** Mackenzie County accommodates a thriving tourist sector without compromising the natural environment that hosts it.

Tourism does not yet play a significant role in the County's economy, but the region has potential for a strong tourist sector. In addition to the adjacent Cariboo Mountains Wildland Provincial Park and Wood Buffalo National Park, the County is host to numerous provincial recreation areas, natural and wildland parks, day-use and overnight campgrounds.

- Cariboo River Natural Area\*
- Child Lake Meadows Natural Area\*
- Harper Creek Natural Area\*
- Fort Vermilion Provincial Recreation Area
- Machesis Lake Provincial Recreation Area
- Rainbow Lake Provincial Recreation Area
- Hay-Zama Lakes Wildland Park\*
- Hutch Lake Campground
- Wadlin Lake Park
- Zama Community Park
- Tompkins Landing Day Use Campground (at the La Crete Ferry landing)
- Buffalo Head Tower Day Use Campground

Asterisked areas do not have developed facilities.

Tourist sector businesses include:

- outfitters such as Lightning D Canoe Tours near Fort Vermilion
- wilderness lodges located at Bistcho Lake, Margaret Lake, Thurston Lake and Wentzel Lake
- accommodations such as Country Gardens Bed and Breakfast near Fort Vermilion

The Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Association for Northwest Alberta undertook a site selection study for a potential downhill ski facility in 2008.<sup>35</sup> The study indicated that the Buffalo Head (Hills) site should be the preferred option. It was the only site examined that has the potential to offer 20% beginner, 60% intermediate and 20% expert skier skill classes. This configuration approximates the distribution generally found within the skier marketplace. It is likely that the only viable way to design such a facility in the region would be to develop the site in a manner that would attract significant levels of tourism.

Two recent announcements suggest that groundwork is being laid in the establishment of an infrastructure for a tourist economy. On March 30, 2010, Mackenzie County received federal funds to expand Zama Community Park's camping capacity with:

- 10 new full-service campsites
- amenities such as picnic tables and fire pits
- a fish pond with channel and walking bridge connecting to an existing pond (to double the park's fishing capacity)

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<sup>35</sup> Brent Harley and Associates. *Downhill Ski Facility Site Selection Study*. For Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwest Alberta. 2008. Retrieved 2010 08 09 from: [http://www.rediregion.ca/studies/documents/Ski\\_Area\\_Feasibility\\_Study\\_Final.pdf](http://www.rediregion.ca/studies/documents/Ski_Area_Feasibility_Study_Final.pdf)

Among other benefits, this will improve the campground's ability to accommodate tourists who travel through en route to northern fishing destinations.

In addition, on April 12, 2010, the La Crete Ferry Campground Society obtained federal and County funding to expand their campground with:

- 30 new and existing amenity enhancements
- roads to the campsites
- electrical and water systems, signage, picnic tables and fire pits

To attract tourists, two things are needed: product and access. Mackenzie County's primary product for tourism is its pristine wilderness, a significant portion of which is untouched by development of any kind. Most eco-tourists do not want to interrupt their dream holiday by stumbling across an oil well. Fort Vermilion has the closest access to this type of wilderness to its north and east near the Cariboo Mountains Wilderness Park and beyond it to the Wood Buffalo National Park.

The first steps in promoting this type of tourism would be for the County to:

- designate an area with specific boundaries as a "zero-development area" in the Municipal Development Plan
- put measures in place to protect its environmental integrity

Such a designation has long-term implications and cannot be made lightly. One important factor in making such a decision is to determine whether the area under consideration has potential for conversion to agricultural land. Designating a zero-development area and then requesting that the province convert some of it to agricultural land 20 years later would not be in the County's best interest.

Primary access points for the County's product are roads, air landing strips and boat launches. It would be necessary to work with tourist operators to identify strategic access points that require a minimal environmental footprint. For example, a group of tourists may decide to make arrangements for a driving/canoeing tour that would take them along the following route:

- fly to High Level and pick up a car
- drive north along Highway 35 to Hay River, NWT and east to Fort Smith
- pick-up some canoes in Fort Smith and drive to Peace Point in the centre of Wood Buffalo National Park
- Leave the car at Peace Point where a contractor would return it to Fort Smith
- launch the canoes at Peace Point into the Peace River
- paddle southwest along the Peace River through Wood Buffalo National Park and back to Fort Vermilion

- pickup a prearranged vehicle to get back to High Level to fly out

An obstacle along this route would be the Vermilion Chutes. Many interested in such a trip may not be capable of navigating the chutes. To improve accessibility for less experienced paddlers, the County could arrange to ensure that there is a safe portage route around them with an excellent, “minimal footprint” type of campsite near the rapids.<sup>36</sup>

Note that the route proposed above follows a circular route. In accessing the County’s “product,” tourists do not want to travel to an area and use the same route to return to their starting point. Planning County access interventions to support the tourist industry must always take this basic principle into consideration.

Mackenzie County is located in the Alberta North Tourist Destination Region (ANTDR) and this organization is an important source of funds for tourism initiatives. Unfortunately, the ANTDR encompasses much more than Mackenzie County and the product for most of that region is not similar to Mackenzie County’s product. A more likely tourist development partner for Mackenzie County would be the Northwest Territories (NWT). The Globe and Mail recently reported<sup>37</sup> that the NWT is considering the approval of “Tourism 2015,” a five-year plan to provide extra funding for tourism. Mackenzie could consider negotiating for funds with ANTDR in order to establish tourist opportunities in partnership with the NWT.

**Strategy E18.1** Work with the Northern Alberta Development Council to develop strategies to adapt County infrastructure and its natural environment in ways that will lay the groundwork for the development of an environmentally sustainable tourist sector (e.g., agricultural and/or eco-tourism).

**Strategy E18.2** Assess whether the County’s existing tourism facilities, businesses and industries are based on environmental values that are, or have the potential to be consistent with the establishment of a County-wide eco-tourist industry.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> There is probably already a good *portage* route there. Can it be enhanced with a wireless, all-weather emergency phone, for example? This whole route may or may not be viable but the example being used here for illustrative purposes.

<sup>37</sup> Wingrove, John. *NWT Set to Extend Tourism Programs*. Globe and Mail, August 2, 2010.

<sup>38</sup> To be successful, County-wide eco-tourism would require a very strong commitment on the parts of both Council and the community. It would occasionally require Council to adopt unpopular positions on environmental preservation as a priority over more economically attractive alternatives (e.g., a new oil company wanting to do exploration in a designated eco-tourist area). Consumers in the new eco-tourist sector demand authenticity. The use of eco-tourism as a marketing tool without embracing the philosophy has damaged the bottom line for the large number of businesses who have attempted it. Hence the need for a strong commitment to the underlying values and principles of eco-tourism. If the community believes in the concept, it must deliver on its promise. The County would require development plans that complement the experience that consumers want.

**Strategy E18.3** Develop bylaws that outline environmental requirements for all tourist facilities and practices that operate in the County.

## Growth Management

**Goal E19** Mackenzie County's population growth rate is about 50% every ten years and will stabilize to a more moderate rate of 10% by the year 2030.

Survey respondents were asked what the County's ideal population would be by 2020 and the average of 50 responses was about 15,000.<sup>39</sup> This is an ambitious growth rate but clearly reflects the oft-repeated desire for a population increase. The underlying motive mentioned in informal discussions is to build the threshold necessary to improve the availability of diverse services in the region. At the same time, residents choose to live where they do because of its unique attractions and don't want the population to grow too large for fear of losing what attracts them to the area in the first place.

Between 2001 and 2006, communities in Mackenzie County grew an average of 11%. Some communities however, are growing much more rapidly than others.

Unfortunately, there are no official statistics available for hamlet populations. A local organization in the hamlet of La Crete however, took the initiative<sup>40</sup> to commission an analysis of population statistics for an area that encompassed the hamlet and the rural area within a 20 km radius of it. It found that between 2001 and 2006, the area's population grew by 19.3%. In 2006, the 0-19 age groups made up 45% of the population. In contrast, the 0-19 age cohort represents 26% of the total population in Alberta. La Crete's high birth rate is one of the reasons that La Crete parents are preoccupied with creating employment opportunities for their young people as soon as possible.

According to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada,<sup>41</sup> the 2006 birth rate in First Nations communities was twice that of the Canadian population. While Mackenzie County does not serve these communities directly, there are indirect impacts on County services and these will probably increase as the municipality begins to establish partnership agreements with them.

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<sup>39</sup> Survey respondents were able to choose their response to the question from the following options: 10,000, 11,000, 12,500, 15,000 and 20,000.

<sup>40</sup> La Crete Health Care Review Committee. *Statistical Review of the Growth Factors in the La Crete Region (Report 2)*. 2008. Retrieved 2010 08 03 from [http://www.lacretehealthcommittee.com/itoolkit.asp?pg=PRESS\\_RELEASES](http://www.lacretehealthcommittee.com/itoolkit.asp?pg=PRESS_RELEASES)

<sup>41</sup> Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. *Social Development*. 2008. Retrieved 2010 08 03 from <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/mr/is/sdpr-eng.asp>

**Strategy E19.1** Foster an expansion of economic opportunities in the region using strategies identified under the Economic Step in this report (Strategies E1-E22).

**Strategy E19.2** Foster increased inter-provincial and international immigration.

**Strategy E19.3** Develop strategies to increase the quality of life for large families living in the County.

**Goal E20** The majority of Mackenzie County's workforce live in the County with their children and families.

For many reasons, family-oriented accommodation in Zama City has not developed as it has in other communities:

- the seasonal nature of the work in the oil field
- the very high costs of development and housing construction
- company policies
- uncertainty about the field's longevity

These factors have unintentionally discouraged family relocation primarily as a result of the lack of availability of homes for purchase and the very high cost of renting moderate-quality, mobile homes. The costs of construction in the remote community<sup>42</sup> exceeds the risk that developers are prepared to take to build the necessary housing. They need assurance that there will be sufficient demand for the homes they build and to date, there has not been sufficient confidence that the demand was there.

Making a significant improvement to the quality of life in single-industry oil communities is possible, but it requires a certain investment in the community and this involves risk. The most equitable way to manage this is to share the risk between the County, the company and residents.

It would be necessary for Apache to become proactive by:

- developing company policy that identifies mechanisms to encourage permanent residency amongst its employees by providing incentives to do so
- providing the tools and resources necessary to implement the policy

Their share of the risk involves the provision of the incentives, tools, and resources.

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<sup>42</sup> Especially those associated with bringing in and housing workers.

The County's risk involves making the financial investment necessary to provide municipal services that are initially disproportionate to the size of the population for a significant period of time. It has already taken the risk of building the multiplex facility and renewing the water system.

Employee residents' risk will be to commit to invest in living in the community year-round instead of in one of the camps, and to bring their family to live in a community that is initially unattractive for family life. This, on the promise that the County and Apache would change that situation.

It would be unwise for any of these three groups to take these risks, without obtaining a commitment from the other two, to invest in building a genuine community in Zama. Consider a hypothetical example of this risk-sharing process, the development of land to make lots in Zama available for sale to employee-residents and the encouragement to establish permanent residential structures. The County has a development plan for Zama but has not taken steps to service lots, nor is it likely to. The County does not want to take on the role of a real estate developer, a costly endeavour for which it does not have experience or expertise. In addition, there is no guarantee that there will be sufficient interest in the lots developed to recuperate the County's costs.

A developer would currently not invest in developing lots in Zama because:

- the cost of developing land in Zama is much, much higher than in other areas because of the very high costs of housing labourers and of transporting supplies to the remote community (comparable to the cost of housing labourers in Fort McMurray)
- there is no evidence that they would be able to recuperate their costs

What if Apache developed a time-limited policy that provides a significant incentive for a specified number of employees to become permanent residents and to build a home in Zama. For example, a five-year policy could provide the incentive to five employees the first year, 10 the second year, and so on, to 50 employees in the final year, a total of 120 homes, a number that could double the population of Zama. This would represent a significant financial investment for Apache.

With Apache's commitment to the policy, the County would be in a position to commit to finding a developer or to developing the land themselves, also a significant financial investment.

Few employee-residents might initially be prepared to commit to investing in the construction of a home until they have witnessed someone else going through the process and can trust that the County and Apache will follow through on their

promise (hence the small number in the first year). Another risk for the County and Apache then, would be to proceed with an ambitious plan based on an initial commitment of only five employees.

It is clear in this hypothetical example, that sharing the risk has the potential to address problems that no one party could possibly take on by themselves. At the same time, a momentum is built whereby most individuals interested in investing in homes have the potential to “wait and see if this going to turn out.”

We have not researched the feasibility of this theoretical example and are in no way recommending it as a strategy for the County and Apache to adopt. The example was presented strictly for the purpose of illustration. It demonstrates the potential that could be available if several parties make a commitment to sharing the risk to invest in community-building and improving the quality of life in Zama.

Once enhanced oil recovery technologies come on stream in the Zama field, production levels will improve significantly. The field’s stability over a 35- to 40 year horizon will become evident providing the grounds to build the investor confidence necessary to spur building and consequent community growth.

**Strategy E20.1** Work with Apache, Husky Oil and the forestry sector to:

- identify strategies to attract employees’ families to relocate to Mackenzie County,
- identify what their employees would expect before they would be willing to move their family to the County and determine whether the County or Apache are in a position to address these priorities,
- develop a joint plan to address those needs and to promote family relocation.

**Strategy E20.2** Identify and promote each hamlet’s strengths in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.

**Strategy E20.3** Identify and address individual each hamlet’s needs in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.

Once Highway 88 is fully paved, it will likely become the preferred route into and out of the County from central and southern Alberta because of the absence of steep grades and because of the time saved traveling to northern communities in comparison to the use of Highway 35.

After travelling 400 km north from Slave Lake, Fort Vermilion is the first community with expanded services that a driver encounters.<sup>43</sup> This will make the hamlet a gateway into

<sup>43</sup> A distance of approximately 400 km.

the province's far north and into the Northwest Territories. This is very likely to trigger moderate population growth because of the opportunities that would become available for highway services. La Crete too, will certainly benefit from being 25 kms west of the fully paved highway.

These phenomena suggest that both organic and economic population growth will have significant impacts on the demand for County services. With the expansion of land available in the agricultural sector and new agri-business opportunities, there is also the potential for young people who have left for employment reasons, to return to their communities for the purpose of family reunification.

Population growth requires responsible municipal management. Notwithstanding the perception that there is a great deal of land available in the region, it is essential that the County minimize the creeping sprawl of human habitation that is not directly associated with farming. Many will want to live on a remote and tranquil property.

To make this available would represent a very high cost to the County's wilderness environment and its infrastructure services. Although such residents may not initially believe that they require them, history has shown that as time moves on, the demand for urban-related services grows. Examples of these services include:

- roads into residential properties for school buses and ambulances
- police surveillance
- fire suppression
- road maintenance such as repairs and snowplowing
- water and wastewater services

Electrical, gas and telecommunications companies would then be expected to build their infrastructure in such a fashion to meet the needs of a dispersed population, again using further County resources.

**Strategy E20.4** Provide exceptional services that enhance the quality of life in County hamlets and existing rural areas as a means to dissuade residents and newcomers from moving to undeveloped areas to establish small lots or acreages.

**Strategy E20.5** Take proactive measures to anticipate growth by preparing evidence-based plans for it but exercise considerable caution in executing major capital expenditures.

**Goal E21** The County has reliable and comprehensive population data to make sound decisions and municipal plans.

Official<sup>44</sup> population figures in Mackenzie County very likely underestimate the actual population for several reasons:

- the cultural history of counting First Nations peoples' living off reserve in municipal jurisdictions
- the number of immigrants to the area whose personal history includes poor experiences with official government interaction and who are fearful of being officially recognized by the governments under which they live
- the presence of residents whose express purpose for moving to the region is to acquire and maintain anonymity, a feat that is not difficult in a jurisdiction with a vast, sparsely populated land mass

The absence of accurate data gives rise to inaccurate estimates of the demand for services. Since these often require major capital investments, there are risks for both over- and under-estimates:

- developing/maintaining services that are not financially sustainable resulting in tax revenues from the population that are insufficient to support them
- making investments to establish facilities and services that turn out to be insufficient to meet demand resulting in unanticipated major investments that must be made to meet the demand

**Strategy E21.1** Consult with remote, northern municipalities in other provinces to share strategies that address the difficulties in acquiring accurate municipal census data.

As mentioned earlier, the County has a significant shadow population. While First Nations communities are governments unto themselves as are the two Towns in the County, the latter communities provide a level of infrastructure and community services that are not yet available in First Nations communities. For this reason, some do use certain County services on a regular basis.

Thousands of seasonal oil and gas workers use County services for six months of the year (winter season) but are not present when censuses are mandated by legislation to be taken (April to June).

**Strategy E21.2** Work with the province to develop a responsible yet equitable method to ensure the County's "shadow" population can be counted so that its true population can be recorded enabling it to access its fair share of transfer payments.

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<sup>44</sup> This refers to census data acquired by both the municipality and Statistics Canada.

**Strategy E21.3** Undertake a timely municipal census during major population shifts.

One size does not fit all. Each of the three hamlets face different needs and have different opportunities. The County must ratify its commitment to sustainability for all of its hamlets even though in cases such as Zama City, sustainability might be more finite. Each community requires a separate strategy requiring different levels of County intervention and support. Each community's goals must be validated and supported.

**Goal E22** Mackenzie County's economy has the capacity to moderate the local impacts of dramatic economic up- and downturns in resource sector activities.

Mackenzie County's overall sustainability will be based on its capacity to adapt to changing conditions and to develop strategies to cope with the volatility inherent in a resource-based economy. Since the County does not have direct control over the global marketplace, measures must be considered to minimize the impact of the economy's peaks and valleys. Although a concerted effort continues to be made to attract new commercial activity, the County is limited in what it can actually do. A dedicated approach to ensuring that the County's overall infrastructure framework will meet its needs in the coming decades is essential. Growth pressure points tend to be in the areas of transportation, health and educational services.

**Strategy E22.1** When making County growth projections for planning major capital expenditures, continue to use "average 20-year growth rates" rather than using "current growth rates" that may not represent enduring growth patterns.

**Strategy E22.2** The County will support efforts to diversify its economic base.

**Strategy E22.3** The County will negotiate life-cycle agreements with current and new industries to ensure that investments are appropriate to project life-cycles.

Fostering growth while strengthening the elements that make up its unique character, will be an important element to strengthen the prognosis for the County's future. Unfortunately, Mackenzie County must cope with the implementation of upcoming major projects with very limited if any direct involvement in the timing of their implementation. These include:

- diamond mining in the Buffalo Head Hills
- other enhanced oil recovery projects
- the decades-long wait for the Mackenzie pipeline

- new initiatives for forestry by-products and for value-added agriculture

Given that these will all likely be commissioned, Council will need to undertake careful planning and a systematic approach to address emerging needs.

## STEP II: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

High quality natural and well-designed built environments:

- create a sense of place
- are designed so that residents can live in ways that minimize negative environmental impact and that enhance positive impact
- protect and improve natural resources and biodiversity
- include local public and green spaces that are well-maintained and user-friendly, and that have facilities for people of all ages
- include an ongoing, efficient use of resources in the provision of services and in the built environment
- are of a size, scale, density, design and layout that complement the distinctive local character of the communities that make up the municipality
- have considered the needs of future generations in current decision-making processes and action plans
- contain buildings that are adaptable, durable, and in mixed-use patterns

### Natural Environment

**Goal N1** Mackenzie County's river valleys are maintained in their natural state and are legislated to remain as such in perpetuity.

**Strategy N1.1** Protect the natural state of Mackenzie County's river valleys with strongly worded municipal bylaws that prevent development.

**Strategy N1.2** Develop municipal policy to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and utilization practices serve to preserve the health and safety of the valleys (especially sound practices to guide the development of any future roadways that must be built over a river).

**Strategy N1.3** Develop municipal bylaws and policies to support continuing public access to the County's river valleys.

**Goal N2** Mackenzie County's environmentally sensitive land areas are well-preserved.

Mackenzie County's natural environment consists of several types of land areas. Its agricultural lands, Crown lands, commercial private property, and residential private

property. An environmentally sensitive area is one that may require special protection because of its:

- landscape (e.g., wetlands, woodlands, valleylands, wildlife corridors, natural heritage features)
- wildlife (wildlife and fish habitats)
- historical value

The federal government has protected Wood Buffalo National Park on Mackenzie County's eastern border and the province has protected the Cariboo Mountains Wildland area in the form of a provincial park. Mackenzie County must:

- decide whether it is necessary to protect any particular lands within its boundaries from surface and/or underground development
- clearly articulate the reasons for this protection to ensure that future Councils will continue to protect the area(s) in question

As discussed under the economic pillar topic on tourism, the County may choose to designate a wilderness area northeast of Fort Vermilion as one that will remain free from surface or underground development. The County should also decide if there are other areas under its jurisdiction that require the County:

- to be aware of their somewhat sensitive nature for public education or future decision-making purposes
- to monitor activity in the area
- to take steps to protect the area

**Strategy N2.1** Identify and maintain an up-to-date inventory of Mackenzie County's environmentally sensitive land areas or ones that are at risk of becoming environmentally sensitive.

**Strategy N2.2** If applicable, select land area(s) that the County wishes to protect from development and develop rationales and strong municipal policies/standards for their protection to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and on-going utilization practices serve to preserve environmentally sensitive lands.

## Built Environment

**Goal N3** Optimal use is made of County farm land.

The recent redesignation of certain Crown lands to agricultural lands discussed under the Economic Pillar's land exchange section represented approximately 58,000 acres.

The County initially transferred over 136,000 of agricultural land in 1994 to the province for redesignation as Crown land in the green zone. The County must now decide whether the land exchange is now complete or whether it wishes to continue negotiating for another 78,000 acres to make the 1994 and 2010 land exchanges of equivalent size.

**Strategy N3.1** Record a motion in Council minutes indicating Council's intent with respect to whether and how it will pursue further land exchange negotiations with the province.

**Strategy N3.2** Ensure that the County's Land-Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan limit urban or non-agricultural development in unused lands that are best-suited for agriculture.

Resource companies occasionally apply to the province to build service roads to their sites and the province informs municipalities of these requests. It is important that the County co-ordinate the planning for such requests in order to minimize the number of roads that are being built and minimize their disruption to the environment. The discussion on oil and gas production under the economic pillar earlier in this report indicated the strategy needed to address this (Strategy E11.6).

The Social Sustainability segment of this report will address the rationale for the importance of places of assembly in County hamlets. Goals and strategies for land development plans to facilitate these places of assembly are addressed there as well (Strategy S1.1). The County's current development plans are presented in Appendices G2 through G4.

The Growth Management section under the Economic Pillar in this report addressed the importance of preventing urban sprawl in the County's hamlets and rural areas (see goals E19-E21 and their strategies).

## Environmental Footprint

Once rail services are improved in Mackenzie County, their increased use will improve greenhouse gas emissions from trucks moving goods and services to markets. The strategy to address rail service is included in the relevant section under the Economic Step (Strategy 6.1).

ATCO EnergySense carried out an energy management assessment of Mackenzie County's municipal facilities in August 2006. A significant number of these buildings as well as the collection, treatment and distribution systems have been replaced or upgraded since that time (see Appendix J1). For the County's new buildings, it would

be useful to request that the relevant architect(s) review the requirements for LEED Certification to determine which facilities and systems would be eligible and for those that are, to apply for certification.

*The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria.<sup>45</sup>*

LEED offers certification in: sustainable site development, water efficiency, energy efficiency, materials selection, indoor environmental quality. Rating systems are available for: new construction, commercial interiors, core and shell, existing buildings, homes, neighbourhood developments. The most important benefit of obtaining such certification is that it provides the County with the tangible evidence necessary to meet the requirements for a growing array of government incentives.

For those new facilities that are not eligible, the County should work with LEED to bring as many of their facilities to certification standards as is feasible.

Unfortunately, there are no records made of energy management upgrades following the ATCO EnergySense energy assessment done in 2006. The following would be the County's top three priorities<sup>46</sup> to address if it has not already done so.

1. La Crete Recreation Centre<sup>47</sup>

- Two new boilers and VFD circulating pumps
- New furnaces and unit heaters in the arena and curling rink
- Direct Digital Controls (DDC)
- Lighting retrofits

These would reduce greenhouse gas tonnage carbon by 73.94 tonnes and reduce energy by almost 16% (987 GJ) each year. At \$144,920 in 2006 dollars, the net effect payback period would be ten years.

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<sup>45</sup> Canadian Green Building Council. *What is LEED?* Retrieved 2010 06 30 from <http://www.cagbc.org/leed/what/index.php>

<sup>46</sup> Next three priorities would be the options recommended in the ATCO Energy Sense's executive summaries for the following facilities: Fort Vermilion Maintenance Shop, La Crete Fire Hall and Fort Vermilion Fire Hall.

<sup>47</sup> ATCO EnergySense. *La Crete (Northern Lights) Recreation Centre and Arena (Energy Management Assessment)*, 2006. Executive Summary: p. 1.

## 2. Fort Vermilion Recreation Centre<sup>48</sup>

- New boiler and VFD circulating pumps
- New furnaces and unit heaters in the curling rink and museum
- Direct Digital Controls (DDC)
- New natural gas hot water heater in the museum
- Lighting retrofits

These would reduce greenhouse gas tonnage carbon by 59.11 tonnes and reduce energy by almost 18% (733.7 GJ) each year. At \$139,333 in 2006 dollars, the net effect payback period would be thirteen years.

## 3. Zama Water Treatment Plant<sup>49</sup>

- New truck fill pad boiler system
- Implementation of Direct Digital Controls (DDC)
- Lighting retrofits

These would reduce greenhouse gas tonnage carbon by 20.65 tonnes and reduce energy by almost 19% (329.9 GJ) each year. At \$45,110 in 2006 dollars, the net effect payback period would be eleven years.

In addition, the County can consider addressing some of the low cost options (\$5000 or less in 2006 dollars) recommended by the ATCOEnergy Sense team:

- La Crete Water Treatment Plant: weatherstripping/sealing
- Fort Vermilion Office: emergency exit lighting retrofits
- Fort Vermilion EMS: set back heat controls and lighting retrofits

**Goal N4** The use and consumption of electricity, natural gas and water in community-owned facilities is reduced.

**Strategy N4.1** Request that the relevant architect(s) for each new County facility and utility system erected since 2006 review the requirements for LEED Certification in order to:

- determine which would be eligible for certification,
- apply for certification for those that are eligible.

For those that are not eligible, request that ATCOEnergy Sense undertake energy managements audits.

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<sup>48</sup> ATCO EnergySense. *Fort Vermilion Community and Cultural Complex (Energy Management Assessment)*. 2006, Executive Summary: p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> ATCO EnergySense. *Zama Water Treatment and Workshop (Energy Management Assessment)*. 2006, Executive Summary: p. 1.

**Strategy N4.2** Insert at least three energy management projects into the County's ten-year capital plan:

- La Crete Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting),
- Fort Vermilion Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting),
- Zama Water treatment Plant (heating, DDC and lighting).

**Strategy N4.3** Update strategies, target levels, time-lines and key performance indicators annually to monitor the reduction of the consumption of each resource used in County-owned infrastructure.

**Strategy N4.4** Schedule energy management audits of all County facilities once every 15 years, to identify opportunities for enhancing energy efficiencies and develop an audit-based plan to make the necessary changes.

**Goal N5** County residents consistently recycle a large majority of their bottles, paper, plastics, cardboard, and electronics.

Solid waste in Mackenzie County is managed by the Mackenzie Regional Waste Management Commission. Most recycling is handled through its transfer stations in Blue Hills, Buffalo Head Prairie, La Crete, Blumenort, Fort Vermilion, Rocky Lane, and Zama City. At these sites, residents can drop off:

- tires
- electronics
- paint, antifreeze, oil, pesticides, propane tanks and household hazardous waste

A Super A grocery store in High Level accepts plastic grocery bags and bottle depots are available in Fort Vermilion, High Level and La Crete. Residents would appreciate a higher level of recycling available to them. Unfortunately, the costs of:

- collection
- building an indoor area to sort and bail the material to be recycled
- the human resources needed to collect, sort and bail
- shipping to destinations to the south and southeast

far exceed the revenues that can be recuperated from companies that purchase the material to be recycled. In addition, the distance of shipping to southern destinations has an environmental cost that may outweigh the benefit of recycling. This is a standard problem in remote, northern communities. At one time, the province

provided grants to assist municipalities to develop recycling services. Unfortunately, these have not been available for some time.

It is clear that paper, plastic, glass, cardboard and other standard recycling services available in urban settings must be considered a long-term goal as the means to do so is not yet evident.

Certainly other northerly jurisdictions have had some successes. The Northwest Territories announced a paper and cardboard initiative in 2009.<sup>50</sup> The population there is about twice the size of the region served by the Mackenzie Regional Waste Commission and the NWT have a federal source for funding initiatives. Each northern situation tends to be unique.

When Highway 58 is eventually extended to the BC border, the County could explore the feasibility of developing partnerships with northeastern BC, the NWT and Yukon as well as the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to promote the establishment of facilities that could make use of recycled materials.

**Strategy N5.1** Continue to monitor new developments in recycling technologies that would be economically feasible for use by the County.

**Strategy N5.2** Work in collaboration with community organizations and groups to strengthen local recycling initiatives.

## Energy Efficient Transportation

The use of energy-efficient transportation can be a significant challenge because of the lack of public transit and the distances required for rural and hamlet residents to access the variety of goods and services that are not locally available.

Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents have three or more motorized vehicles in their household. Ten percent of all respondents have five or more vehicles. It should be noted however that 71% of survey respondents were from La Crete or its surrounding rural areas. Thus, it is likely that motorized farm equipment is substantially represented in these figures.

Due to the pervasive need for motorized transportation however, the habit to drive when the situation does not require it is likely strong. The County can assist in increasing the use of bicycles and walking in its hamlets by establishing pedestrian-friendly routes between key hamlet destinations.

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<sup>50</sup> Government of Northwest Territories. *Current News: Paper and Cardboard Recycling Initiative*. March 9, 2009. Retrieved 2010 08 13 from [http://www.exec.gov.nt.ca/currentnews/prDetails.asp?varPR\\_ID=1236](http://www.exec.gov.nt.ca/currentnews/prDetails.asp?varPR_ID=1236)

**Goal N6** Mackenzie County's hamlet land-use plans are designed to provide energy-efficient means of access between key destinations in the community.

**Strategy N6.1** Ensure that hamlet municipal development plans provide for safe, convenient, accessible and comfortable pedestrian pathways in each community.

## STEP III: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

A socially sustainable community is one that is characterized by:<sup>51</sup>

- a sense of community identity and belonging
- social inclusiveness where all citizens have similar life opportunities
- respectful engagement with people from different backgrounds
- friendly, helpful behaviour in neighborhoods
- opportunities for leisure, recreation, sport and social support activities
- low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour
- diversity and affordability of housing
- the availability of opportunities for artistic expression
- a strong sense of community heritage
- community pride

### A Sense of Place

**Goal S1** Each County hamlet and rural area hosts a concentration of social, cultural and commercial activity in one strategic location.

Residents of any community need opportunities to meet and interact with others in a neutral way, one that builds relationships and more importantly, trust. When parents trust the residents of their community, they can allow their children to move around the community safely, and can be confident that if they run into a problem, someone will be available to help and contact the parents.

A “sense of place” or “place of assembly” is one where numerous types of activity take place in a central area of the community and provide opportunities for residents to meet and interact. It is typically where the stores and businesses are, but if there are no coffee shops and places for social or cultural activities there, then it is not a place of assembly. Establishing or fostering the growth of just such a place of assembly in each hamlet is of fundamental importance to the continued presence of a small town atmosphere and a family-friendly environment. It requires a certain concentration of activity, though:

- diverse activities in a 1-2 square block area (the more there are, the more likely it will be to succeed as a place of assembly)

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<sup>51</sup> Alberta Urban Municipalities Association. *Municipal Sustainability Planning Microsite: Five Dimensions of MSP*. Retrieved 2010 03 30 from: <http://msp.auma.ca/Overview/Five+Dimensions+of+MSP/#Society>

- places for residents of all demographic characteristics to gather both in demographically distinct (e.g., youth) and in heterogeneously blended groups
- space designed to be people-friendly (e.g., has protected spaces to sit in the sun in comfort, is “senior friendly,”<sup>52</sup>)

Such a community hub should be active from at least 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily, This will trigger sufficient hourly activity consistently, to draw new, added-value commercial services that in turn will enhance the concentration of activity. While the intensity of activity may vary throughout the day, the more diversity in the area’s functions, the greater its use and viability will be and hence its value as a place to meet and interact with others in the community.

La Crete’s Mennonite roots has led to the establishment of a strong sense of community in the hamlet. Its hub is located on both sides of its secondary highway and the hamlet’s layout is conducive to reinforcing the place of assembly that builds a sense of community.<sup>53</sup> Other County hamlets however have not yet evolved in such a way that it is possible to label an identified place of community assembly.

Fort Vermilion has an excellent potential location for its hamlet core area as a place for community assembly.<sup>54</sup> The intersection of the main roads going through the hamlet is at the centre of the community and is a beautiful location on the river. It is currently occupied by a hotel, bar, and store that create an environment that is not conducive to attract local residents of all ages and interests to meet and interact in a safe and comfortable atmosphere. It wouldn’t attract other businesses to relocate nearby so that they could benefit from nearby traffic. The County may wish to consider long-term plans to revitalize this area, to take advantage of its location in the centre of the community. Should the community hall eventually need to be replaced it could be moved to this area as well.

Given the finite nature of the oil industry, many might question the wisdom of investing in infrastructure and community-building in Zama City, a remote hamlet that does not have a long-term future. The hamlet has been there for well over twenty years however and will continue for at least another 30 years. This is not an insignificant period of time. It warrants putting in place some basic services to create a safe place to build a sense of community that is rooted in family values. This is what the County is trying to do. By doing so, it is creating a nearby, healthy alternative to the type of lifestyle often associated with remote camps in the oil and gas sector, i.e., where there is often frequent use and abuse of alcohol and drugs.

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<sup>52</sup> Alberta Seniors and Community Supports. *Senior Friendly™ Program*. Retrieved 2010.02.17 from [http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/about\\_ministry/senior\\_friendly/](http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/about_ministry/senior_friendly/)

<sup>53</sup> La Crete’s Development Plan is available in Appendix G2.

<sup>54</sup> Fort Vermilion’s Development Plan is available in Appendix G 3.

Zama City's layout consists of a residential area directly opposite an industrial area. It is time to begin strategic development planning that focuses on building community by designating an area where there is room for commercial development that will create synergy with other types of activity. Zama's current development plan<sup>55</sup> has designated an area west of the current residential area for further residential growth. Unfortunately, a borrow pit has since been identified in the designated area.

An alternative area for new residential growth could be the vacant lands east of the existing residential area and a social/commercial core could be established between the two areas. This would be particularly ideal given the presence of a community park in the area that borders the residential and vacant lands. Unfortunately, the area east of the vacant lands are occupied by a large slough.

The County will have to revisit its development plan for Zama in order to increase the accuracy of the environmental assessment of its lands. Once this has been completed it will be in a position to undertake planning for new residential growth and for a social/commercial core that is so necessary to maintain and enhance the community's social cohesion as it grows.

Where ever it eventually goes, the development of Zama's "core" will require visioning and development planning to strengthen the community's appeal as an alternative place of residence for potential new employees and contract workers coming to work in the Zama field.

If it looks and feels like a transient community, it will remain a transient community. If it looks and feels like a family community, that is what it will become.

**Strategy S1.1** Amend hamlet development plans to incorporate the establishment or reinforcement of a central core area that provides synergistic opportunities for individuals and groups to gather for social and cultural opportunities, for commercial activity and the provision of public services.

**Strategy S1.2** Develop a community standards bylaw for residential and industrial properties and promote its enforcement in Zama City.

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<sup>55</sup> Zama's current Development Plan is available in Appendix G4.

## Cultural Vibrance and Inter-Cultural Relationships

**Goal S2** The County's hamlets, rural areas and First Nations communities each have distinct and thriving cultures yet they are linked by common, broad economic and environmental conditions.

**Strategy S2.1** Showcase the unique features of each of the County's cultures throughout the County's hamlets and populated rural areas.<sup>56</sup>

## County-First Nations Relations

**Goal S3** The County and the four First Nations located within its geographical boundaries share a common vision for the region, one that maintains cultural autonomy and that harmonizes economic pursuits.

The region's First Nations communities have occupied their land for many generations while the County has only been an incorporated body for fifteen years. This makes it a relative newcomer to the area.

Prior to its incorporation in 1995, the Improvement District #23 provided the Tallcree and Beaver Nations with water services without a formal agreement. Under a previous agreement with Alberta Transportation, the Improvement District also maintained any roads in the Tallcree, Beaver and Dene Tha' Nations that were also used as "through" roads by County residents. With the incorporation of the new municipality, these practices were continued without any changes.

In 1999, the province established a memorandum of understanding with the Little Red River Cree and Tallcree Nations giving them control of a large region of Crown land and resources within County boundaries without notifying Mackenzie County Council. This presented the County with numerous logistical problems and the County have since taken numerous steps to try to understand how to work with the First Nations communities to address mutual interests (see Appendix H2).

In 2010, the County is close to signing the first agreement that it has negotiated with a local First Nation, since its incorporation in 1995. The agreement will provide for County delivery of utility and fire protection services to the Tallcree Nation, as well as Tallcree representation on the Fort Vermilion Recreation Board and access to its recreational facilities.

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<sup>56</sup> One example could be to promote the establishment of a "County Heritage Pavilion" during the famous "La Crete Rodeo Days."

These discussions have largely taken place between each community's leaders but will have a significant impact on their residents, particularly in the joint use of recreational facilities. Obviously, both parties to the agreement will want to make a success of the introduction of closer relations between members of their respective cultures.

It would be most valuable then, for Council to prepare residents of Fort Vermilion and the surrounding area for the arrival of a larger number of visitors from a different culture at their recreational facilities. This can be done by raising local awareness about:

- why inter-cultural relationships are sought with the County's First Nations
- how to build constructive relations with members of other cultures
- how to engage in problem-solving with members of other cultures

It may be of value to engage the assistance of a cultural interpreter or cultural mediator to:

- deepen Councillors' and staff members' understanding of both the differences between their own culture and that of First Nations communities
- teach key County participants basic skills in inter-cultural sensitivity
- act as an ongoing advisor for future negotiations as a means to mediate any misunderstandings that may arise due to cultural differences
- to work with the County and First Nations Councillors to develop a protocol to manage inter-cultural communication and to resolve mutual concerns.

The County has long been lobbying the province for the enhancement of health services. Its efforts would be significantly strengthened by evidence of a regional partnership where all voices are heard and have equal weight.

One example where inter-cultural relations are important in the health sector is in the care for frail seniors. While acute care is medically and scientifically intensive, compassion should be the primary focus in caring for frail, elderly residents. In advocating for seniors' services then, County leaders must keep in mind that seniors want to die at home. In many cultural communities, seniors hold strong feelings about wanting to eat the same kinds of foods during their declining years as they did all of their lives and to "die in their own language." For these and similar reasons, they may often avoid being admitted to badly needed health services that do not cater to cultural needs. This is one reason why the availability of services for seniors in La Crete has been so important to its residents.

If Mackenzie County is to succeed in establishing a strong network of health services that address local needs, it will be imperative that these services be carefully designed to meet the cultural needs of the targeted service recipients including First

Nations communities, and not just in a token fashion. The physician recruitment and retention committee mentioned earlier, could choose to expand its role to examine other local issues related to health care in the community such as strategies to address culturally appropriate delivery of health care in the County.

**Strategy S3.1** Use a cultural interpreter to develop joint protocols with each First Nation to manage inter-cultural communication and to resolve mutual concerns.

**Strategy S3.2** Identify and prioritize goals that are common to both the County and specific First Nations, and develop joint strategies to address them.

**Strategy S3.3** Develop public awareness activities to assist residents to understand the reasons for, and how to welcome an increased number of members of another culture to their community activities.

**Strategy S3.4** Invite the First Nations and Mennonite communities to create and display icons of their cultures in each County hamlet.

**Strategy S3.5** Encourage local organizations to involve members of First Nations communities in the planning processes for local activities and events.

**Strategy S3.6** Develop strategies to encourage residents of First Nations, Mennonite and County communities to participate in one another's public activities and events, and to ensure they feel genuinely welcome during such experiences (e.g., local festivals, cultural, and recreational activities).

**Strategy S3.7** Continue to involve Mennonites and begin to involve representatives of First Nations communities in advocacy activities for the availability and cultural appropriateness of health services offered in the County.

## Growing Communities

**Goal S4** The capacity of infrastructure in County hamlets and rural communities keeps pace with their growth and is planned in a way that ensures their sustainability.

Blue Hills is an agricultural community that is not likely to evolve into a more densely populated areas that could be called a hamlet or a village. Its distance from services to meet daily needs can pose challenges.

In order to maintain a strong sense of community within the "Mennonite culture," many in La Crete hope that Blue Hills residents will continue to come to La Crete to address their day-to-day needs for various services. Unfortunately, traveling 1-1.5

hours to do so has become a significant burden for many in Blue Hills. While there is no desire to establish a separate hamlet in the Blue Hills agricultural area, residents would appreciate access to essential services a little closer to home, in order to reduce the number of trips to La Crete i.e., post office and convenience store. One small rural community in Saskatchewan found a unique way to address the continuing need for a local convenience store (see Appendix H3).

**Strategy S4.1** Explore strategies to establish a retail convenience outlet in Blue Hills that could provide basic amenities for local residents (e.g., milk, gas, stamps, aspirin, and a postal service) and that would be located next to the Blue Hills community hall.

## STEP IV: SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Municipally-owned facilities and structures:

- operate at optimal usage levels given the size of the population
- have the capacity to absorb growth
- are well-maintained on a schedule that maximizes life expectancy
- have accumulated reserve funds in place to ensure replacement when needed
- have replacement capital plans in place that take the needs of future generations into account
- attract and maintain an adequate, stable workforce to meet their needs
- have operating budgets that reflect staffing levels necessary to achieve their objectives
- are of a size, scale, density, design and layout that complement the distinctive local character of the communities that make up the municipality
- have considered the needs of future generations in current decision-making processes and action plans
- contain high-quality buildings that are adaptable, durable, and in mixed-use patterns

Under ordinary circumstances, elements of community infrastructure would be addressed in both the economic and environmental portions of a sustainability report. Due to the challenges of building and maintaining it in the province's far north however, community infrastructure is sufficiently important to warrant its own section. The lack of cost-efficient transportation for supplies, of short-term skilled labour and of housing for workers all increase the cost of creating new infrastructure dramatically. In many sectors, these costs may be perceived as unreasonable/unacceptable.

Only municipal infrastructure is addressed in this section and it represents those facilities or "hard services" that are owned and operated by Mackenzie County (local roads, water and wastewater systems, parks, recreational facilities and County office spaces).<sup>57</sup> Infrastructure for highway, rail and air transportation as well as power and telecommunications are outside of the County's jurisdiction. They are addressed in the under Economic Sustainability earlier in this report.

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<sup>57</sup> See Appendix J1

## Recreational Infrastructure

**Goal C1** Community parks, recreational facilities and community halls are available to each community consistent with local, cultural needs.

To assess the sustainability of the County's recreational facilities is complex. Each community has developed recreational facilities and programs suited to its particular community character and size.

*Based on standard per capita ratios, most County communities have access to an adequate level of facilities such as indoor rinks, active park spaces, curling rinks, and golf courses. An indoor rink for example is generally targeted to serve 30,000 people. The County has 10,000 people yet understandably, it has five indoor rinks because of the wide distance between communities. To evaluate the County's recreation facilities and services against national standards does not take into consideration its remoteness, its distance between communities and its cultural diversity.<sup>58</sup>*

The County manages these facilities with a much smaller residential tax base to support them than can be expected in most municipalities. It is not unreasonable to speculate that the only reason the County can afford its recreation facilities is due primarily to its commercial oil and gas revenues. Since the oil and gas sector can be economically volatile over time, the County must closely monitor these investments.

The County's facilities are largely adequate to meet the day-to-day needs of residents, with the exception of those living in small communities over one hour from a larger one, i.e., Zama and Blue Hills. Adequacy however, does not translate into sustainability. The County's remoteness makes it difficult to attract certain types of skilled workers such as health professionals that may want a higher level facility than what the County offers. Rather than adequate recreational facilities, it may be that the County must differentiate itself by offering gold standard facilities. This may not be sufficient to attract professionals and skilled workers to settle permanently in the area, but it could be used as a component of a larger incentive plan that would be proposed by the Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee mentioned earlier.

Zama is one area that does not have access to recreational facilities beyond an ice rink and a community hall. Some might consider that a community of 200 should not even expect that much. A community that aspires to attract a sufficient number of

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<sup>58</sup> Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwestern Alberta. *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*. 2009. p. 49.

families to sustain a school, may need these facilities however and more. It is important to recognize that the hamlet consists entirely of employees in the oil and gas sector, the County's largest source of revenue. The County then has a certain obligation to its commercial taxpayers in that sector, to assist with the establishment of a sustainable community in Zama, at least for the decades that the oil companies are there. If it takes recreational facilities to get enough new families in to achieve year-to-year stability for the school, then do it.

Residents in La Crete have expressed a desire for a swimming pool in their community. While a few communities the size of La Crete have found the resources to build a swimming pool and have done so, most have found that the cost of maintaining these facilities has put severe pressures on their annual operating budgets (in the order of several hundred thousand dollars each year). Such communities must charge very high user fees and must still operate the facilities at unacceptably high deficit levels.

There would be only two ways that Mackenzie County could justify a municipal pool in the community. The first would be if swimming would be the highest priority recreational activity for a very large majority of the hamlet's adults and children. This would mean that most of them would be using the pool several times a week all year-round (i.e., higher priority than hockey and field sports).

A second strategy would be to build a pool as part of a much larger recreationally-oriented tourist attraction that would bring in a minimum of several thousand tourists to La Crete each year.

**Strategy C1.1** Assess life expectancy for current recreational facilities and prepare long-term plans to ensure the timely availability of funds to address:

- expected maintenance requirements during the typical life cycle of each facility,
- facility upgrades or replacement.

**Strategy C1.2** Undertake a financial and operational review of County recreational facilities and equipment to:

- ensure adequacy of capital, operating funding and reserves,
- identify opportunities for increased usage, increased revenues and decreased costs,
- ensure optimal use of funds,
- identify other efficiencies that could mitigate the size of the annual grant required from the County to operate the facilities.

**Strategy C1.3** Establish policies that will ensure that residents of each hamlet have access to an attractive and well-managed community park site that:

- is easily accessible,
- reflects community values,
- is linked to other parks in a manner that will eventually provide for a County-wide linked park system.

**Strategy C1.4** Work with Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation to establish a provincial campground along Highway 35 in Mackenzie County.

**Strategy C1.5** Develop strategies to minimize environmental damage on the County's ATV/snowmobile trail networks.

**Strategy C1.6** Work with stakeholders to enhance and expand cross-country ski trails and facilities near each hamlet and develop strategies to minimize environmental damage.

**Goal C2** Capital-intensive recreational facilities are designed to guarantee significant and consistent levels of tourism from outside of the region.

As mentioned earlier in the report, the Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwestern Alberta (REDI) carried out a study in 2008 to assess the feasibility of a downhill ski facility in the region. Such a facility would be very attractive to local residents but these would not be able to support a privately owned facility or even one that is co-owned by the Municipality and a private operator. A tourism study carried out in 2009 suggested that a downhill ski facility could “provide an added component to a winter festival featuring cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling to build a more complete value proposition for winter tourism.”<sup>59</sup>

**Strategy C2.1** Work with regional partners to undertake a feasibility study to determine whether the *Buffalo Head* slopes site<sup>60</sup> could be designed to attract sufficient tourism to ensure financial viability for the establishment of a downhill ski facility.

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<sup>59</sup> Studio Group Marketing & Communications. *REDI Regional Tourism Plan*. 2009. Prepared for the Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwestern Alberta, p. 22

<sup>60</sup> This is the preferred development option for a Downhill Ski Facility site that has potential to attract tourism to the region. It is the only site in the County that can approximate the distribution of skier skill classes generally found within the skier marketplace (20% beginner, 60% intermediate, and 20% expert) according to: Brent Harley and Associates. *Northwest Alberta Downhill Ski Facility Site Selection Study*. 2008. Prepared for the Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwest Alberta (REDI).

## Utility Infrastructure

**Goal C3** The County continues to provide high quality utility services (water distribution and treatment as well as waste waster collection and treatment) and ensures that they:

- are available in each hamlet,
- meet quality standards consistent with current national standards and demand,
- are stable and reliable,
- are each financially self-sustaining at both operational and capital levels.

The following lists demonstrate the existing utility services provided by the County or in the County.

County-operated water treatment plants are located in:

- Fort Vermilion
- La Crete
- Zama City
- Rural Water line for residents between Fort Vermilion and La Crete (construction project approved in 2010)

County-operated rural water points can be found in:

- Rocky Lane
- Buffalo Head Prairie
- Wolfe Lake Water Point
- High Level Water Point
- Tompkins Water Point
- La Crete Water Point

Mackenzie Regional Waste Management Commission<sup>61</sup> operates:

- Blue Hills Transfer Station
- Buffalo Head Prairie Transfer Station
- La Crete Transfer Station
- Blumenort Transfer Station
- Fort Vermilion Transfer Station
- Rocky Lane Transfer Station
- Zama Transfer Station

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<sup>61</sup> Waste collection is not provided in County hamlets or rural areas. Transfer station layout maps are available in Appendix J2.

Natural Gas is provided by:

- AltaGas Utilities
- Northern Lights Gas Co-op

Electricity is provided by:

- Direct Energy Regulated Services
- ATCO Power

An economic development study undertaken last year indicates that the County water supply, as well as treatment and distribution facilities are adequate to sustain moderate or even rapid growth in most communities. There are upgrade or expansion projects either planned or underway for those that are not (see Appendix J4)

The La Crete water treatment system for example currently treats ground water and may soon reach its capacity. Should the existing raw water supply diminish completely or is not able to accommodate needs, the water may be provided via a potable water line from Fort Vermilion to La Crete with a secondary treatment process at the La Crete water treatment plant prior to distribution. In this situation, that treatment plant may require an upgrade to accommodate the change in the treatment process.

The County is in the process of implementing a multi-year plan to construct a rural water line between Fort Vermilion and La Crete using water from the Peace River. Engineering design and initial construction began in 2009. The plan's third phase was approved in 2010 and involves construction of the leg between Fort Vermilion and the Highway 88 connector, the road between Highway 88 and La Crete. The eight-phase plan should be completed by 2015 (see Appendix J4).

Wastewater collection and treatment facilities are also adequate to sustain moderate or even rapid growth in most communities. A new treatment facility opened recently in Zama City and the collection system in Fort Vermilion was recently upgraded.

Mackenzie County submitted a proposal to the province's Rural Community Adaptation Program in June 2010 to undertake a project that will include preparation of master plans for potable water distribution, wastewater collection, stormwater management systems as well as an off-site levy review. It will:

- provide an evaluation of the performance of County's existing systems
- recommend system performance standards and upgrading criteria
- identify system performance deficiencies

- determine performance upgrading requirements complete with conceptual cost estimates
- identify any revised growth projections and land use plans since the Municipal Development Plan was last updated
- recommend upgrades and new infrastructure requirements to service future growth conditions

**Strategy C3.1** Assess life expectancy for current facilities and prepare long-term plans to prepare for their replacement.

**Strategy C3.2** Provide potable rural water lines to County residents.

## Infrastructure Risk

**Goal C4** The risk of various types of damage to municipal infrastructure are minimized due to the availability of up-to-date risk assessments as well as up-to-date plans for managing each type of risk.

**Goal C5** The risk associated with damage to local infrastructure (other than the risk associated with climate change) is comparable to the levels of infrastructure risk in other parts of the province.<sup>62</sup>

Two types of risk will be addressed in this portion of the report. The first relates to the risk of damage to local infrastructure under various conditions. The second relates to the risk that a municipality must take when it must make growth projections to decide how many residents that a facility will serve over the course of its expected life.

While municipalities have been managing infrastructure risk for some time, the risk of damage to infrastructure due to climate change is a more recent development that warrants Council's attention. The most important reason for this is that this type of risk has changed the way that risk is assessed. Traditionally, risk has been assessed on the basis of what has happened in the past, e.g., rate of highway accidents, historical frequency of floods (some every 10 years, every 50 years, every 100 years, every 300 years), historical rate of forest fires based on seasonal temperatures.

There is no way of knowing when, how or to what extent global climate change will affect a given geographical area because it has not been dealt with in the modern age and there are no scientific records available to use as guidelines of what to expect.

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<sup>62</sup> The risk in Mackenzie County is higher than in other parts of the province because of the very high cost of bringing in professional services to address damage.

Climate change poses a new type of risk because future occurrences can no longer be based on events of the past.

Fortunately, municipalities can predict and plan for certain types of environmental phenomena. These include increases and decreases in:

- wind and water loads
- energy and water demands
- average seasonal temperatures
- average seasonal precipitation
- a combination of the above

Already in a 2002 Insurance Bureau of Canada presentation,<sup>63</sup> there was a recognition that patterns of weather-related hazards had changed. While two to four hazards had occurred each year in past decades, they had increased to 12 per year in the decade prior to 2002. Not only are municipalities being held accountable for their losses, but for the losses of individuals within their jurisdiction.

Anticipating the potential impacts of local and regional climate change and incorporating them into its sustainability plans, the County can strengthen its resilience to them. Measures that can be taken to reduce risk include the enhancement of emergency preparedness plans, annual inspections, improving GIS capacity, technical evaluations, and gathering information from stakeholders. Local farmers for example, could work with the Fort Vermilion research station to make plans for changes in farming practices necessary to address both an annual 3 degree Celcius increase and decrease in summer temperatures.

In 2002, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities<sup>64</sup> carried out a research project to raise awareness with six municipal governments about probable climate change impacts that would increase the vulnerability of their communities. Their results point to a number of conditions that lead to an increased capacity to respond to climate change impacts. When there is a research partner or team working with the municipality, there will be a greater chance of success if:

- a relationship of trust exists between staff, elected officials and the research partner and regular communication between them is maintained
- committed funding for research that directly assists the municipality is available

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<sup>63</sup> Voll, Jane. *Climate Change and Communities: An Insurance Perspective*. Insurance Bureau of Canada, 2002. Retrieved 2010 08 15 from <http://www.c-ciarn.ca/pdf/voll.pdf>

<sup>64</sup> Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2002). *Final report on Federation of Canadian Municipalities municipal infrastructure risk project: adapting to climate change*. Report prepared for the Climate Change Action Fund, Natural Resources Canada, 29 p.

- Council commits to its participation in the project with a clear understanding of the resources that must to be made available
- there are tangible benefits to the municipality in place (i.e. potential funding for database development)
- there is evidence that the community places a high priority on the potential climate change impacts
- local economic, social, cultural and political conditions are taken into account when planning project activities

**Strategy C5.1** Carry out full risk assessments of regional infrastructure every five years and update plans to mitigate identified risks (liability, property, errors and omissions, vehicle, and environmental assessments including those associated with hazardous goods and climate change).

**Strategy C5.2** Work with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to conduct a joint protective service risk assessment that will:

- identify potential opportunities to improve the quality and timeliness of services to protect regional infrastructure,
- address infrastructure at risk and liability issues,
- prioritize current/future issues requiring attention.

**Strategy C5.3** Work with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to develop a plan for sustainable water infrastructure and supply across the region that will address current and future requirements. This should include water available for fire suppression.

A strategy to address the cost of bringing in professional services has not been included as all strategies related to the improvement of transportation in and out of the County in this report will address this cost.

As mentioned earlier, the second type of risk that a municipality must take relates to the accuracy of growth projections when deciding how many residents that a facility will serve over the course of its expected life.

When communities undergo periods of rapid growth, residents tend to expect the municipality to project the necessary size of new facilities on the basis of recent high growth rates. Unfortunately, it is rare for a rapid growth rate to be sustained over time.

As can be seen from the Population Growth Rate table in Appendix H4, the County has undergone several years with growth rates as high as 12-36% in a single year. It should be noted however that in Mackenzie County, these high growth rates never

last more than one or two consecutive years and then they return to near zero growth rates for several more years in a row. In other words, the County's growth rate at any given period of time cannot be relied upon to continue for a sufficiently extended period to justify making capital investments on the basis of consistently high growth rates.

If a small community has grown in large spurts over a long time, the community must look at whether the reasons for the large spurts will continue. La Crete for example has grown from a few hundred in the 1940s to a few thousand in 2010. There are many reasons for its growth but an important one was the immigration of one to two thousand immigrants to the area. La Crete can only expect a similar growth rate if it intends to invite and host several thousand more newcomers to the area within the next couple of decades.

Growth rates are an unknown factor when a municipality plans for the size of new facilities. What makes things even more difficult is that the cost of planning for increased size is not proportionate. For example, it may only cost 10% more to build for 25% more capacity. It can be very tempting then, to plan for higher capacity than is necessary, "just in case."

When using growth projections, part of the calculation of the cost of the facility is based on the increased tax revenues expected from that growth. Two potential problems arise when growth projections are much too high or much too low. When growth is over-estimated, a smaller number of people than expected have to pay higher than expected taxes to maintain the facility. When growth is under-estimated, there is a higher cost to taxpayers because the facility must be expanded. Either way, taxpayers pay.

Making growth projections then, is a delicate and risky exercise. For this reason, the growth rate used to project facility usage over its lifetime tends to be conservative and represents the rate that the municipality has grown over an extended period of time (e.g. 20-50 years).

All of the strategies under the growth management heading in this report can be used to mitigate this type of risk (Strategies E19.1-E22.3).

## Staffing

**Goal C6** The County's staffing complement keeps pace with the County's growing need for infrastructure.

Municipal Councils tend to expect that their municipalities are administered in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible, and they should expect nothing less. At the same time, they plan for new structures, programs and activities and sometimes, are not aware of the burden that detailed planning places on existing staff. Mackenzie County has upgraded several facilities in the past year and are opening several new ones as well.

The staff today that respond to today's programs<sup>65</sup> cannot be expected to take on additional tasks to plan for major new projects.

**Strategy C6.1** Continue to review staffing needs annually.

**Strategy C6.2** Undertake a formal review of the County's organizational structure at least once every three years to ensure that its staff complement continues to meet current needs.

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<sup>65</sup> The current draft of the County's organizational chart is available in Appendix J1.

# CONCLUSION

## Plan Implementation and Evolution

**Goal Z1** The County has a well-organized, ongoing process to monitor the implementation of, and to assess the results of its sustainability plan.

To implement this plan, Council must make decisions that involve risk and that affect existing interests. To assure a healthy, long-term future for the County, Council must educate the community on the steps necessary for Council, residents and stakeholders to transform it. Mistakes may be made, but taking risks are part of any successful community's evolution.

The Municipal Sustainability Plan presented in this report is a long-term plan for the community. This statement contains two critical components: a time frame and a guide. The plan proposed in this report will not be easy to implement and will take a very long time to complete. Council and community residents alike must remind themselves periodically that many of the strategies assume the establishment of a sound foundation. Laying foundations can be the most time-consuming element of implementing a plan whether it be in constructing buildings or in building communities. To implement the plan, Council must first establish its short-term (2011-2013), medium-term (2014-2020) and long term objectives (2021-2050). It will be necessary to articulate strategies in more detail, to set target dates, and to update the plan annually, as goals are met, reframed or delayed.

Councillors and residents must also understand that by its very nature, a plan cannot be rigidly adhered to. It must take into account changing conditions in the community as well as new opportunities or threats. As conditions change, the plan must be updated to accommodate these changes. For this reason, the plan should be considered as a guide to meet the vision rather than a legislated document that must be implemented in every detail.

It is essential however, to:

- keep the vision and the long-term objectives as targets
- review the strategies needed to achieve them on a regular basis and
- adjust them as necessary

Steps that will be important to achieve the County's goals and vision are to establish a long-term calendar that indicates target dates for their achievement and to monitor the results of the strategies used to achieve the goals.

The calendar outlines dates for the achievement of each goal and for any short-term objectives developed to achieve the overall goal. It also includes dates for the completion of each strategy used to achieve the goal. Obstacles arise from time to time, and the achievement of some targets may be delayed. The plan's calendar is then modified accordingly. This provides Council and ratepayers with an overall picture of what the steps are to meet each goal and when they can expect that they will be met.

Once the County has finalized its plan and its calendar, it will be necessary to develop "key performance indicators" or KPIs to measure progress on County goals. This will provide Council with the information it needs to monitor and evaluate the plan's implementation over time.

**Strategy Z1.1** Develop a plan calendar.

**Strategy Z1.2** Develop key performance indicators to measure progress on key County goals.

**Strategy Z1.3** Schedule a dedicated item at each annual Council planning session to:

- review the sustainability plan's key performance indicators,
- update or amend any goals, strategies, key performance indicators and/or timelines as required.

**Strategy Z1.4** Prepare a sustainability plan implementation report every two years and circulate it to residents.

In summary,

- Be prepared to take risks.
- Always keep the vision and the objectives in the foreground and be cautious about getting caught prematurely in detail.
- Educate the community on the steps necessary for Council, residents and stakeholders to transform the community.
- Expand on the plan with time frames.
- Use the plan as a guide, not as a law.
- All of Council's efforts should be directed toward the achievement of Council's objective at hand, whatever it may be, rather than spending too much time fleshing out details of Plan B before they are needed.
- Once hamlets' future core areas are identified, find ways to drive activity to those areas now.
- Make it easy and attractive to walk between business areas.
- Improve maintenance on main pedestrian routes.
- Keep store fronts active.

## Using this Plan

To keep this Municipal Sustainability Plan off the shelf and in the minds of current and future Councillors, several steps can be taken to integrate it into ongoing decision-making processes. To ensure its implementation, a Municipal Plan must have life and must connect to Council's decision-making process. The assumption is that if the Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP) is sufficiently comprehensive, it will serve as a guide for all Council decisions. The County can require that requests to Council for funding or for decisions can state explicitly the goal or strategy in the MSP that it addresses. When Council makes other types of decisions, the related goal or strategy in the MSP can be reflected in the relevant Council meeting minutes. MDPs, Area Structure Plans, Business Plans, Strategic Plans, Emergency Management Plans and other planning tools can all tie their goals and strategies explicitly to the County's MSP.

To facilitate this explicit linking process, a decision-making template can be developed. When requests for decisions are submitted to Council, the template would pose a series of questions about:

- which sustainability step(s) will be addressed by the proposed action
- which specific goals and strategies will be addressed (referred to by a unique number identifier)
- measures to use to demonstrate the effectiveness of proposed actions

Clearly, the plan included in this report does not cover all of the potential decisions that will be made by Council. It is up to the County then to take this plan and to modify it to meet needs not currently addressed in the plan. Only then can Council embrace it as its own plan.

**Goal Z2** Councillors share a common vision for the directions that the County should take and the strategies to get there.

In conclusion, the obstacle to overall County sustainability that most urgently needs attention is the apparent tendency of decision-makers and community leaders to place local interests before County interests. In the long-term, local interests are at considerable risk if the County itself is not sustainable. Councillors in particular must learn to withstand the inevitable jealousies that arise when one region perceives that their needs are more important than those of another region. To ensure that the

County's strongest communities thrive, its weakest ones must be strengthened. Council, community leaders, residents and stakeholders must work to increase the level of harmony amongst themselves in order to achieve this objective. To assist them to do so, Council must dedicate resources, time and commitment to navigate the cultural and attitudinal differences that arise while working to address County needs.

**Strategy Z2.1** Undertake a systematic approach to sensitizing Councillors to the situations faced in other Councillors' jurisdictions by requesting that they make a sincere commitment to listen to what one another is saying and by requesting their participation in:

- at least 80% of expanded road tours,
- at least 80% of community meetings in other jurisdictions,
- at least 80% of targeted public social events in other jurisdictions.

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# Appendix A

## Executive Summary

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County's *4Step Community Sustainability Plan* is a type of strategic plan that outlines strategies to build a strong economy, one that protects environmental integrity and contributes to strong social cohesion.

Sustainability means that residents will continue to be able to live in ways that meet their needs yet do not erode the ability of their children and their children's children to meet their needs.

Residents recognize the County's growing potential to be a community of diverse people and cultures who share a common desire to live in an environment that embraces the northern spirit and where family, friends, and faith are the cornerstones of their lives. To achieve this vision, the County's main objective will be to unite residents and stakeholders by cultivating social, cultural and economic links between each of its various communities. Only by merging common interests and efforts, will the County's communities join forces to achieve common goals. The County's sustainability is also inextricably linked to local attitudes. Residents, community leaders and opinion setters must understand that achieving sustainability is not possible without building bridges between contrasting attitudes.

### Economic Sustainability

Mackenzie County's economy is founded on the extraction of natural resources, agriculture and forestry. At the same time, high quality public services are essential to provide a quality of life that remains attractive to local residents and to potential newcomers.

To ensure the County's long-term economic sustainability, Council must take measures to close the distance between business and their markets. This requires improving the efficiency and cost of travel through primary transportation corridors. Advocacy with the province will continue to be a primary strategy to ensure that :

- Highway 88 is fully paved as soon as possible
- Highway 58 is widened and extended to the BC border in a timely manner
- Zama Road is designated as a secondary highway and is paved
- Rail services are upgraded
- Scheduled air passenger services are improved

Given its northern climate, the County is proud of its agricultural community's successes. It will support and advocate, where necessary, for:

- enhancements to the sustainability of northern agricultural practices,
- community measures to strengthen the local research presence,
- measures taken to provide employment opportunities for youth and young families by promoting local agri-business opportunities.

Advocacy will also play a central role:

- in supporting local oil and gas producers to implement new projects in enhanced oil recovery and in carbon capture/sequestration in ensuring the
- availability of locally appropriate and high-quality health services that meet local needs. Establishing a municipal health committee can support Alberta Health Services to recruit and retain health professionals.

Despite the 2008-2009 economic downturn, there is room for optimism in the province's Northwest. The continuing potential for rapid population growth however, means the County requires current, reliable, and comprehensive population data in order to plan for facilities and services that will continue to meet local needs.

## Environmental Sustainability

Mackenzie County's extensive natural environment is a precious resource and will be governed in a way that protects it and that allows people to enjoy it, while limiting the possibility of damaging development. The County will:

- coordinate the planning of service roads for the forestry and oil and gas sectors to minimize duplication and environmental damage,
- advocate for the improvement of rail service in the County as a means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by cutting down on truck traffic moving goods to and from markets,
- minimize urban sprawl by discouraging residents and newcomers from settling in small parcels on potentially productive agricultural lands,
- undertake energy assessments of its facilities on a regular basis,
- monitor new developments in the recycling sector as a means to find realistic ways to increase local recycling of waste materials.

## Social Sustainability

Residents of any community need opportunities to meet and interact with others in a neutral way, one that builds relationships and more importantly, trust. When parents trust the residents of their community, they can allow their children to move around the community safely, and can be confident that if they run into a problem, someone will be available to help and contact the parents.

A “sense of place” or “place of assembly” is one where numerous types of activity take place in a central area of the community and provide opportunities for residents to meet and interact. The County can amend hamlet development plans to incorporate the establishment or reinforcement of a central core area. This will provide for or enhance synergistic opportunities for individuals and groups to gather for social and cultural opportunities, for commercial activity and for access to public services.

In 2010, the County is getting close to signing the first agreement that it has negotiated with a local First Nation, since its incorporation in 1995. The agreement will provide for County delivery of utility and fire protection services to the Tallcree Nation, for Tallcree representation on the Fort Vermilion Recreation Board and for access to its recreational facilities.

These discussions have largely taken place between each community’s leaders but will have a significant impact on their residents, particularly in the joint use of recreational facilities. Both parties to the agreement will want to make a success of the introduction of closer relations between members of their respective cultures. The County can now identify and prioritize goals that are common to both the County and specific First Nations, and develop joint strategies to address them. It will also be important:

- to involve members of First Nations communities in the planning processes for local activities and events.
- to encourage residents of First Nations, Mennonite and County communities to participate in one another’s public activities and events, and to ensure they feel genuinely welcome during such experiences (e.g., local festivals, cultural, and recreational activities).

## Community Infrastructure Sustainability

The County has relatively good recreational infrastructure and will continue to monitor how best to ensure a high level of recreation for its various communities. It also provides high quality utility services and must continue to manage them in such a fashion that they will sustain future generations. The County is currently

implementing an eight-phase plan to construct a rural water line to serve residents between Fort Vermilion and La Crete.

Infrastructure risk must continue to be considered and monitored over time. The risk of climate change should also be brought into the equation as it will have a significant impact on the infrastructure into the future. It will also be important to work with Rainbow Lake and High Level to develop joint risk assessments for the region.

The population growth rate in the County has fluctuated greatly, increasing by as much as 12-36% in some years. These rates are not continuous, however. When planning for infrastructure upgrades it will be important to use a conservative long range population estimate as the basis for those plans. This minimizes the financial problems that arise when planning to build for a population that is smaller or larger than anticipated.

## Conclusion

To be a successful County, everyone must work together and put local interests aside. The Municipal Sustainability Plan is a guide for the future and as such, its goals and strategies must be modified as opportunities arise and threats emerge. To implement this plan, Council must determine short, medium and long term objectives and adjust these to fit its needs. This MSP should guide all other plans and decisions made by Council, always striving and pointing the County in the direction of its Vision Statement.

## Appendix B

# Mackenzie County's Municipal Sustainability Plan

# MACKENZIE COUNTY

## 4STEP COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

### Vision

Mackenzie County is a community of diverse people and cultures who share a common desire to live in an environment that embraces the northern spirit and where family, friends, and faith are the cornerstones of their lives.

### Objective

Mackenzie County's objective is to cultivate social, cultural and economic links between the County's various communities so that they unite residents and stakeholders in the achievement of the County's vision.

### Principles

#### Local Autonomy

- Local freedom and flexibility provides a forum to take advantage of creative opportunities that face limited encumbrances from regulation.
- Optimal local autonomy with equal opportunities provides for the unique cultural, environmental, and economic flavour of each of the County's communities.
- Local post-secondary education will provide opportunities for the residents to learn skills locally that can be applied locally.
- Local hiring and training will permit the north to increase its labour self-sufficiency in the unskilled, skilled and professional sectors.

#### County Cohesion

- Bridge geographic distances to strengthen relationships both within and outside of municipal boundaries.

## Management of change

- Moderate yet sufficient population growth will preserve the culture and character of County communities. At the same time, it will permit under-served communities to reach the critical population mass necessary to sustain essential services: educational facilities, daily postal, grocery and fuel needs.
- The County's capacity to absorb natural population growth will reinforce the potential for families to age together.
- Moderate and centralized commercial development in under-served areas will create a synergy between businesses that will optimize business sustainability.
- Municipal policy on development density will preserve residents' ability to enjoy wide open spaces.
- Moderate change will permit renewal but will not interrupt the small-town atmosphere and the northern spirit inherent in County communities.

## Community Pride

- Strengthening community pride creates the incentive to attend to community maintenance, cleanliness, and aesthetic appeal.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal E1:** The County's transportation system:

- reduces travel time and increases safe, comfortable and efficient travel between its communities and between the County and major destinations beyond its borders,
- provides economically efficient access to business and industrial markets outside of County boundaries.

**Strategy E1.1:** Maintain a strong and consistent approach with Alberta Transportation to request the completion and of upgrade northern transportation corridors:

- to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods to, from and within the County,
- to strengthen economically, socially and environmentally sustainable opportunities for the movement of people, as well as agricultural and resource sector goods.



**Goal E2** Highway 88 is a fully-paved, two-lane highway with shoulders, passing lanes and rest stops that provides a well-maintained, year-round link between Highway 58 and Slave Lake.

**Strategy E2.1:** Encourage the establishment of a coalition of partners to form a Highway Association whose mandate would be twofold:

- to pursue a provincial commitment to pave the remaining 150 km of Highway 88 in a timely fashion,
- to market Highway 88's tourism and economic development potential.



**Goal E3** Highway 58 is a paved, two-lane highway with shoulders and passing lanes that extends from the BC border to the Wentzel River at Fox Lake.

**Strategy E3.1** Undertake comparative research of the NE British Columbia and NW Alberta economies in order to identify potential incentives for BC to extend its NE road system to its border with Alberta.

**Strategy E3.2** Obtain a commitment from the Government of Alberta to encourage the BC government to provide a permanent road link between Fort Nelson and Rainbow Lake and to extend Highway 58 to the BC border.

## Step I: Economic Sustainability (con'd)

**Strategy E3.3** Work with relevant organizations and interested parties in northeastern BC to promote the link jointly with the two provincial governments.

**Strategy E3.4** Work with regional stakeholders to pursue a provincial commitment to complete the widening of Highway 58 as soon as possible.

**Strategy E3.5** Work with the region's MLA, Alberta Transportation and regional stakeholders to assess the best alignment/route for connecting Highway 58 to BC's paved SYD road.



**Goal E4** Zama Road is a paved secondary highway.

**Strategy E4.1** Work with stakeholders to encourage the province to designate Zama Road as a secondary highway and to pave it within a specific period of time.



**Goal E5** Residents of La Crete, Blue Hills and Buffalo Head Prairie have paved access to:

- Highway 35 via a bridge that crosses the Peace River at Tompkins Landing,
- Highway 88 via the County road known as the Highway 88 Connector.

**Strategy E5.1** Request that the province assess the costs to users to make a detour when the river crossing at Tompkins Landing is unavailable against the benefit of a year-round bridge across the river.

**Strategy E5.2** Work with the province to establish timely, reliable, year-round crossing across the Peace River at Tompkins Landing.

**Strategy E5.3** Establish priorities and obtain financial assistance to pave hamlet roads under the provincial Streets Improvement Program.



## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

### **Goal E6** County businesses and shippers:

- are satisfied with communications and relationships with the company that provides rail service to the County,
- have access to reliable rail service on a 312-lb mainline standard,
- have access to a sufficient number of grain hopper cars that can be loaded to full mainline standard potential to keep costs down,
- enjoy comparable service to that provided elsewhere on Alberta's mainline.

### **Strategy E6.1** Encourage the establishment of a coalition or partnership of rail shippers in the Mackenzie and Peace regions whose mandate would be twofold:

- to work with CN to address gaps in car supply,
- to request that the province encourage CN to upgrade the line to a 286- or 312-lb rail standard.



### **Goal E7** Scheduled air passenger services in Mackenzie County reduce the time needed to travel within and beyond County boundaries.

#### **Strategy E7.1** Before permitting the purchase of land or the construction of homes along the airport's boundaries:

- commission a study immediately to investigate whether long term plans for the La Crete airport should involve expansion on its current site or relocation to a new site,
- develop a long-term strategy for the La Crete airport.

#### **Strategy E7.2** Continue to support a level of infrastructure for all weather airports in County communities.

#### **Strategy E7.3** Promote air service providers to create services to, from and between the communities of the region and beyond the County.

#### **Strategy E7.4** Add a safe, accessible heliport and a Medevac service to the Fort Vermilion and Zama airports.



### **Goal E8** Agricultural lands in Mackenzie County are in optimal health because area farmers use sustainable agricultural practices that are tailored to the needs of the local climate, flora and fauna.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E8.1** Encourage the County's Agricultural Services Board to work with the local agricultural societies, the Fort Vermilion substation of the Lacombe Research Centre and the Mackenzie Applied Research Association to identify and implement sustainable agricultural practices.



**Goal E9** Fort Vermilion hosts an applied research centre of excellence that focuses on human and technological adaptations to northern climates in four areas:

- human ecology,
- sustainable resource management/development,
- energy production/distribution,
- information technologies.

**Strategy E9.1** Explore options to establish an applied research centre of excellence in Fort Vermilion whose interdisciplinary focus would be on adaptation to northern climates.

**Strategy E9.2** Establish a research fund that would use accrued interest to grant funds for northern climate research projects.



**Goal E10** Youth have sustainable employment opportunities that enable them to continue to live and work in the County.

**Strategy E10.1** Work with the Northern Alberta Development Council to identify external sources of strategic expertise/assistance necessary to advocate for the establishment of agri-businesses that will be eligible to participate fully in provincial marketing boards as a means to distribute their products.



**Goal E11** Non-renewable resource companies operating in Mackenzie County are able to make profits while minimizing their environmental footprint by:

- operating to an acknowledged environmental standard,
- optimizing the recovery or distribution of the resource with which they are working,
- applying environmental remediation and restoration strategies when a site has been exhausted that will accelerate the recovery of the affected ecosystem (health, integrity and sustainability).

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E11.1** Continue to advocate for enhanced oil recovery (EOR).

**Strategy E11.2** Continue to advocate for the use of environmentally sustainable production and distribution practices in the County oil and gas fields.

**Strategy E11.3** Continue to support Apache Corporation in its efforts to implement responsible carbon sequestration processes.

**Strategy E11.4** Research the long-term prognosis for the life of the Rainbow Lake oil and gas field and identify a role that the County can play to support Husky Energy and Imperial Oil to develop new technologies to increase the life of their field and to practice environmentally sustainable production and distribution.

**Strategy E11.5** Keep informed about and/or explore:

- the evolution of the plans for two proposed Arctic pipelines including the Mackenzie Valley pipeline,
- other exploration opportunities planned for the southern Northwest Territories,
- their impact on the County's environment (e.g., need for roads/tributary lines),
- the implications for economic development opportunities in the County.

**Strategy E11.6** Develop a procedure to co-ordinate plans for the establishment of new infrastructure being made by commercial, government and public service organizations in rural and wilderness areas.



**Goal E12** Timber that has commercial value in Mackenzie County is harvested in a manner that is:

- as environmentally sustainable as possible,
- legally allowable,
- physically possible,
- financially feasible,
- optimally productive.

**Strategy E12.1** Promote the direct sale of lumber cleared from the Alberta/Mackenzie County land exchange to local forest companies.



## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Goal E13** The quality of and access to health services offered in the county is comparable to or exceeds those of other rural health regions in the province.

**Strategy E13.1** Establish or strengthen a municipal physician recruitment and retention committee targeted at health services for residents in hamlets, rural areas, First Nations communities and the local “shadow” population.

- Ensure that the committee’s membership is composed of a representative who is capable of speaking on behalf of the interests of each of these core target groups.
- Develop a strategy to ensure that Alberta Health Services’ Region 1 Community Health Council has a direct line of communication with the municipal physician retention and recruitment committee.
- Use the committee to facilitate the establishment of innovative partnerships that could enhance service delivery in the region (e.g., partnerships with resource companies’ occupational health teams, with property owners that have space available for lease, with an enhanced research centre of excellence, with an existing or newly-created society that co-ordinates volunteers to work in health programs and facilities).
- Use the committee to monitor evolving health service developments around the province and the country on an ongoing basis in order to familiarize its members as well as those of the Community Health Council with alternative models and strategies that might be adaptable to the region’s services.
- Establish a productive working relationship with the High Level Health Services Committee and its Health and Safety Committee to ensure that goals and strategies of mutual interest are fully supported and not in competition with one another.

**Strategy E13.2** Work with community stakeholders to establish a strong voice with both the department of *Alberta Health and Wellness* and *Alberta Health Services*, to ensure that ongoing provincial planning meets local health needs.



**Goal E14** Residents can remain living in the County while pursuing post-secondary educational opportunities in the fields of service, technology and the trades.

**Strategy E14.1** Develop a detailed plan to advocate for equitable provincial post-secondary funding for the County that is based on a recognition of the County’s unique demographic profile.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E14.2** Identify and facilitate the implementation of strategies that would increase the attractiveness of distance learning in the region.

**Strategy E14.3** Expand the availability and local awareness of high quality distance learning opportunities.



**Goal E15** All County residents and businesses have access to the most current telecommunication technologies to permit them to participate in global opportunities.

**Strategy E15.1** Use the County's rural gas co-operative to continue using a systematic approach to expand broadband coverage throughout the County and its First Nations communities.



**Goal E16** The County's business communities can provide local products and services to meet consumer demand.

**Strategy E16.1** Consult with the County's business community to identify strategies that would strengthen the municipality's "open-for-business" attitude.

**Strategy E16.2** Undertake an assessment to determine if and how the County may be of assistance or can provide support to businesses operating under County business licenses.

**Strategy E16.3** Develop strategies to attract small- and medium-sized enterprises that provide support to the County's existing businesses and industries.



**Goal E17** Mackenzie County:

- is an attractive destination for non-residents to visit or to decide to relocate, and
- remains an attractive home for County residents at all stages of their lives.

**Strategy E17.1** Develop a promotional program for relocation targeted at the employees/contract workers with families that are working in the Zama oil and gas field.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E17.2** Work in partnership with regional organizations to develop strategies to promote the County including a program to involve community members in promoting the area to distant friends and family.

**Strategy E17.3** Develop a detailed plan to advocate for a substantial enhancement to health service delivery models in the County.

**Strategy E17.4** Encourage the establishment of, promote and support “Buy Local” initiatives.



**Goal E18** Mackenzie County accommodates a thriving tourist sector without compromising the natural environment that hosts it.

**Strategy E18.1** Work with the Northern Alberta Development Council to develop strategies to adapt County infrastructure and its natural environment in ways that will lay the groundwork for the development of an environmentally sustainable tourist sector (e.g., agricultural and/or eco-tourism).

**Strategy E18.2** Assess whether the County’s existing tourism facilities, businesses and industries are based on environmental values that are, or have the potential to be consistent with the establishment of a County-wide eco-tourist industry.

**Strategy E18.3** Develop bylaws that outline environmental requirements for all tourist facilities and practices that operate in the County.



**Goal E19** Mackenzie County’s population growth rate is about 50% every ten years and will stabilize to a more moderate rate of 10% by the year 2030.

**Strategy E19.1** Foster an expansion of economic opportunities in the region using strategies identified under the Economic Step in this report (Strategies E1-E22).

**Strategy E19.2** Foster increased inter-provincial and international immigration.

**Strategy E19.3** Develop strategies to increase the quality of life for large families living in the County.



**Goal E20** The majority of Mackenzie County’s workforce live in the County with their children and families.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E20.1** Work with Apache, Husky Oil and the forestry sector to:

- identify strategies to attract employees' families to relocate to Mackenzie County,
- identify what their employees would expect before they would be willing to move their family to the County and determine whether the County or Apache are in a position to address these priorities,
- develop a joint plan to address those needs and to promote family relocation.

**Strategy E20.2** Identify and promote each hamlet's strengths in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.

**Strategy E20.3** Identify and address individual each hamlet's needs in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.

**Strategy E20.4** Provide exceptional services that enhance the quality of life in County hamlets and existing rural areas as a means to dissuade residents and newcomers from moving to undeveloped areas to establish small lots or acreages.

**Strategy E20.5** Take proactive measures to anticipate growth by preparing evidence-based plans for it but exercise considerable caution in executing major capital expenditures.



**Goal E21** The County has reliable and comprehensive population data to make sound decisions and municipal plans.

**Strategy E21.1** Consult with remote, northern municipalities in other provinces to share strategies that address the difficulties in acquiring accurate municipal census data.

**Strategy E21.2** Work with the provincial government to develop a responsible yet equitable method to ensure the County's "shadow" population can be counted so that its true population can be recorded enabling it to access its fair share of transfer payments.

**Strategy E21.3** Undertake a timely municipal census during major population shifts.



## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Goal E22** Mackenzie County's economy has the capacity to moderate the local impacts of dramatic economic up- and downturns in resource sector activities.

**Strategy E22.1** When making County growth projections for planning major capital expenditures, continue to use "average 20-year growth rates" rather than using "current growth rates" that may not represent enduring growth patterns.

**Strategy E22.2** The County will support efforts to diversify its economic base.

**Strategy E22.3** The County will negotiate life-cycle agreements with current and new industries to ensure that investments are appropriate to project life-cycles.

## STEP II: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal N1** Mackenzie County's river valleys are maintained in their natural state and are legislated to remain as such in perpetuity.

**Strategy N1.1** Protect the natural state of Mackenzie County's river valleys with strongly worded municipal bylaws that prevent development.

**Strategy N1.2** Develop municipal policy to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and utilization practices serve to preserve the health and safety of the valleys (especially sound practices to guide the development of any future roadways that must be built over a river).

**Strategy N1.3** Develop municipal bylaws and policies to support continuing public access to the County's river valleys.



**Goal N2** Mackenzie County's environmentally sensitive land areas are well-preserved.

**Strategy N2.1** Identify and maintain an up-to-date inventory of Mackenzie County's environmentally sensitive land areas or ones that are at risk of becoming environmentally sensitive.

**Strategy N2.2** If applicable, select land area(s) that the County wishes to protect from development and develop rationales and strong municipal policies/standards for their protection to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and on-going utilization practices serve to preserve environmentally sensitive lands.



**Goal N3** Optimal use is made of County farm land.

**Strategy N3.1** Record a motion in Council minutes indicating Council's intent with respect to whether and how it will pursue further land exchange negotiations with the province.

**Strategy N3.2** Ensure that the County's Land-Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan limit urban or non-agricultural development in unused lands that are best-suited for agriculture.

## Step II: Environmental Sustainability (con'd)

**Goal N4** The use and consumption of electricity, natural gas and water in community-owned facilities is reduced from 2010 levels.

**Strategy N4.1** Request that the relevant architect(s) for each new County facility and utility system erected since 2006 review the requirements for LEED Certification in order to:

- determine which would be eligible for certification,
- apply for certification for those that are eligible.

For those that are not eligible, request that ATCOEnergy Sense undertake energy managements audits.

**Strategy N4.2** Insert at least three energy management projects into the County's ten-year capital plan:

- La Crete Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting),
- Fort Vermilion Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting),
- Zama Water treatment Plant (heating, DDC and lighting).

**Strategy N4.3** Update strategies, target levels, time-lines and key performance indicators annually to monitor the reduction of the consumption of each resource used in County-owned infrastructure.

**Strategy N4.4** Schedule energy management audits of all County facilities once every 15 years, to identify opportunities for enhancing energy efficiencies and develop an audit-based plan to make the necessary changes.



**Goal N5** County residents consistently recycle a large majority of their bottles, paper, plastics, cardboard, and electronics.

**Strategy N5.1** Continue to monitor new developments in recycling technologies that would be economically feasible for use by the County.

**Strategy N5.2** Work in collaboration with community organizations and groups to strengthen local recycling initiatives.



## STEP II: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Goal N6** Mackenzie County's hamlet land-use plans are designed to provide energy-efficient means of access between key destinations in the community.

**Strategy N6.1** Ensure that hamlet municipal development plans provide for safe, convenient, accessible and comfortable pedestrian pathways in each community.

## STEP III: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal S1** Each County hamlet and rural area hosts a concentration of social, cultural and commercial activity in one strategic location.

**Strategy S1.1** Amend hamlet development plans to incorporate the establishment or reinforcement of a central core area that provides synergistic opportunities for individuals and groups to gather for social and cultural opportunities, for commercial activity and the provision of public services.

**Strategy S1.2** Develop a community standards bylaw for residential and industrial properties and promote its enforcement in Zama City.



**Goal S2** The County's hamlets, rural areas and First Nations communities each have distinct and thriving cultures yet they are linked by common, broad economic and environmental conditions.

**Strategy S2.1** Showcase the unique features of each of the County's cultures throughout its hamlets and populated rural areas.



**Goal S3** The County and the four First Nations located within its geographical boundaries share a common vision for the region, one that maintains cultural autonomy and that harmonizes economic pursuits.

**Strategy S3.1** Use a cultural interpreter to develop joint protocols with each First Nation to manage inter-cultural communication and to resolve mutual concerns.

**Strategy S3.2** Identify and prioritize goals that are common to both the County and specific First Nations, and develop joint strategies to address them.

**Strategy S3.3** Develop public awareness activities to assist residents to understand the reasons for, and how to welcome an increased number of members of another culture to their community activities.

**Strategy S3.4** Invite the First Nations and Mennonite communities to create and display icons of their cultures in each County hamlet.

**Strategy S3.5** Encourage local organizations to involve members of First Nations communities in the planning processes for local activities and events.

**Strategy S3.6** Develop strategies to encourage residents of First Nations, Mennonite and County communities to participate in one another's public activities and events, and to ensure they feel genuinely welcome during such experiences (e.g., local festivals, cultural, and recreational activities).

**Strategy S3.7** Continue to involve Mennonites and begin to involve representatives of First Nations communities in advocacy activities for the availability and cultural appropriateness of health services offered in the County.



**Goal S4** The capacity of infrastructure in County hamlets and rural communities keeps pace with their growth and is planned in a way that ensures their sustainability.

**Strategy S4.1** Explore strategies to establish a retail convenience outlet in Blue Hills that could provide basic amenities for local residents (e.g., milk, gas, stamps, aspirin, and a postal service) and that would be located next to the Blue Hills community hall.



## STEP IV: SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

**Goal C1** Community parks, recreational facilities and community halls are available to each community consistent with local, cultural needs.

**Strategy C1.1** Assess life expectancy for current recreational facilities and prepare long-term plans to ensure the timely availability of funds to address:

- expected maintenance requirements during the typical life cycle of each facility,
- facility upgrades or replacement.

**Strategy C1.2** Undertake a financial and operational review of County recreational facilities and equipment to:

- ensure adequacy of capital, operating funding and reserves,
- identify opportunities for increased usage, increased revenues and decreased costs,
- ensure optimal use of funds,
- identify other efficiencies that could mitigate the size of the annual grant required from the County to operate the facilities.

**Strategy C1.3** Establish policies that will ensure that residents of each hamlet have access to an attractive and well-managed community park site that:

- is easily accessible,
- reflects community values,
- is linked to other parks in a manner that will eventually provide for a County-wide linked park system.

**Strategy C1.4** Work with the Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation to establish a provincial campground along Highway 35 in Mackenzie County.

**Strategy C1.5** Develop strategies to minimize environmental damage on the County's ATV/snowmobile trail networks.

**Strategy C1.6** Work with stakeholders to enhance and expand cross-country ski trails and facilities near each hamlet and develop strategies to minimize environmental damage.



## STEP IV: SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (CON'D)

**Goal C2** Capital-intensive recreational facilities are designed to guarantee significant and consistent levels of tourism from outside of the region.

**Strategy C2.1** Work with regional partners to undertake a feasibility study to determine whether the *Buffalo Head* slopes site could be designed to attract sufficient tourism to ensure financial viability for the establishment of a downhill ski facility.



**Goal C3** The County continues to provide high quality utility services (water distribution and treatment as well as waste water collection and treatment) and ensures that they:

- are available in each hamlet,
- meet quality standards consistent with current national standards and demand,
- are stable and reliable,
- are each financially self-sustaining at both operational and capital levels.

**Strategy C3.1** Assess life expectancy for current facilities and prepare long-term plans to prepare for their replacement.

**Strategy C3.2** Provide potable rural water lines to County residents.



**Goal C4** The risk of various types of damage to municipal infrastructure is minimized due to the availability of up-to-date risk assessments as well as up-to-date plans for managing each type of risk.

**Goal C5** The risk associated with damage to local infrastructure (other than the risk associated with climate change) is comparable to the levels of infrastructure risk in other parts of the province.

**Strategy C5.1** Carry out full risk assessments of regional infrastructure every five years and update plans to mitigate identified risks (liability, property, errors and omissions, vehicle, and environmental assessments including those associated with hazardous goods and climate change).

## STEP IV: SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (CON'D)

**Strategy C5.2** Work with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to conduct a joint protective service risk assessment that will:

- identify potential opportunities to improve the quality and timeliness of services to protect regional infrastructure,
- address infrastructure at risk and liability issues,
- prioritize current/future issues requiring attention.

**Strategy C5.3** Work with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to develop a plan for sustainable water infrastructure and supply across the region that will address current and future requirements. This should include water available for fire suppression.



**Goal C6** The County's staffing complement keeps pace with the County's growing need for infrastructure.

**Strategy C6.1** Continue to review staffing needs annually.

**Strategy C6.2** Undertake a formal review of the County's organizational structure at least once every three years to ensure that its staff complement continues to meet current needs.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

**Goal Z1** The County has a well-organized, ongoing process to monitor the implementation of, and to assess the results of its sustainability plan.

**Strategy Z1.1** Develop a plan calendar.

**Strategy Z1.2** Develop key performance indicators to measure progress on key County goals.

**Strategy Z1.3** Schedule dedicated time at each annual Council planning session to:

- review the sustainability plan's key performance indicators,
- update or amend any goals, strategies, key performance indicators and/or timelines as required.

**Strategy Z1.4** Prepare a sustainability plan implementation report every two years and circulate it to residents.



**Goal Z2** Councillors share a common vision for the directions that the County should take and the strategies to get there.

**Strategy Z2.1** Undertake a systematic approach to sensitize Councillors to the situations faced in other Councillors' jurisdictions by requesting that they make a sincere commitment to listen to what one another is saying and by requesting their participation in:

- at least 80% of expanded road tours,
- at least 80% of community meetings in other jurisdictions,
- at least 80% of targeted public social events in other jurisdictions.

## Appendix C

### Reference List

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The following documents were among the primary reference sources reviewed during the course of the development of the Municipal Sustainability Plan.

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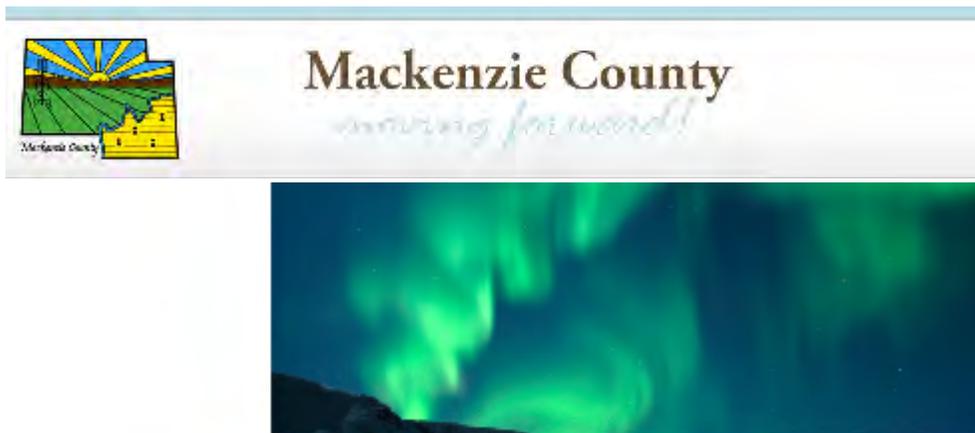
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## Appendix D

### Mackenzie Future Website



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## News & Updates

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- The County is developing plans to ensure its long-term viability.  
[Click here to view the new activity schedule](#)  
Your input is essential.
- [Mackenzie County: Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

## Home

Mackenzie County is using a new approach to envision and prepare for its future. The County wants to involve residents in thinking about:

- a long-term vision for the County
- what would need to be done to achieve that vision

The reason for this is to make sure that County leadership and its economy remain strong over the long-term. By having both, the County can then make sure that it has the capacity to:

- meet the County's social and recreational needs
- help strengthen its distinctive cultures and the relations between them
- preserve the long-term health of the environment

We are calling this our "Community Plan."

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## What is a Community Plan?

- [What is a Community Plan?](#)
- [Why should the county have a Community Plan?](#)
- [Who is developing the plan?](#)
- [When will the planning process occur?](#)

Our Community Plan will help the County to make sure that we live in a way that meets our needs without weakening the ability of our children and our children's children to meet their needs.

It is a vision that is based on:

- A consensus on a successful future that is shared by the County, its residents and those who have a stake in the County
- A series of solutions for the challenges that arise from change (e.g., growth or decline)
- A legacy that meets current and future needs
- An overall view that guides other community plans such as the County's land-use plan, the business plan and the strategic plan.

Mackenzie's plan incorporates four steps to sustainability:

### Economic Viability

A flourishing and diverse local economy:

- A wide range of jobs and training opportunities
- Sufficient land and buildings to support economic prosperity and change
- Dynamic job and business creation
- A strong business community with links into the wider economy

### Social and Cultural Cohesion

Harmonious and inclusive communities:

- Tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs
- Friendly, cooperative and helpful behaviour in neighbourhoods
- Opportunities for leisure, recreation, sport and other activities
- Low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour with visible, effective and community-friendly policing
- All people are socially included and have similar life opportunities
- Sufficient range, diversity and affordability of housing within a balanced housing market
- A sense of community identity and belonging;
- Opportunities for expression via a variety of art forms (visual, dramatic, musical, etc);
- Strong sense of community heritage;
- Pride in the whole County

## Environmental Integrity

A quality natural and built environment:

- Efficient use of resources now and in the future in the built environment and service provision (e.g. energy efficiency, land, water resources, flood defense, waste minimization, etc.)
- Living in a way that minimizes the negative environmental impact and enhances the positive impact (e.g. recycling, walking, cycling)
- Protecting and improving natural resources and biodiversity (e.g. air quality, noise, water quality)
- Having due regard for the needs of future generations in current decisions and actions
- Creating a sense of place (e.g. a place with a positive 'feeling' for people, and local distinctiveness)
- Well-maintained, local, user-friendly public and green spaces with facilities for everyone including children and older people
- A high quality, well-designed built environment of appropriate size, scale, density, design and layout that complements the distinctive local character of the community
- High quality, mixed-use, durable, flexible and adaptable buildings

## Community Facilities

A sustainable approach to responding to community needs for:

- Community Wellness Facilities (recreation, parks, services)
- Public Works
- Utility Services

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## Why should the County have a Community Plan?

[What is a Community Plan?](#)  
[Why should the county have a Community Plan?](#)  
[Who is developing the plan?](#)  
[When will the planning process occur?](#)

There are a variety of reasons why a local Council might decide to do this type of Plan. Here are two that are relevant to Mackenzie County.

### The question of growth, staying the same or downsizing

Some communities in Alberta face the challenge of surviving into the future:

- Their population may be getting smaller
- There may be a lack of job opportunities, or
- There may be a lack of educational opportunities for young people

On the other hand, some communities are growing so quickly that the cost of building and maintaining roads, sewers and water treatment is a heavy economic burden. Rapid growth also reduces a sense of connection with fellow citizens. A Sustainability Plan helps the County to be prepared for rapid change.

### Access to government funding

The provincial and federal governments have strongly encouraged all Cities, Towns, Villages and Counties to consult with their residents to develop a vision for their community's future. These sustainability plans are now a requirement for eligibility for many provincial and federal grants for roads, recreation and cultural facilities and many other services.

Essentially, Canada and the province are telling municipal governments: "Consult with your community before asking for money. Make sure you and your residents are on the same page."

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## Who is developing the plan?

[What is a Community Plan?](#)  
[Why should the county have a Community Plan?](#)  
[Who is developing the plan?](#)  
[When will the planning process occur?](#)

Council has hired a municipal consulting firm called Activation Analysis Group Inc. (AAGI) to work with residents and the County to develop the plan.

There will be individual interviews held with some residents. There will be public meetings in each community. Most importantly, the interactive section of this website will be used to obtain input from residents on a variety of topics.

After consulting with the community, AAGI will prepare a draft report to be presented to Council for its approval and action. This draft will be available to the community on this web page when it is ready. Council may request changes to the plan before its final approval.

This web page will keep residents informed at every step of the process.

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## Community Meetings

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

The powerpoint presentation from the Community Meetings can be found on the [Presentations](#) page.

## Community Meeting Schedule

### La Crete

---

Monday May 3rd  
at 7:00pm  
at the La Crete Heritage Centre

### Blue Hills

---

Tuesday May 4th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Blue Hills Community School

### Zama City

---

Wednesday May 5th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Zama Community Hall

### Fort Vermilion

---

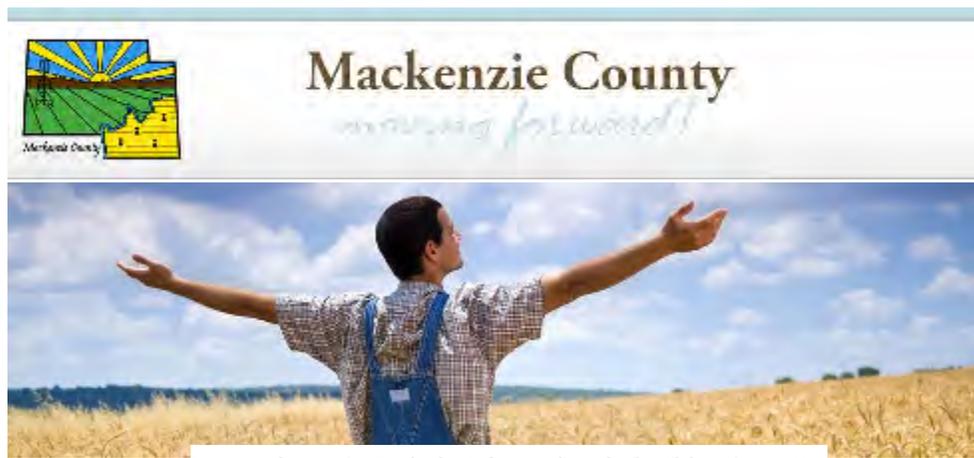
Thursday May 6th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Fort Vermilion Council Chambers

### Rocky Lane

---

Friday May 7th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Rocky Lane Agricultural Society Community Hall

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- [Mackenzie County: Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

## Surveys

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

The survey process is now complete. Thank you for your input.

Watch for Mackenzie's Municipal Sustainability Plan report that will be posted in August or September.

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## Presentations

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

Public meetings were held in each of the County's hamlets. View the presentation, which was featured at the Community Meetings, for additional background information on the Municipal Sustainability Plan.

[Download PowerPoint presentation \(1.04 MB\)](#)

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# Mackenzie County

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- [Mackenzie County: Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

## Pictures

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

One way to find out what people think about their community is to find out what visual images they think of when they think of their home town.

E-mail your photos to: [input@mackenziefuture.ca](mailto:input@mackenziefuture.ca) and we will post them on this web page.

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# Mackenzie County

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## References/Downloads

[Mackenzie County: Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

[Social and Cultural Step: Background material](#)

[Environmental Step: Background material](#)

[Economic Step: Background Material](#)

[Community Facilities Step: Background Material](#)

### Social and Cultural Step: Background material

[Statistics Canada 2006 Community Profile for Mackenzie County](#)

[Alberta Municipal Affairs Municipal Profile for Mackenzie County](#)

[See how Mackenzie County's population has changed since 1959](#)

[The County's growth rate changed remarkably from one year to the next for a long time](#)

See the changing composition of the County's population between 1996 and 2006

- [Age of Population - Mackenzie and Wood Buffalo](#)
- [Age of Population - Mackenzie and Big Lakes](#)
- [Age of Population - Mackenzie and Grand Prairie](#)
- [Age of Population 2006 - Mackenzie and Wood Buffalo](#)
- [Age of Population 2006 - Mackenzie and Big Lakes](#)
- [Age of Population 2006 - Mackenzie and Grand Prairie](#)

See how the breakdown of occupations in Mackenzie County compared with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo in 2001 and 2006

- [Occupations 2001](#)
- [Occupations 2006](#)

[See how the breakdown of industries in Mackenzie County compares with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo](#)

[See how the median income in Mackenzie County compares with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo](#)

[There are fewer people per dwelling unit in Mackenzie County in 2006 than there were 10 years before](#)

[There are more dwelling units in Mackenzie County in 2006 than there were 10 years before](#)

[Reserves and Métis settlements in Mackenzie County](#)

[Aboriginal People in Alberta - 2006 Census Analysis](#)

[See how the breakdown of immigrant status in Mackenzie County compares with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo](#)

[English is not the mother tongue of the majority of Mackenzie County's residents](#)

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### Environmental Step: Background material

[Mackenzie County Municipal Development Plan](#)

[County Land Use Districts](#)

[Community Plan - Ft Vermilion](#)

[Community Plan - High Level](#)

[Community Plan - La Crete](#)

[Community Plan - Rainbow Lake](#)

[Community Plan - Zama City](#)

[Development Plan - High Level](#)

[Development Plan - Rainbow Lake \(industrial\)](#)

[Development Plan - Rainbow Lake \(residential\)](#)

[Development Plan - Zama City](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - Dene Tha First Nation Baseline](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - High Level Baseline](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - Rainbow Lake Baseline](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - Zama City Baseline](#)

[Hay-Zama Wildland Provincial Park Map](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - Dene Tha First Nation](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - High Level](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - Rainbow Lake](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - Zama City](#)

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## **Economic Step: Background Material**

---

Financial Statements for Mackenzie County

- [2006 Audited Financial Statements](#)
- [2007 Audited Financial Statements](#)
- [2008 Audited Financial Statements](#)

County Budgets

- [2007 County Budget](#)
- [2008 County Budget](#)
- [2009 County Budget](#)

[Airport Information Report - Ft. Vermillion Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - High Level Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - La Crete Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - Rainbow Lake Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - Zama City Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - Zama Lake Airport](#)

[Assessment of County Properties](#)

[Bitumen Resources and Grosmont Field](#)

[Condensate Production 1990-2006](#)

[Natural Gas Production 1990-2006](#)

[Oil & Gas Industry Activity by Well Count](#)

[Oil Production 1990-2006 \(barrels of oil\)](#)

[Oil Production 1990-2006 \(cubic metres\)](#)

[Regional Labour Market Review](#)

[Transportation Infrastructure in Mackenzie County](#)

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## **Community Facilities Step: Background Material**

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[Mackenzie County Parks&Recreation Infrastructure](#)

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Your input is essential.
- [Mackenzie County:](#)  
[Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

## Links

[Alberta Urban Municipalities Association's  
Municipal Sustainability Planning microsite](#)

[Comprehensive Guide for Municipal Sustainability Planning](#)

[Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties'  
Integrated Community Sustainability Plan Tools](#)

[Case Studies](#)

[Realizing a Vision of Sustainability:  
Apply for the EQUilibrium Communities Initiative](#)

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## Contact Us

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[www.aagi.ca](http://www.aagi.ca)

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Phone: (780) 927.3718  
Fax: (780) 927.4266  
[www.mackenziecounty.com](http://www.mackenziecounty.com)

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# Appendix E

## Public Input

- E1: Public Meetings' Newspaper Advertisement
- E2: Powerpoint Presentation for Public Meetings
- E3: Mackenzie Future Survey



# Planning Mackenzie's Future

The County is developing plans to ensure its long-term viability. Your input is essential. The Community meetings will allow you to provide your input and to respond to proposed changes for the County. Come out to the meeting nearest you and help make Mackenzie County an appealing place for years to come!

## **La Crete**

7:00 pm - May 3, 2010  
La Crete Heritage Centre

## **Blue Hills**

7:00 pm - May 4, 2010  
Blue Hills Community School

## **Zama City**

7:00 pm - May 5, 2010  
Zama Community Hall

## **Fort Vermilion**

7:00 pm - May 6, 2010  
Fort Vermilion Council Chambers

## **Rocky Lane**

7:00 pm - May 7, 2010  
Rocky Lane Agricultural Society Community Hall

**Make a lasting impact – come out  
and help shape Mackenzie County!**

For more information and to find out  
other ways to get involved visit:

**[www.mackenziefuture.ca](http://www.mackenziefuture.ca)**



## 4Step Community Development Plan

### What is Mackenzie County's 4Step Community Development Plan?

- It is a specific type of strategic plan
- Designed to provide the County with a viable structured road-map as a means to plan for long-term sustainability
- It outlines the steps necessary to build a strong economy that protects environmental integrity and that contributes to strong social cohesion in this culturally diverse municipal district

1



## 4Step Community Development Plan

### Who is developing Mackenzie County's 4Step Community Development Plan?

- Activation Analysis Group Inc. is assisting Mackenzie County in the formation of the Plan
- Public Planning sessions are being held during the first week of May in Hamlets around the County for public input
- The comprehensive Plan is to be completed by June 30, 2010

**Mackenzie County is challenged by both distance from markets and between each area of settlement.**

2



## 4Step Community Development Plan

### Incorporates 4 Steps:

- Social Sustainability
- Environmental Sustainability
- Economic Sustainability
- Community Infrastructure Sustainability

**Overall sustainability will be based on its capacity to adapt to changing conditions and to develop strategies to cope with the volatility inherent in a resource-based economic environment.**

3



## Vision Statement

A key component is the vision statement, one that expresses the nature of the community in which citizens wish to live. An authentic vision statement must have the following characteristics:

- A measurable standard
- Consistency
- Validity
- Authentic
- Actionable
- Internal to the community
- Value-based

4



## Social Sustainability

**A socially sustainable community is one that is characterized by:**

- Respectful engagement with people from different backgrounds
- Social inclusiveness where all citizens have similar life opportunities
- Opportunities for leisure, recreation, sport and social support activities
- Low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Diversity and affordability of housing
- A sense of community identity, belonging and pride
- Strong sense of community heritage

5



## Environmental Sustainability

**High quality natural and well-designed built environments:**

- Create a sense of place
- Are designed so that residents can live in ways that minimize negative environmental impact and enhance positive impact
- Protect and improve natural resources and biodiversity
- Include local public and green spaces that are well-maintained and user-friendly, and that have facilities for people of all ages
- Are of a size, scale, density, design and layout that complement the distinctive local character of the communities
- Have considered the needs of future generations

6



# Economic Sustainability

## A consistently thriving local economy:

- Makes new and diverse jobs and training opportunities available
- Attracts and maintains an adequate and stable workforce to meet the needs of the commercial and institutional sectors
- Makes quality land and buildings available to support healthy economic activity and change
- Provides for the creation and diversification of businesses and industries
- Builds a strong business community that is well-connected with the wider economy



# Community Infrastructure Sustainability

## Municipally-owned facilities:

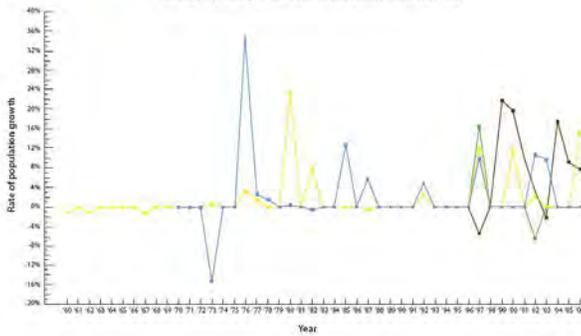
- Operate at optimal usage levels given the size of the population and have the capacity to absorb community growth
- Are well-maintained that maximizes life expectancy
- Have accumulated reserve funds in place to ensure facility replacement when needed
- Have replacement capital plans in place that take the needs of future generations into account
- Have operating budgets that reflect staffing levels necessary to achieve their objectives



## Population Growth Rate

■ Mackenzie County ■ Grande Prairie County ■ MD of Big Lakes ■ Wood Buffalo

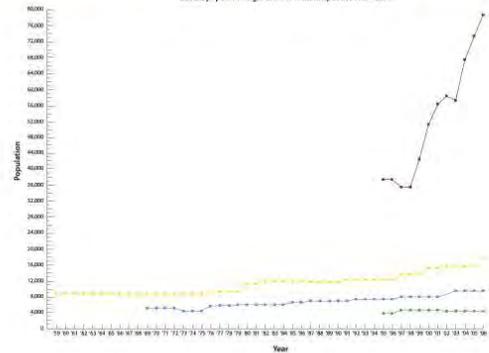
Rate of population growth for each of four municipalities 1960-2006



## Population

■ Mackenzie County ■ Grande Prairie County ■ MD of Big Lakes ■ Wood Buffalo

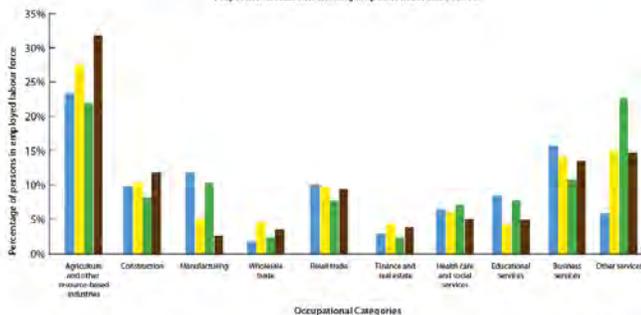
Official population figures for four municipalities 1959-2006



## Industry

■ Mackenzie County ■ Grande Prairie County ■ MD of Big Lakes ■ Wood Buffalo

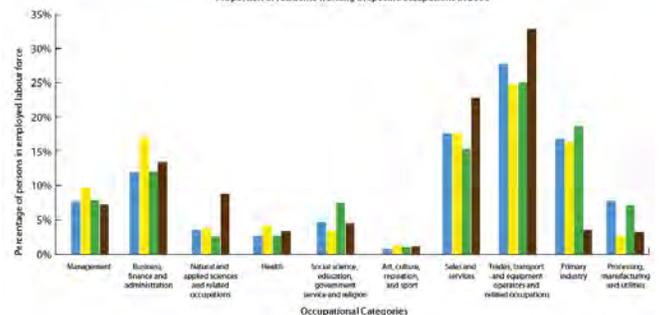
Proportion of residents working in specific industries in 2006



## Occupations 2006

■ Mackenzie County ■ Grande Prairie County ■ MD of Big Lakes ■ Wood Buffalo

Proportion of residents working in specific occupations in 2006

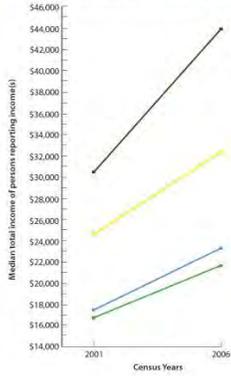




### Income

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Historical median income for each of four municipalities



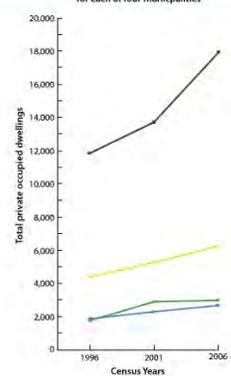
Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Income, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XBE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright Statistics Canada 2007. All rights reserved.



### Dwelling Units

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Historical number of private dwelling units for each of four municipalities



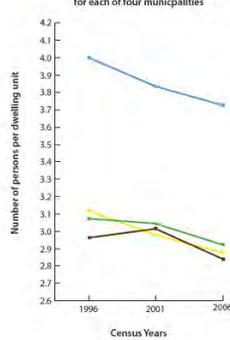
Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Dwelling, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XBE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright Statistics Canada 2007. All rights reserved.



### Persons per Dwelling Unit

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Historical number of persons per dwelling unit for each of four municipalities



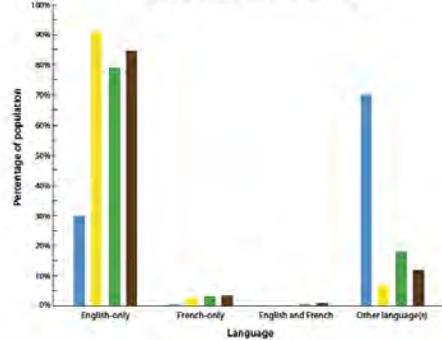
Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Dwelling, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XBE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright Statistics Canada 2007. All rights reserved.



### Mother Tongue 2006

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Mother tongue in each of four municipalities



Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Mother Tongue, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XBE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright Statistics Canada 2007. All rights reserved.



For more information visit:  
[www.mackenziefuture.ca](http://www.mackenziefuture.ca)



Please send the completed survey back to us:  
by fax: (780) 463-5280  
by mail: Activation Analysis Group Inc.  
107-4990 92 Avenue, Edmonton AB T6B 2V4  
or by e-mail if you have a scanner: [input@mackenziefuture.ca](mailto:input@mackenziefuture.ca)



## Mackenzie's Future

### A SURVEY FOR THE COUNTY'S MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

1. How many years have you lived in Mackenzie County?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than one year | <input type="checkbox"/> 11-25 years   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years          | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-40 years   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 years          | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 40 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years         |  |

2. How old are you? Please circle your answer.

- |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 15-19 | 20-24 | 25-29 |
| 30-34 | 35-39 | 40-44 |
| 45-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 |
| 60-64 | 65-69 | 70-74 |
| 75-79 | 80-84 | 85+   |

3. Including yourself, how many people are there in your household?  
(Circle one)

- 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    Over 8

4. How many motorized vehicles are there in your household (excluding farm equipment)?

- 1    2    3    4    5    Over 5

5. **Where do you live in Mackenzie County? If you do not live in a hamlet, a First Nations community or a Métis settlement, check off the community that is the closest to your home and then, mark the number of kilometers you live from that community in the space provided.**

Check one:	Distance you live from community
<input type="checkbox"/> A Dene Tha' Nation community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Zama City	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow Lake	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Beaver Nation community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> High Level	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fort Vermilion	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Tallcree community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> La Crete	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Little Red River Cree Nation community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Métis settlement	_____

6. **Of those who are 14 years old or older, how many people in your household are employed?**

___	Adult(s) Full-time
___	Adult(s) Part-time
___	Student Part-time

7. **How often do you leave the County during a given year? (Choose one)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
More than once/week	Weekly	Every other week	Monthly	3-4 times a year	1-2 times a year	Rarely

8. **For what reasons do you leave the County?**

Please rank these reasons in order of frequency, with the most frequent departures being ranked as number one, and the next most frequent reason as number two, and the least frequent as number 7.

- \_\_\_ Visit family or friends
- \_\_\_ Work-related business
- \_\_\_ Health Service
- \_\_\_ Shopping
- \_\_\_ Recreational Activities
- \_\_\_ Vacation Travel
- \_\_\_ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

## RECREATION

**9. Does anyone in your household participate in sports activities based in your community? If so, which sports?**

**10. Does anyone in your household participate in sports activities based outside of your community? If so, which sports?**

**11. What other recreational activities based in your community do members of your household participate in?**

## SOCIAL LIFE

12. What social activities do you take part in, in your community and for each one, how often (how many times per month)?

13. What facilities or services are needed to improve social life in your community?

## QUALITY OF LIFE

14. What are the best things about living in Mackenzie County and why?

15. What are the challenges about living in Mackenzie County and why?

16. Why do you live in, or why did you move to Mackenzie County?

**17. How long do you intend to remain in Mackenzie County?**

- Less than a year                       1-2 years                       3-5 years  
 6-10 years                       11-25 years                       Until I retire  
 For the rest of my life

**POPULATION**

**18. Mackenzie County currently has about 10,000 residents (includes First Nations communities). What do you think would be an ideal size for Mackenzie County within the next ten years?**

- 10,000       11,000       12,500       15,000       20,000

**19. What would be the benefits and drawbacks of considerable growth in Mackenzie County?**

**SERVICES**

**20. To what extent do you use services based in your community either in person or over the telephone? Rate your answer on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being never and 5 being always.**

	Never			Always	
Shopping for weekly household needs	1	2	3	4	5
Business services	1	2	3	4	5
Religious services	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational services	1	2	3	4	5
Educational services	1	2	3	4	5
Government services	1	2	3	4	5
Health services	1	2	3	4	5
Social Services	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural services (e.g., drama, choir)	1	2	3	4	5
Other services	1	2	3	4	5

**21. In what community do you obtain most of your other services?**

- Zama City                       Fort Vermilion                       La Crete
- Rainbow Lake                       High Level                       Manning
- Grande Prairie                       Peace River                       Edmonton
- A Dene Tha' Nation community                       A Beaver Nation community
- A Little Red River Cree Nation community                       A Tallcree Nation community
- A Métis settlement

**GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

**22. If new commercial development were proposed where, in your community, should it be developed?**

**23. Housing in the County is primarily of the single-family type. Higher density housing can accommodate more people with the use of fewer resources. Should higher density development be a priority in the County?**

- Not at all
- A little more
- A lot more

**24. If more diverse types of housing options were added (e.g., duplex, townhouse, condominium, apartment), would it make the County more or less attractive for people to live here?**

- More
- Same
- Less

**25. If you were asked to give the reason why someone should move to Mackenzie County, what reason would you give?**

**26. If you were asked to market Mackenzie County, what word or phrase would you suggest be used?**

**27. If you could change one thing about the County to make it a better place to live, what would you change?**

## USE OF ENERGY RESOURCES

28. Many places are encouraging people to walk or use ways other than the car to get around. What places do you visit in your community on a regular basis and how do you get there?

	Walk	Car/ATV/ Motorbike	Non-motorized vehicle (e.g., bike)	N/A
Shopping/Errands				
Schools				
Arena/Curling Rink				
Sport Field				
Community Hall				
Park/Playground/Trails				
Visiting Family & Friends				
County Office/Band Office				
Trapline				
Other				

If other, please specify

29. Have you made any changes in your household to address environmental sustainability issues? If so, what changes have you made.

**30. When you made changes in your household to address environmental sustainability issues, what were your primary motivations for doing so? (Choose three of the 10 choices offered)**

- Eligibility for financial incentives
- Social expectation
- Reduce energy consumption
- Reduce waste
- Reduce water usage
- Reduce use of fuel
- Reduce my family's impact on our local environment
- Increased efficiency
- Increased effectiveness
- Lower cost

**31. What prevents you from making changes in your household to address environmental sustainability issues?**

**32. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Use of sensitive natural areas in Mackenzie County is avoided					
Use of areas that surround Mackenzie County' natural areas is limited to ensure ecosystem integrity					
Backcountry areas are protected from overuse and degradation					
Recreation areas are designed and managed to protect as much of the natural environment as possible					
Community members and visitors act as stewards of the natural environment in Mackenzie County					
Economic diversification impacts on natural areas in Mackenzie County					
The County is likely to implement the environmental policies it sets					
There are sufficient buildings and land in the County to support economic prosperity and change					
County facilities are energy efficient					
The County's recycling program is effective and efficient					

**BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

**33. Do you work in a private for-profit business in Mackenzie County?**

- Yes  
 No

**34. Do you or anyone in your household own commercial property or a private, for-profit business anywhere in the County?**

- Yes (If yes, go to question 35)
- No (If no, go to question 37)

**35. What overall grade would you give the community as a place to do business?**

- A (excellent)
- B (above average)
- C (average)
- D (below average)
- F (poor)

**36. In the last three years, did the community's business climate get stronger, weaker, or stay the same?**

- Got stronger
- Stayed the same
- Got weaker

### **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

**37. What challenges do you think a new business in Mackenzie County would face?**

**38. Rate improvement needs in the community. Use one of the following options to rate needs in your community:**

- 1 Needs Significant Improvement
- 2 Needs Improvement
- 3 Does Not Need Improvement
- N/A Not Applicable

Appearance of business/service buildings	1	2	3	N/A
Appearance of business signs	1	2	3	N/A
Appearance of ditch beside rural roads/highways	1	2	3	N/A
Cleanliness of sidewalks	1	2	3	N/A
Cleanliness of streets	1	2	3	N/A
Congested streets	1	2	3	N/A
Parking near your destination	1	2	3	N/A
Pedestrian access to your destination	1	2	3	N/A
Street lighting	1	2	3	N/A
Variety of stores	1	2	3	N/A

Other Improvements Needed

**39. If your community were trying to attract business, how attractive would each of the following issues be?**

- 5 Critically Important
- 4 Above Average Importance
- 3 Average importance
- 2 Below Average Importance
- 1 Not at all Important

Wage rates	1	2	3	4	5
Transportation costs	1	2	3	4	5
Telecommunication Costs	1	2	3	4	5
Local Taxes	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Labour	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Industrial Sites	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Housing	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Public Transportation	1	2	3	4	5

**SIZE AND GROWTH**

**40. What actions could be taken to encourage residents to support local businesses?**

a) Would the action(s) you suggested above be feasible for you?

- Yes       No       Maybe

b) If not, what could be feasible for you?

c) Would you consider setting up a small business to support the local economy?

- Yes       No       Maybe

d) If Yes, what kind of business?

**41. Which types of goods or services not currently available in your hamlet or rural area would you most like to see offered? (Choose one only)**

- Food
- Clothing store
- Other (specify below)

**42. Do you think the County needs more commercial, industrial or agricultural development and if so, what kind? Why or why not?**

**43. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

1 Strongly disagree	
2 Disagree	
3 Neither agree nor disagree	
4 Agree	
5 Strongly Agree	
Local businesses in Mackenzie County play an important role in helping the community to attain its social and cultural goals	1 2 3 4 5
Mackenzie County's economy has improved in the past five years	1 2 3 4 5
In the past five years, it has been relatively easy to find employment in Mackenzie County	1 2 3 4 5
Mackenzie County's economy is able to adapt successfully to external factors.	1 2 3 4 5

**44. Do you have any comments to add? If so, please use the textbox below to make your comments.**

Thank you for taking time to fill out the survey.

Please send the completed survey back to us:

by fax: **(780) 463-5280**

by mail: **Activation Analysis Group Inc.**

**107-4990 92 Avenue, Edmonton AB T6B 2V4**

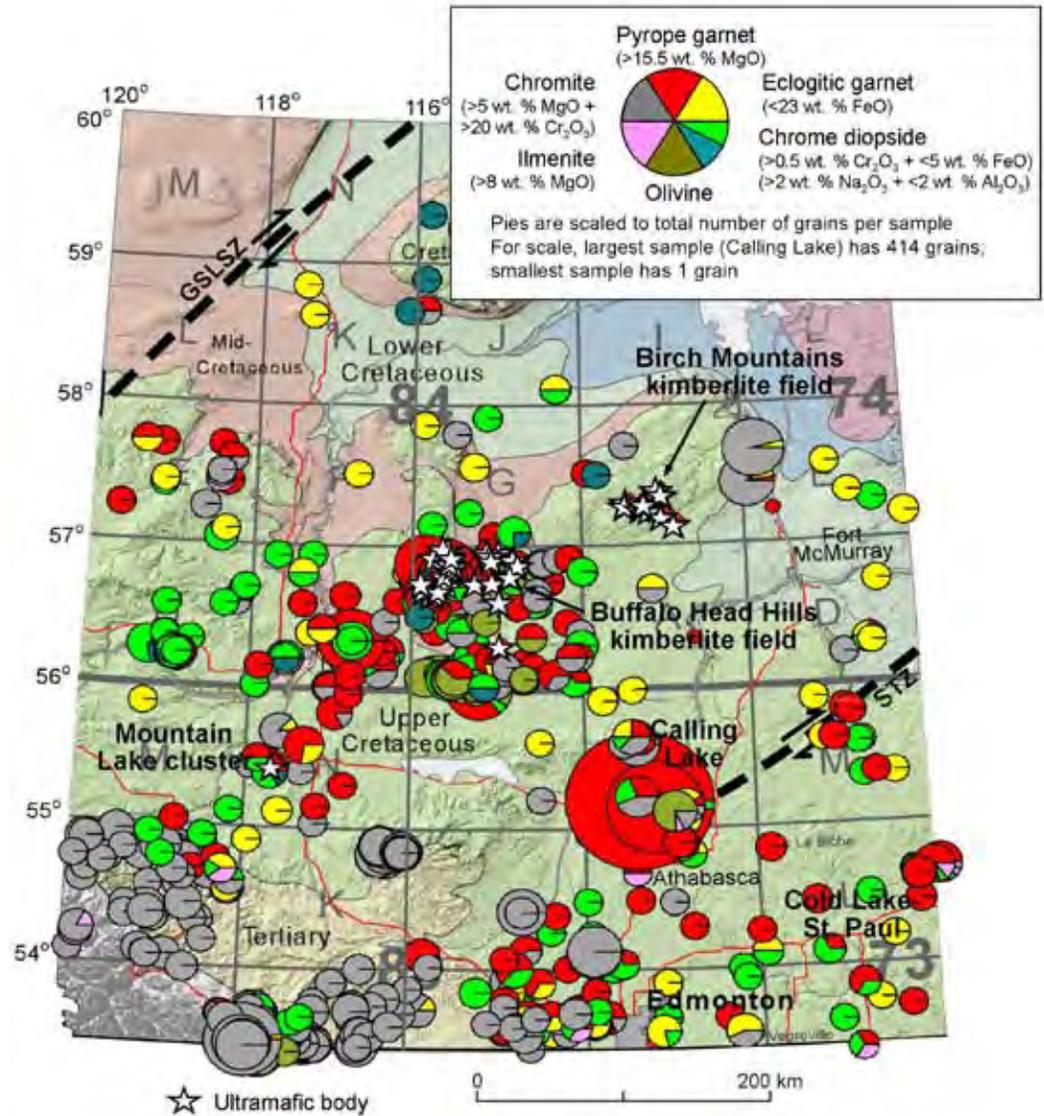
or by e-mail if you have a scanner: **input@mackenziefuture.ca**

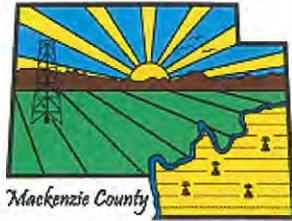
# Appendix F

## Economic Sustainability

- F1. Alberta Kimberlite Finds
- F2. Rail Freight Service Review Submission
- F3. White Zone / Green Zone Land Exchange
- F4. Mackenzie County Mission to Khanty-Maniysk
- F5. Crude Oil and Natural Gas Resources
- F6. Tolko Industries' – Footner Forest Products' Joint Forest Management Agreement
- F7. Broadband Coverage

# Alberta Kimberlite Finds





## Mackenzie County

P.O. Box 640, Fort Vermilion, AB T0H 1N0  
Phone (780) 927-3718 Fax (780) 927-4266  
[www.mackenziecounty.com](http://www.mackenziecounty.com)

April 28, 2010

Mr. Walter Paszkowski  
Chair – Rail Freight Service Review Panel  
Rail Freight Service Review Secretariat  
Suite 808 - 180 Elgin Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0N5

Dear Mr. Paszkowski:

Mackenzie County is pleased to provide the attached submission to the Rail Freight Service Review. The review is both timely and important in identifying and addressing issues and problems with Canada's rail mode, and in moving forward with a more efficient, and effective rail system which is more responsive to shippers'/consignees' needs.

We look forward to the results of your review and deliberations, and we are confident that you will precipitate needed, positive and enduring change to Canada's rail system to the benefit of both railways and shippers, and for the nation as a whole.

Mackenzie County would like to have this submission made available on your website to all interested parties.

Yours truly,

Greg Newman  
Reeve

Attach.

# MACKENZIE COUNTY SUBMISSION TO THE RAIL FREIGHT SERVICE REVIEW

## April 28, 2010

### Background

Mackenzie County is located in the northwestern corner of the Province of Alberta, 800 kilometers north from Edmonton. The county comprises 12 per cent of Alberta's entire landmass, or about 50,000 square kilometres, larger than the province of Prince Edward Island.

The county offers a mix of flat arable land with boreal forest, thus accounting for active agriculture, forestry, and tourism industries. Oil and gas also play a significant role in the area's economy. It is largely responsible for the establishment and growth of three of the area's five main communities, being High Level, Zama City, and Rainbow Lake. Fort Vermilion and La Crete are more driven by forestry and agriculture. Mackenzie County holds 36 per cent of the Peace Region's natural gas reserves, and 80 per cent of its light-medium crude oil reserves.



There are many active grain farmers in the area. La Crete boasts the largest United Farmers of Alberta retail outlet in Alberta, giving just one indication of how active the local agriculture industry is.

There are several sawmills within the county, the largest being La Crete Sawmills and Ridgeview Mills in La Crete, and Tolko Industries in High Level. Footner Forest Industries operates an OSB board mill just south of High Level. These mills are essentially rail dependent to remain competitive in domestic, US and international markets.

There is approximately 250,000MT to 300,000MT of grain produced in the County. As a result of the rationalization and consolidation of country grain elevators in the late 1990s, only one elevator remains in the County. The Viterra elevator in High Level handles approximately 105,000MT per year, and is reportedly at capacity.

The remaining production is loaded in producer grain cars, or is trucked to either Rycroft or Dawson Creek. A small amount is trucked to local markets in the greater Edmonton region, mostly feed. It is estimated that as much as 50% of production is moved out by truck, at higher cost than what prevailed prior to elevator rationalization

With regard to inbound rail movements, the railway has traditionally carried fuel destined for NWT and the County. With diamond mines coming on stream in NWT, the three currently operating mines demand approximately 162 million litres of fuel (approximately 160,000 MT), 50,000 MT of cement and a similar tonnage of ammonia nitrate. The fuel is currently moved by rail, while the cement and ammonia nitrate are moved in by truck. Starting in 2011, it is anticipated that the cement and ammonia nitrate will move to High Level in bulk by rail, where the products will be bagged and moved to NWT by truck. High Level is thus in its early stages of becoming a significant inbound rail-based staging point for NWT diamond mines. It is expected that an additional three diamond mines will be developed in NWT, essentially doubling annual fuel, cement and ammonia nitrate tonnage to more than 500,000MT.

There is every expectation of future growth of traffic on the rail line tied to expanded agricultural production, as High Level's position as a staging and supply point for NWT mines solidifies and accelerates, and as the forest industry emerges out of its downturn.

The rail line between Edmonton and Hay River has a long history, dating back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was the transportation link that opened up the Peace Country and connected it to the rest of Canada. From 1929 until 1981, it was jointly owned by CN and CP. In 1964, the federal government built the Great Slave Railway north from Grimshaw, AB to Hay River, NWT, thus providing a rail connection for Mackenzie County. When CN bought out CP in 1981, CP retained marketing rights for traffic on the line. However, this right was never exercised. In 1998, CN Rail sold the line to Rail Link, which subsequently sold it to Rail America. In January 2006, CN Rail re-acquired the line.

The line is 264,000 lbs rail from Edmonton to High Level, and 220,000 lbs north of High Level. Mainline standard is now 286,000 lbs for the most part. In 2004, then owner Rail America estimated that some \$59 million were required to rehabilitate the line from Smith to High Level (track rehabilitation, bridge work) and to upgrade to 286,000 lbs to High Level. Most Canadian grain cars are still rated at 264,000lbs.

In preparation for this submission, Mackenzie County consulted with a cross section of rail users in the County, representative of the freight being carried on the line. We have also familiarized ourselves with the background research reports undertaken for review, and we have read all submissions posted to date. The coincidence of problems identified in the background research, problems raised in Review submissions, and problems enunciated by Mackenzie County rail users seem to indicate that there are a number of systemic problems in Canada's rail transportation mode that need to be addressed and dealt with. These problems seem to span a number of products and geographic regions.

On the positive side, rail users in Mackenzie County are of the opinion that rail service has improved since CN Rail re-acquired the line in early 2006.

Mackenzie County is pleased to have this opportunity to provide a submission to the Review. Two of our three major industry sectors – agriculture and forestry – are almost entirely rail dependent. Because of our distance from major markets, much of future economic activity and development in the County will be dependent upon a competitive, cost effective, efficient, and responsive rail transportation mode. We believe the Review represents a unique opportunity to define and enunciate problems and issues in Canada's rail system that in many cases has a direct impact on the country's economic performance, and to find solutions for the betterment of all participants in our rail based logistics systems.

## **Issues and Problems**

### **Car spotting problems/car supply and possible solutions**

Car spotting and supply problems are the same in Mackenzie County as those described in numerous submissions to the review panel, that is, cars do not arrive when promised or scheduled, and the cars supplied are often shorted from that ordered or promised. Mackenzie County shippers and consignees reported this as a problem that has direct and immediate adverse financial consequences. For example,

many grain producer car loaders hire commercial grain trucks to bring product to the loading site in anticipation of car arrivals to ensure the cars are loaded within the 24 hour demurrage free period, only to find that cars do not arrive. Trucks then have to return to the farm and be unloaded. This is reportedly happening with such frequency that it becomes impossible or financially prohibitive to pre-book commercial grain trucks for delivery to producer car loading sites at supposed car arrival times. A number of producer car loaders are now booking commercial grain trucks only when cars have physically arrived. This results in a premium price having to be paid for trucking, or an inability to obtain service on short notice – again incurring extra, unnecessary costs.

Just as frequent as CN Rail failing to deliver cars on time in quantities ordered, are stories of grain cars being stored on sidings for weeks and months on end without moving. These stories are too numerous, too frequent and too geographically diverse across Western Canada not to contain elements of truth.

For grain, it goes to utilization of the grain car fleet, particularly that portion of the fleet supplied by the Canadian Wheat Board/Government of Canada and provincially financed and supplied cars.

Solutions: Mackenzie County recommends that several actions be taken to improve grain car spotting/car supply. There are several potential solutions to the car spotting/car supply problems. These include:

- Provide for – preferably through regulation – penalties for underutilization of grain cars when it can be demonstrated that cars sit idle while car spotting are delayed and cars shorted on delivery. For example, if a given car is found to have been sitting idle and stationary – for say a week – while at the same time there are car spotting delays and shorting of cars on delivery, a penalty should be imposed on the railway. Historical crop and shipment data, and sophisticated current year crop forecasting models should greatly assist in ensuring that adequate equipment is allocated to, and available in, various geographic regions to meet expected demand.
- Provide for an expanded role for the Grain Monitor to include real time monitoring of car status (e.g. moving or stationary) and location to assist in enforcing the penalty regime. This could be done by ensuring that the Monitor has real time access to read-outs from railway car readers, or alternatively using a satellite tracking system for rail grain cars similar to that used in the trucking industry.

### **CN Rail internal and external communications improvements**

Although the situation seems to be improving, rail users in Mackenzie County suggest that there is room for considerable improvement in communications with regard to CN Rail, both externally with customers and internally in the railway.

With regard to external communications between CN Rail and its customers, customer service representatives need to be more knowledgeable and precise with regard to interaction with rail users.

A seeming lack of internal communication within CN Rail contributes to frustrations and uncertainty with regard to car spotting and number of cars to be delivered. In this regard, there seems to be a disconnect and lack of information flowing between CN customer service representatives and CN personnel on the ground responsible for assembling and dispatching trains.

Rail users in Mackenzie County feel strongly that there should be a local contact person designated by CN Rail on the ground at Roma Junction/Peace River, where trains are assembled for the trip north. This would facilitate accurate information about car spotting and car deliveries approximately 12 hours prior to train arrival in High Level rather than not knowing what is arriving until the train gets there.

### **Need for continued infrastructure maintenance and upgrading**

Collector systems off rail mainlines collectively generate the majority of tonnage moved by CN and CP, be it grain, coal and other mining products, potash, sulphur, forest products and the like, products which are a major factor in Canada's export performance, current account balances and contribution to Canada's Gross Domestic Product.

For Mackenzie County, being heavily rail dependent, it is important that CN has a multiyear program of maintenance and upgrading for the line connecting us to Edmonton, to ensure that rail infrastructure becomes a positive contributor to economic growth, rather than a detriment. Moreover, it would be a positive sign of trust and cooperation if such plans would be shared with the County and its rail users.

### **CN Rail/Rail user balanced accountability**

Mackenzie County supports the concept of balanced accountability between railways and rail shippers/consignees. While a host of ancillary charges are imposed on shippers by railways for non-performance, non-performance by railways have no consequences.

- If (grain) cars are spotted 6 weeks late, there is no consequence for the railway
- If car cycle times for shipper leased chemical cars have more than doubled over the past several years (with corresponding increases in car lease costs for chemical shippers), there is no consequence for the railway
- If railways split "single order/multiple container" movements between different trains and thereby cause part of the order to miss a vessel sailing date and thereby causing a switch in suppliers by overseas importers, there is no consequence for the railway
- If railways fail to meet Just-in-Time (JIT) delivery deadlines, there is no consequence for the railway
- If railways cause serious congestion and delays at port container terminals by allocating insufficient cars or other operational deficiencies, there is no consequence for the railway

While there may well be mutual accountability built into some current confidential contracts, this is a concept that should be applied universally to rail transportation and to participants in rail logistics chains.

Such a concept of mutual accountability should be grounded in regulations. With respect to specific charges, there are several alternatives. A starting point might be to mirror the railways' tariffs of Ancillary Charges, and have them also apply to the railways. For example, if a car is supposed to be spotted on a specific day and it is a day late, the railway would pay \$75 demurrage. If the car is five days late, demurrage would be \$375. This could also apply to shorted cars, and loaded cars which are not picked up as originally scheduled or promised. Thus, we could have a system of equal accountability and equal penalties for the same "offences" for both railways and rail users.

### **Demurrage and ancillary charges**

Rail users in Mackenzie County would like to see the current 24 hour demurrage free period extended to 48 to 96 hours, as this would provide a bit more flexibility in loading/unloading.

There is considerable dissatisfaction with how ancillary charges are invoiced. Rail users report that they are often assessed demurrage for car numbers that have never been delivered to them. The practice of requiring rail users to demonstrate mistakes in invoices for ancillary charges before adjustments are made, is also troublesome, as it puts the onus entirely on rail users and give railways a free pass to be sloppy and inaccurate in their billing procedures. This also increases administrative costs for rail users.

### **Monopoly pricing of freight rates**

Rail users in Mackenzie County are concerned about the railways' ability to impose monopoly pricing on lines and at points where there is no intra-modal railway competition. There is a substantial need, particularly for rail users located in distant economic regions like Mackenzie County, for a mechanism that would facilitate and provide for reasonable and competitive rates where there is a rail monopoly.

### **Division of Northwest Alberta into two shipping blocks for allocation of rail grain cars**

Northwest Alberta should be divided into two blocks for car allocation purposes to ensure that an adequate number of rail grain cars are allocated and delivered to County loading sites. The County and a number of grain shippers are concerned that Viterro will order as many cars as possible to their new terminal at Sexsmith due to open in 2011 to the detriment of car supply for their High Level terminal, thereby further worsening the car supply situation for County producers and driving up costs unnecessarily.

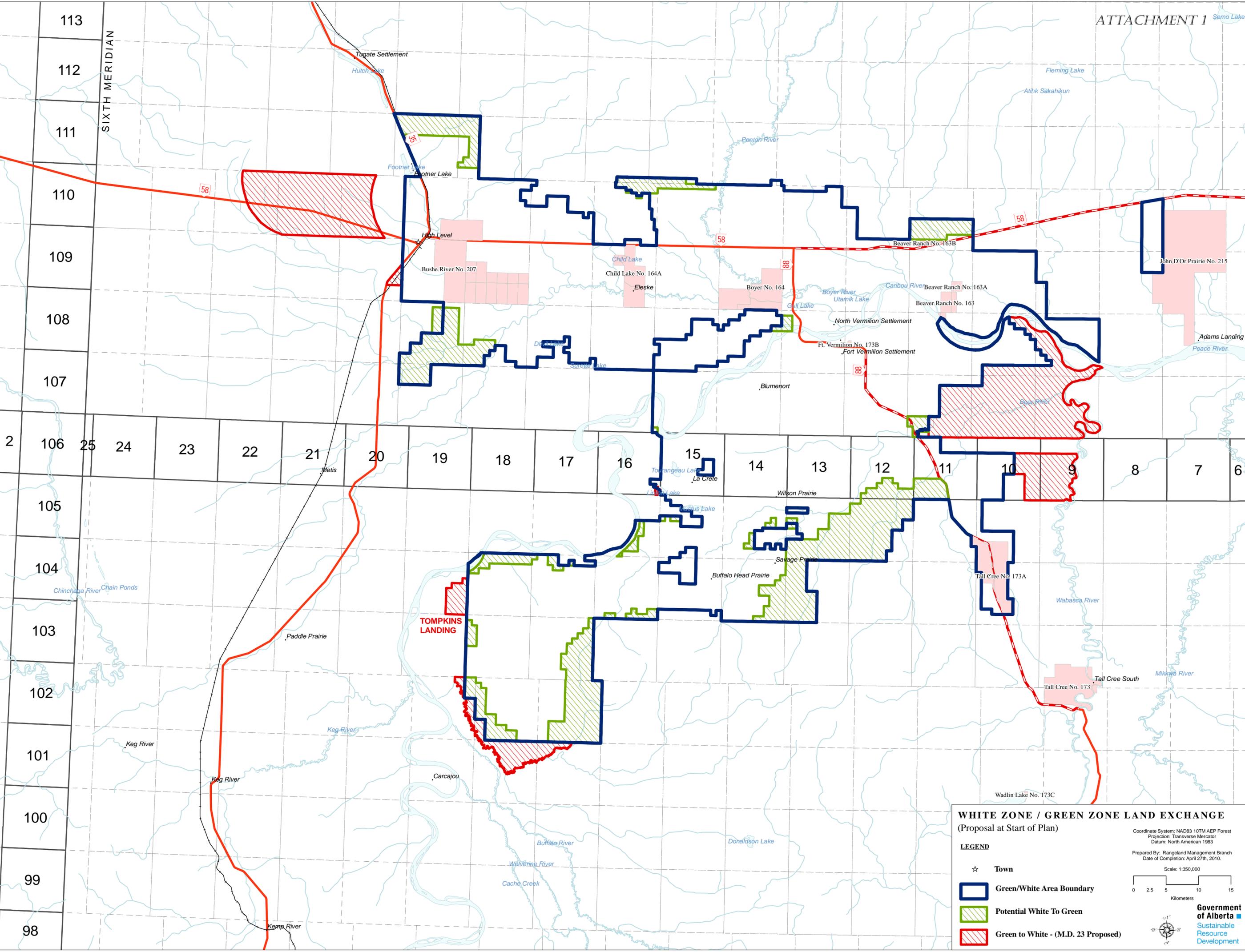
### **Running Rights**

Running rights, or joint running rights, have been strenuously opposed by the country's two rail carriers. Yet, when it seems to be to their benefit – like in BC's Fraser Canyon to alleviate capacity constraints – they embrace the idea and cooperate.

In not too many years, there could be – for a number of reasons - serious capacity constraints throughout the Canadian rail system which would make joint running rights a palatable option. While Mackenzie County is not at all advocating a forced and immediate system of running rights, we would suggest that it would be prudent to examine options and alternatives with regard to running rights – with attendant marketing/freight solicitation rights - which would result in win-win situations and leave the railways financially no worse off than under the status quo.

The purpose of raising the issue here is to try and initiate a rational discussion and debate around the concept. Many permutations are possible, but it could include some kind of a public-private partnership with regard to infrastructure (track, terminals, signalling, control systems etc). Alternatively, current railway companies could split their corporations into an infrastructure entity and a train operating entity, where the infrastructure entity would charge for use and occupancy of the infrastructure. There are probably many other concepts that could be acceptable and workable.

The Review Panel is faced with a most important task. Canada's rail transportation system is a critical component and force in the generation of the nation's gross domestic product, in our export performance and by extension our current account balance. The problems are many, but they are well defined. We believe, with good will and a willingness to cooperate, solutions acceptable to all parties are possible and within reach in moving forward.



**WHITE ZONE / GREEN ZONE LAND EXCHANGE**  
(Proposal at Start of Plan)

**LEGEND**

- ☆ Town
- Green/White Area Boundary
- Potential White To Green
- Green to White - (M.D. 23 Proposed)

Coordinate System: NAD83 10TMAEP Forest  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983

Prepared By: Rangeland Management Branch  
Date of Completion: April 27th, 2010.

Scale: 1:350,000

0 2.5 5 10 15  
Kilometers

**Government of Alberta**  
Sustainable Resource Development

**MACKENZIE COUNTY MISSION TO KHANTY-MANSIYSK**  
**December 14 – 16, 2009**

---

**PARTICIPANTS:**

Reeve Greg Newman – Mackenzie County  
Councillor Ed Froese – Mackenzie County  
Councillor Ray Toews – Mackenzie County  
Stein Jahnsen – Activation Analysis Group Inc.  
John Szumlas – Activation Analysis Group Inc.

**OUTCOMES:**

**UGRA RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:**

- Both the Institute and the KMAO government agreed that cooperation/partnership between the UGRA Institute and a new institute in Mackenzie County would be desirable and would be mutually beneficial, and should be further and actively explored and pursued by both parties
- As the Institute and the KMAO government jointly pursues commercialization of Institute products, services and patents, opportunities exist for Canadian organizations to represent and market these in Canada. Many of these products, services and patents are unique and could benefit Canada and Canadian organizations. Access to the Institute's Sun Microsystems super computer - should it be part of the commercialization packages – would be of substantial benefit and value.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE KHANTY-MANSIYSK AUTONOMOUS OKRUG:**

- The KMAO government expressed surprise that canola was grown in Mackenzie County, with soil and climatic conditions almost identical to that of the Okrug. The KMAO government would like to actively work with representatives of the Mackenzie delegation to establish a canola crop program in the Okrug, along with possibly the construction of a canola crushing plant using Canadian technology in order to expand and diversify their agriculture industry.
- Given the similarities between the Okrug's and Western Canada's forest resources, the KMAO Forestry Department expressed a strong desire to establish a cooperative relationship with respect to silviculture and other forestry matters with sister departments in the Province of Alberta.
- The Deputy Chairman of the KMAO government expressed a strong desire for the Okrug to be invited to Mackenzie County to view agricultural practices and technologies and to further pursue and explore UGRA Institute matters.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Joint exploration with the UGRA Institute with respect to cooperation/partnership arrangements.
- Joint exploration with the UGRA Institute with respect to potential joint research initiatives and programs that would benefit both parties.
- Joint program with the KMAO government to determine the most suitable lands in the Okrug on which to establish the canola crop program.
- Identification of a Canadian canola crushing organization and Canadian crushing technology to be included in the KMAO canola crop program
- Facilitation of a cooperative relationship between the KMAO Forestry Department and sister departments in Western Canada
- An invitation to the KMAO government to visit Mackenzie County in June 2010.

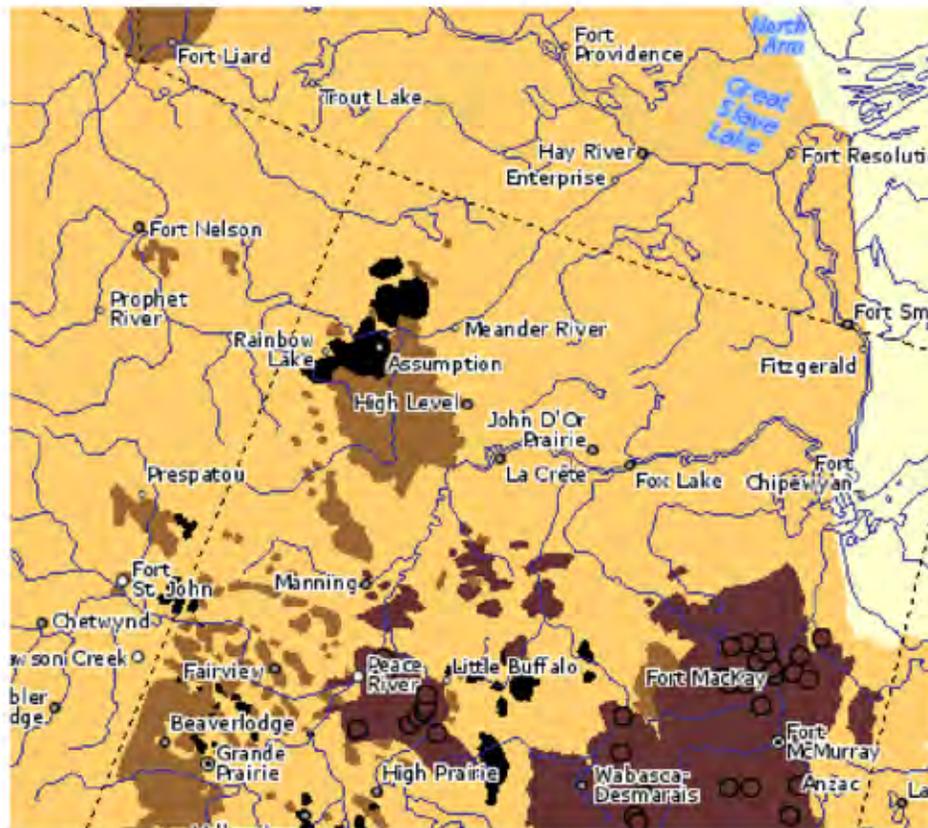
Implementation of these next steps would provide mutual benefits to both KMAO, Mackenzie County and Canada.

**MEETINGS IN KMAO:**

- The delegation met with representatives of the departments of Environmental Protection; Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources Department; Committee for External Relations; Economic Policy Department; Education Department; Forestry Department; The Agroindustrial Complex; Healthcare Department; Investment Department; and the Deputy Chairman of the KMAO Government.
- The delegation had a full day of meetings at the UGRA Institute for Information Technology.



## Crude Oil and Natural Gas Resources



0 75 150 225 300 km

### Oil and Natural Gas Resources

- Oil Field (or oil pool)
- Oil Sands
- Natural Gas Field (or gas pool)

### Oil Sand Projects

- Oil Sands Project

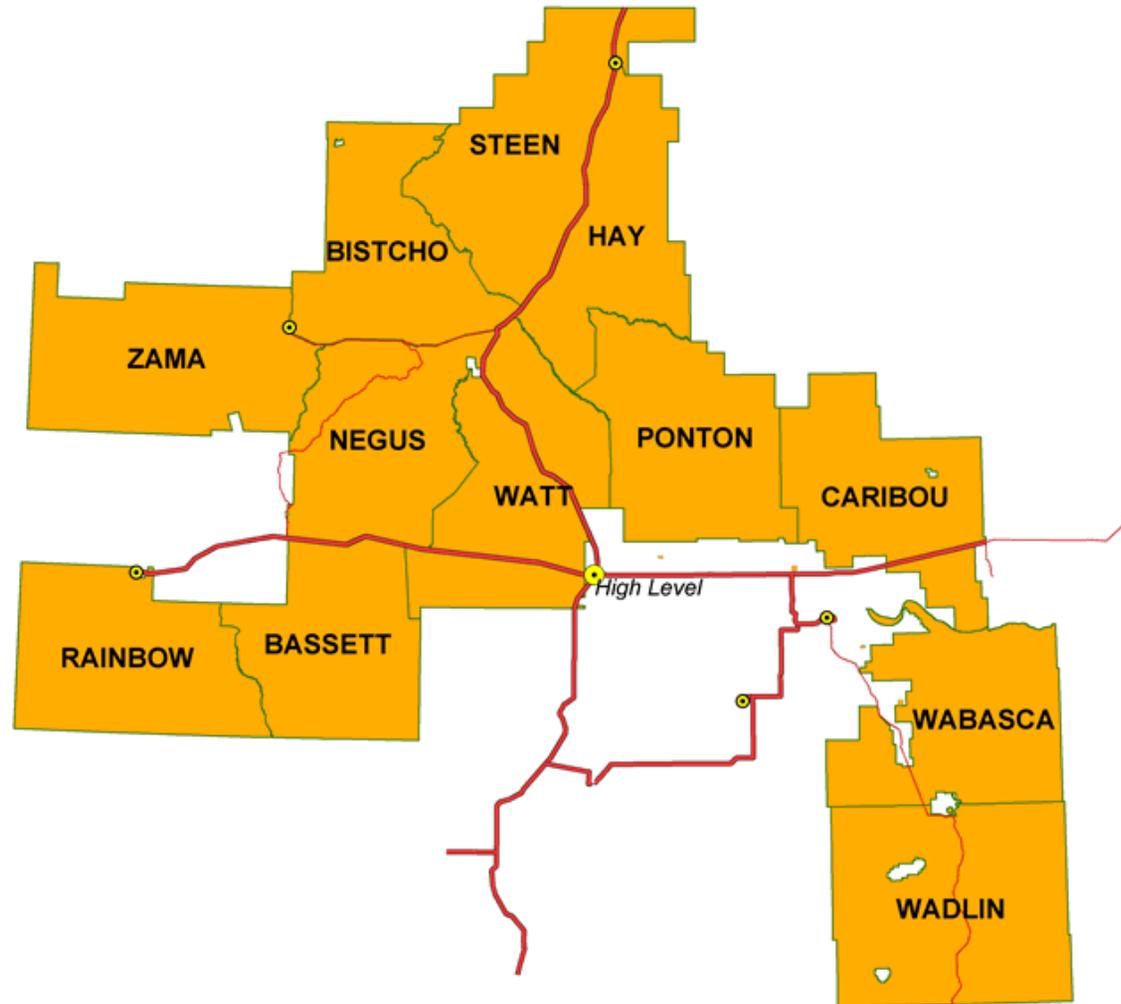
### Pipeline Infrastructure

- Crude Oil Pipelines
- Natural Gas Pipelines

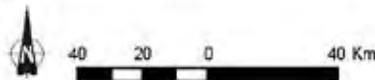
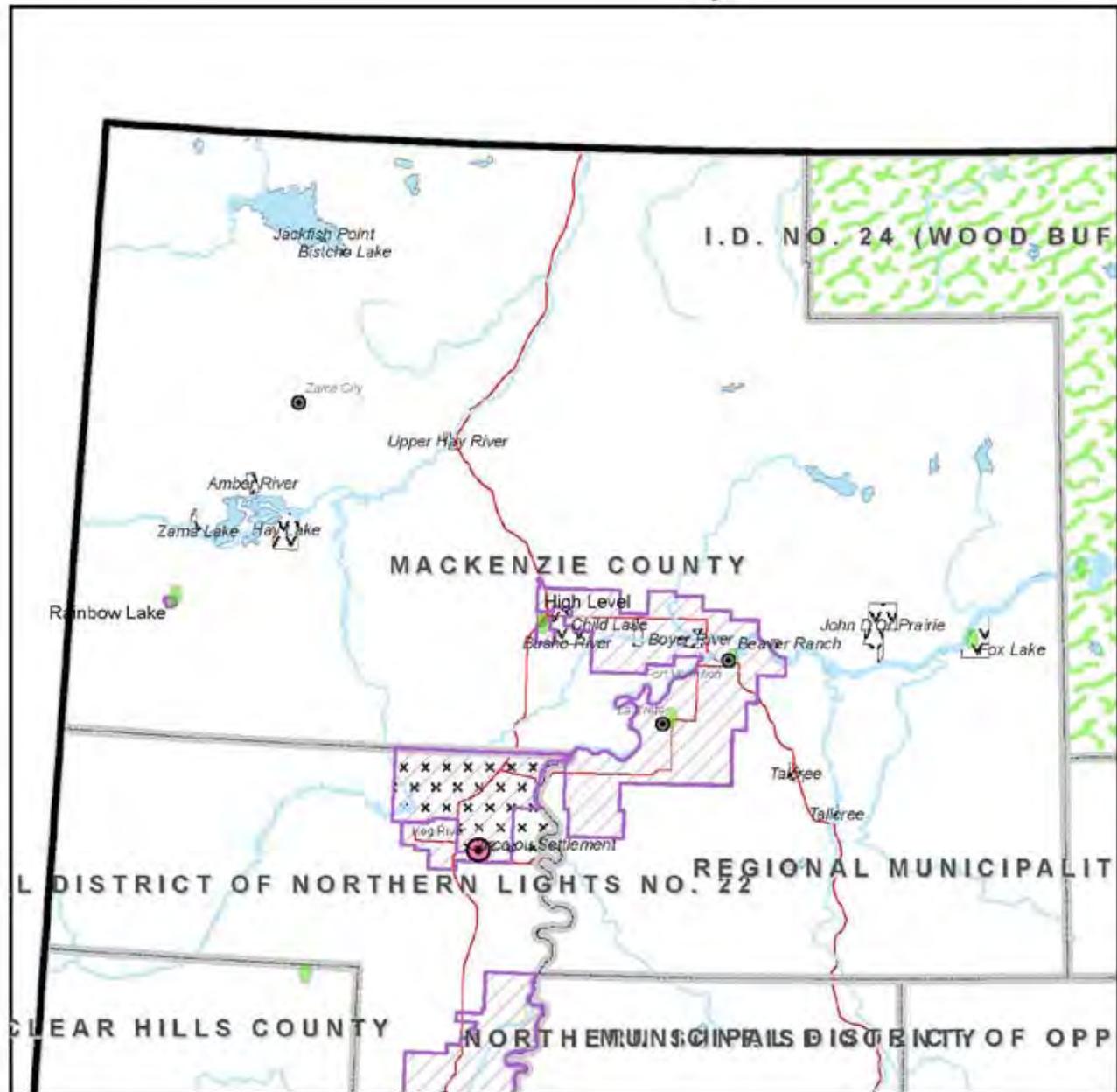
### Sedimentary Basins

- Western Canada Sedimentary Basin
- Atlantic Margin
- Arctic Cratonic
- Arctic Margin
- Pacific Margin
- Intermontane
- Eastern Cratonic
- Other (Cordillera, Innuitia, Appalachia, Canadian Shield)

## Tolko Industries'-Footner Forest Products' Joint Forest Management Agreement in the Mackenzie County Area



# Rural Alberta Broadband Coverage Mackenzie County



- |                                     |                              |                           |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Area NOT Served, 0% Coverage        | Hamlet                       | Municipalities Boundaries |
| Area Served >0% up to 25% Coverage  | Deferral Account Communities | Provincial Border         |
| Area Served >25% up to 50% Coverage | Cities, Towns, and Villages  | Major Roads               |
| Area Served >50% up to 90% Coverage | Indian Reserves              | Major Waterways           |
| Area Served >90% Coverage           | Metis Settlements            | Major Lakes and Rivers    |
|                                     | Gas Co-op Franchise Areas    | Provincial Parks          |
|                                     |                              | National Parks            |



# Appendix G

## Environmental Sustainability

- G1. 2006 Mackenzie County Energy Management Assessment
- G2. La Crete Development Plan
- G3. Fort Vermilion Development Plan
- G4. Zama City Development Plan

## 2006 Mackenzie County Energy Management Assessment

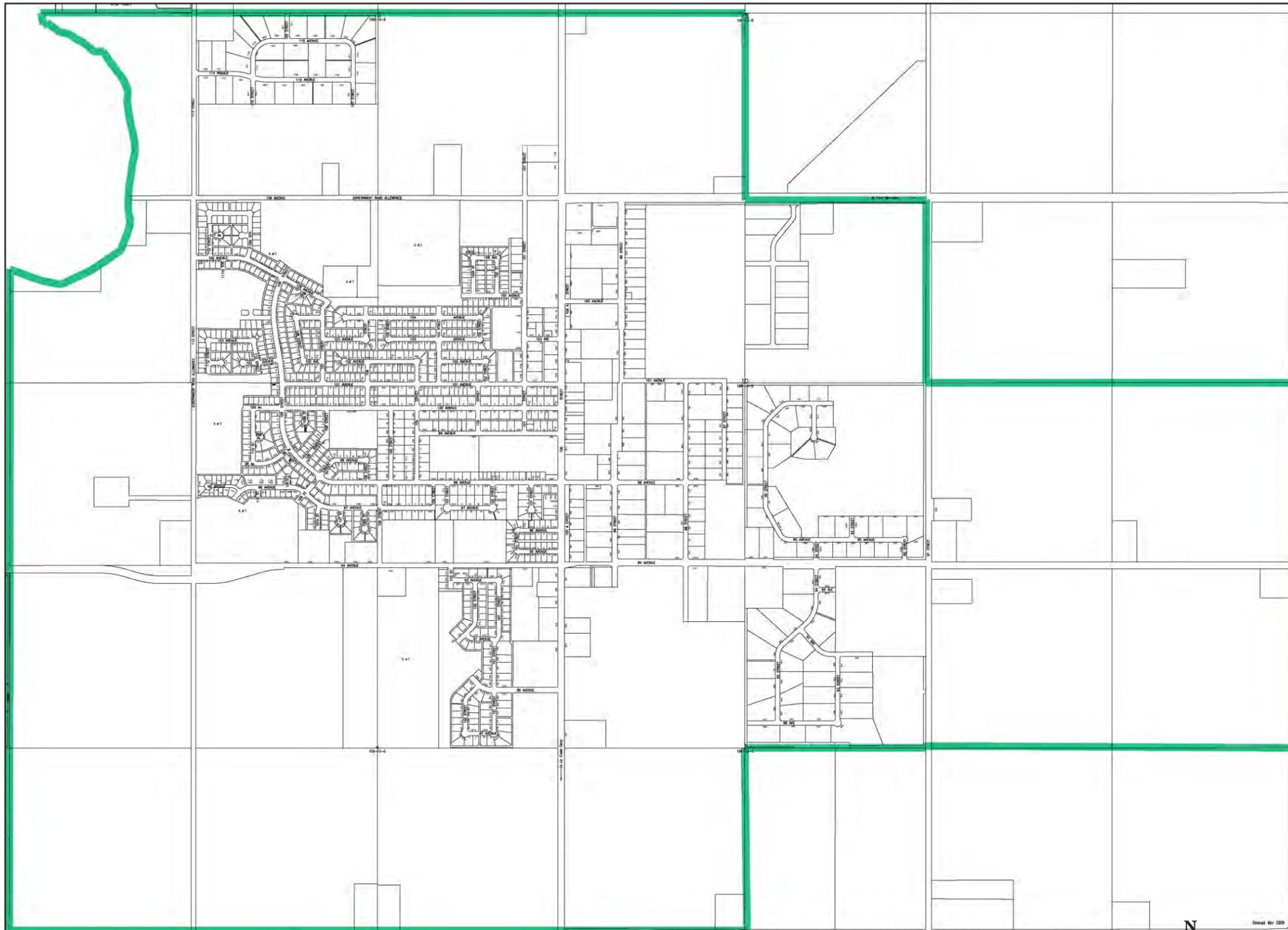
Options	Estimated Savings	Estimated Cost	Payback in Yrs without avoided costs	kWh Savings per Yr	GJ/kWh Saved/Yr in GJ's	Energy Reduced by %	GHG Reduction Tonnage Carbon	Potential Avoided Costs	Net Effective Cost	Net Effective Payback In Yrs
Fort Vermilion Water Treat	\$5,058	\$38,414	7.60	34,625	340.4	9.90%	35.84	\$5,284	\$33,130	6.55
Fort Vermilion Fire Hall	\$844	\$9,861	11.68	2,318	79.0	11.39%	5.64	\$1,145	\$8,716	10.32
Fort Vermilion EMS	\$539	\$2,776	5.15	3,807	35.6	8.32%	4.57	\$257	\$2,519	4.67
LaCrete Water Treatment	\$89	\$216	2.43	0	9.9	0.97%	0.49	\$0	\$216	2.43
LaCrete Fire Hall	\$1,661	\$6,093	3.67	15,580	84.8	11.88%	15.69	\$620	\$5,474	3.30
LaCrete EMS	\$1,168	\$10,862	9.30	1,363	16.2	7.67%	1.81	\$1,076	\$9,786	8.38
LaCrete Sub M.D. Office	\$4,672	\$76,946	16.47	25,476	356.0	24.56%	33.77	\$7,444	\$69,503	14.88
Zama Water Treatment	\$3,888	\$45,110	11.60	15,947	329.9	18.85%	20.65	\$1,900	\$43,210	11.11
Zama Fire Hall	\$592	\$10,268	17.35	1,539	55.9	10.69%	3.92	\$1,306	\$8,962	15.14
Zama Community Hall	\$651	\$5,041	7.74	3,718	48.6	8.40%	5.16	\$507	\$4,534	6.96
LaCrete Rec. Centre	\$13,231	\$144,920	10.95	75,479	987.0	15.73%	73.94	\$13,179	\$131,741	9.96
Fort Vermilion Rec. Centre	\$9,575	\$139,333	14.55	48,344	733.7	17.91%	59.11	\$12,107	\$127,226	13.29
LaCrete Maint. Shop	\$588	\$4,593	7.81	3,473	43.1	5.71%	4.70	\$434	\$4,159	7.07
Zama Sub M.D. Office	\$1,098	\$8,953	8.15	6,363	81.3	23.61%	8.73	\$1,163	\$7,790	7.10
Fort Vermilion M.D. Office	\$285	\$911	3.20	1,743	20.5	2.13%	2.31	\$60	\$851	2.99
Fort Vermilion Maint. Shop	\$1,917	\$26,323	13.73	7,525	164.8	15.69%	13.75	\$3,602	\$22,721	11.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,855</b>	<b>\$530,620</b>	<b>11.57</b>	<b>247,302</b>	<b>3386.7</b>	<b>193.43%</b>	<b>290.10</b>	<b>\$50,081</b>	<b>\$480,540</b>	<b>10.48</b>

Report August-06

Utility Consumption Numbers are based on available data only.

Annual Usage All Facilities	GJ	kWh	M3			kWh-GJ	
Electrical Usage		2,023,178		kWh Saved Elect	247,302	12.22%	890.3 \$ Saved
Natural Gas Usage	16,194.0			GJ Saved Gas	2,343.6	14.47%	2343.6 11.44%
Water & Sewer			N/A			Facility	All Facilities
Totals	16,194.0	2,023,178	N/A			Location	M.D. Mackenzie No. 23
						Built	N/A

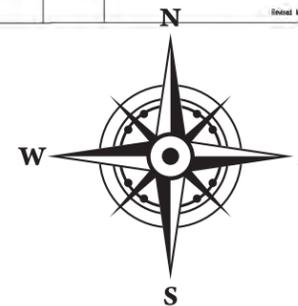
Projected Normalized Future Cost	Rate Used	Projected W/O GST	0.0036 kWh/GJ	Factor			
Estimated Future Costs	Consumption	kWh/GJ/M3	Total \$/Yr	GJ	CO2	Tonnage	Formula
Water & Sewer	N/A	N/A	N/A				
Gas	17,004	\$10.47	\$178,007	17004	Gas	847.82	0.049861
Elect	2,023,178	\$0.11	\$222,701	7283	Converted from kWh	Elect	1851.73 0.00091526
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$400,708</b>	<b>24,287</b>	<b>Total all energy</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2699.55</b>

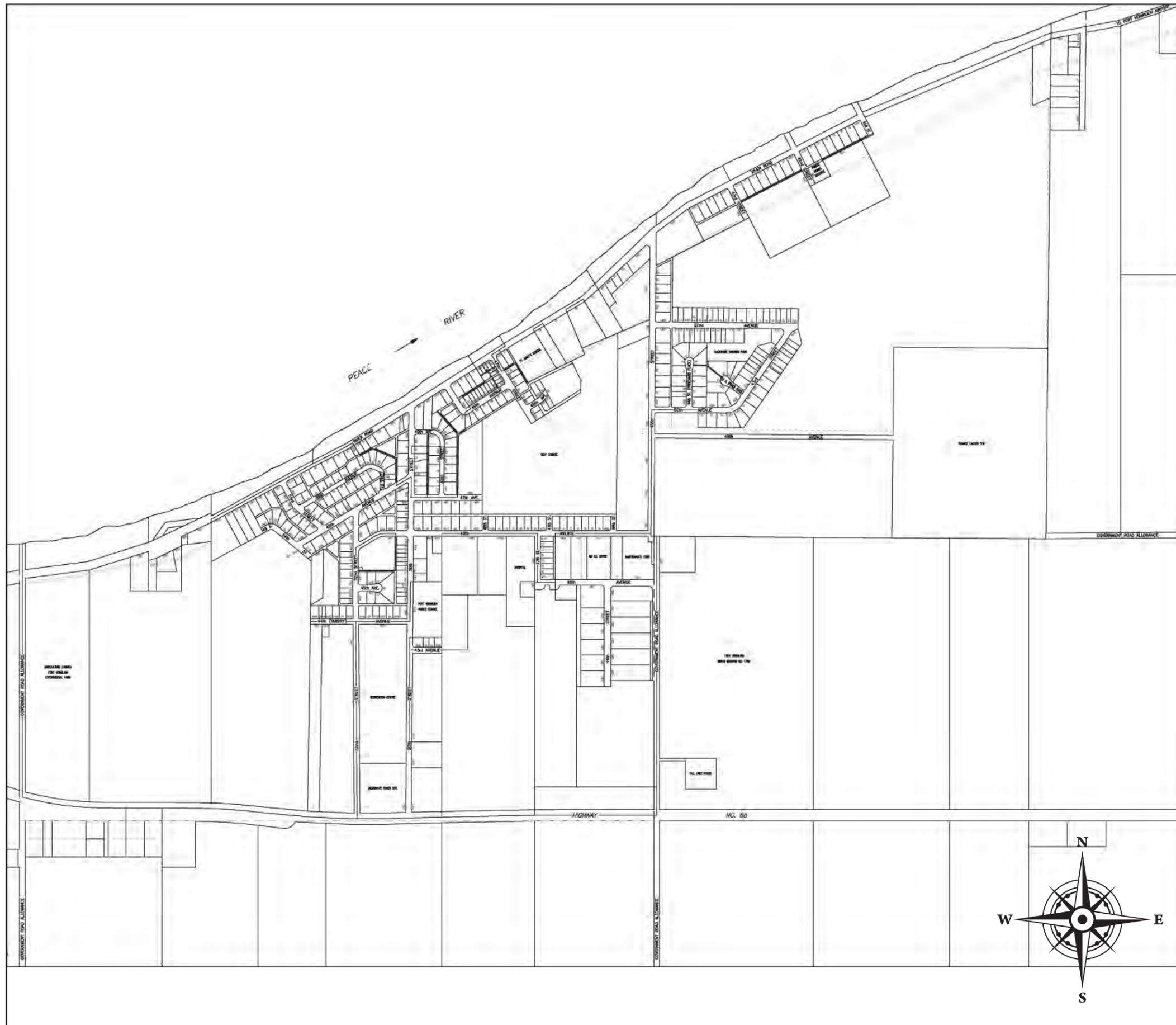


**■ Hamlet Boundaries**

Growth Area: Based on the hamlet's informal boundaries in La Crete shown in green on this map, there is land available for development. Designation of land for different purposes, planning and detailing have not yet taken place.

**Hamlet of La Crete**





Growth Area: Land is available for expansion in Fort Vermillion. Designation of land for different purposes, planning and detailing have not yet taken place.

## Hamlet of Fort Vermillion



Map  
#2



**Residential Growth Area**

County Council has designated land available in Zama City for residential development and has developed an area structure plan with details on road networks, servicing and lotting.

**Hamlet of Zama City**



Map #3

# Appendix H

## Social Sustainability

- H1. Reserves and Métis Settlements
- H2. First Nations Relations
- H3. Financing a Hamlet Convenience Store
- H4. Population Growth Rate: 1959 – 2006
- H5. Population 1959 - 2006
- H6. Age of Population in 2006 vs. Wood Buffalo
- H7. Age of Population in 2006 vs. Big Lakes
- H8. Age of Population in 2006 vs. Grande Prairie
- H9. Mother Tongue 2006
- H10. Immigrant Status 2006
- H11. Total Dwelling Units 1996 - 2006
- H12. Persons per Dwelling Unit 2006
- H13. Median Income 2001 - 2006
- H14. Occupations 2006
- H15. Industry 2006
- H16. Proportion of Non-Residential to Total Assessment 2009

## **Reserves and Métis Settlements in Mackenzie County by Nation**

	<b>Reserve (IR) or Settlement</b>	<b>Nation</b>
1	Amber River IR 211	Dene Tha' First Nation
2	Beaver Ranch IR 163	Tallcree First Nation
3	Beaver Ranch IR 163A	Tallcree First Nation
4	Beaver Ranch IR 163B	Tallcree First Nation
5	Bistcho Lake IR 213	Dene Tha' First Nation
6	Boyer IR 164	Beaver First Nation
7	Boyer Settlement	
8	Bushe River IR 207	Dene Tha' First Nation
9	Child Lake IR 164A	Beaver First Nation
10	Fox Lake IR 162	Little Red River Cree Nation
11	Fort Vermilion IR 173B	Tallcree First Nation
12	Fort Vermilion Settlement	
13	Garden Creek	Little Red River Cree Nation
14	Hay Lake IR 209*	Dene Tha' First Nation
15	Jackfish Point IR 214	Dene Tha' First Nation
16	John D'or Prairie IR 215	Little Red River Cree Nation
17	North Vermilion Settlement	
18	Tall Cree IR 173	Tallcree First Nation
19	Tall Cree IR 173A	Tallcree First Nation
20	Tugate Settlement	
21	Upper River IR 212 (Meander River)	Dene Tha' First Nation
22	Wadlin Lake IR 173C	Tallcree First Nation
23	Zama Lake IR 210	Dene Tha' First Nation

\* Includes community of Assumption and Chateh Post Office

## **Unofficial Population of First Nations in Mackenzie County<sup>1</sup>**

Beaver Nation 2008 population: 408  
 Dene Tha' First Nation 2008 population: 1904  
 Little Red River Cree Nation 2008 population: 3431  
 Tallcree First Nation 2008 population: 506  
**Total First Nations 2008 population: 6249**

Population of Settlements not available

<sup>1</sup> Source: Alberta Municipal Affairs. *2009 Official Population List*. p.11

## Recent Milestones in Relations Between Mackenzie County and the Four First Nations Located within its Geographical Boundaries

- 1993: Settlement of the Tallcree land claim. The band received 13,000 acres and \$7,000,000. The Government of Alberta contributed the land and \$1,500,000 and the Government of Canada, \$5,500,000.
- 1999: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Alberta, the Little Red River Cree Nation and the Tallcree Nation. The Government of Alberta signed an MOU giving control of a large region of crown land and resources within County boundaries to the two First Nations without notifying Mackenzie County Council.
- 2001: County makes a presentation to Minister of Sustainable Resource Development regarding the MOU signed in 1999. The County's recommendation was:

*that the province not extend the MOU with the Little Red River and Tallcree First Nations. Rather, Council requests to meet with the province to initiate preparations for Regional Strategies for Integrated Resource Management within the municipality. The MD Of Mackenzie must be at the table with the province when the development and management of land and resources are determined.*

- 2001: AAMDC Member Advisory Committee on First Nation Issues Because it was aware that the province had entered into similar MOUs with First Nations in other jurisdictions, Mackenzie County submitted a Resolution to the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) Northern Zone meeting requesting the establishment of an AAMDC Advisory Committee on First Nations issues. With the support of the Northern Zone, the request was then submitted to the membership at the Spring AAMDC Convention. The resolution was worded as follows:

*that the AAMD&C establish a Member Advisory Committee on First Nation Issues, to develop recommendations aimed at ensuring that provincial and federal aboriginal policy, and any new agreements with First Nations, do not create undue hardship for local municipal governments and affected communities.*

Reeve Neufeld and CAO Harvey Proskiw of Mackenzie County (formerly Municipal District of Mackenzie #23) were appointed by AAMDC as District

Five's representative on the AAMD&C's new Member Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Issues.

- 2003: Request for information on provincial plans for renewal of 1999 MOU. Mackenzie County requested information from Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development regarding the plans for the future of the 1999 MOU between the Government of Alberta, the Little Red River Cree and Tallcree First Nations. The MOU expired on March 31, 2001 and the province did not subsequently renew it.

*At this point, we are not contemplating a renewal of the MOU. Discussions are taking place with the Little Red River, Tallcree and Beaver First Nations regarding a number of specific resource management issues and possible economic development initiatives. These issues, however, are of a bilateral nature and do not involve the development of an integrated resource plan.<sup>1</sup>*

- 2003: Government of Alberta News Release - Government accepts facilitator's recommendations (December 2)

*"Through the process, Alberta sought clarity, not confrontation," said Calahasen. "The recommendations serve as an excellent long-term blueprint for both First Nations and Industry in following the guiding principle of the Aboriginal Policy Framework, which is to improve the participation, in a fair and reasonable way, of Aboriginal people and business in the economic opportunities associated with resource development"*

- 2005: Release of Report on AAMD&C-AUMA Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Issues. The report included 5 recommendations, one of which was to:

*Continue the work of the present advisory committee by establishing a smaller implementation committee, with the goal of developing strategies and resource materials to help municipalities and Aboriginal communities develop more effective working relationships and partnerships around common interests, in cooperation with the Province of Alberta and representatives of Aboriginal communities.*

- 2006: Meeting between County and Tallcree administrative representatives. Mackenzie County requested a meeting with Tallcree administrative

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence from Ken Boutillier, Assistant Deputy Minister of Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to Mackenzie County dated July 2, 2003 re: MOU between Alberta, the Little Red River Cree Nation and the Tallcree Nation.

representatives in order to propose draft agreements for the County's on-going provision of treated water to the Tallcree Reserve 173B, which is directly adjacent to the hamlet of Fort Vermilion. The Chief Executive Advisor for the Tallcree First Nation indicated that the Nation is a government body, that those elected represent their constituency, and that it runs itself, as an upstanding government should. He believed that First Nations are rendered to treaty status and should be treated as any ratepayer or user of services. He wished to have a general understanding in the form of terms of reference before proceeding with negotiations. No further meetings took place nor was subsequent feedback received from the Tallcree Nation.

- 2006: County protocol for negotiations with First Nations. Mackenzie Councillor made a motion to draft a County protocol for negotiations with First Nations located in the County. No policy was prepared or approved because of a lack of information on potentially productive steps that a municipality can take in order to achieve results without involvement of the Provincial and/or Federal governments.
- 2006: AAMDC visits County. During the visit, the County highlights difficulties that have been encountered with certain County's projects.<sup>2</sup> In June 2006, AAMDC met with the Honourable Pearl Calahasen. The Minister's response was:

*The Minister acknowledges that work needs to be done on the conflicts that exists between municipal and aboriginal governments. Consultation is key to resolving issues. The Government of Alberta's First Nations Consultation Policy on Land Management and Resource Development is available to rural administrators. The fact that all of Alberta is under Treaties means that, ultimately, the Supreme Court of Canada will decide all land disputes. Both municipalities and companies are under obligation to consult with Aboriginal governments before any work commences on traditional (crown) land.*

- 2008: Mackenzie County invites the Chiefs of the Tallcree, Beaver, Little Red River Cree and Dene Tha' Nations) to a meeting with Council. Although they had initially agreed to participate, the Chiefs later decided not to do so.
- 2008: Mackenzie County request for update on 2005 AAMD&C Report recommendations. The AAMDC response stated that:

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2 For example, the Assumption Road by-pass was delayed and later cancelled due to the County's inability to reach an agreement with the Dene Nation. Difficulties encountered during Agricultural Land Exchange Task Force meetings.

*“A draft document entitled **Common Interests, Mutual Gains: Building Relations with Aboriginal People** has been produced and circulated to key stakeholders for comments. There have been delays in getting comprehensive feedback so the two associations continue to work with stakeholders”. Furthermore, “the recommendations in Building Relationships were aimed at strengthening municipal-First Nations relationships and address municipal concerns with related provincial and federal policy. The AAMDC continues to work towards that goal through these avenues.*

- Mackenzie County Council First Nations Committee. Council created this committee but soon dissolved it upon realizing that any formal meetings between the municipality and the Bands should be Council-to-Council.

## Negotiation and Agreements

- 1995 to present: Water services. The County provides water services to Tallcree and Beaver Nations without a formal agreement. Payments are made based on monthly invoices. These services predate 1995 when the Municipal District (now a County) was first established.
- 1995 to present: Road Maintenance. Alberta Transportation and Mackenzie County signed an agreement that the County would maintain any roads in the Tallcree, Beaver and Dene Tha’ Nations that are also used as “through” roads by County residents.
- 1998 to present: Exchange of Crown land and County agricultural lands. An Agricultural Land Task Force was established with representatives of Mackenzie County, the Town of High Level, Alberta Sustainable Development, four First Nations and the forest companies that are located within County boundaries. The Task Force was established in order to review and prepare a recommendation relating to Mackenzie County’s request for a transfer of Crown lands from a Green Zone to a White Zone designation. This request followed a provincial request in 1994 that the County surrender certain agricultural lands back to the province for conversion back to woodlands. The County’s understanding at the time was that the province would make certain Crown lands available to the County for agricultural purposes as an exchange for the lands that were surrendered. Representatives of each of the County’s four First Nations were invited to all Agricultural Land Task Force meetings to participate in the negotiations. In 2010, Mackenzie County Council made two presentations to the Alberta Minister of Sustainable Resource Development and a presentation to Alberta’s Premier

regarding the land exchange. The first phase of negotiations were completed in June 2010 and approximately 54,000 acres are being made available as new agricultural land before the end of the year.

- 2010 County negotiations with Tall Cree Nation. Mackenzie County Council passed a motion directing its Finance Committee to negotiate service agreements with the Tallcree First Nations. These included the formalization of the provision of water services as well as initiating the provision of fire protection and other utility services, and recreational services. In response to their request, the County also issued a letter to the Tallcree Nation stating that it will support one voting representative on the Fort Vermilion recreation Board. Facilities. Two meetings have taken place and negotiations are well under way. Once both Councils have approved the draft agreements, the final step will be to solicit the approval of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada as the federal department will be granting funds to the Tallcree Nation for part of the costs that would be incurred.

## Greetings from Val Marie, Saskatchewan<sup>1</sup>

Greetings from Val Marie! Or rather, greetings from Whitemud, the lone grocery store in this tiny Saskatchewan village (population 137). The only other store nearby of any notable size is 76 kilometers north in Ponteix — a long haul for groceries. So a couple of years ago, when Whitemud (named after the clay banks of the nearby Frenchman River) was threatened with closure, co-owner Catherine Macaulay came up with the idea of selling shares.

A corporation and board were formed, hand-drawn posters declaring SAVE OUR GROCERY STORE were passed out — and 96 shares were sold at \$1,000 each. Even the village council bought in. Macaulay retains control, but the newly renovated Whitemud now has 45 owners—about 20% of its clientèle — many of them farmers and ranchers.

Saving Whitemud may have also saved Ken Jensen's campground/vacation and RV business, just outside the village. It definitely saves Trudy Hayes (who ranches to the south) the 25-kilometre drive she would have had to take just for a quart of milk.

After you've had a look around the store—with its magazine and greeting-card display, fresh potted flowers and bouquets, deli counter, and veggie and dairy coolers—settle in at Coffee Corner. That's the place to be, sitting in the sunshine at one of two small tables, gazing out the big windows to Centre Street and the hills beyond.

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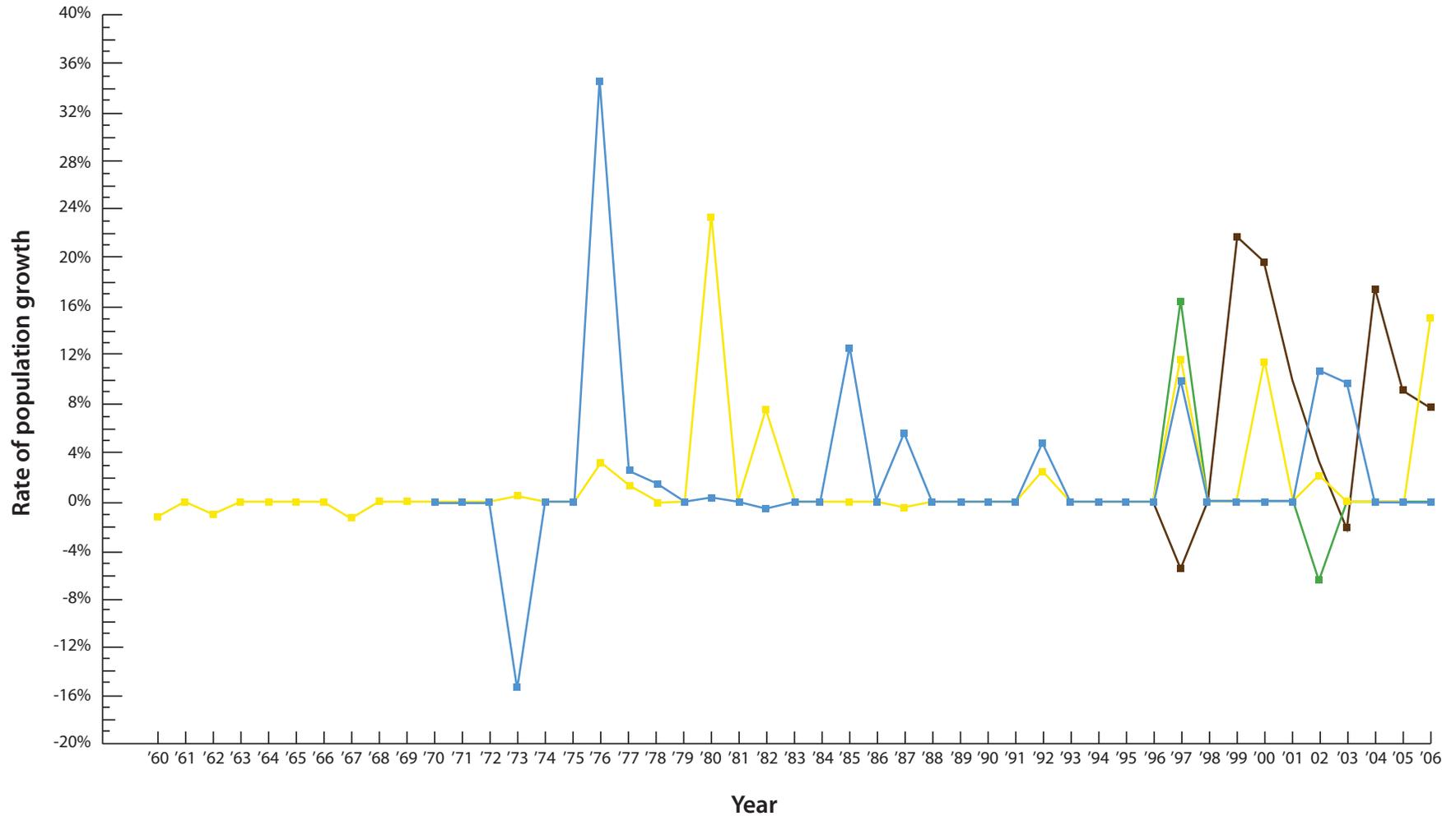
<sup>1</sup> Margoshes, Dave. *Greetings from Val Marie, Saskatchewan* (Reader's Digest Postcard Series). Reader's Digest. July, 2010, p. 109.



# Population Growth Rate

■ Mackenzie County  
 ■ Grande Prairie County  
 ■ MD of Big Lakes  
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Rate of population growth for each of four municipalities 1960-2006



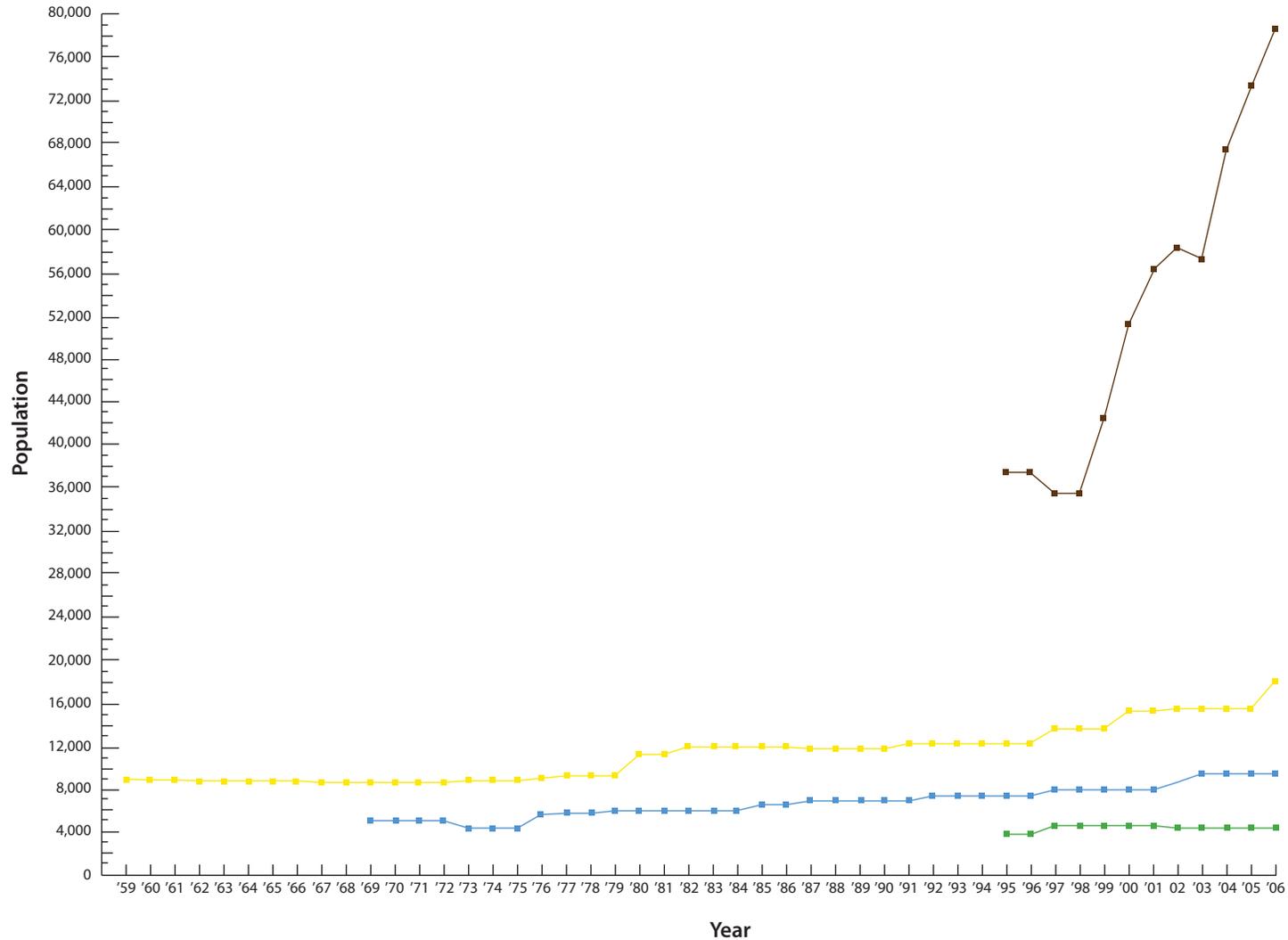
Data Source: Statistics Canada. /2006 Community Profiles: Mackenzie County / (table). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa, Ontario  
 Graph Source: Activation Analysis Group Inc. 2010



# Population

■ Mackenzie County  
 ■ Grande Prairie County  
 ■ MD of Big Lakes  
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Official population figures for four municipalities 1959-2006

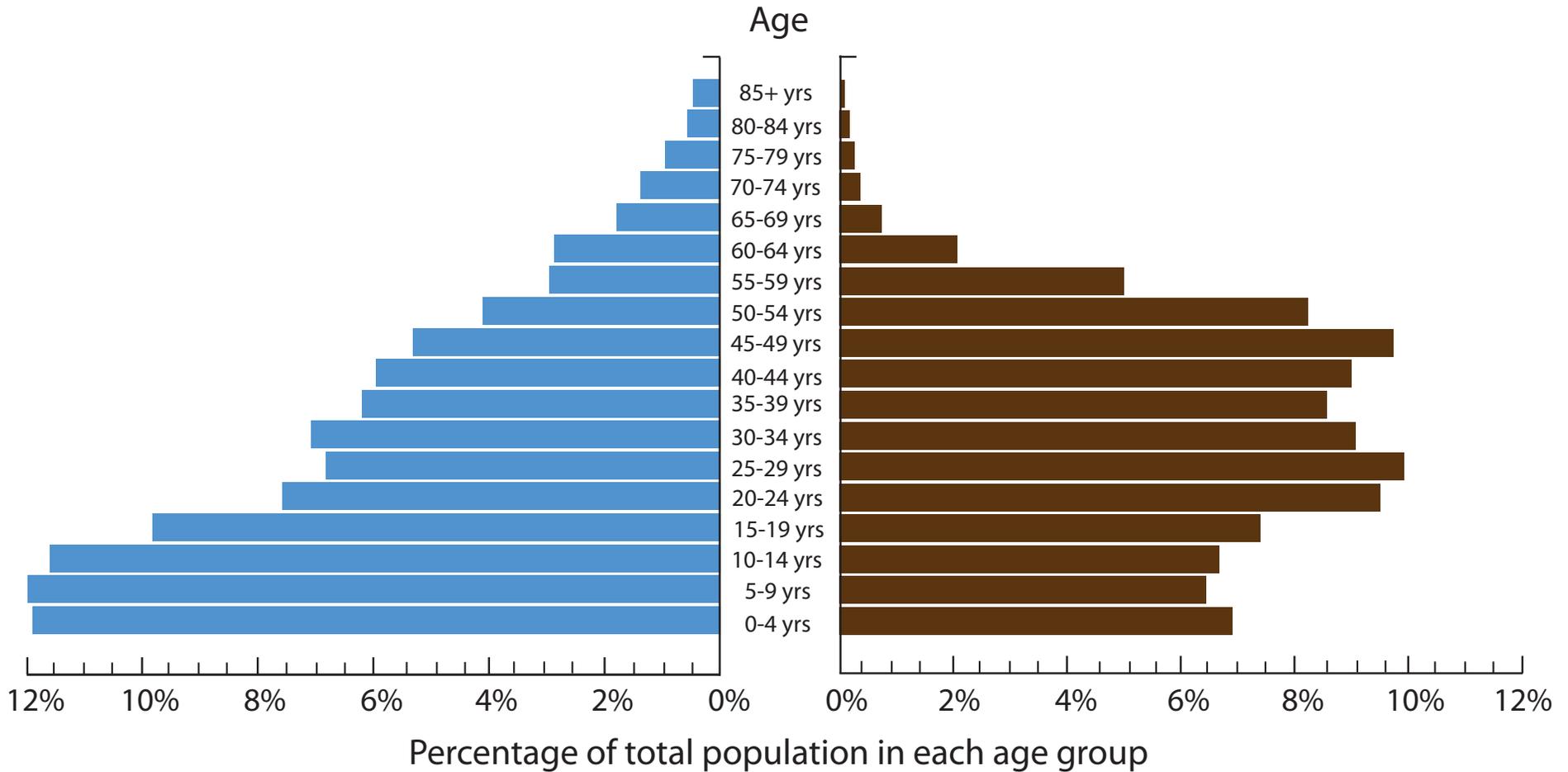


Data Source: Statistics Canada. /2006 Community Profiles: Mackenzie County / (table). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa, Ontario  
 Graph Source: Activation Analysis Group Inc. 2010



# Age of Population 2006

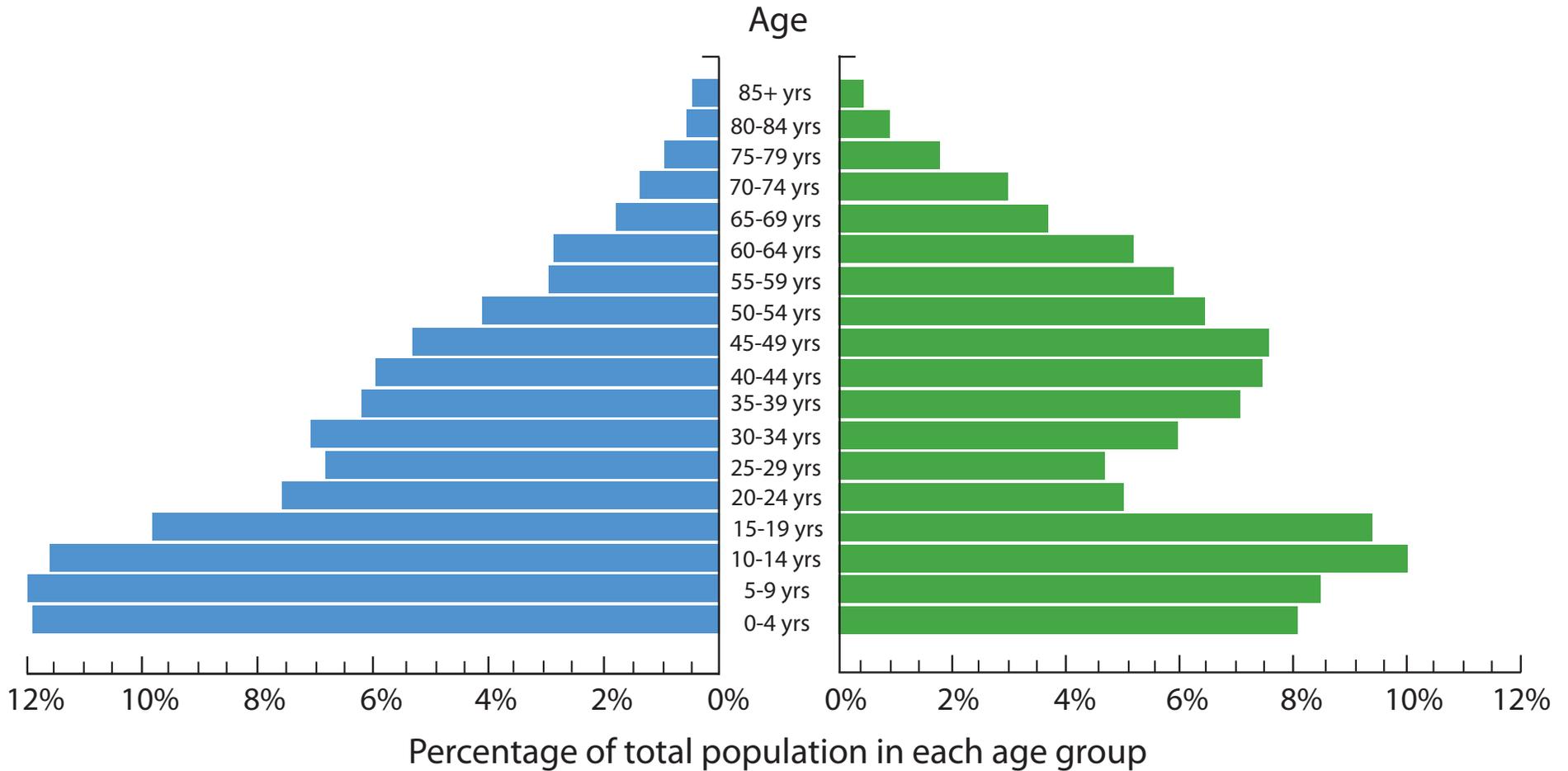
■ Mackenzie County
 ■ Wood Buffalo





# Age of Population 2006

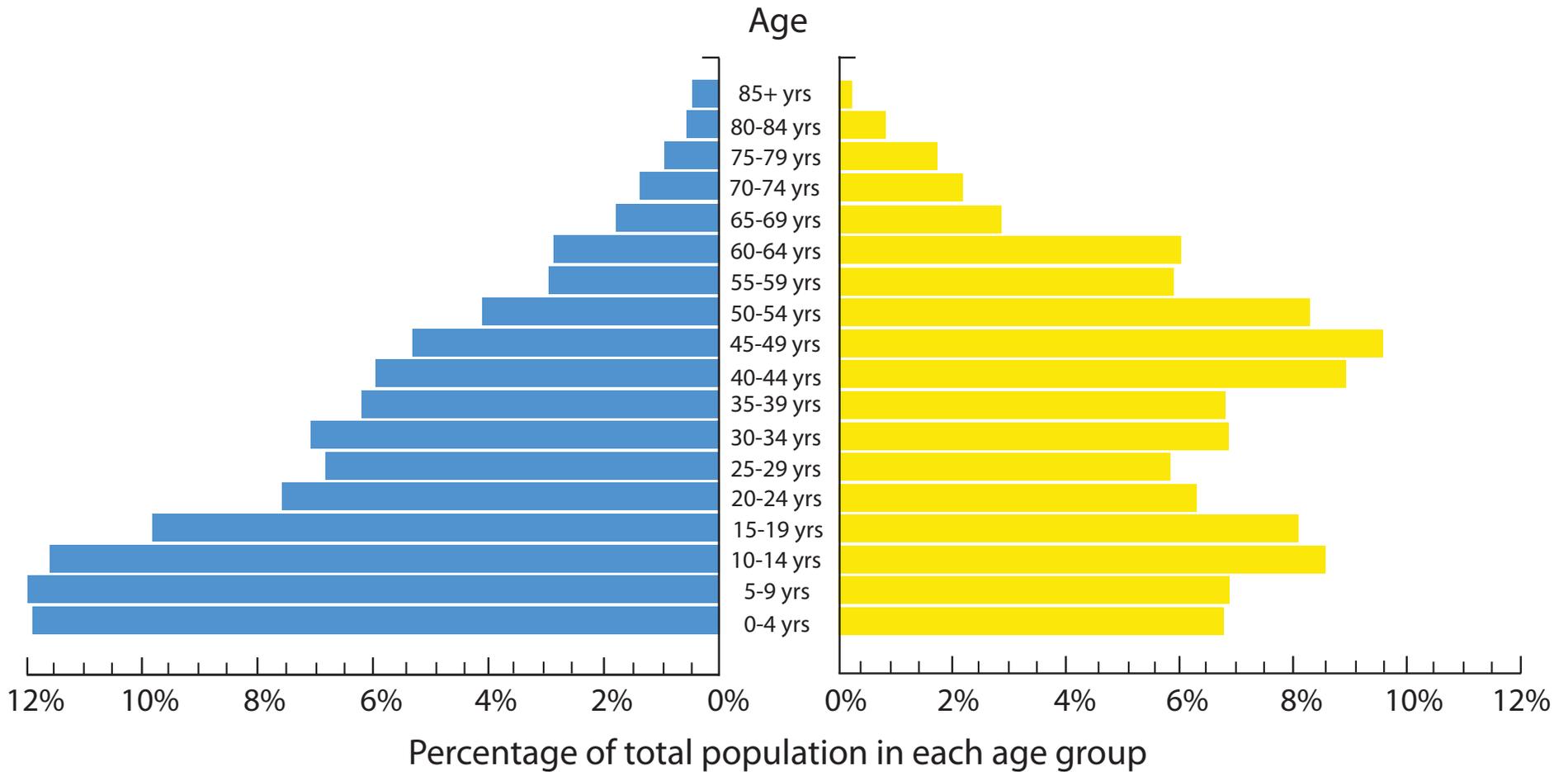
■ Mackenzie County
 ■ MD of Big Lakes





# Age of Population 2006

■ Mackenzie County
 ■ Grande Prairie County

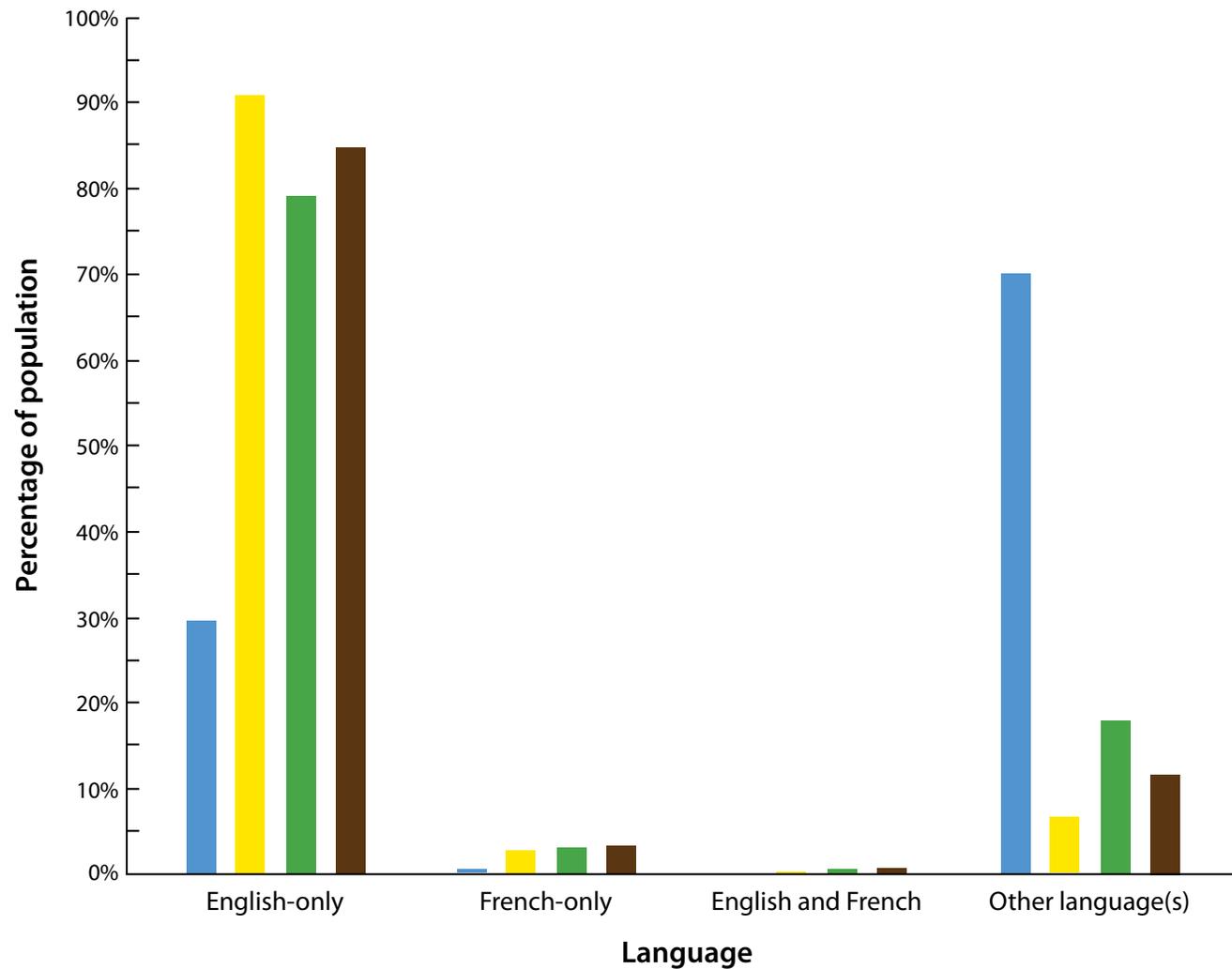




# Mother Tongue 2006

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

### Mother tongue in each of four municipalities

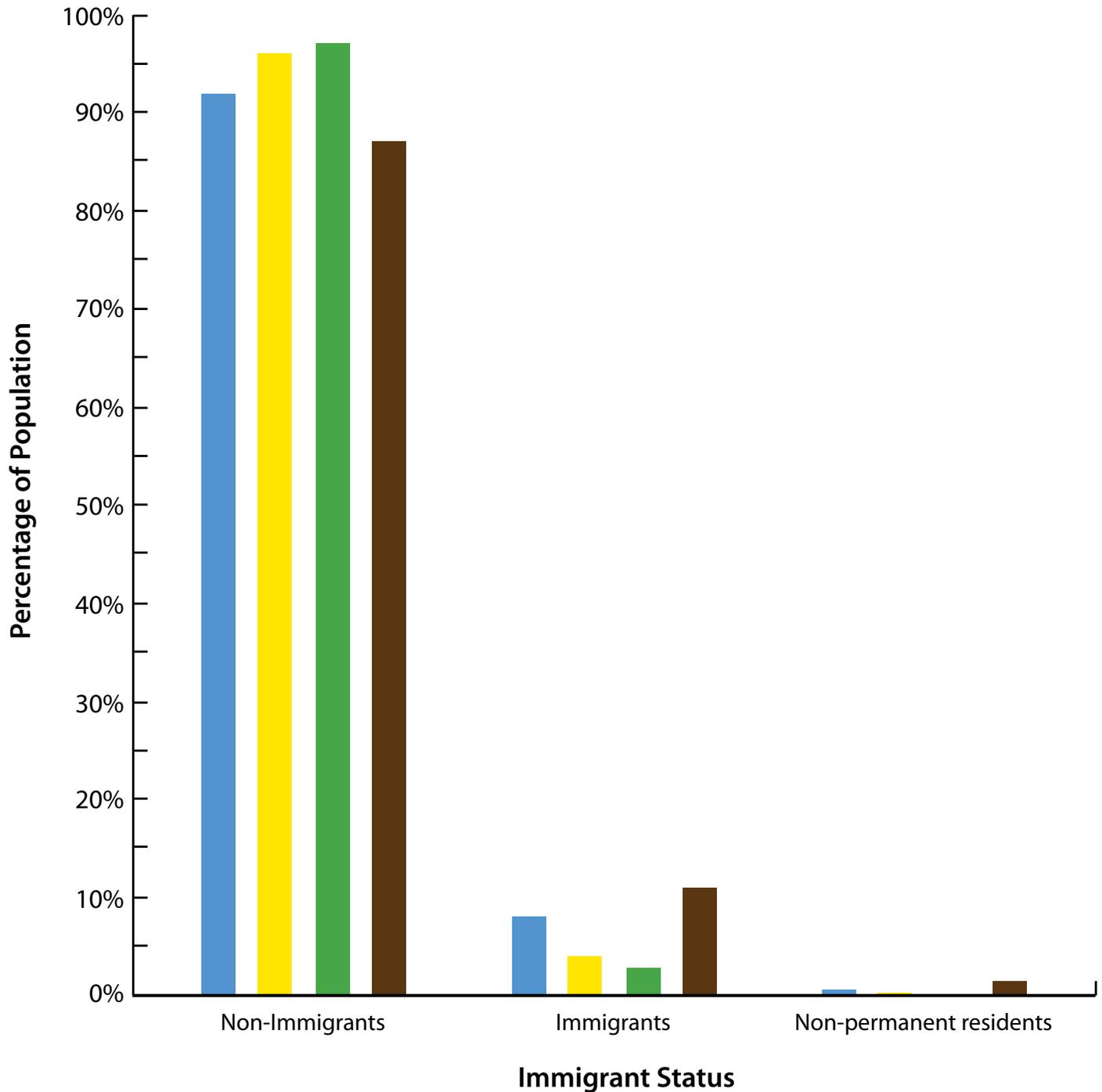




# Immigrant Status 2006

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Breakdown of immigrant status in each of four municipalities

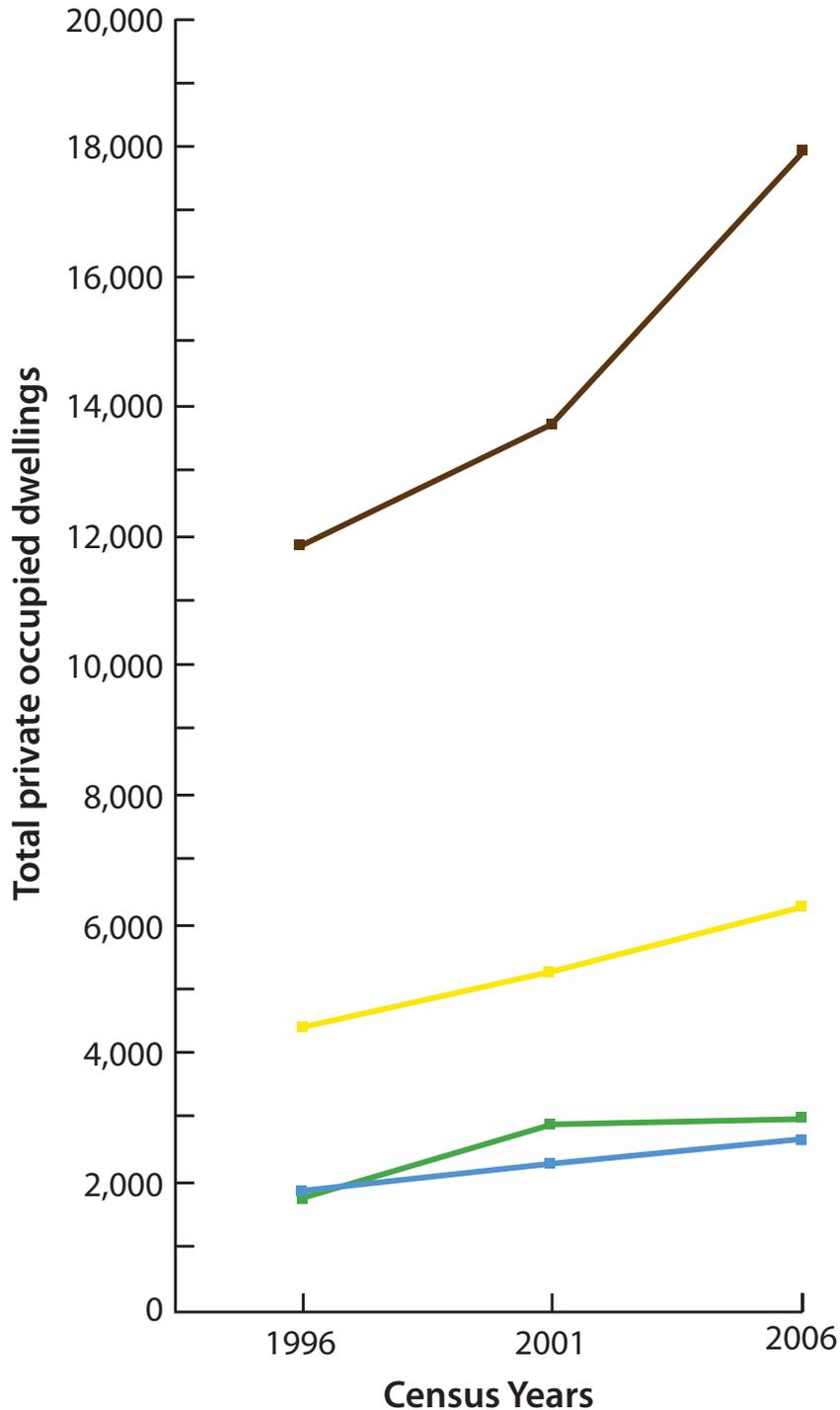




# Dwelling Units

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Historical number of private dwelling units for each of four municipalities

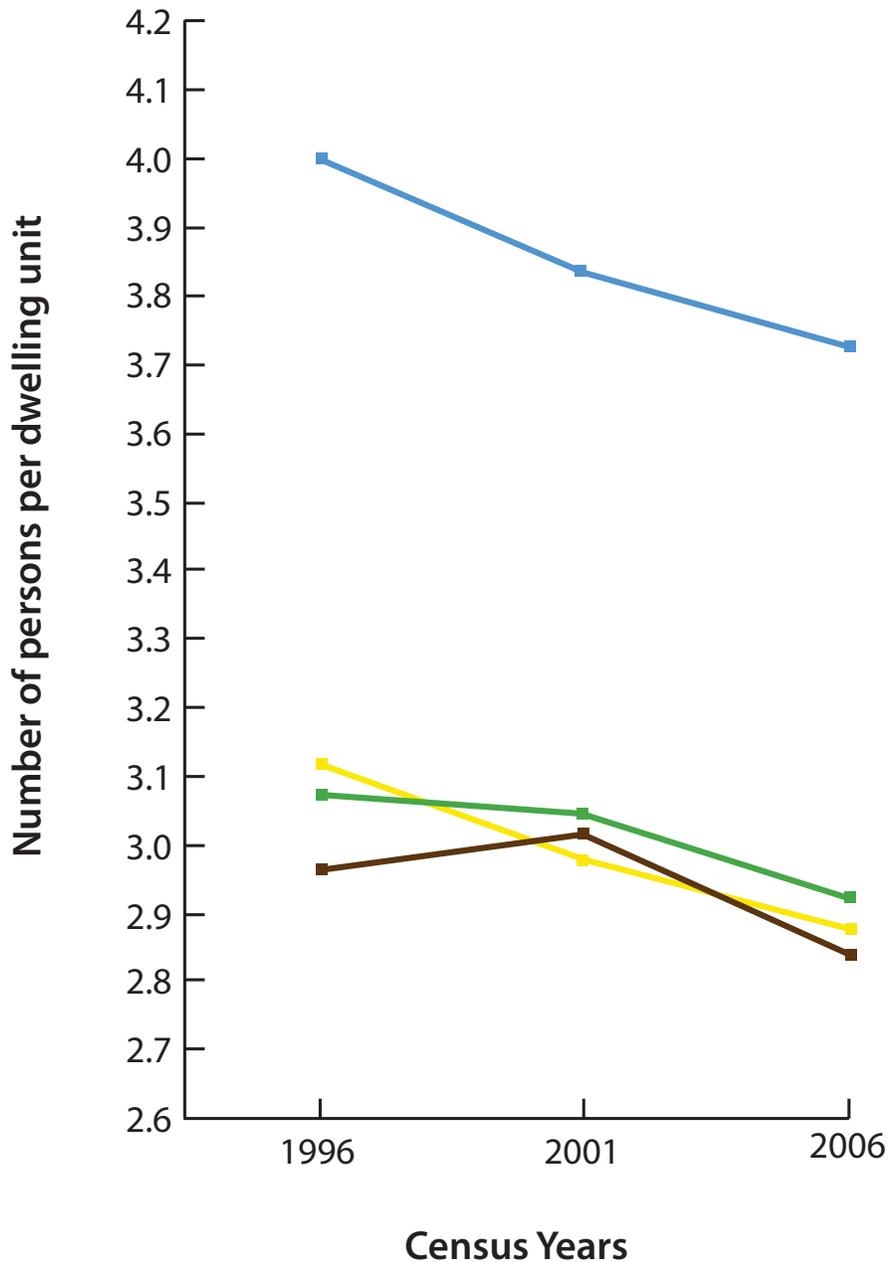




# Persons per Dwelling Unit

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Historical number of persons per dwelling unit for each of four municipalities

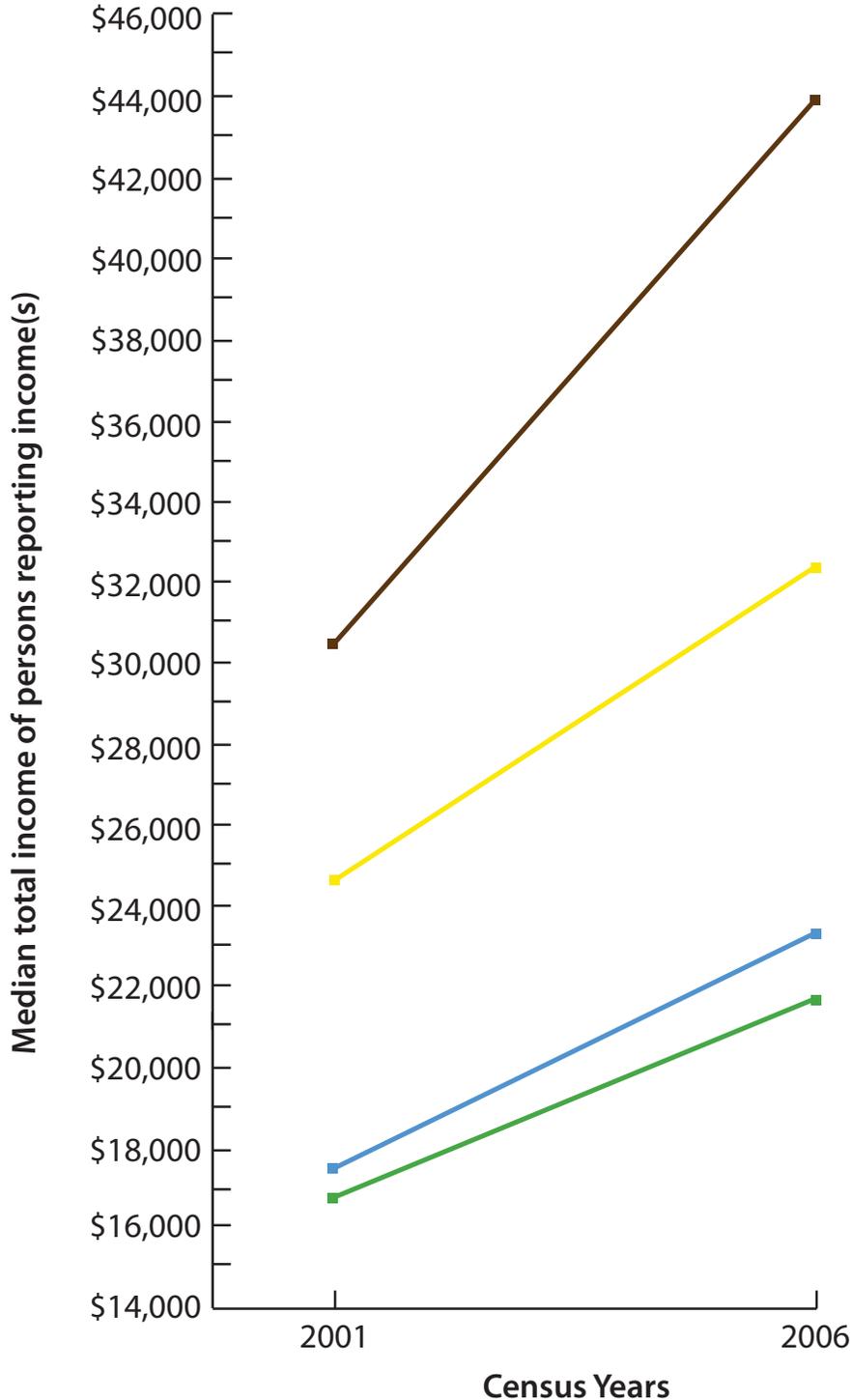




# Income

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Historical median income for each of four municipalities

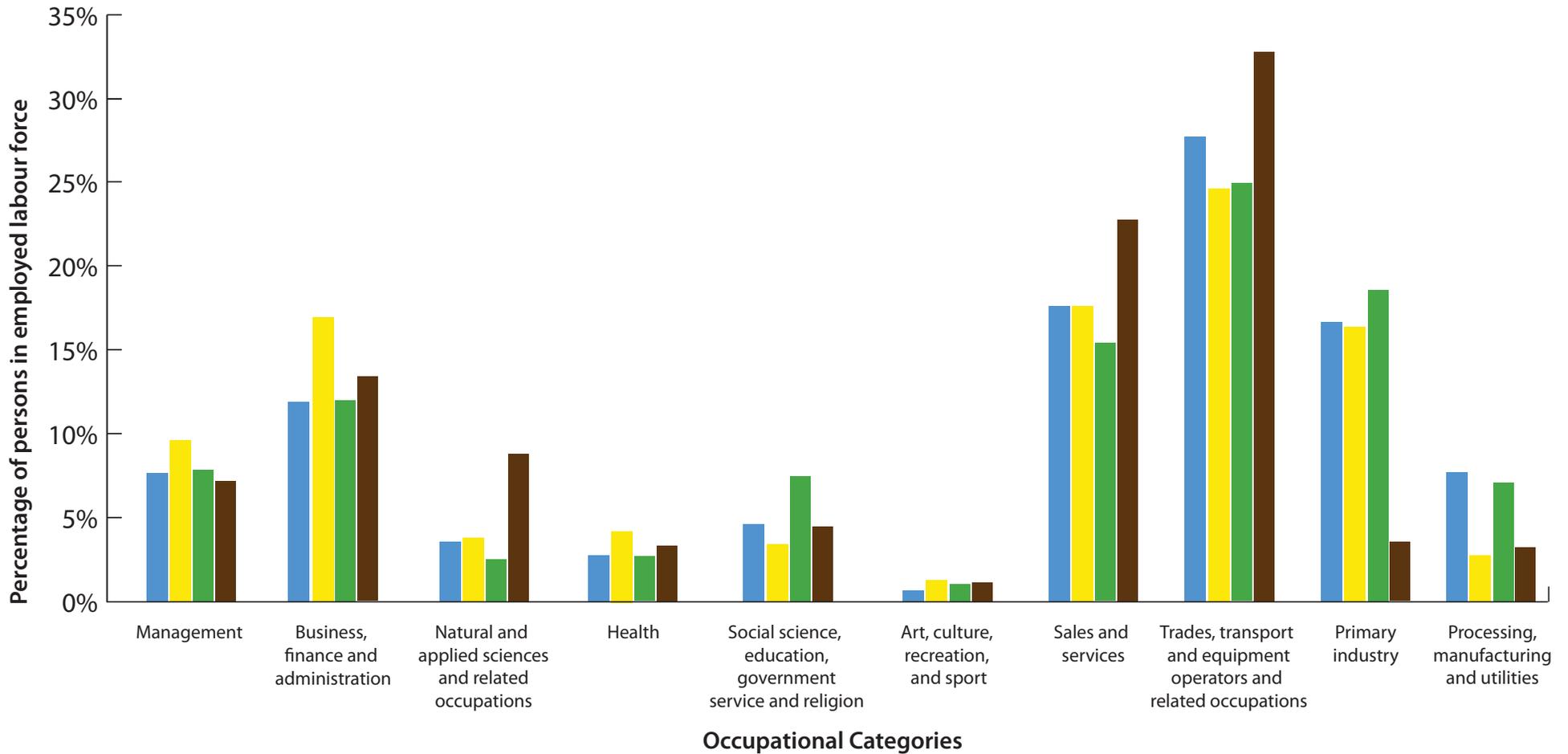




# Occupations 2006

■ Mackenzie County 
 ■ Grande Prairie County 
 ■ MD of Big Lakes 
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Proportion of residents working in specific occupations in 2006

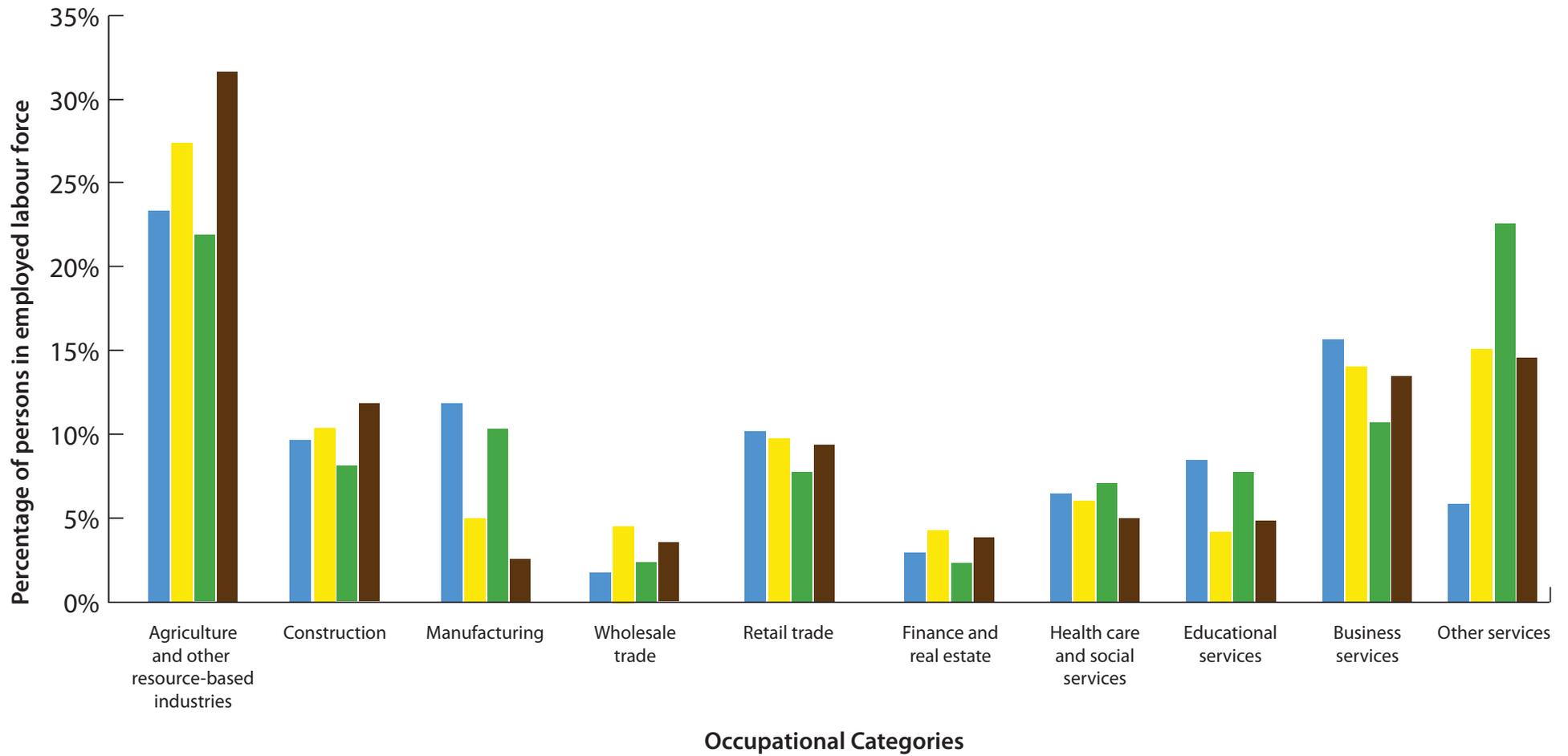




# Industry

■ Mackenzie County 
 ■ Grande Prairie County 
 ■ MD of Big Lakes 
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Proportion of residents working in specific industries in 2006

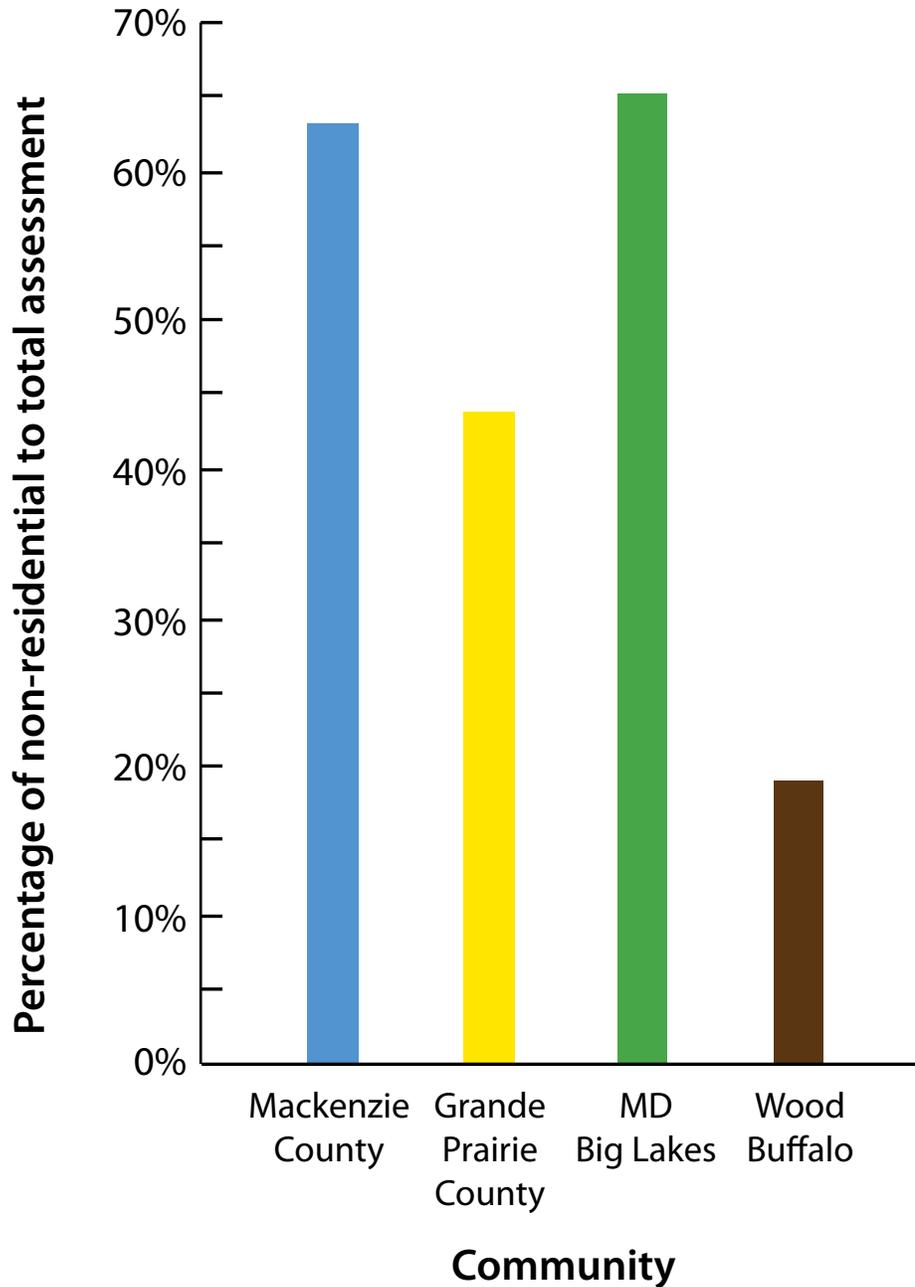




# Assessments

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Proportion of non-residential to total assessment in each of four municipalities in 2009



## Appendix J

# Community Infrastructure Sustainability

- J1. Municipal Infrastructure
- J2. Organizational Chart
- J3. Transfer Stations
- J4. Capital Plan for Rural Water Line
- J5. Utility Infrastructure

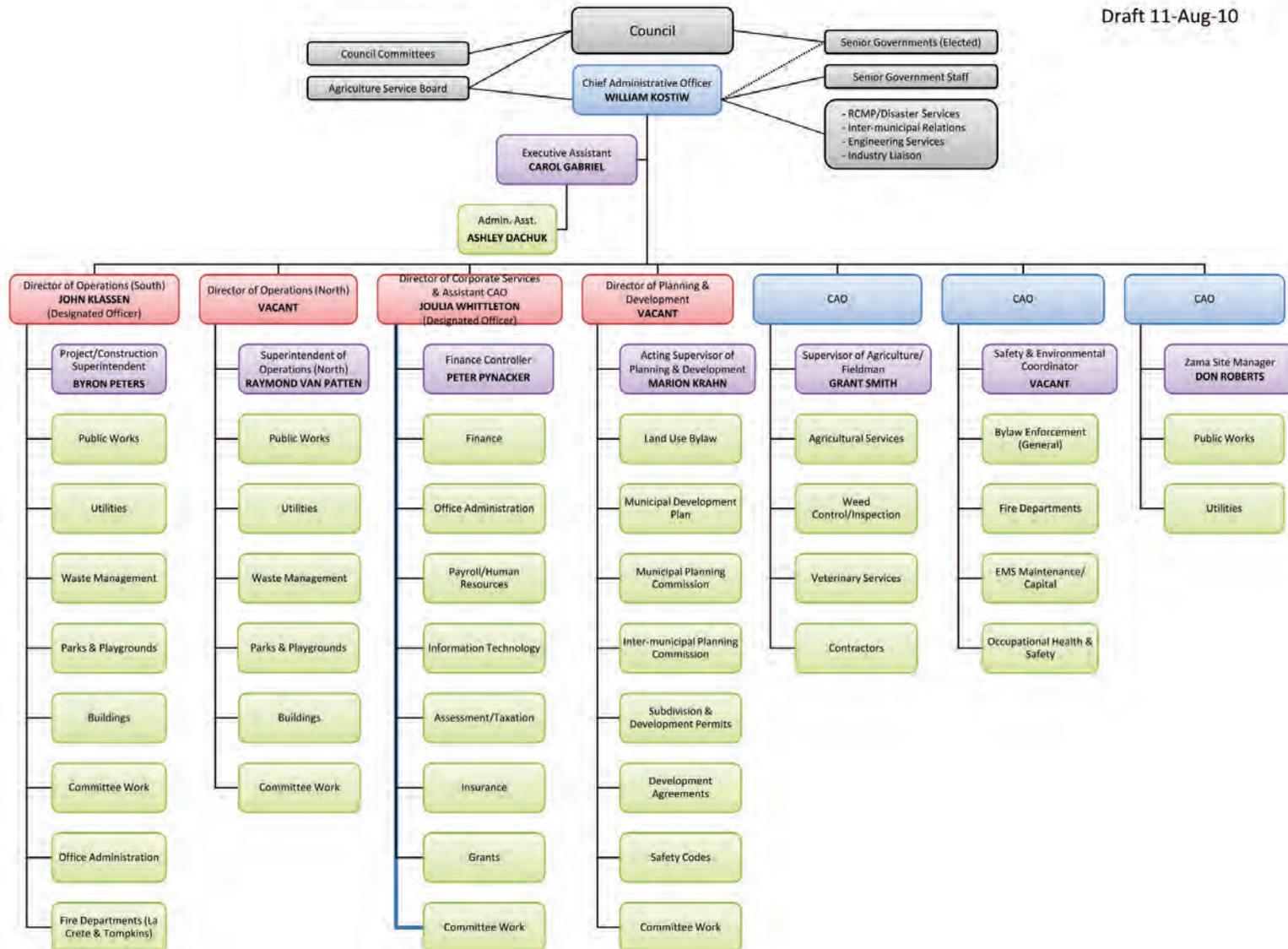
# Mackenzie Municipal Infrastructure

Hamlet	Facility	Built	Renovation or Addition	Equipment	Status	Gaps
Blue Hills	Community Hall	Info N/A				
Fort Vermilion	Airport Building	1983		Most original		
Fort Vermilion	County office	2003	2010-2011A	Most original		Replaced in 2006
Fort Vermilion	EMS	1982		Most original	leased to province	
Fort Vermilion	Fire Hall	1980		Most original		Wireless spotty in some areas
Fort Vermilion	Maintenance shop	1979	2003	Most original		
Fort Vermilion	rec centre	1984	1991	Most original		
Fort Vermilion	water treatment	1978	2002	Most original		
La Crete	Airport Building	N/A				
La Crete	County office	2010		New		Replaced in 2010
La Crete	EMS	1980	2001A	Most original	leased to province	
La Crete	Fire Hall	1980	2001A	Most original		Rural satellite station south of La Crete needed; Wireless spotty.
La Crete	Maintenance shop	2010		Most original		
La Crete	rec centre	1982	1992	Most original		
La Crete	water treatment (old)	1980		Most original		
La Crete	water treatment (new)	2005		Most original		
Rocky Lane	Community Hall	Info N/A				
Zama	Airport Building	N/A				
Zama	Fire Hall	2010		New		Wireless spotty in some areas
Zama	county office/library	1978		Most original		Facility to be replaced/demolished in 2011
Zama	county office/library	+2010-2011		New		
Zama	community hall	1985	2004A	Mech upgrade		
Zama	water treatment	1980	2010	Most original		

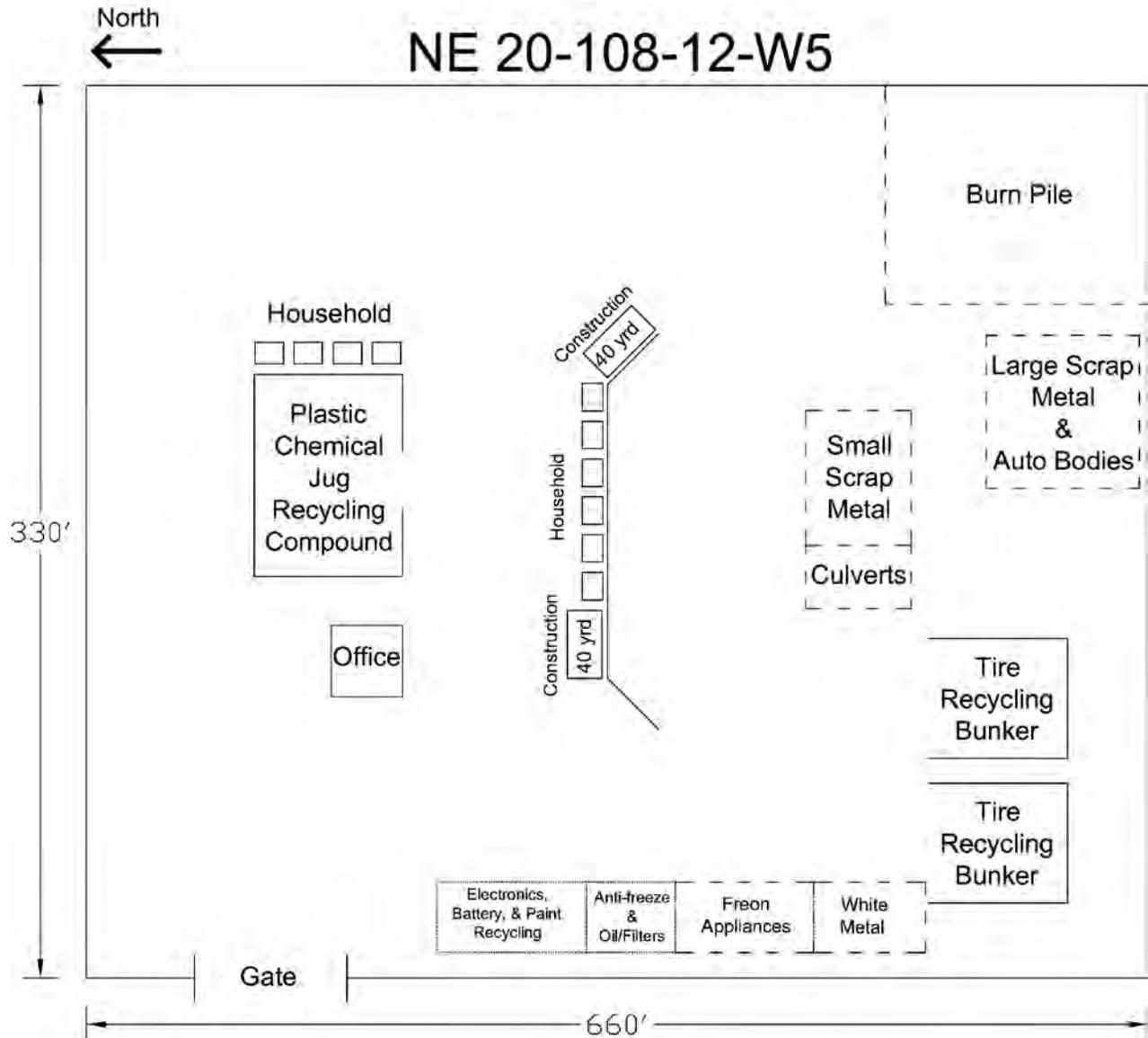
Sources: Atco EnergySense Reports  
Alberta Airport Inventories

# Mackenzie County Organizational Chart

Draft 11-Aug-10



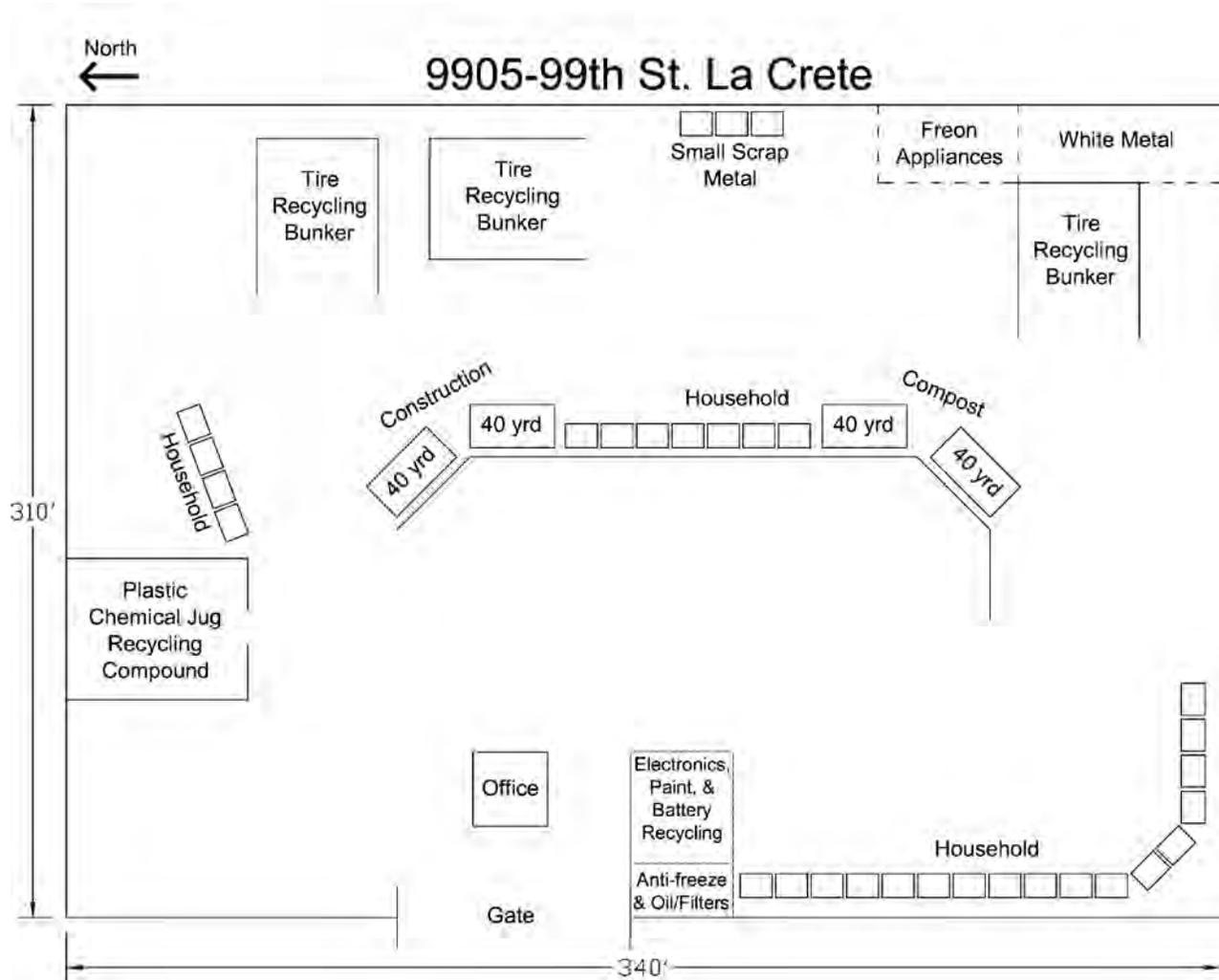
# Fort Vermillion Waste Transfer Station



Source: Mackenzie County. *Environmental Services: Solid Waste Transfer Stations.*

Retrieved 2010 08 18 from [http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16](http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16)

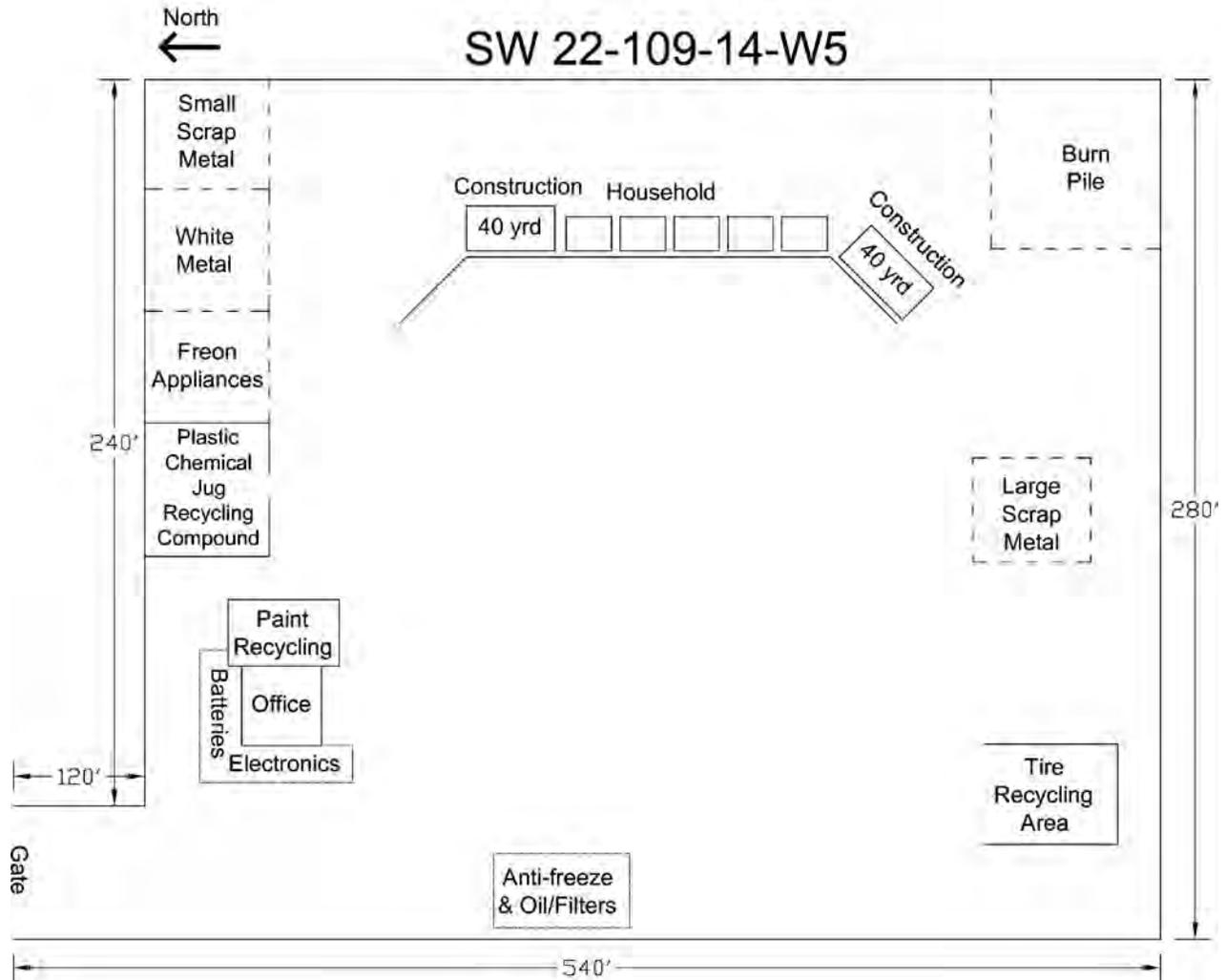
# La Crete Waste Transfer Station



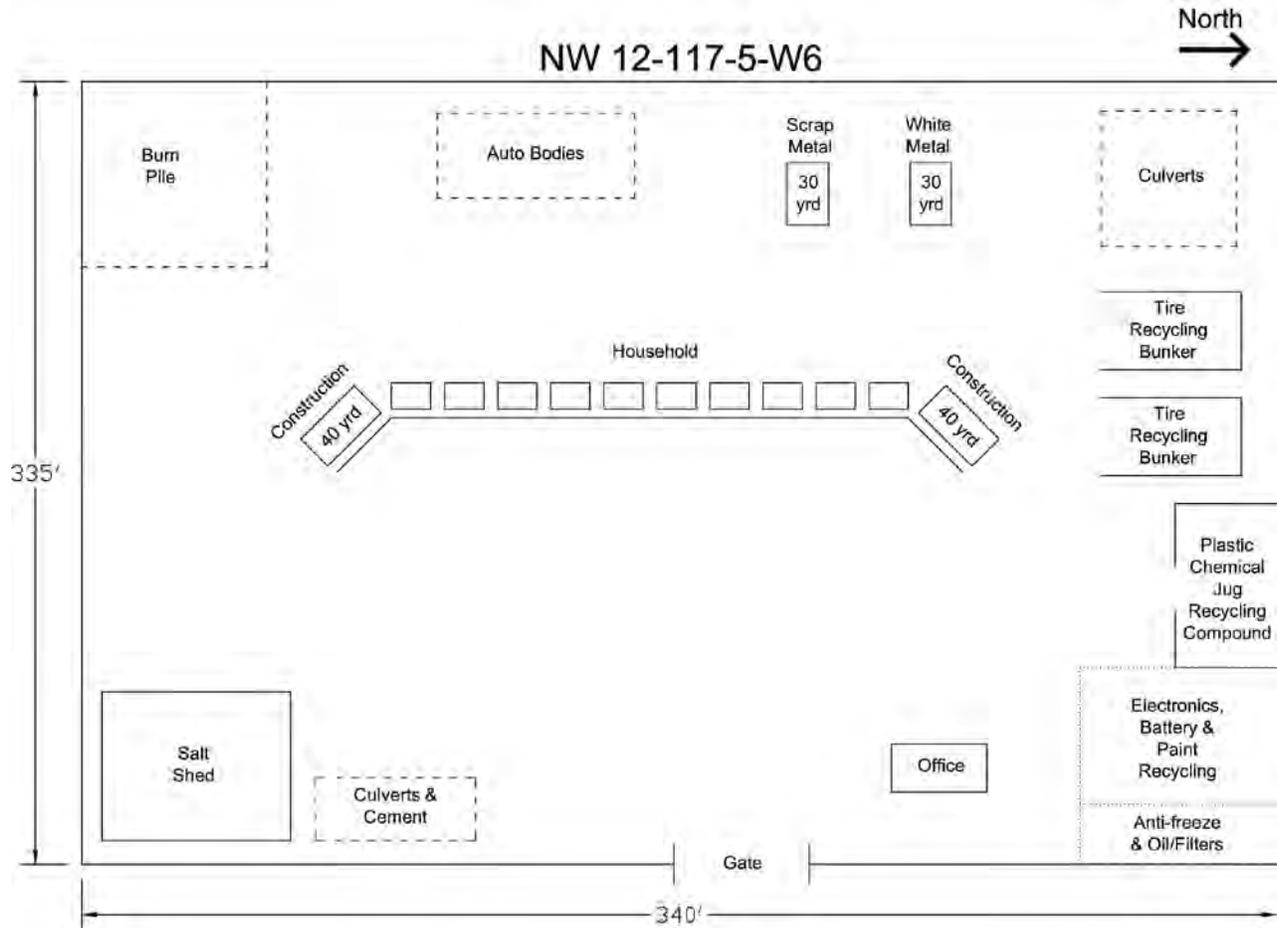
Source: Mackenzie County. *Environmental Services: Solid Waste Transfer Stations.*

Retrieved 2010 08 18 from [http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16](http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16)

# Rocky Lane Waste Transfer Station



# Zama Waste Transfer Station



Source: Mackenzie County. *Environmental Services: Solid Waste Transfer Stations.*

Retrieved 2010 08 18 from [http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16](http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16)

## Mackenzie County Multi-year capital plan (DRAFT)

Please note that the plan includes some of the major projects from the 2009 project list. This is done in order to show comparatively the magnitude of work scheduled for 2009 and future years.

LC - La Crete; FV - Fort Vermilion; BH - Blue Hills; RL - Rocky Lane

Category	Sub-category/location	Description/location	Planned activities	Total	Grants or other funding	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Rural Water Line</b>												
	Rural	Phase I	Engineering and design	\$287,539		\$87,539	\$200,000					
	Rural	Phase II	Construction to 94th Avenue	\$25,000			\$25,000					
	Rural	Phase III	Fort Vermilion to 88 Connector	\$3,500,000			\$3,500,000					
	Rural	Phase IV	La Crete to Bluehills	\$2,000,000				\$2,000,000				
	Rural	Phase V	88 Connector to Tall Cree	\$3,000,000					\$3,000,000			
	Rural	Phase VI	La Crete to 88 Connector	\$2,000,000						\$2,000,000		
	Rural	Phase VII	Fort Vermilion to Boyer	\$2,400,000							\$2,400,000	
	Rural	Phase VIII	High Level to rural High Level	\$1,500,000								\$1,500,000
<b>Total Rural Water Line</b>				<b>\$14,712,539</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$87,539</b>	<b>\$3,725,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,400,000</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>

## WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE'S CAPACITY FOR POPULATION GROWTH IN MACKENZIE COUNTY

Service	Fort Vermilion	La Crete	Zama
Water Treatment	Raw water supply is excellent (Peace River).	Although the two wells were upgraded in 2009, raw water supply may reach its capacity in near future (due to increase in consumption; life of the wells, etc).	Raw water supply is good. New wells.
Water Distribution	Renewal program continues and expansion plans are underway.	Distribution system in La Crete should not be a limiting factor for growth.	Renewal program recently completed and expansion is underway.
Wastewater Treatment	Existing system should not limit growth.	Existing lagoon is reaching capacity. Expansion opportunities are available. Sewage treatment should not be a limiting factor to growth.	New treatment facility opened.
Wastewater Collection	Distribution system upgrade is complete. Current collection system should not be a limiting factor.	Current collection system should not be a limiting factor to growth.	Current collection system should not be a limiting factor to growth

Adapted from: Activation Analysis Group Inc. *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*. 2009. Report to Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta.

# Appendices

- A: Executive Summary
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  - E1: Public Meetings' Newspaper Advertisement
  - E2: Powerpoint Presentation from Public Meetings
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  - F1: Alberta Kimberlite Finds
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  - F3: White Zone / Green Zone Land Exchange
  - F4: Mackenzie County Mission to Khanty-Mansiysk
  - F5: Crude Oil and Natural Gas Resources
  - F6: Tolko Industries' - Footner Forest Products' Joint Forest Management Agreement
  - F7: Broadband Coverage
  
- G: Environmental Sustainability
  - G1: 2006 Mackenzie County Energy Management Assessment
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  - H10: Immigrant Status 2006
  - H11: Total Dwelling Units 1996 – 2006
  - H12: Persons per Dwelling Unit 1996 – 2006
  - H13: Median Income 2001 – 2006
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  - H15: Industry 2006
  - H16: Proportion of Non-Residential to Total Assessment 2009
  
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  - J5: Utility Infrastructure

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County's *4Step Community Sustainability Plan* is a type of strategic plan that outlines strategies to build a strong economy, one that protects environmental integrity and contributes to strong social cohesion.

Sustainability means that residents will continue to be able to live in ways that meet their needs yet do not erode the ability of their children and their children's children to meet their needs.

Residents recognize the County's growing potential to be a community of diverse people and cultures who share a common desire to live in an environment that embraces the northern spirit and where family, friends, and faith are the cornerstones of their lives. To achieve this vision, the County's main objective will be to unite residents and stakeholders by cultivating social, cultural and economic links between each of its various communities. Only by merging common interests and efforts, will the County's communities join forces to achieve common goals. The County's sustainability is also inextricably linked to local attitudes. Residents, community leaders and opinion setters must understand that achieving sustainability is not possible without building bridges between contrasting attitudes.

### Economic Sustainability

Mackenzie County's economy is founded on the extraction of natural resources, agriculture and forestry. At the same time, high quality public services are essential to provide a quality of life that remains attractive to local residents and to potential newcomers.

To ensure the County's long-term economic sustainability, Council must take measures to close the distance between business and their markets. This requires improving the efficiency and cost of travel through primary transportation corridors. Advocacy with the province will continue to be a primary strategy to ensure that :

- Highway 88 is fully paved as soon as possible
- Highway 58 is widened and extended to the BC border in a timely manner
- Zama Road is designated as a secondary highway and is paved
- Rail services are upgraded
- Scheduled air passenger services are improved

Given its northern climate, the County is proud of its agricultural community's successes. It will support and advocate, where necessary, for:

- enhancements to the sustainability of northern agricultural practices,
- community measures to strengthen the local research presence,
- measures taken to provide employment opportunities for youth and young families by promoting local agri-business opportunities.

Advocacy will also play a central role:

- in supporting local oil and gas producers to implement new projects in enhanced oil recovery and in carbon capture/sequestration in ensuring the
- availability of locally appropriate and high-quality health services that meet local needs. Establishing a municipal health committee can support Alberta Health Services to recruit and retain health professionals.

Despite the 2008-2009 economic downturn, there is room for optimism in the province's Northwest. The continuing potential for rapid population growth however, means the County requires current, reliable, and comprehensive population data in order to plan for facilities and services that will continue to meet local needs.

## Environmental Sustainability

Mackenzie County's extensive natural environment is a precious resource and will be governed in a way that protects it and that allows people to enjoy it, while limiting the possibility of damaging development. The County will:

- coordinate the planning of service roads for the forestry and oil and gas sectors to minimize duplication and environmental damage,
- advocate for the improvement of rail service in the County as a means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by cutting down on truck traffic moving goods to and from markets,
- minimize urban sprawl by discouraging residents and newcomers from settling in small parcels on potentially productive agricultural lands,
- undertake energy assessments of its facilities on a regular basis,
- monitor new developments in the recycling sector as a means to find realistic ways to increase local recycling of waste materials.

## Social Sustainability

Residents of any community need opportunities to meet and interact with others in a neutral way, one that builds relationships and more importantly, trust. When parents trust the residents of their community, they can allow their children to move around the community safely, and can be confident that if they run into a problem, someone will be available to help and contact the parents.

A “sense of place” or “place of assembly” is one where numerous types of activity take place in a central area of the community and provide opportunities for residents to meet and interact. The County can amend hamlet development plans to incorporate the establishment or reinforcement of a central core area. This will provide for or enhance synergistic opportunities for individuals and groups to gather for social and cultural opportunities, for commercial activity and for access to public services.

In 2010, the County is getting close to signing the first agreement that it has negotiated with a local First Nation, since its incorporation in 1995. The agreement will provide for County delivery of utility and fire protection services to the Tallcree Nation, for Tallcree representation on the Fort Vermilion Recreation Board and for access to its recreational facilities.

These discussions have largely taken place between each community’s leaders but will have a significant impact on their residents, particularly in the joint use of recreational facilities. Both parties to the agreement will want to make a success of the introduction of closer relations between members of their respective cultures. The County can now identify and prioritize goals that are common to both the County and specific First Nations, and develop joint strategies to address them. It will also be important:

- to involve members of First Nations communities in the planning processes for local activities and events.
- to encourage residents of First Nations, Mennonite and County communities to participate in one another’s public activities and events, and to ensure they feel genuinely welcome during such experiences (e.g., local festivals, cultural, and recreational activities).

## Community Infrastructure Sustainability

The County has relatively good recreational infrastructure and will continue to monitor how best to ensure a high level of recreation for its various communities. It also provides high quality utility services and must continue to manage them in such a fashion that they will sustain future generations. The County is currently

implementing an eight-phase plan to construct a rural water line to serve residents between Fort Vermilion and La Crete.

Infrastructure risk must continue to be considered and monitored over time. The risk of climate change should also be brought into the equation as it will have a significant impact on the infrastructure into the future. It will also be important to work with Rainbow Lake and High Level to develop joint risk assessments for the region.

The population growth rate in the County has fluctuated greatly, increasing by as much as 12-36% in some years. These rates are not continuous, however. When planning for infrastructure upgrades it will be important to use a conservative long range population estimate as the basis for those plans. This minimizes the financial problems that arise when planning to build for a population that is smaller or larger than anticipated.

## Conclusion

To be a successful County, everyone must work together and put local interests aside. The Municipal Sustainability Plan is a guide for the future and as such, its goals and strategies must be modified as opportunities arise and threats emerge. To implement this plan, Council must determine short, medium and long term objectives and adjust these to fit its needs. This MSP should guide all other plans and decisions made by Council, always striving and pointing the County in the direction of its Vision Statement.

# Appendix A

## Executive Summary

## Appendix B

# Mackenzie County's Municipal Sustainability Plan

# MACKENZIE COUNTY

## 4STEP COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

### Vision

Mackenzie County is a community of diverse people and cultures who share a common desire to live in an environment that embraces the northern spirit and where family, friends, and faith are the cornerstones of their lives.

### Objective

Mackenzie County's objective is to cultivate social, cultural and economic links between the County's various communities so that they unite residents and stakeholders in the achievement of the County's vision.

### Principles

#### Local Autonomy

- Local freedom and flexibility provides a forum to take advantage of creative opportunities that face limited encumbrances from regulation.
- Optimal local autonomy with equal opportunities provides for the unique cultural, environmental, and economic flavour of each of the County's communities.
- Local post-secondary education will provide opportunities for the residents to learn skills locally that can be applied locally.
- Local hiring and training will permit the north to increase its labour self-sufficiency in the unskilled, skilled and professional sectors.

#### County Cohesion

- Bridge geographic distances to strengthen relationships both within and outside of municipal boundaries.

## Management of change

- Moderate yet sufficient population growth will preserve the culture and character of County communities. At the same time, it will permit under-served communities to reach the critical population mass necessary to sustain essential services: educational facilities, daily postal, grocery and fuel needs.
- The County's capacity to absorb natural population growth will reinforce the potential for families to age together.
- Moderate and centralized commercial development in under-served areas will create a synergy between businesses that will optimize business sustainability.
- Municipal policy on development density will preserve residents' ability to enjoy wide open spaces.
- Moderate change will permit renewal but will not interrupt the small-town atmosphere and the northern spirit inherent in County communities.

## Community Pride

- Strengthening community pride creates the incentive to attend to community maintenance, cleanliness, and aesthetic appeal.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal E1:** The County's transportation system:

- reduces travel time and increases safe, comfortable and efficient travel between its communities and between the County and major destinations beyond its borders,
- provides economically efficient access to business and industrial markets outside of County boundaries.

**Strategy E1.1:** Maintain a strong and consistent approach with Alberta Transportation to request the completion and of upgrade northern transportation corridors:

- to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods to, from and within the County,
- to strengthen economically, socially and environmentally sustainable opportunities for the movement of people, as well as agricultural and resource sector goods.



**Goal E2** Highway 88 is a fully-paved, two-lane highway with shoulders, passing lanes and rest stops that provides a well-maintained, year-round link between Highway 58 and Slave Lake.

**Strategy E2.1:** Encourage the establishment of a coalition of partners to form a Highway Association whose mandate would be twofold:

- to pursue a provincial commitment to pave the remaining 150 km of Highway 88 in a timely fashion,
- to market Highway 88's tourism and economic development potential.



**Goal E3** Highway 58 is a paved, two-lane highway with shoulders and passing lanes that extends from the BC border to the Wentzel River at Fox Lake.

**Strategy E3.1** Undertake comparative research of the NE British Columbia and NW Alberta economies in order to identify potential incentives for BC to extend its NE road system to its border with Alberta.

**Strategy E3.2** Obtain a commitment from the Government of Alberta to encourage the BC government to provide a permanent road link between Fort Nelson and Rainbow Lake and to extend Highway 58 to the BC border.

## Step I: Economic Sustainability (con'd)

**Strategy E3.3** Work with relevant organizations and interested parties in northeastern BC to promote the link jointly with the two provincial governments.

**Strategy E3.4** Work with regional stakeholders to pursue a provincial commitment to complete the widening of Highway 58 as soon as possible.

**Strategy E3.5** Work with the region's MLA, Alberta Transportation and regional stakeholders to assess the best alignment/route for connecting Highway 58 to BC's paved SYD road.



**Goal E4** Zama Road is a paved secondary highway.

**Strategy E4.1** Work with stakeholders to encourage the province to designate Zama Road as a secondary highway and to pave it within a specific period of time.



**Goal E5** Residents of La Crete, Blue Hills and Buffalo Head Prairie have paved access to:

- Highway 35 via a bridge that crosses the Peace River at Tompkins Landing,
- Highway 88 via the County road known as the Highway 88 Connector.

**Strategy E5.1** Request that the province assess the costs to users to make a detour when the river crossing at Tompkins Landing is unavailable against the benefit of a year-round bridge across the river.

**Strategy E5.2** Work with the province to establish timely, reliable, year-round crossing across the Peace River at Tompkins Landing.

**Strategy E5.3** Establish priorities and obtain financial assistance to pave hamlet roads under the provincial Streets Improvement Program.



## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

### **Goal E6** County businesses and shippers:

- are satisfied with communications and relationships with the company that provides rail service to the County,
- have access to reliable rail service on a 312-lb mainline standard,
- have access to a sufficient number of grain hopper cars that can be loaded to full mainline standard potential to keep costs down,
- enjoy comparable service to that provided elsewhere on Alberta's mainline.

### **Strategy E6.1** Encourage the establishment of a coalition or partnership of rail shippers in the Mackenzie and Peace regions whose mandate would be twofold:

- to work with CN to address gaps in car supply,
- to request that the province encourage CN to upgrade the line to a 286- or 312-lb rail standard.



### **Goal E7** Scheduled air passenger services in Mackenzie County reduce the time needed to travel within and beyond County boundaries.

#### **Strategy E7.1** Before permitting the purchase of land or the construction of homes along the airport's boundaries:

- commission a study immediately to investigate whether long term plans for the La Crete airport should involve expansion on its current site or relocation to a new site,
- develop a long-term strategy for the La Crete airport.

#### **Strategy E7.2** Continue to support a level of infrastructure for all weather airports in County communities.

#### **Strategy E7.3** Promote air service providers to create services to, from and between the communities of the region and beyond the County.

#### **Strategy E7.4** Add a safe, accessible heliport and a Medevac service to the Fort Vermilion and Zama airports.



### **Goal E8** Agricultural lands in Mackenzie County are in optimal health because area farmers use sustainable agricultural practices that are tailored to the needs of the local climate, flora and fauna.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E8.1** Encourage the County's Agricultural Services Board to work with the local agricultural societies, the Fort Vermilion substation of the Lacombe Research Centre and the Mackenzie Applied Research Association to identify and implement sustainable agricultural practices.



**Goal E9** Fort Vermilion hosts an applied research centre of excellence that focuses on human and technological adaptations to northern climates in four areas:

- human ecology,
- sustainable resource management/development,
- energy production/distribution,
- information technologies.

**Strategy E9.1** Explore options to establish an applied research centre of excellence in Fort Vermilion whose interdisciplinary focus would be on adaptation to northern climates.

**Strategy E9.2** Establish a research fund that would use accrued interest to grant funds for northern climate research projects.



**Goal E10** Youth have sustainable employment opportunities that enable them to continue to live and work in the County.

**Strategy E10.1** Work with the Northern Alberta Development Council to identify external sources of strategic expertise/assistance necessary to advocate for the establishment of agri-businesses that will be eligible to participate fully in provincial marketing boards as a means to distribute their products.



**Goal E11** Non-renewable resource companies operating in Mackenzie County are able to make profits while minimizing their environmental footprint by:

- operating to an acknowledged environmental standard,
- optimizing the recovery or distribution of the resource with which they are working,
- applying environmental remediation and restoration strategies when a site has been exhausted that will accelerate the recovery of the affected ecosystem (health, integrity and sustainability).

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E11.1** Continue to advocate for enhanced oil recovery (EOR).

**Strategy E11.2** Continue to advocate for the use of environmentally sustainable production and distribution practices in the County oil and gas fields.

**Strategy E11.3** Continue to support Apache Corporation in its efforts to implement responsible carbon sequestration processes.

**Strategy E11.4** Research the long-term prognosis for the life of the Rainbow Lake oil and gas field and identify a role that the County can play to support Husky Energy and Imperial Oil to develop new technologies to increase the life of their field and to practice environmentally sustainable production and distribution.

**Strategy E11.5** Keep informed about and/or explore:

- the evolution of the plans for two proposed Arctic pipelines including the Mackenzie Valley pipeline,
- other exploration opportunities planned for the southern Northwest Territories,
- their impact on the County's environment (e.g., need for roads/tributary lines),
- the implications for economic development opportunities in the County.

**Strategy E11.6** Develop a procedure to co-ordinate plans for the establishment of new infrastructure being made by commercial, government and public service organizations in rural and wilderness areas.



**Goal E12** Timber that has commercial value in Mackenzie County is harvested in a manner that is:

- as environmentally sustainable as possible,
- legally allowable,
- physically possible,
- financially feasible,
- optimally productive.

**Strategy E12.1** Promote the direct sale of lumber cleared from the Alberta/Mackenzie County land exchange to local forest companies.



## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Goal E13** The quality of and access to health services offered in the county is comparable to or exceeds those of other rural health regions in the province.

**Strategy E13.1** Establish or strengthen a municipal physician recruitment and retention committee targeted at health services for residents in hamlets, rural areas, First Nations communities and the local “shadow” population.

- Ensure that the committee’s membership is composed of a representative who is capable of speaking on behalf of the interests of each of these core target groups.
- Develop a strategy to ensure that Alberta Health Services’ Region 1 Community Health Council has a direct line of communication with the municipal physician retention and recruitment committee.
- Use the committee to facilitate the establishment of innovative partnerships that could enhance service delivery in the region (e.g., partnerships with resource companies’ occupational health teams, with property owners that have space available for lease, with an enhanced research centre of excellence, with an existing or newly-created society that co-ordinates volunteers to work in health programs and facilities).
- Use the committee to monitor evolving health service developments around the province and the country on an ongoing basis in order to familiarize its members as well as those of the Community Health Council with alternative models and strategies that might be adaptable to the region’s services.
- Establish a productive working relationship with the High Level Health Services Committee and its Health and Safety Committee to ensure that goals and strategies of mutual interest are fully supported and not in competition with one another.

**Strategy E13.2** Work with community stakeholders to establish a strong voice with both the department of *Alberta Health and Wellness* and *Alberta Health Services*, to ensure that ongoing provincial planning meets local health needs.



**Goal E14** Residents can remain living in the County while pursuing post-secondary educational opportunities in the fields of service, technology and the trades.

**Strategy E14.1** Develop a detailed plan to advocate for equitable provincial post-secondary funding for the County that is based on a recognition of the County’s unique demographic profile.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E14.2** Identify and facilitate the implementation of strategies that would increase the attractiveness of distance learning in the region.

**Strategy E14.3** Expand the availability and local awareness of high quality distance learning opportunities.



**Goal E15** All County residents and businesses have access to the most current telecommunication technologies to permit them to participate in global opportunities.

**Strategy E15.1** Use the County's rural gas co-operative to continue using a systematic approach to expand broadband coverage throughout the County and its First Nations communities.



**Goal E16** The County's business communities can provide local products and services to meet consumer demand.

**Strategy E16.1** Consult with the County's business community to identify strategies that would strengthen the municipality's "open-for-business" attitude.

**Strategy E16.2** Undertake an assessment to determine if and how the County may be of assistance or can provide support to businesses operating under County business licenses.

**Strategy E16.3** Develop strategies to attract small- and medium-sized enterprises that provide support to the County's existing businesses and industries.



**Goal E17** Mackenzie County:

- is an attractive destination for non-residents to visit or to decide to relocate, and
- remains an attractive home for County residents at all stages of their lives.

**Strategy E17.1** Develop a promotional program for relocation targeted at the employees/contract workers with families that are working in the Zama oil and gas field.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E17.2** Work in partnership with regional organizations to develop strategies to promote the County including a program to involve community members in promoting the area to distant friends and family.

**Strategy E17.3** Develop a detailed plan to advocate for a substantial enhancement to health service delivery models in the County.

**Strategy E17.4** Encourage the establishment of, promote and support “Buy Local” initiatives.



**Goal E18** Mackenzie County accommodates a thriving tourist sector without compromising the natural environment that hosts it.

**Strategy E18.1** Work with the Northern Alberta Development Council to develop strategies to adapt County infrastructure and its natural environment in ways that will lay the groundwork for the development of an environmentally sustainable tourist sector (e.g., agricultural and/or eco-tourism).

**Strategy E18.2** Assess whether the County’s existing tourism facilities, businesses and industries are based on environmental values that are, or have the potential to be consistent with the establishment of a County-wide eco-tourist industry.

**Strategy E18.3** Develop bylaws that outline environmental requirements for all tourist facilities and practices that operate in the County.



**Goal E19** Mackenzie County’s population growth rate is about 50% every ten years and will stabilize to a more moderate rate of 10% by the year 2030.

**Strategy E19.1** Foster an expansion of economic opportunities in the region using strategies identified under the Economic Step in this report (Strategies E1-E22).

**Strategy E19.2** Foster increased inter-provincial and international immigration.

**Strategy E19.3** Develop strategies to increase the quality of life for large families living in the County.



**Goal E20** The majority of Mackenzie County’s workforce live in the County with their children and families.

## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Strategy E20.1** Work with Apache, Husky Oil and the forestry sector to:

- identify strategies to attract employees' families to relocate to Mackenzie County,
- identify what their employees would expect before they would be willing to move their family to the County and determine whether the County or Apache are in a position to address these priorities,
- develop a joint plan to address those needs and to promote family relocation.

**Strategy E20.2** Identify and promote each hamlet's strengths in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.

**Strategy E20.3** Identify and address individual each hamlet's needs in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.

**Strategy E20.4** Provide exceptional services that enhance the quality of life in County hamlets and existing rural areas as a means to dissuade residents and newcomers from moving to undeveloped areas to establish small lots or acreages.

**Strategy E20.5** Take proactive measures to anticipate growth by preparing evidence-based plans for it but exercise considerable caution in executing major capital expenditures.



**Goal E21** The County has reliable and comprehensive population data to make sound decisions and municipal plans.

**Strategy E21.1** Consult with remote, northern municipalities in other provinces to share strategies that address the difficulties in acquiring accurate municipal census data.

**Strategy E21.2** Work with the provincial government to develop a responsible yet equitable method to ensure the County's "shadow" population can be counted so that its true population can be recorded enabling it to access its fair share of transfer payments.

**Strategy E21.3** Undertake a timely municipal census during major population shifts.



## STEP I: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Goal E22** Mackenzie County's economy has the capacity to moderate the local impacts of dramatic economic up- and downturns in resource sector activities.

**Strategy E22.1** When making County growth projections for planning major capital expenditures, continue to use "average 20-year growth rates" rather than using "current growth rates" that may not represent enduring growth patterns.

**Strategy E22.2** The County will support efforts to diversify its economic base.

**Strategy E22.3** The County will negotiate life-cycle agreements with current and new industries to ensure that investments are appropriate to project life-cycles.

## STEP II: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal N1** Mackenzie County's river valleys are maintained in their natural state and are legislated to remain as such in perpetuity.

**Strategy N1.1** Protect the natural state of Mackenzie County's river valleys with strongly worded municipal bylaws that prevent development.

**Strategy N1.2** Develop municipal policy to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and utilization practices serve to preserve the health and safety of the valleys (especially sound practices to guide the development of any future roadways that must be built over a river).

**Strategy N1.3** Develop municipal bylaws and policies to support continuing public access to the County's river valleys.



**Goal N2** Mackenzie County's environmentally sensitive land areas are well-preserved.

**Strategy N2.1** Identify and maintain an up-to-date inventory of Mackenzie County's environmentally sensitive land areas or ones that are at risk of becoming environmentally sensitive.

**Strategy N2.2** If applicable, select land area(s) that the County wishes to protect from development and develop rationales and strong municipal policies/standards for their protection to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and on-going utilization practices serve to preserve environmentally sensitive lands.



**Goal N3** Optimal use is made of County farm land.

**Strategy N3.1** Record a motion in Council minutes indicating Council's intent with respect to whether and how it will pursue further land exchange negotiations with the province.

**Strategy N3.2** Ensure that the County's Land-Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan limit urban or non-agricultural development in unused lands that are best-suited for agriculture.

## Step II: Environmental Sustainability (con'd)

**Goal N4** The use and consumption of electricity, natural gas and water in community-owned facilities is reduced from 2010 levels.

**Strategy N4.1** Request that the relevant architect(s) for each new County facility and utility system erected since 2006 review the requirements for LEED Certification in order to:

- determine which would be eligible for certification,
- apply for certification for those that are eligible.

For those that are not eligible, request that ATCOEnergy Sense undertake energy managements audits.

**Strategy N4.2** Insert at least three energy management projects into the County's ten-year capital plan:

- La Crete Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting),
- Fort Vermilion Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting),
- Zama Water treatment Plant (heating, DDC and lighting).

**Strategy N4.3** Update strategies, target levels, time-lines and key performance indicators annually to monitor the reduction of the consumption of each resource used in County-owned infrastructure.

**Strategy N4.4** Schedule energy management audits of all County facilities once every 15 years, to identify opportunities for enhancing energy efficiencies and develop an audit-based plan to make the necessary changes.



**Goal N5** County residents consistently recycle a large majority of their bottles, paper, plastics, cardboard, and electronics.

**Strategy N5.1** Continue to monitor new developments in recycling technologies that would be economically feasible for use by the County.

**Strategy N5.2** Work in collaboration with community organizations and groups to strengthen local recycling initiatives.



## STEP II: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (CON'D)

**Goal N6** Mackenzie County's hamlet land-use plans are designed to provide energy-efficient means of access between key destinations in the community.

**Strategy N6.1** Ensure that hamlet municipal development plans provide for safe, convenient, accessible and comfortable pedestrian pathways in each community.

## STEP III: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Goal S1** Each County hamlet and rural area hosts a concentration of social, cultural and commercial activity in one strategic location.

**Strategy S1.1** Amend hamlet development plans to incorporate the establishment or reinforcement of a central core area that provides synergistic opportunities for individuals and groups to gather for social and cultural opportunities, for commercial activity and the provision of public services.

**Strategy S1.2** Develop a community standards bylaw for residential and industrial properties and promote its enforcement in Zama City.



**Goal S2** The County's hamlets, rural areas and First Nations communities each have distinct and thriving cultures yet they are linked by common, broad economic and environmental conditions.

**Strategy S2.1** Showcase the unique features of each of the County's cultures throughout its hamlets and populated rural areas.



**Goal S3** The County and the four First Nations located within its geographical boundaries share a common vision for the region, one that maintains cultural autonomy and that harmonizes economic pursuits.

**Strategy S3.1** Use a cultural interpreter to develop joint protocols with each First Nation to manage inter-cultural communication and to resolve mutual concerns.

**Strategy S3.2** Identify and prioritize goals that are common to both the County and specific First Nations, and develop joint strategies to address them.

**Strategy S3.3** Develop public awareness activities to assist residents to understand the reasons for, and how to welcome an increased number of members of another culture to their community activities.

**Strategy S3.4** Invite the First Nations and Mennonite communities to create and display icons of their cultures in each County hamlet.

**Strategy S3.5** Encourage local organizations to involve members of First Nations communities in the planning processes for local activities and events.

**Strategy S3.6** Develop strategies to encourage residents of First Nations, Mennonite and County communities to participate in one another's public activities and events, and to ensure they feel genuinely welcome during such experiences (e.g., local festivals, cultural, and recreational activities).

**Strategy S3.7** Continue to involve Mennonites and begin to involve representatives of First Nations communities in advocacy activities for the availability and cultural appropriateness of health services offered in the County.



**Goal S4** The capacity of infrastructure in County hamlets and rural communities keeps pace with their growth and is planned in a way that ensures their sustainability.

**Strategy S4.1** Explore strategies to establish a retail convenience outlet in Blue Hills that could provide basic amenities for local residents (e.g., milk, gas, stamps, aspirin, and a postal service) and that would be located next to the Blue Hills community hall.



## STEP IV: SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

**Goal C1** Community parks, recreational facilities and community halls are available to each community consistent with local, cultural needs.

**Strategy C1.1** Assess life expectancy for current recreational facilities and prepare long-term plans to ensure the timely availability of funds to address:

- expected maintenance requirements during the typical life cycle of each facility,
- facility upgrades or replacement.

**Strategy C1.2** Undertake a financial and operational review of County recreational facilities and equipment to:

- ensure adequacy of capital, operating funding and reserves,
- identify opportunities for increased usage, increased revenues and decreased costs,
- ensure optimal use of funds,
- identify other efficiencies that could mitigate the size of the annual grant required from the County to operate the facilities.

**Strategy C1.3** Establish policies that will ensure that residents of each hamlet have access to an attractive and well-managed community park site that:

- is easily accessible,
- reflects community values,
- is linked to other parks in a manner that will eventually provide for a County-wide linked park system.

**Strategy C1.4** Work with the Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation to establish a provincial campground along Highway 35 in Mackenzie County.

**Strategy C1.5** Develop strategies to minimize environmental damage on the County's ATV/snowmobile trail networks.

**Strategy C1.6** Work with stakeholders to enhance and expand cross-country ski trails and facilities near each hamlet and develop strategies to minimize environmental damage.



## STEP IV: SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (CON'D)

**Goal C2** Capital-intensive recreational facilities are designed to guarantee significant and consistent levels of tourism from outside of the region.

**Strategy C2.1** Work with regional partners to undertake a feasibility study to determine whether the *Buffalo Head* slopes site could be designed to attract sufficient tourism to ensure financial viability for the establishment of a downhill ski facility.



**Goal C3** The County continues to provide high quality utility services (water distribution and treatment as well as waste water collection and treatment) and ensures that they:

- are available in each hamlet,
- meet quality standards consistent with current national standards and demand,
- are stable and reliable,
- are each financially self-sustaining at both operational and capital levels.

**Strategy C3.1** Assess life expectancy for current facilities and prepare long-term plans to prepare for their replacement.

**Strategy C3.2** Provide potable rural water lines to County residents.



**Goal C4** The risk of various types of damage to municipal infrastructure is minimized due to the availability of up-to-date risk assessments as well as up-to-date plans for managing each type of risk.

**Goal C5** The risk associated with damage to local infrastructure (other than the risk associated with climate change) is comparable to the levels of infrastructure risk in other parts of the province.

**Strategy C5.1** Carry out full risk assessments of regional infrastructure every five years and update plans to mitigate identified risks (liability, property, errors and omissions, vehicle, and environmental assessments including those associated with hazardous goods and climate change).

## STEP IV: SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (CON'D)

**Strategy C5.2** Work with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to conduct a joint protective service risk assessment that will:

- identify potential opportunities to improve the quality and timeliness of services to protect regional infrastructure,
- address infrastructure at risk and liability issues,
- prioritize current/future issues requiring attention.

**Strategy C5.3** Work with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to develop a plan for sustainable water infrastructure and supply across the region that will address current and future requirements. This should include water available for fire suppression.



**Goal C6** The County's staffing complement keeps pace with the County's growing need for infrastructure.

**Strategy C6.1** Continue to review staffing needs annually.

**Strategy C6.2** Undertake a formal review of the County's organizational structure at least once every three years to ensure that its staff complement continues to meet current needs.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

**Goal Z1** The County has a well-organized, ongoing process to monitor the implementation of, and to assess the results of its sustainability plan.

**Strategy Z1.1** Develop a plan calendar.

**Strategy Z1.2** Develop key performance indicators to measure progress on key County goals.

**Strategy Z1.3** Schedule dedicated time at each annual Council planning session to:

- review the sustainability plan's key performance indicators,
- update or amend any goals, strategies, key performance indicators and/or timelines as required.

**Strategy Z1.4** Prepare a sustainability plan implementation report every two years and circulate it to residents.



**Goal Z2** Councillors share a common vision for the directions that the County should take and the strategies to get there.

**Strategy Z2.1** Undertake a systematic approach to sensitize Councillors to the situations faced in other Councillors' jurisdictions by requesting that they make a sincere commitment to listen to what one another is saying and by requesting their participation in:

- at least 80% of expanded road tours,
- at least 80% of community meetings in other jurisdictions,
- at least 80% of targeted public social events in other jurisdictions.

## Appendix C

### Reference List

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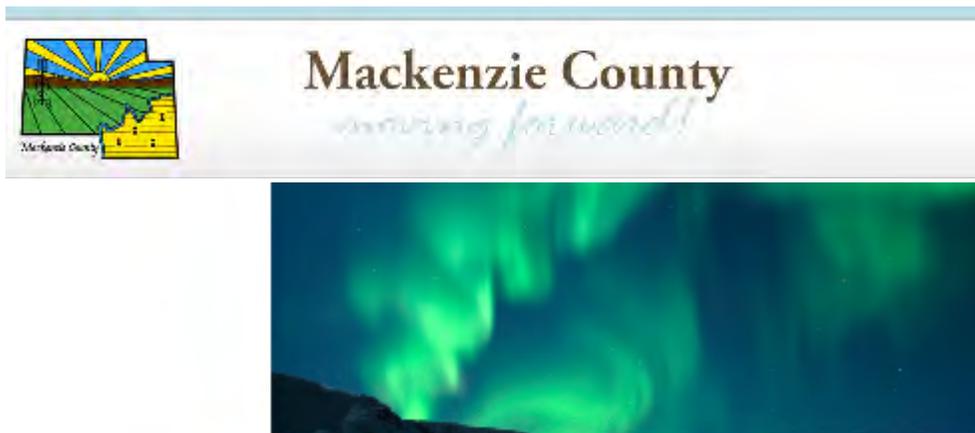
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## Appendix D

### Mackenzie Future Website



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## News & Updates

- The survey is now closed.  
Watch for Mackenzie's Municipal Sustainability Plan report that will be posted in August or September.
- The County is developing plans to ensure its long-term viability.  
[Click here to view the new activity schedule](#)  
Your input is essential.
- [Mackenzie County: Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

## Home

Mackenzie County is using a new approach to envision and prepare for its future. The County wants to involve residents in thinking about:

- a long-term vision for the County
- what would need to be done to achieve that vision

The reason for this is to make sure that County leadership and its economy remain strong over the long-term. By having both, the County can then make sure that it has the capacity to:

- meet the County's social and recreational needs
- help strengthen its distinctive cultures and the relations between them
- preserve the long-term health of the environment

We are calling this our "Community Plan."

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## What is a Community Plan?

- [What is a Community Plan?](#)
- [Why should the county have a Community Plan?](#)
- [Who is developing the plan?](#)
- [When will the planning process occur?](#)

Our Community Plan will help the County to make sure that we live in a way that meets our needs without weakening the ability of our children and our children's children to meet their needs.

It is a vision that is based on:

- A consensus on a successful future that is shared by the County, its residents and those who have a stake in the County
- A series of solutions for the challenges that arise from change (e.g., growth or decline)
- A legacy that meets current and future needs
- An overall view that guides other community plans such as the County's land-use plan, the business plan and the strategic plan.

Mackenzie's plan incorporates four steps to sustainability:

### Economic Viability

A flourishing and diverse local economy:

- A wide range of jobs and training opportunities
- Sufficient land and buildings to support economic prosperity and change
- Dynamic job and business creation
- A strong business community with links into the wider economy

### Social and Cultural Cohesion

Harmonious and inclusive communities:

- Tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs
- Friendly, cooperative and helpful behaviour in neighbourhoods
- Opportunities for leisure, recreation, sport and other activities
- Low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour with visible, effective and community-friendly policing
- All people are socially included and have similar life opportunities
- Sufficient range, diversity and affordability of housing within a balanced housing market
- A sense of community identity and belonging;
- Opportunities for expression via a variety of art forms (visual, dramatic, musical, etc);
- Strong sense of community heritage;
- Pride in the whole County

## Environmental Integrity

A quality natural and built environment:

- Efficient use of resources now and in the future in the built environment and service provision (e.g. energy efficiency, land, water resources, flood defense, waste minimization, etc.)
- Living in a way that minimizes the negative environmental impact and enhances the positive impact (e.g. recycling, walking, cycling)
- Protecting and improving natural resources and biodiversity (e.g. air quality, noise, water quality)
- Having due regard for the needs of future generations in current decisions and actions
- Creating a sense of place (e.g. a place with a positive 'feeling' for people, and local distinctiveness)
- Well-maintained, local, user-friendly public and green spaces with facilities for everyone including children and older people
- A high quality, well-designed built environment of appropriate size, scale, density, design and layout that complements the distinctive local character of the community
- High quality, mixed-use, durable, flexible and adaptable buildings

## Community Facilities

A sustainable approach to responding to community needs for:

- Community Wellness Facilities (recreation, parks, services)
- Public Works
- Utility Services

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## Why should the County have a Community Plan?

[What is a Community Plan?](#)  
[Why should the county have a Community Plan?](#)  
[Who is developing the plan?](#)  
[When will the planning process occur?](#)

There are a variety of reasons why a local Council might decide to do this type of Plan. Here are two that are relevant to Mackenzie County.

### The question of growth, staying the same or downsizing

Some communities in Alberta face the challenge of surviving into the future:

- Their population may be getting smaller
- There may be a lack of job opportunities, or
- There may be a lack of educational opportunities for young people

On the other hand, some communities are growing so quickly that the cost of building and maintaining roads, sewers and water treatment is a heavy economic burden. Rapid growth also reduces a sense of connection with fellow citizens. A Sustainability Plan helps the County to be prepared for rapid change.

### Access to government funding

The provincial and federal governments have strongly encouraged all Cities, Towns, Villages and Counties to consult with their residents to develop a vision for their community's future. These sustainability plans are now a requirement for eligibility for many provincial and federal grants for roads, recreation and cultural facilities and many other services.

Essentially, Canada and the province are telling municipal governments: "Consult with your community before asking for money. Make sure you and your residents are on the same page."

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## News & Updates

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[Click here to view the new activity schedule](#)  
Your input is essential.
- [Mackenzie County: Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

## Who is developing the plan?

[What is a Community Plan?](#)  
[Why should the county have a Community Plan?](#)  
[Who is developing the plan?](#)  
[When will the planning process occur?](#)

Council has hired a municipal consulting firm called Activation Analysis Group Inc. (AAGI) to work with residents and the County to develop the plan.

There will be individual interviews held with some residents. There will be public meetings in each community. Most importantly, the interactive section of this website will be used to obtain input from residents on a variety of topics.

After consulting with the community, AAGI will prepare a draft report to be presented to Council for its approval and action. This draft will be available to the community on this web page when it is ready. Council may request changes to the plan before its final approval.

This web page will keep residents informed at every step of the process.

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## Community Meetings

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

The powerpoint presentation from the Community Meetings can be found on the [Presentations](#) page.

## Community Meeting Schedule

### La Crete

---

Monday May 3rd  
at 7:00pm  
at the La Crete Heritage Centre

### Blue Hills

---

Tuesday May 4th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Blue Hills Community School

### Zama City

---

Wednesday May 5th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Zama Community Hall

### Fort Vermilion

---

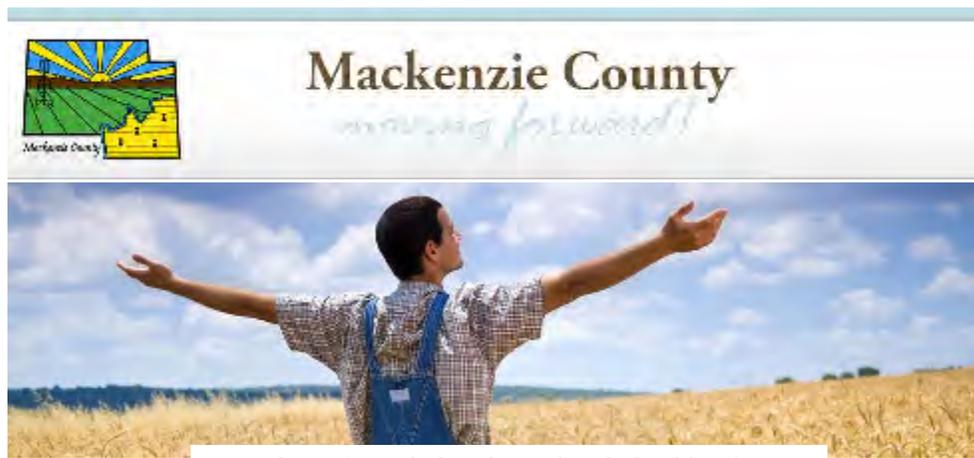
Thursday May 6th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Fort Vermilion Council Chambers

### Rocky Lane

---

Friday May 7th  
at 7:00pm  
at the Rocky Lane Agricultural Society Community Hall

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## Surveys

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

The survey process is now complete. Thank you for your input.

Watch for Mackenzie's Municipal Sustainability Plan report that will be posted in August or September.

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## Presentations

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

Public meetings were held in each of the County's hamlets. View the presentation, which was featured at the Community Meetings, for additional background information on the Municipal Sustainability Plan.

[Download PowerPoint presentation \(1.04 MB\)](#)

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## Pictures

[Community Meetings](#)  
[Surveys](#)  
[Presentations](#)  
[Pictures](#)

One way to find out what people think about their community is to find out what visual images they think of when they think of their home town.

E-mail your photos to: [input@mackenziefuture.ca](mailto:input@mackenziefuture.ca) and we will post them on this web page.

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## References/Downloads

[Mackenzie County: Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

[Social and Cultural Step: Background material](#)  
[Environmental Step: Background material](#)  
[Economic Step: Background Material](#)  
[Community Facilities Step: Background Material](#)

### Social and Cultural Step: Background material

[Statistics Canada 2006 Community Profile for Mackenzie County](#)

[Alberta Municipal Affairs Municipal Profile for Mackenzie County](#)

[See how Mackenzie County's population has changed since 1959](#)

[The County's growth rate changed remarkably from one year to the next for a long time](#)

See the changing composition of the County's population between 1996 and 2006

- [Age of Population - Mackenzie and Wood Buffalo](#)
- [Age of Population - Mackenzie and Big Lakes](#)
- [Age of Population - Mackenzie and Grand Prairie](#)
- [Age of Population 2006 - Mackenzie and Wood Buffalo](#)
- [Age of Population 2006 - Mackenzie and Big Lakes](#)
- [Age of Population 2006 - Mackenzie and Grand Prairie](#)

See how the breakdown of occupations in Mackenzie County compared with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo in 2001 and 2006

- [Occupations 2001](#)
- [Occupations 2006](#)

[See how the breakdown of industries in Mackenzie County compares with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo](#)

[See how the median income in Mackenzie County compares with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo](#)

[There are fewer people per dwelling unit in Mackenzie County in 2006 than there were 10 years before](#)

[There are more dwelling units in Mackenzie County in 2006 than there were 10 years before](#)

[Reserves and Métis settlements in Mackenzie County](#)

[Aboriginal People in Alberta - 2006 Census Analysis](#)

[See how the breakdown of immigrant status in Mackenzie County compares with Grande Prairie County, Municipal District of Big Lakes and Wood Buffalo](#)

[English is not the mother tongue of the majority of Mackenzie County's residents](#)

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### Environmental Step: Background material

[Mackenzie County Municipal Development Plan](#)

[County Land Use Districts](#)

[Community Plan - Ft Vermilion](#)

[Community Plan - High Level](#)

[Community Plan - La Crete](#)

[Community Plan - Rainbow Lake](#)

[Community Plan - Zama City](#)

[Development Plan - High Level](#)

[Development Plan - Rainbow Lake \(industrial\)](#)

[Development Plan - Rainbow Lake \(residential\)](#)

[Development Plan - Zama City](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - Dene Tha First Nation Baseline](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - High Level Baseline](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - Rainbow Lake Baseline](#)

[Environmental Impact Statement - Zama City Baseline](#)

[Hay-Zama Wildland Provincial Park Map](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - Dene Tha First Nation](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - High Level](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - Rainbow Lake](#)

[Socio-Economic Impact Assessment - Zama City](#)

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## **Economic Step: Background Material**

---

Financial Statements for Mackenzie County

- [2006 Audited Financial Statements](#)
- [2007 Audited Financial Statements](#)
- [2008 Audited Financial Statements](#)

County Budgets

- [2007 County Budget](#)
- [2008 County Budget](#)
- [2009 County Budget](#)

[Airport Information Report - Ft. Vermillion Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - High Level Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - La Crete Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - Rainbow Lake Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - Zama City Airport](#)

[Airport Information Report - Zama Lake Airport](#)

[Assessment of County Properties](#)

[Bitumen Resources and Grosmont Field](#)

[Condensate Production 1990-2006](#)

[Natural Gas Production 1990-2006](#)

[Oil & Gas Industry Activity by Well Count](#)

[Oil Production 1990-2006 \(barrels of oil\)](#)

[Oil Production 1990-2006 \(cubic metres\)](#)

[Regional Labour Market Review](#)

[Transportation Infrastructure in Mackenzie County](#)

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## **Community Facilities Step: Background Material**

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[Mackenzie County Parks&Recreation Infrastructure](#)

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- [Mackenzie County:](#)  
[Draft Sustainability Plan](#)

## Links

[Alberta Urban Municipalities Association's Municipal Sustainability Planning microsite](#)

[Comprehensive Guide for Municipal Sustainability Planning](#)

[Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties' Integrated Community Sustainability Plan Tools](#)

[Case Studies](#)

[Realizing a Vision of Sustainability: Apply for the EQUilibrium Communities Initiative](#)

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## Contact Us

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Fax: (780) 927.4266  
[www.mackenziecounty.com](http://www.mackenziecounty.com)

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# Appendix E

## Public Input

- E1: Public Meetings' Newspaper Advertisement
- E2: Powerpoint Presentation for Public Meetings
- E3: Mackenzie Future Survey



# Planning Mackenzie's Future

The County is developing plans to ensure its long-term viability. Your input is essential. The Community meetings will allow you to provide your input and to respond to proposed changes for the County. Come out to the meeting nearest you and help make Mackenzie County an appealing place for years to come!

## **La Crete**

7:00 pm - May 3, 2010  
La Crete Heritage Centre

## **Blue Hills**

7:00 pm - May 4, 2010  
Blue Hills Community School

## **Zama City**

7:00 pm - May 5, 2010  
Zama Community Hall

## **Fort Vermilion**

7:00 pm - May 6, 2010  
Fort Vermilion Council Chambers

## **Rocky Lane**

7:00 pm - May 7, 2010  
Rocky Lane Agricultural Society Community Hall

**Make a lasting impact – come out  
and help shape Mackenzie County!**

For more information and to find out  
other ways to get involved visit:

**[www.mackenziefuture.ca](http://www.mackenziefuture.ca)**



## 4Step Community Development Plan

### What is Mackenzie County's 4Step Community Development Plan?

- It is a specific type of strategic plan
- Designed to provide the County with a viable structured road-map as a means to plan for long-term sustainability
- It outlines the steps necessary to build a strong economy that protects environmental integrity and that contributes to strong social cohesion in this culturally diverse municipal district

1



## 4Step Community Development Plan

### Who is developing Mackenzie County's 4Step Community Development Plan?

- Activation Analysis Group Inc. is assisting Mackenzie County in the formation of the Plan
- Public Planning sessions are being held during the first week of May in Hamlets around the County for public input
- The comprehensive Plan is to be completed by June 30, 2010

**Mackenzie County is challenged by both distance from markets and between each area of settlement.**

2



## 4Step Community Development Plan

### Incorporates 4 Steps:

- Social Sustainability
- Environmental Sustainability
- Economic Sustainability
- Community Infrastructure Sustainability

**Overall sustainability will be based on its capacity to adapt to changing conditions and to develop strategies to cope with the volatility inherent in a resource-based economic environment.**

3



## Vision Statement

A key component is the vision statement, one that expresses the nature of the community in which citizens wish to live. An authentic vision statement must have the following characteristics:

- A measurable standard
- Consistency
- Validity
- Authentic
- Actionable
- Internal to the community
- Value-based

4



## Social Sustainability

**A socially sustainable community is one that is characterized by:**

- Respectful engagement with people from different backgrounds
- Social inclusiveness where all citizens have similar life opportunities
- Opportunities for leisure, recreation, sport and social support activities
- Low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Diversity and affordability of housing
- A sense of community identity, belonging and pride
- Strong sense of community heritage

5



## Environmental Sustainability

**High quality natural and well-designed built environments:**

- Create a sense of place
- Are designed so that residents can live in ways that minimize negative environmental impact and enhance positive impact
- Protect and improve natural resources and biodiversity
- Include local public and green spaces that are well-maintained and user-friendly, and that have facilities for people of all ages
- Are of a size, scale, density, design and layout that complement the distinctive local character of the communities
- Have considered the needs of future generations

6



# Economic Sustainability

## A consistently thriving local economy:

- Makes new and diverse jobs and training opportunities available
- Attracts and maintains an adequate and stable workforce to meet the needs of the commercial and institutional sectors
- Makes quality land and buildings available to support healthy economic activity and change
- Provides for the creation and diversification of businesses and industries
- Builds a strong business community that is well-connected with the wider economy



# Community Infrastructure Sustainability

## Municipally-owned facilities:

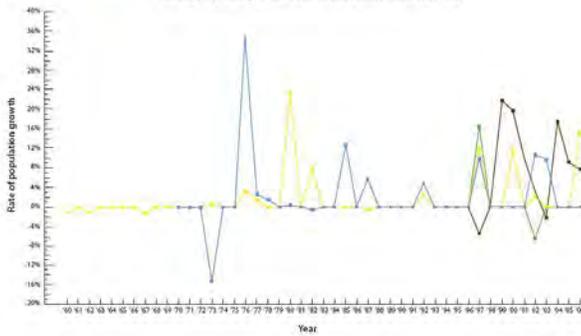
- Operate at optimal usage levels given the size of the population and have the capacity to absorb community growth
- Are well-maintained that maximizes life expectancy
- Have accumulated reserve funds in place to ensure facility replacement when needed
- Have replacement capital plans in place that take the needs of future generations into account
- Have operating budgets that reflect staffing levels necessary to achieve their objectives



## Population Growth Rate

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

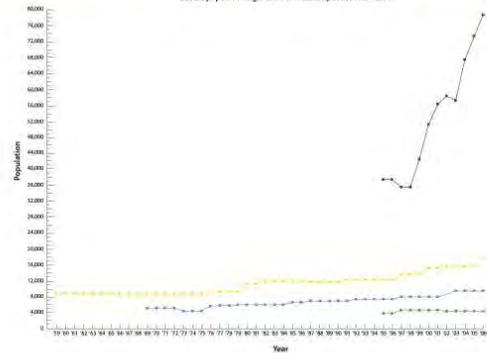
Rate of population growth for each of four municipalities 1960-2006



## Population

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

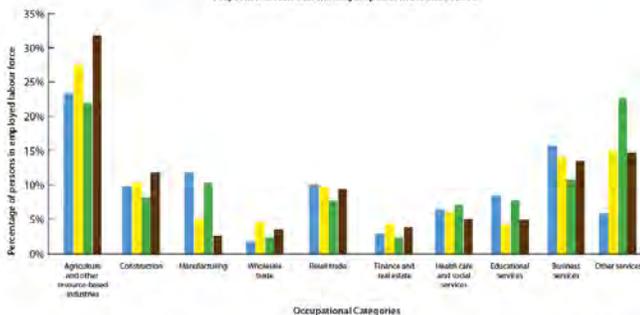
Official population figures for four municipalities 1959-2006



## Industry

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

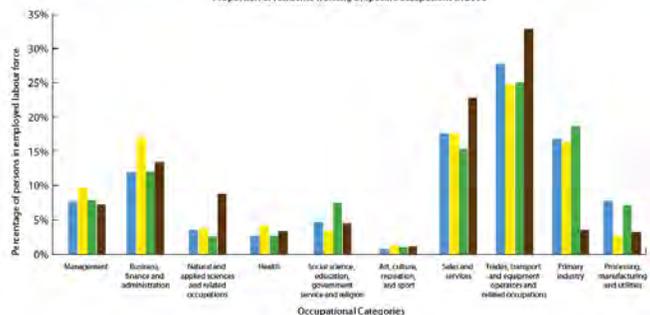
Proportion of residents working in specific industries in 2006



## Occupations 2006

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Proportion of residents working in specific occupations in 2006

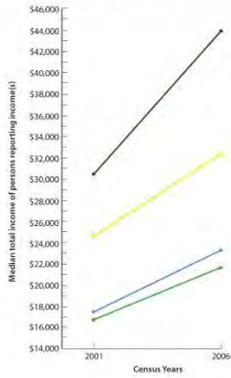




### Income

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Historical median income for each of four municipalities



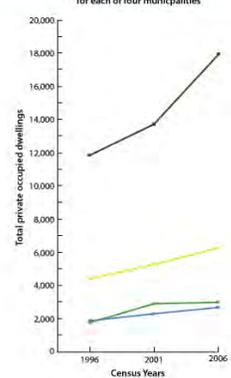
StatSource: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Income, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XIE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright: Statistics Canada, 2007.



### Dwelling Units

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Historical number of private dwelling units for each of four municipalities



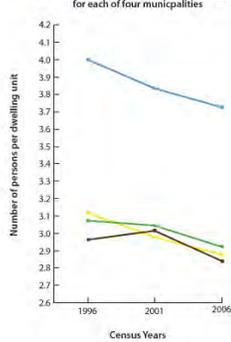
StatSource: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Private Dwellings, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XIE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright: Statistics Canada, 2007.



### Persons per Dwelling Unit

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Historical number of persons per dwelling unit for each of four municipalities



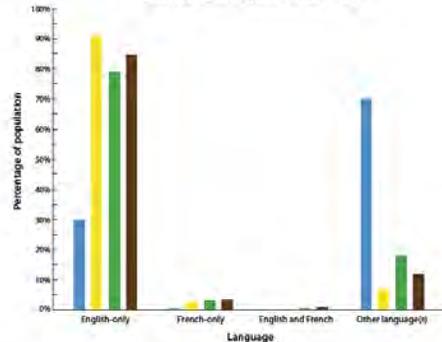
StatSource: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Private Dwellings, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XIE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright: Statistics Canada, 2007.



### Mother Tongue 2006

Mackenzie County Grande Prairie County MD of Big Lakes Wood Buffalo

Mother tongue in each of four municipalities



StatSource: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Census of Mother Tongue, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 9202-XIE, Ottawa, Ontario, 2007. Copyright: Statistics Canada, 2007.



For more information visit:  
[www.mackenziefuture.ca](http://www.mackenziefuture.ca)



Please send the completed survey back to us:  
by fax: (780) 463-5280  
by mail: **Activation Analysis Group Inc.**  
**107-4990 92 Avenue, Edmonton AB T6B 2V4**  
or by e-mail if you have a scanner: [input@mackenziefuture.ca](mailto:input@mackenziefuture.ca)



## Mackenzie's Future

### A SURVEY FOR THE COUNTY'S MUNICIPAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

1. How many years have you lived in Mackenzie County?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than one year | <input type="checkbox"/> 11-25 years   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years          | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-40 years   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 years          | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 40 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years         |  |

2. How old are you? Please circle your answer.

- |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 15-19 | 20-24 | 25-29 |
| 30-34 | 35-39 | 40-44 |
| 45-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 |
| 60-64 | 65-69 | 70-74 |
| 75-79 | 80-84 | 85+   |

3. Including yourself, how many people are there in your household?  
(Circle one)

- 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    Over 8

4. How many motorized vehicles are there in your household (excluding farm equipment)?

- 1    2    3    4    5    Over 5

5. **Where do you live in Mackenzie County? If you do not live in a hamlet, a First Nations community or a Métis settlement, check off the community that is the closest to your home and then, mark the number of kilometers you live from that community in the space provided.**

Check one:	Distance you live from community
<input type="checkbox"/> A Dene Tha' Nation community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Zama City	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow Lake	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Beaver Nation community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> High Level	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fort Vermilion	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Tallcree community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> La Crete	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Little Red River Cree Nation community	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> A Métis settlement	_____

6. **Of those who are 14 years old or older, how many people in your household are employed?**

___	Adult(s) Full-time
___	Adult(s) Part-time
___	Student Part-time

7. **How often do you leave the County during a given year? (Choose one)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
More than once/week	Weekly	Every other week	Monthly	3-4 times a year	1-2 times a year	Rarely

8. **For what reasons do you leave the County?**

Please rank these reasons in order of frequency, with the most frequent departures being ranked as number one, and the next most frequent reason as number two, and the least frequent as number 7.

- \_\_\_ Visit family or friends
- \_\_\_ Work-related business
- \_\_\_ Health Service
- \_\_\_ Shopping
- \_\_\_ Recreational Activities
- \_\_\_ Vacation Travel
- \_\_\_ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

## RECREATION

**9. Does anyone in your household participate in sports activities based in your community? If so, which sports?**

**10. Does anyone in your household participate in sports activities based outside of your community? If so, which sports?**

**11. What other recreational activities based in your community do members of your household participate in?**

## SOCIAL LIFE

12. What social activities do you take part in, in your community and for each one, how often (how many times per month)?

13. What facilities or services are needed to improve social life in your community?

## QUALITY OF LIFE

14. What are the best things about living in Mackenzie County and why?

15. What are the challenges about living in Mackenzie County and why?

16. Why do you live in, or why did you move to Mackenzie County?

**17. How long do you intend to remain in Mackenzie County?**

- Less than a year                       1-2 years                       3-5 years  
 6-10 years                       11-25 years                       Until I retire  
 For the rest of my life

**POPULATION**

**18. Mackenzie County currently has about 10,000 residents (includes First Nations communities). What do you think would be an ideal size for Mackenzie County within the next ten years?**

- 10,000       11,000       12,500       15,000       20,000

**19. What would be the benefits and drawbacks of considerable growth in Mackenzie County?**

**SERVICES**

**20. To what extent do you use services based in your community either in person or over the telephone? Rate your answer on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being never and 5 being always.**

	Never			Always	
Shopping for weekly household needs	1	2	3	4	5
Business services	1	2	3	4	5
Religious services	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational services	1	2	3	4	5
Educational services	1	2	3	4	5
Government services	1	2	3	4	5
Health services	1	2	3	4	5
Social Services	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural services (e.g., drama, choir)	1	2	3	4	5
Other services	1	2	3	4	5

**21. In what community do you obtain most of your other services?**

- Zama City                       Fort Vermilion                       La Crete
- Rainbow Lake                       High Level                       Manning
- Grande Prairie                       Peace River                       Edmonton
- A Dene Tha' Nation community                       A Beaver Nation community
- A Little Red River Cree Nation community                       A Tallcree Nation community
- A Métis settlement

**GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

**22. If new commercial development were proposed where, in your community, should it be developed?**

**23. Housing in the County is primarily of the single-family type. Higher density housing can accommodate more people with the use of fewer resources. Should higher density development be a priority in the County?**

- Not at all
- A little more
- A lot more

**24. If more diverse types of housing options were added (e.g., duplex, townhouse, condominium, apartment), would it make the County more or less attractive for people to live here?**

- More
- Same
- Less

**25. If you were asked to give the reason why someone should move to Mackenzie County, what reason would you give?**

**26. If you were asked to market Mackenzie County, what word or phrase would you suggest be used?**

**27. If you could change one thing about the County to make it a better place to live, what would you change?**

## USE OF ENERGY RESOURCES

28. Many places are encouraging people to walk or use ways other than the car to get around. What places do you visit in your community on a regular basis and how do you get there?

	Walk	Car/ATV/ Motorbike	Non-motorized vehicle (e.g., bike)	N/A
Shopping/Errands				
Schools				
Arena/Curling Rink				
Sport Field				
Community Hall				
Park/Playground/Trails				
Visiting Family & Friends				
County Office/Band Office				
Trapline				
Other				

If other, please specify

29. Have you made any changes in your household to address environmental sustainability issues? If so, what changes have you made.

**30. When you made changes in your household to address environmental sustainability issues, what were your primary motivations for doing so? (Choose three of the 10 choices offered)**

- Eligibility for financial incentives
- Social expectation
- Reduce energy consumption
- Reduce waste
- Reduce water usage
- Reduce use of fuel
- Reduce my family's impact on our local environment
- Increased efficiency
- Increased effectiveness
- Lower cost

**31. What prevents you from making changes in your household to address environmental sustainability issues?**

**32. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Use of sensitive natural areas in Mackenzie County is avoided					
Use of areas that surround Mackenzie County' natural areas is limited to ensure ecosystem integrity					
Backcountry areas are protected from overuse and degradation					
Recreation areas are designed and managed to protect as much of the natural environment as possible					
Community members and visitors act as stewards of the natural environment in Mackenzie County					
Economic diversification impacts on natural areas in Mackenzie County					
The County is likely to implement the environmental policies it sets					
There are sufficient buildings and land in the County to support economic prosperity and change					
County facilities are energy efficient					
The County's recycling program is effective and efficient					

**BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

**33. Do you work in a private for-profit business in Mackenzie County?**

- Yes  
 No

**34. Do you or anyone in your household own commercial property or a private, for-profit business anywhere in the County?**

- Yes (If yes, go to question 35)
- No (If no, go to question 37)

**35. What overall grade would you give the community as a place to do business?**

- A (excellent)
- B (above average)
- C (average)
- D (below average)
- F (poor)

**36. In the last three years, did the community's business climate get stronger, weaker, or stay the same?**

- Got stronger
- Stayed the same
- Got weaker

### **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

**37. What challenges do you think a new business in Mackenzie County would face?**

**38. Rate improvement needs in the community. Use one of the following options to rate needs in your community:**

- 1 Needs Significant Improvement
- 2 Needs Improvement
- 3 Does Not Need Improvement
- N/A Not Applicable

Appearance of business/service buildings	1	2	3	N/A
Appearance of business signs	1	2	3	N/A
Appearance of ditch beside rural roads/highways	1	2	3	N/A
Cleanliness of sidewalks	1	2	3	N/A
Cleanliness of streets	1	2	3	N/A
Congested streets	1	2	3	N/A
Parking near your destination	1	2	3	N/A
Pedestrian access to your destination	1	2	3	N/A
Street lighting	1	2	3	N/A
Variety of stores	1	2	3	N/A

Other Improvements Needed

**39. If your community were trying to attract business, how attractive would each of the following issues be?**

- 5 Critically Important
- 4 Above Average Importance
- 3 Average importance
- 2 Below Average Importance
- 1 Not at all Important

Wage rates	1	2	3	4	5
Transportation costs	1	2	3	4	5
Telecommunication Costs	1	2	3	4	5
Local Taxes	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Labour	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Industrial Sites	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Housing	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of Public Transportation	1	2	3	4	5

**SIZE AND GROWTH**

**40. What actions could be taken to encourage residents to support local businesses?**

a) Would the action(s) you suggested above be feasible for you?

- Yes       No       Maybe

b) If not, what could be feasible for you?

c) Would you consider setting up a small business to support the local economy?

- Yes       No       Maybe

d) If Yes, what kind of business?

**41. Which types of goods or services not currently available in your hamlet or rural area would you most like to see offered? (Choose one only)**

- Food
- Clothing store
- Other (specify below)

**42. Do you think the County needs more commercial, industrial or agricultural development and if so, what kind? Why or why not?**

**43. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

1 Strongly disagree	
2 Disagree	
3 Neither agree nor disagree	
4 Agree	
5 Strongly Agree	
Local businesses in Mackenzie County play an important role in helping the community to attain its social and cultural goals	1 2 3 4 5
Mackenzie County's economy has improved in the past five years	1 2 3 4 5
In the past five years, it has been relatively easy to find employment in Mackenzie County	1 2 3 4 5
Mackenzie County's economy is able to adapt successfully to external factors.	1 2 3 4 5

**44. Do you have any comments to add? If so, please use the textbox below to make your comments.**

Thank you for taking time to fill out the survey.

Please send the completed survey back to us:

by fax: **(780) 463-5280**

by mail: **Activation Analysis Group Inc.**

**107-4990 92 Avenue, Edmonton AB T6B 2V4**

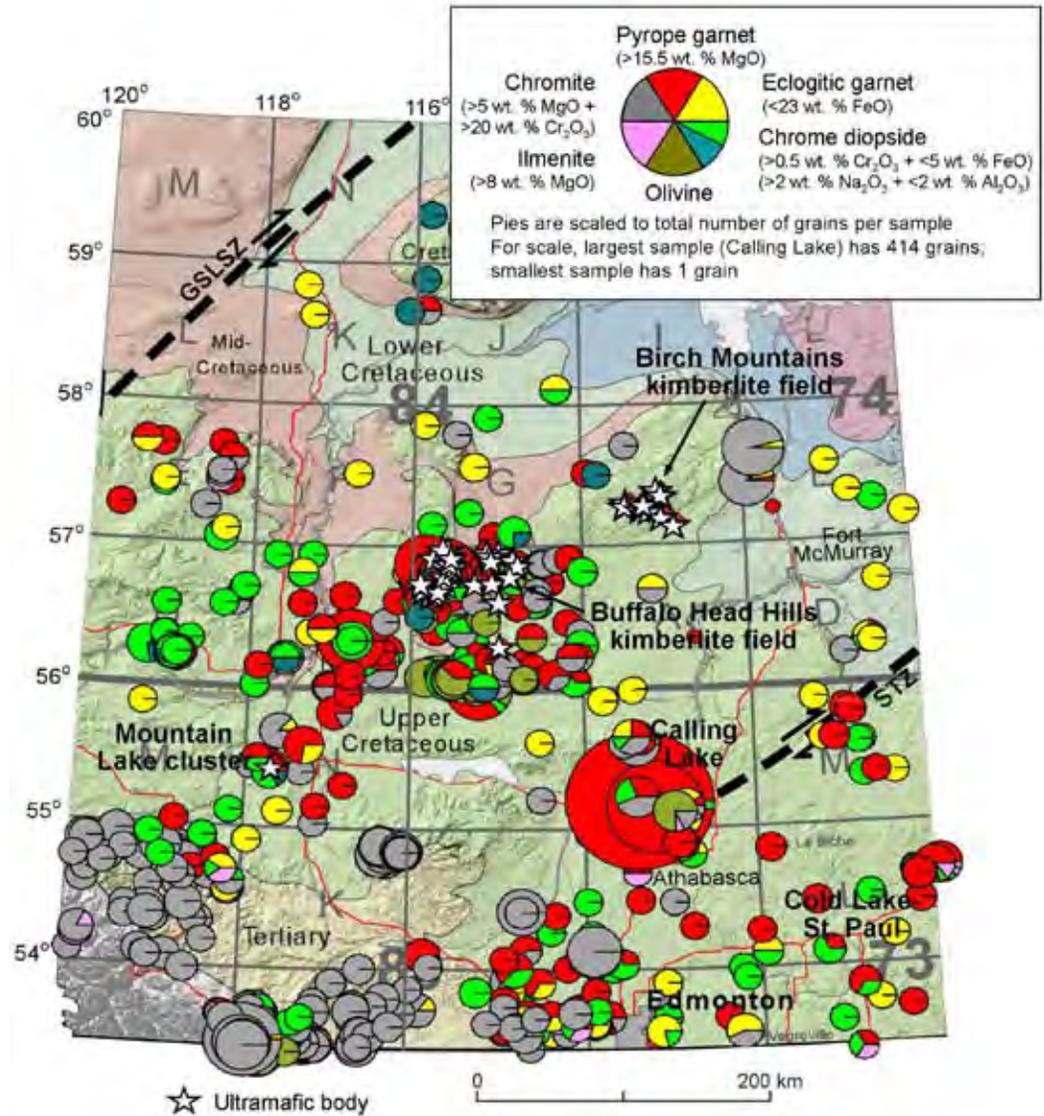
or by e-mail if you have a scanner: **input@mackenziefuture.ca**

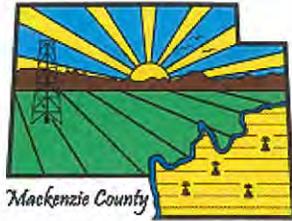
# Appendix F

## Economic Sustainability

- F1. Alberta Kimberlite Finds
- F2. Rail Freight Service Review Submission
- F3. White Zone / Green Zone Land Exchange
- F4. Mackenzie County Mission to Khanty-Maniysk
- F5. Crude Oil and Natural Gas Resources
- F6. Tolko Industries' – Footner Forest Products' Joint Forest Management Agreement
- F7. Broadband Coverage

# Alberta Kimberlite Finds





## Mackenzie County

P.O. Box 640, Fort Vermilion, AB T0H 1N0  
Phone (780) 927-3718 Fax (780) 927-4266  
[www.mackenziecounty.com](http://www.mackenziecounty.com)

April 28, 2010

Mr. Walter Paszkowski  
Chair – Rail Freight Service Review Panel  
Rail Freight Service Review Secretariat  
Suite 808 - 180 Elgin Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0N5

Dear Mr. Paszkowski:

Mackenzie County is pleased to provide the attached submission to the Rail Freight Service Review. The review is both timely and important in identifying and addressing issues and problems with Canada's rail mode, and in moving forward with a more efficient, and effective rail system which is more responsive to shippers'/consignees' needs.

We look forward to the results of your review and deliberations, and we are confident that you will precipitate needed, positive and enduring change to Canada's rail system to the benefit of both railways and shippers, and for the nation as a whole.

Mackenzie County would like to have this submission made available on your website to all interested parties.

Yours truly,

Greg Newman  
Reeve

Attach.

# MACKENZIE COUNTY SUBMISSION TO THE RAIL FREIGHT SERVICE REVIEW

## April 28, 2010

### Background

Mackenzie County is located in the northwestern corner of the Province of Alberta, 800 kilometers north from Edmonton. The county comprises 12 per cent of Alberta's entire landmass, or about 50,000 square kilometres, larger than the province of Prince Edward Island.

The county offers a mix of flat arable land with boreal forest, thus accounting for active agriculture, forestry, and tourism industries. Oil and gas also play a significant role in the area's economy. It is largely responsible for the establishment and growth of three of the area's five main communities, being High Level, Zama City, and Rainbow Lake. Fort Vermilion and La Crete are more driven by forestry and agriculture. Mackenzie County holds 36 per cent of the Peace Region's natural gas reserves, and 80 per cent of its light-medium crude oil reserves.



There are many active grain farmers in the area. La Crete boasts the largest United Farmers of Alberta retail outlet in Alberta, giving just one indication of how active the local agriculture industry is.

There are several sawmills within the county, the largest being La Crete Sawmills and Ridgeview Mills in La Crete, and Tolko Industries in High Level. Footner Forest Industries operates an OSB board mill just south of High Level. These mills are essentially rail dependent to remain competitive in domestic, US and international markets.

There is approximately 250,000MT to 300,000MT of grain produced in the County. As a result of the rationalization and consolidation of country grain elevators in the late 1990s, only one elevator remains in the County. The Viterra elevator in High Level handles approximately 105,000MT per year, and is reportedly at capacity.

The remaining production is loaded in producer grain cars, or is trucked to either Rycroft or Dawson Creek. A small amount is trucked to local markets in the greater Edmonton region, mostly feed. It is estimated that as much as 50% of production is moved out by truck, at higher cost than what prevailed prior to elevator rationalization

With regard to inbound rail movements, the railway has traditionally carried fuel destined for NWT and the County. With diamond mines coming on stream in NWT, the three currently operating mines demand approximately 162 million litres of fuel (approximately 160,000 MT), 50,000 MT of cement and a similar tonnage of ammonia nitrate. The fuel is currently moved by rail, while the cement and ammonia nitrate are moved in by truck. Starting in 2011, it is anticipated that the cement and ammonia nitrate will move to High Level in bulk by rail, where the products will be bagged and moved to NWT by truck. High Level is thus in its early stages of becoming a significant inbound rail-based staging point for NWT diamond mines. It is expected that an additional three diamond mines will be developed in NWT, essentially doubling annual fuel, cement and ammonia nitrate tonnage to more than 500,000MT.

There is every expectation of future growth of traffic on the rail line tied to expanded agricultural production, as High Level's position as a staging and supply point for NWT mines solidifies and accelerates, and as the forest industry emerges out of its downturn.

The rail line between Edmonton and Hay River has a long history, dating back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was the transportation link that opened up the Peace Country and connected it to the rest of Canada. From 1929 until 1981, it was jointly owned by CN and CP. In 1964, the federal government built the Great Slave Railway north from Grimshaw, AB to Hay River, NWT, thus providing a rail connection for Mackenzie County. When CN bought out CP in 1981, CP retained marketing rights for traffic on the line. However, this right was never exercised. In 1998, CN Rail sold the line to Rail Link, which subsequently sold it to Rail America. In January 2006, CN Rail re-acquired the line.

The line is 264,000 lbs rail from Edmonton to High Level, and 220,000 lbs north of High Level. Mainline standard is now 286,000 lbs for the most part. In 2004, then owner Rail America estimated that some \$59 million were required to rehabilitate the line from Smith to High Level (track rehabilitation, bridge work) and to upgrade to 286,000 lbs to High Level. Most Canadian grain cars are still rated at 264,000lbs.

In preparation for this submission, Mackenzie County consulted with a cross section of rail users in the County, representative of the freight being carried on the line. We have also familiarized ourselves with the background research reports undertaken for review, and we have read all submissions posted to date. The coincidence of problems identified in the background research, problems raised in Review submissions, and problems enunciated by Mackenzie County rail users seem to indicate that there are a number of systemic problems in Canada's rail transportation mode that need to be addressed and dealt with. These problems seem to span a number of products and geographic regions.

On the positive side, rail users in Mackenzie County are of the opinion that rail service has improved since CN Rail re-acquired the line in early 2006.

Mackenzie County is pleased to have this opportunity to provide a submission to the Review. Two of our three major industry sectors – agriculture and forestry – are almost entirely rail dependent. Because of our distance from major markets, much of future economic activity and development in the County will be dependent upon a competitive, cost effective, efficient, and responsive rail transportation mode. We believe the Review represents a unique opportunity to define and enunciate problems and issues in Canada's rail system that in many cases has a direct impact on the country's economic performance, and to find solutions for the betterment of all participants in our rail based logistics systems.

## **Issues and Problems**

### **Car spotting problems/car supply and possible solutions**

Car spotting and supply problems are the same in Mackenzie County as those described in numerous submissions to the review panel, that is, cars do not arrive when promised or scheduled, and the cars supplied are often shorted from that ordered or promised. Mackenzie County shippers and consignees reported this as a problem that has direct and immediate adverse financial consequences. For example,

many grain producer car loaders hire commercial grain trucks to bring product to the loading site in anticipation of car arrivals to ensure the cars are loaded within the 24 hour demurrage free period, only to find that cars do not arrive. Trucks then have to return to the farm and be unloaded. This is reportedly happening with such frequency that it becomes impossible or financially prohibitive to pre-book commercial grain trucks for delivery to producer car loading sites at supposed car arrival times. A number of producer car loaders are now booking commercial grain trucks only when cars have physically arrived. This results in a premium price having to be paid for trucking, or an inability to obtain service on short notice – again incurring extra, unnecessary costs.

Just as frequent as CN Rail failing to deliver cars on time in quantities ordered, are stories of grain cars being stored on sidings for weeks and months on end without moving. These stories are too numerous, too frequent and too geographically diverse across Western Canada not to contain elements of truth.

For grain, it goes to utilization of the grain car fleet, particularly that portion of the fleet supplied by the Canadian Wheat Board/Government of Canada and provincially financed and supplied cars.

Solutions: Mackenzie County recommends that several actions be taken to improve grain car spotting/car supply. There are several potential solutions to the car spotting/car supply problems. These include:

- Provide for – preferably through regulation – penalties for underutilization of grain cars when it can be demonstrated that cars sit idle while car spotting are delayed and cars shorted on delivery. For example, if a given car is found to have been sitting idle and stationary – for say a week – while at the same time there are car spotting delays and shorting of cars on delivery, a penalty should be imposed on the railway. Historical crop and shipment data, and sophisticated current year crop forecasting models should greatly assist in ensuring that adequate equipment is allocated to, and available in, various geographic regions to meet expected demand.
- Provide for an expanded role for the Grain Monitor to include real time monitoring of car status (e.g. moving or stationary) and location to assist in enforcing the penalty regime. This could be done by ensuring that the Monitor has real time access to read-outs from railway car readers, or alternatively using a satellite tracking system for rail grain cars similar to that used in the trucking industry.

### **CN Rail internal and external communications improvements**

Although the situation seems to be improving, rail users in Mackenzie County suggest that there is room for considerable improvement in communications with regard to CN Rail, both externally with customers and internally in the railway.

With regard to external communications between CN Rail and its customers, customer service representatives need to be more knowledgeable and precise with regard to interaction with rail users.

A seeming lack of internal communication within CN Rail contributes to frustrations and uncertainty with regard to car spotting and number of cars to be delivered. In this regard, there seems to be a disconnect and lack of information flowing between CN customer service representatives and CN personnel on the ground responsible for assembling and dispatching trains.

Rail users in Mackenzie County feel strongly that there should be a local contact person designated by CN Rail on the ground at Roma Junction/Peace River, where trains are assembled for the trip north. This would facilitate accurate information about car spotting and car deliveries approximately 12 hours prior to train arrival in High Level rather than not knowing what is arriving until the train gets there.

### **Need for continued infrastructure maintenance and upgrading**

Collector systems off rail mainlines collectively generate the majority of tonnage moved by CN and CP, be it grain, coal and other mining products, potash, sulphur, forest products and the like, products which are a major factor in Canada's export performance, current account balances and contribution to Canada's Gross Domestic Product.

For Mackenzie County, being heavily rail dependent, it is important that CN has a multiyear program of maintenance and upgrading for the line connecting us to Edmonton, to ensure that rail infrastructure becomes a positive contributor to economic growth, rather than a detriment. Moreover, it would be a positive sign of trust and cooperation if such plans would be shared with the County and its rail users.

### **CN Rail/Rail user balanced accountability**

Mackenzie County supports the concept of balanced accountability between railways and rail shippers/consignees. While a host of ancillary charges are imposed on shippers by railways for non-performance, non-performance by railways have no consequences.

- If (grain) cars are spotted 6 weeks late, there is no consequence for the railway
- If car cycle times for shipper leased chemical cars have more than doubled over the past several years (with corresponding increases in car lease costs for chemical shippers), there is no consequence for the railway
- If railways split "single order/multiple container" movements between different trains and thereby cause part of the order to miss a vessel sailing date and thereby causing a switch in suppliers by overseas importers, there is no consequence for the railway
- If railways fail to meet Just-in-Time (JIT) delivery deadlines, there is no consequence for the railway
- If railways cause serious congestion and delays at port container terminals by allocating insufficient cars or other operational deficiencies, there is no consequence for the railway

While there may well be mutual accountability built into some current confidential contracts, this is a concept that should be applied universally to rail transportation and to participants in rail logistics chains.

Such a concept of mutual accountability should be grounded in regulations. With respect to specific charges, there are several alternatives. A starting point might be to mirror the railways' tariffs of Ancillary Charges, and have them also apply to the railways. For example, if a car is supposed to be spotted on a specific day and it is a day late, the railway would pay \$75 demurrage. If the car is five days late, demurrage would be \$375. This could also apply to shorted cars, and loaded cars which are not picked up as originally scheduled or promised. Thus, we could have a system of equal accountability and equal penalties for the same "offences" for both railways and rail users.

### **Demurrage and ancillary charges**

Rail users in Mackenzie County would like to see the current 24 hour demurrage free period extended to 48 to 96 hours, as this would provide a bit more flexibility in loading/unloading.

There is considerable dissatisfaction with how ancillary charges are invoiced. Rail users report that they are often assessed demurrage for car numbers that have never been delivered to them. The practice of requiring rail users to demonstrate mistakes in invoices for ancillary charges before adjustments are made, is also troublesome, as it puts the onus entirely on rail users and give railways a free pass to be sloppy and inaccurate in their billing procedures. This also increases administrative costs for rail users.

### **Monopoly pricing of freight rates**

Rail users in Mackenzie County are concerned about the railways' ability to impose monopoly pricing on lines and at points where there is no intra-modal railway competition. There is a substantial need, particularly for rail users located in distant economic regions like Mackenzie County, for a mechanism that would facilitate and provide for reasonable and competitive rates where there is a rail monopoly.

### **Division of Northwest Alberta into two shipping blocks for allocation of rail grain cars**

Northwest Alberta should be divided into two blocks for car allocation purposes to ensure that an adequate number of rail grain cars are allocated and delivered to County loading sites. The County and a number of grain shippers are concerned that Viterro will order as many cars as possible to their new terminal at Sexsmith due to open in 2011 to the detriment of car supply for their High Level terminal, thereby further worsening the car supply situation for County producers and driving up costs unnecessarily.

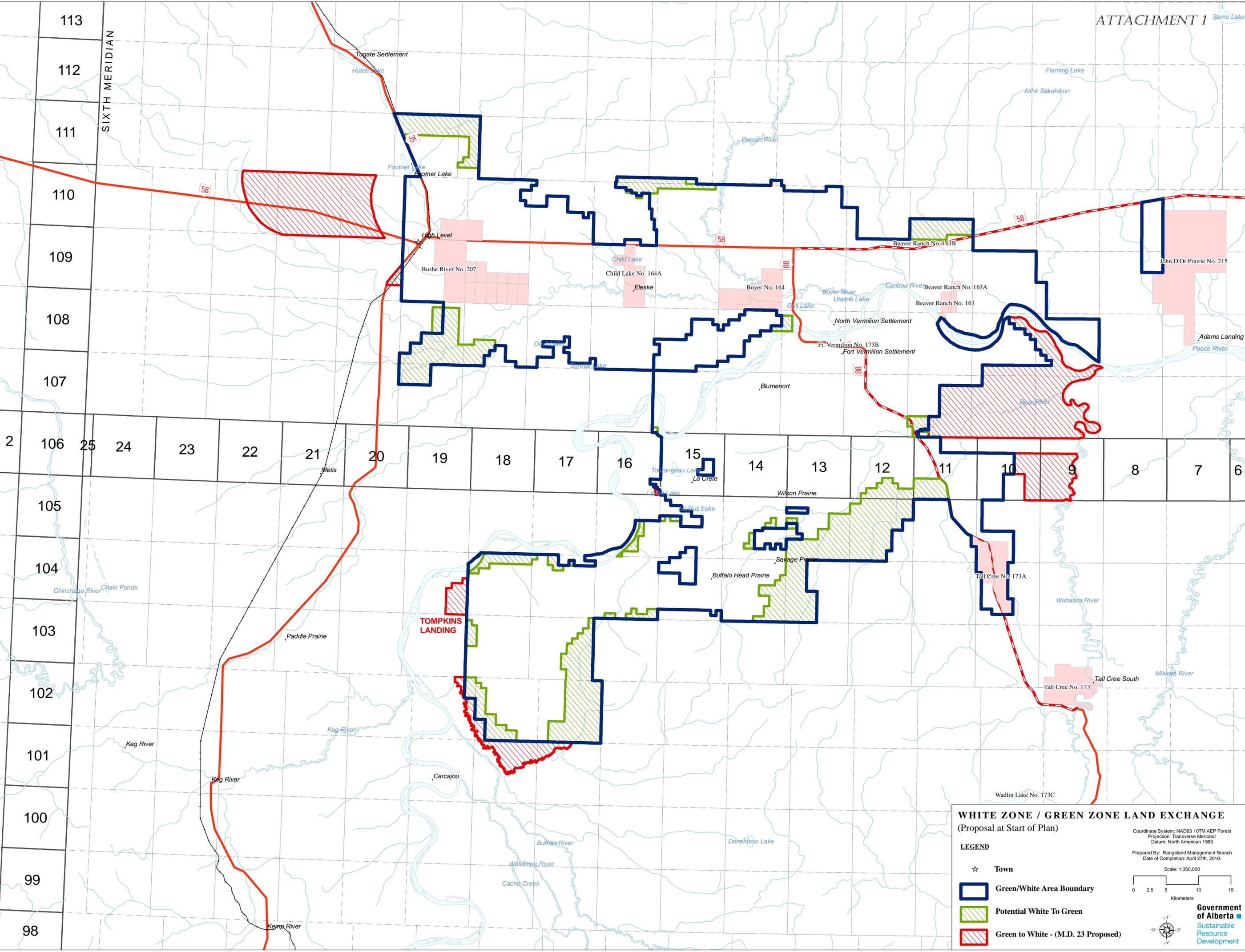
### **Running Rights**

Running rights, or joint running rights, have been strenuously opposed by the country's two rail carriers. Yet, when it seems to be to their benefit – like in BC's Fraser Canyon to alleviate capacity constraints – they embrace the idea and cooperate.

In not too many years, there could be – for a number of reasons - serious capacity constraints throughout the Canadian rail system which would make joint running rights a palatable option. While Mackenzie County is not at all advocating a forced and immediate system of running rights, we would suggest that it would be prudent to examine options and alternatives with regard to running rights – with attendant marketing/freight solicitation rights - which would result in win-win situations and leave the railways financially no worse off than under the status quo.

The purpose of raising the issue here is to try and initiate a rational discussion and debate around the concept. Many permutations are possible, but it could include some kind of a public-private partnership with regard to infrastructure (track, terminals, signalling, control systems etc). Alternatively, current railway companies could split their corporations into an infrastructure entity and a train operating entity, where the infrastructure entity would charge for use and occupancy of the infrastructure. There are probably many other concepts that could be acceptable and workable.

The Review Panel is faced with a most important task. Canada's rail transportation system is a critical component and force in the generation of the nation's gross domestic product, in our export performance and by extension our current account balance. The problems are many, but they are well defined. We believe, with good will and a willingness to cooperate, solutions acceptable to all parties are possible and within reach in moving forward.



**WHITE ZONE / GREEN ZONE LAND EXCHANGE**  
(Proposal at Start of Plan)

Coordinate System: NAD83 10TMAEP Forest  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983

Prepared By: Rangeland Management Branch  
Date of Completion: April 27th, 2010.

Scale: 1:350,000

0 2.5 5 10 15  
Kilometers

**LEGEND**

- ☆ Town
- Green/White Area Boundary
- Potential White To Green
- Green to White - (M.D. 23 Proposed)

**Government of Alberta**  
Sustainable Resource Development

**MACKENZIE COUNTY MISSION TO KHANTY-MANSIYSK**  
**December 14 – 16, 2009**

---

**PARTICIPANTS:**

Reeve Greg Newman – Mackenzie County  
Councillor Ed Froese – Mackenzie County  
Councillor Ray Toews – Mackenzie County  
Stein Jahnsen – Activation Analysis Group Inc.  
John Szumlas – Activation Analysis Group Inc.

**OUTCOMES:**

**UGRA RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:**

- Both the Institute and the KMAO government agreed that cooperation/partnership between the UGRA Institute and a new institute in Mackenzie County would be desirable and would be mutually beneficial, and should be further and actively explored and pursued by both parties
- As the Institute and the KMAO government jointly pursues commercialization of Institute products, services and patents, opportunities exist for Canadian organizations to represent and market these in Canada. Many of these products, services and patents are unique and could benefit Canada and Canadian organizations. Access to the Institute's Sun Microsystems super computer - should it be part of the commercialization packages – would be of substantial benefit and value.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE KHANTY-MANSIYSK AUTONOMOUS OKRUG:**

- The KMAO government expressed surprise that canola was grown in Mackenzie County, with soil and climatic conditions almost identical to that of the Okrug. The KMAO government would like to actively work with representatives of the Mackenzie delegation to establish a canola crop program in the Okrug, along with possibly the construction of a canola crushing plant using Canadian technology in order to expand and diversify their agriculture industry.
- Given the similarities between the Okrug's and Western Canada's forest resources, the KMAO Forestry Department expressed a strong desire to establish a cooperative relationship with respect to silviculture and other forestry matters with sister departments in the Province of Alberta.
- The Deputy Chairman of the KMAO government expressed a strong desire for the Okrug to be invited to Mackenzie County to view agricultural practices and technologies and to further pursue and explore UGRA Institute matters.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Joint exploration with the UGRA Institute with respect to cooperation/partnership arrangements.
- Joint exploration with the UGRA Institute with respect to potential joint research initiatives and programs that would benefit both parties.
- Joint program with the KMAO government to determine the most suitable lands in the Okrug on which to establish the canola crop program.
- Identification of a Canadian canola crushing organization and Canadian crushing technology to be included in the KMAO canola crop program
- Facilitation of a cooperative relationship between the KMAO Forestry Department and sister departments in Western Canada
- An invitation to the KMAO government to visit Mackenzie County in June 2010.

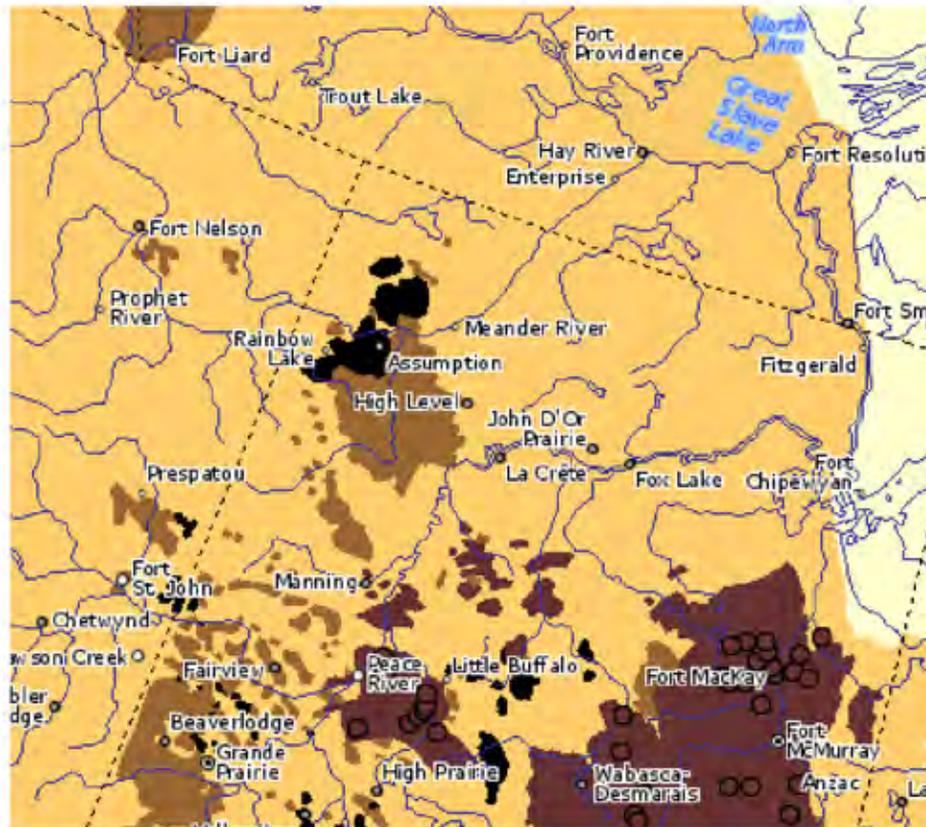
Implementation of these next steps would provide mutual benefits to both KMAO, Mackenzie County and Canada.

**MEETINGS IN KMAO:**

- The delegation met with representatives of the departments of Environmental Protection; Oil, Gas and Mineral Resources Department; Committee for External Relations; Economic Policy Department; Education Department; Forestry Department; The Agroindustrial Complex; Healthcare Department; Investment Department; and the Deputy Chairman of the KMAO Government.
- The delegation had a full day of meetings at the UGRA Institute for Information Technology.



### Crude Oil and Natural Gas Resources

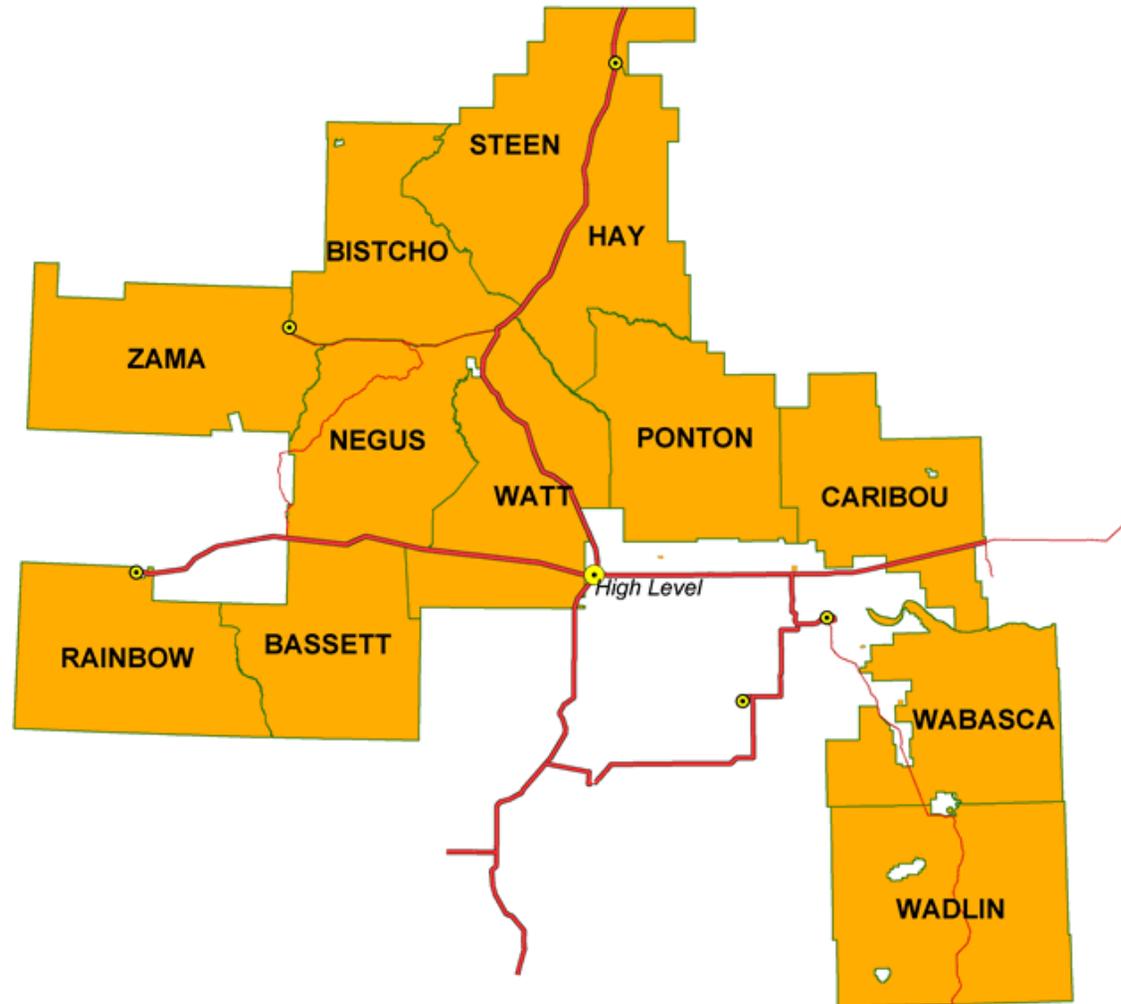


0 75 150 225 300 km

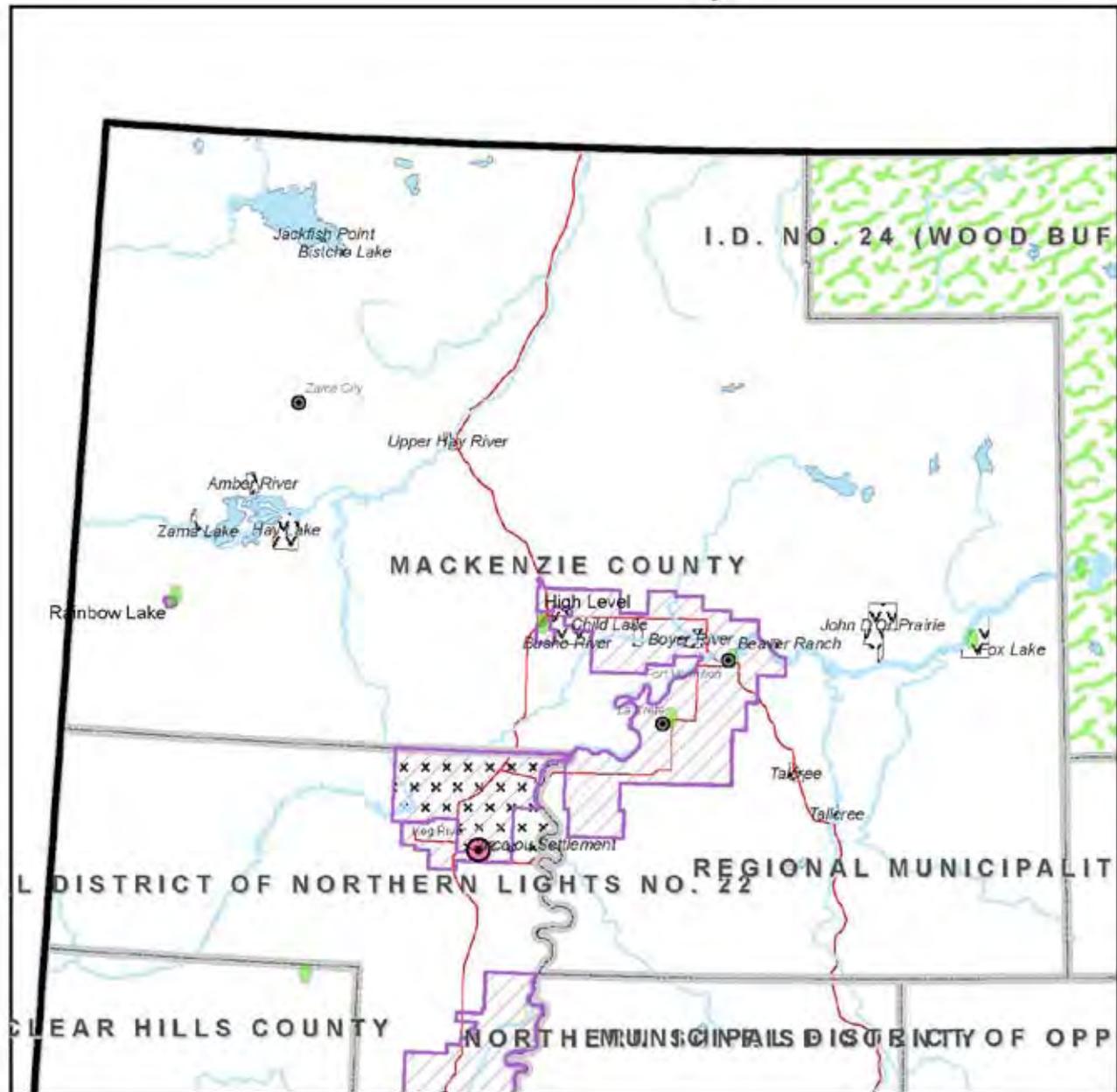
Oil and Natural Gas Resources	
	Oil Field (or oil pool)
	Oil Sands
	Natural Gas Field (or gas pool)
Oil Sand Projects	
	Oil Sands Project
Pipeline Infrastructure	
	Crude Oil Pipelines
	Natural Gas Pipelines
Sedimentary Basins	
	Western Canada Sedimentary Basin
	Atlantic Margin
	Arctic Cratonic
	Arctic Margin
	Pacific Margin
	Intermontane
	Eastern Cratonic
	Other (Cordillera, Innuitia, Appalachia, Canadian Shield)

Source: Atlas of Canada. Crude Oil and Natural Resources (Map). 2009. Retrieved 2010 08 16 from <http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/economic/energy/oilgas>

## Tolko Industries'-Footner Forest Products' Joint Forest Management Agreement in the Mackenzie County Area



# Rural Alberta Broadband Coverage Mackenzie County



- |                                     |                              |                           |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Area NOT Served, 0% Coverage        | Hamlet                       | Municipalities Boundaries |
| Area Served >0% up to 25% Coverage  | Deferral Account Communities | Provincial Border         |
| Area Served >25% up to 50% Coverage | Cities, Towns, and Villages  | Major Roads               |
| Area Served >50% up to 90% Coverage | Indian Reserves              | Major Waterways           |
| Area Served >90% Coverage           | Metis Settlements            | Major Lakes and Rivers    |
|                                     | Gas Co-op Franchise Areas    | Provincial Parks          |
|                                     |                              | National Parks            |



# Appendix G

## Environmental Sustainability

- G1. 2006 Mackenzie County Energy Management Assessment
- G2. La Crete Development Plan
- G3. Fort Vermilion Development Plan
- G4. Zama City Development Plan

## 2006 Mackenzie County Energy Management Assessment

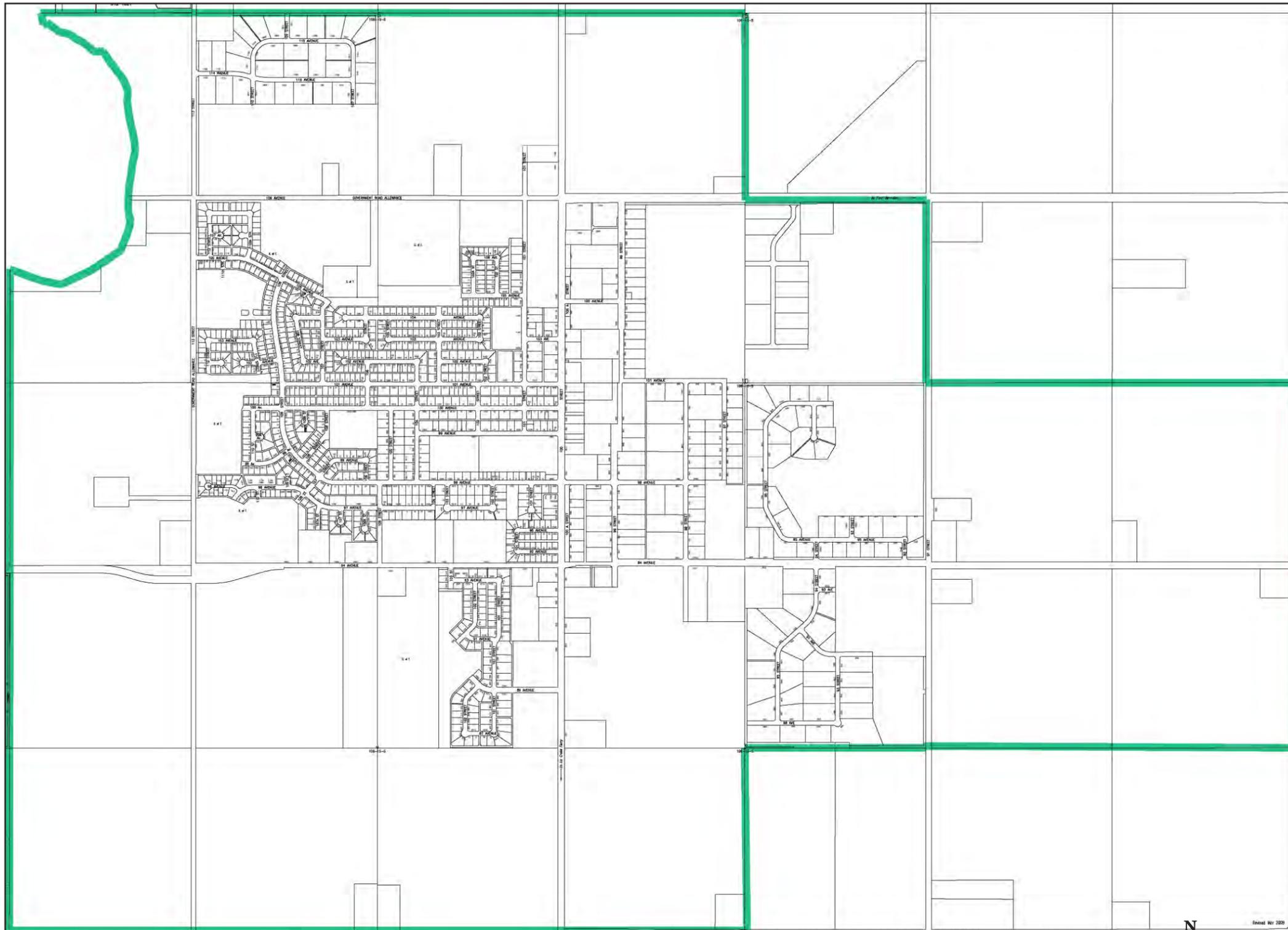
Options	Estimated Savings	Estimated Cost	Payback in Yrs without avoided costs	kWh Savings per Yr	GJ/kWh Saved/Yr in GJ's	Energy Reduced by %	GHG Reduction Tonnage Carbon	Potential Avoided Costs	Net Effective Cost	Net Effective Payback In Yrs
Fort Vermilion Water Treat	\$5,058	\$38,414	7.60	34,625	340.4	9.90%	35.84	\$5,284	\$33,130	6.55
Fort Vermilion Fire Hall	\$844	\$9,861	11.68	2,318	79.0	11.39%	5.64	\$1,145	\$8,716	10.32
Fort Vermilion EMS	\$539	\$2,776	5.15	3,807	35.6	8.32%	4.57	\$257	\$2,519	4.67
LaCrete Water Treatment	\$89	\$216	2.43	0	9.9	0.97%	0.49	\$0	\$216	2.43
LaCrete Fire Hall	\$1,661	\$6,093	3.67	15,580	84.8	11.88%	15.69	\$620	\$5,474	3.30
LaCrete EMS	\$1,168	\$10,862	9.30	1,363	16.2	7.67%	1.81	\$1,076	\$9,786	8.38
LaCrete Sub M.D. Office	\$4,672	\$76,946	16.47	25,476	356.0	24.56%	33.77	\$7,444	\$69,503	14.88
Zama Water Treatment	\$3,888	\$45,110	11.60	15,947	329.9	18.85%	20.65	\$1,900	\$43,210	11.11
Zama Fire Hall	\$592	\$10,268	17.35	1,539	55.9	10.69%	3.92	\$1,306	\$8,962	15.14
Zama Community Hall	\$651	\$5,041	7.74	3,718	48.6	8.40%	5.16	\$507	\$4,534	6.96
LaCrete Rec. Centre	\$13,231	\$144,920	10.95	75,479	987.0	15.73%	73.94	\$13,179	\$131,741	9.96
Fort Vermilion Rec. Centre	\$9,575	\$139,333	14.55	48,344	733.7	17.91%	59.11	\$12,107	\$127,226	13.29
LaCrete Maint. Shop	\$588	\$4,593	7.81	3,473	43.1	5.71%	4.70	\$434	\$4,159	7.07
Zama Sub M.D. Office	\$1,098	\$8,953	8.15	6,363	81.3	23.61%	8.73	\$1,163	\$7,790	7.10
Fort Vermilion M.D. Office	\$285	\$911	3.20	1,743	20.5	2.13%	2.31	\$60	\$851	2.99
Fort Vermilion Maint. Shop	\$1,917	\$26,323	13.73	7,525	164.8	15.69%	13.75	\$3,602	\$22,721	11.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,855</b>	<b>\$530,620</b>	<b>11.57</b>	<b>247,302</b>	<b>3386.7</b>	<b>193.43%</b>	<b>290.10</b>	<b>\$50,081</b>	<b>\$480,540</b>	<b>10.48</b>

Report August-06

Utility Consumption Numbers are based on available data only.

Annual Usage All Facilities	GJ	kWh	M3			kWh-GJ	
Electrical Usage		2,023,178		kWh Saved Elect	247,302	12.22%	890.3 \$ Saved
Natural Gas Usage	16,194.0			GJ Saved Gas	2,343.6	14.47%	2343.6 11.44%
Water & Sewer			N/A			Facility	All Facilities
Totals	16,194.0	2,023,178	N/A			Location	M.D. Mackenzie No. 23
						Built	N/A

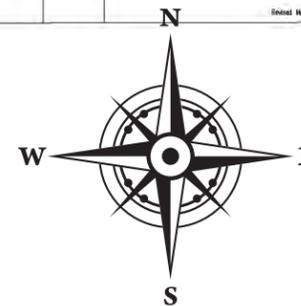
Projected Normalized Future Cost	Rate Used	Projected W/O GST	0.0036 kWh/GJ	Factor			
Estimated Future Costs	Consumption	kWh/GJ/M3	Total \$/Yr	GJ	CO2	Tonnage	Formula
Water & Sewer	N/A	N/A	N/A				
Gas	17,004	\$10.47	\$178,007	17004	Gas	847.82	0.049861
Elect	2,023,178	\$0.11	\$222,701	7283	Converted from kWh	Elect	1851.73 0.00091526
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$400,708</b>	<b>24,287</b>	<b>Total all energy</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2699.55</b>

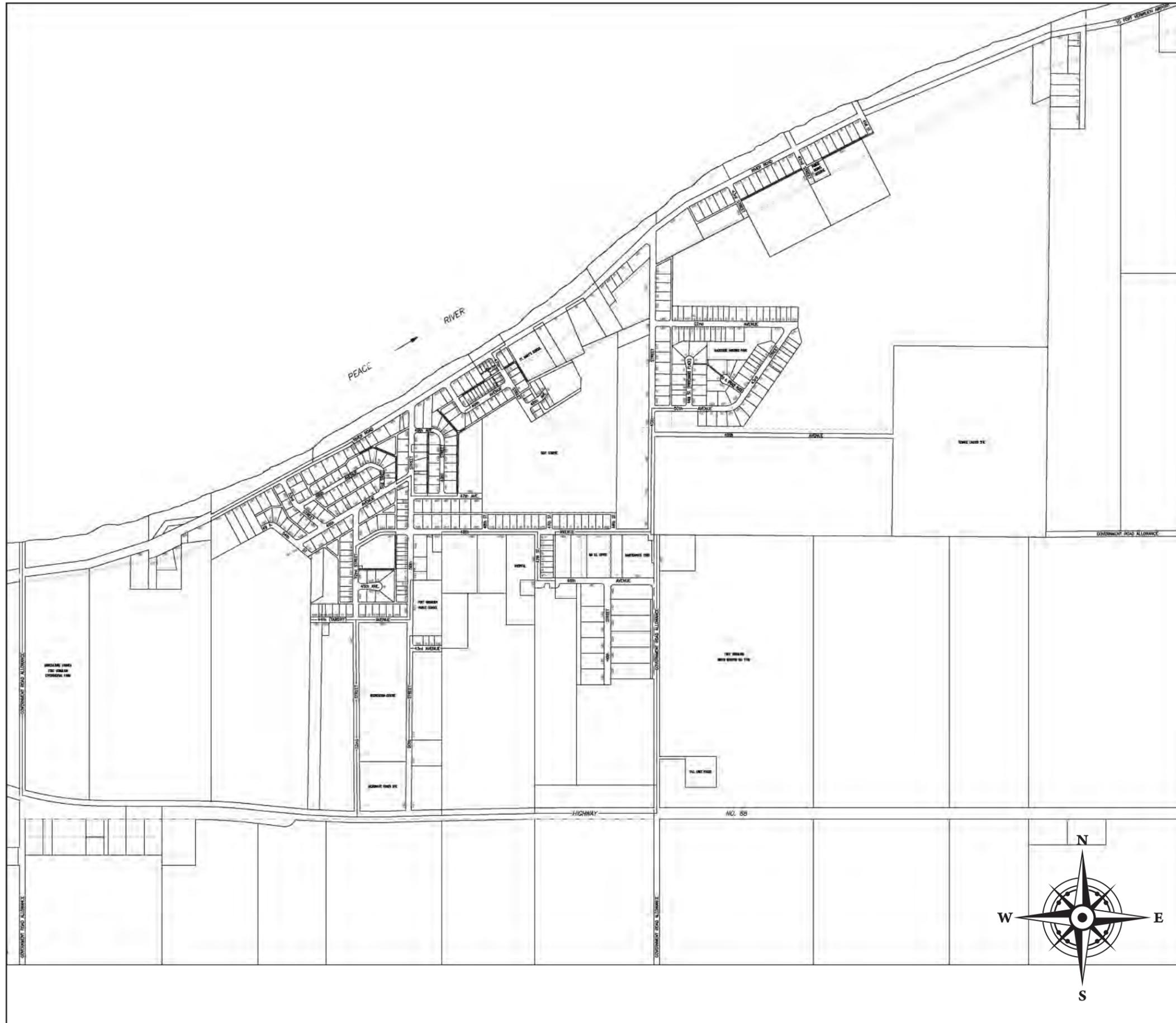


**■ Hamlet Boundaries**

Growth Area: Based on the hamlet's informal boundaries in La Crete shown in green on this map, there is land available for development. Designation of land for different purposes, planning and detailing have not yet taken place.

**Hamlet of La Crete**



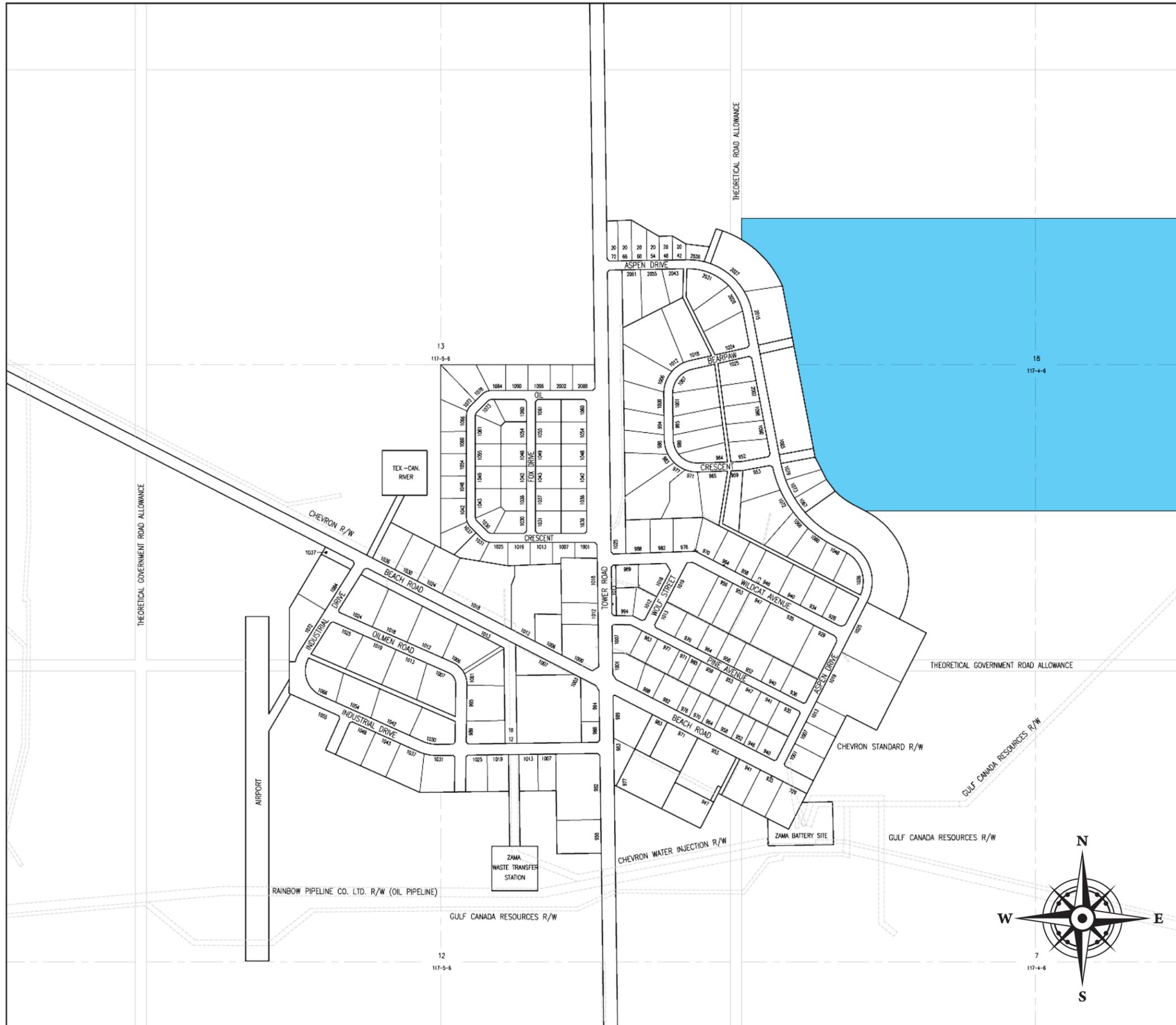


Growth Area: Land is available for expansion in Fort Vermillion. Designation of land for different purposes, planning and detailing have not yet taken place.

## Hamlet of Fort Vermillion

**ACTIVATION  
ANALYSIS**  
GROUP INC.  
*Experience. Objectivity. Clarity.*

Map  
#6



**Residential Growth Area**

County Council has designated land available in Zama City for residential development and has developed an area structure plan with details on road networks, servicing and lotting.

**Hamlet of Zama City**



Map  
#4

# Appendix H

## Social Sustainability

- H1. Reserves and Métis Settlements
- H2. First Nations Relations
- H3. Financing a Hamlet Convenience Store
- H4. Population Growth Rate: 1959 – 2006
- H5. Population 1959 - 2006
- H6. Age of Population in 2006 vs. Wood Buffalo
- H7. Age of Population in 2006 vs. Big Lakes
- H8. Age of Population in 2006 vs. Grande Prairie
- H9. Mother Tongue 2006
- H10. Immigrant Status 2006
- H11. Total Dwelling Units 1996 - 2006
- H12. Persons per Dwelling Unit 2006
- H13. Median Income 2001 - 2006
- H14. Occupations 2006
- H15. Industry 2006
- H16. Proportion of Non-Residential to Total Assessment 2009

## **Reserves and Métis Settlements in Mackenzie County by Nation**

	<b>Reserve (IR) or Settlement</b>	<b>Nation</b>
1	Amber River IR 211	Dene Tha' First Nation
2	Beaver Ranch IR 163	Tallcree First Nation
3	Beaver Ranch IR 163A	Tallcree First Nation
4	Beaver Ranch IR 163B	Tallcree First Nation
5	Bistcho Lake IR 213	Dene Tha' First Nation
6	Boyer IR 164	Beaver First Nation
7	Boyer Settlement	
8	Bushe River IR 207	Dene Tha' First Nation
9	Child Lake IR 164A	Beaver First Nation
10	Fox Lake IR 162	Little Red River Cree Nation
11	Fort Vermilion IR 173B	Tallcree First Nation
12	Fort Vermilion Settlement	
13	Garden Creek	Little Red River Cree Nation
14	Hay Lake IR 209*	Dene Tha' First Nation
15	Jackfish Point IR 214	Dene Tha' First Nation
16	John D'or Prairie IR 215	Little Red River Cree Nation
17	North Vermilion Settlement	
18	Tall Cree IR 173	Tallcree First Nation
19	Tall Cree IR 173A	Tallcree First Nation
20	Tugate Settlement	
21	Upper River IR 212 (Meander River)	Dene Tha' First Nation
22	Wadlin Lake IR 173C	Tallcree First Nation
23	Zama Lake IR 210	Dene Tha' First Nation

\* Includes community of Assumption and Chateh Post Office

## **Unofficial Population of First Nations in Mackenzie County<sup>1</sup>**

Beaver Nation 2008 population: 408  
 Dene Tha' First Nation 2008 population: 1904  
 Little Red River Cree Nation 2008 population: 3431  
 Tallcree First Nation 2008 population: 506  
**Total First Nations 2008 population: 6249**

Population of Settlements not available

<sup>1</sup> Source: Alberta Municipal Affairs. *2009 Official Population List*. p.11

## Recent Milestones in Relations Between Mackenzie County and the Four First Nations Located within its Geographical Boundaries

- 1993: Settlement of the Tallcree land claim. The band received 13,000 acres and \$7,000,000. The Government of Alberta contributed the land and \$1,500,000 and the Government of Canada, \$5,500,000.
- 1999: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Alberta, the Little Red River Cree Nation and the Tallcree Nation. The Government of Alberta signed an MOU giving control of a large region of crown land and resources within County boundaries to the two First Nations without notifying Mackenzie County Council.
- 2001: County makes a presentation to Minister of Sustainable Resource Development regarding the MOU signed in 1999. The County's recommendation was:

*that the province not extend the MOU with the Little Red River and Tallcree First Nations. Rather, Council requests to meet with the province to initiate preparations for Regional Strategies for Integrated Resource Management within the municipality. The MD Of Mackenzie must be at the table with the province when the development and management of land and resources are determined.*

- 2001: AAMDC Member Advisory Committee on First Nation Issues Because it was aware that the province had entered into similar MOUs with First Nations in other jurisdictions, Mackenzie County submitted a Resolution to the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) Northern Zone meeting requesting the establishment of an AAMDC Advisory Committee on First Nations issues. With the support of the Northern Zone, the request was then submitted to the membership at the Spring AAMDC Convention. The resolution was worded as follows:

*that the AAMD&C establish a Member Advisory Committee on First Nation Issues, to develop recommendations aimed at ensuring that provincial and federal aboriginal policy, and any new agreements with First Nations, do not create undue hardship for local municipal governments and affected communities.*

Reeve Neufeld and CAO Harvey Proskiw of Mackenzie County (formerly Municipal District of Mackenzie #23) were appointed by AAMDC as District

Five's representative on the AAMD&C's new Member Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Issues.

- 2003: Request for information on provincial plans for renewal of 1999 MOU. Mackenzie County requested information from Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development regarding the plans for the future of the 1999 MOU between the Government of Alberta, the Little Red River Cree and Tallcree First Nations. The MOU expired on March 31, 2001 and the province did not subsequently renew it.

*At this point, we are not contemplating a renewal of the MOU. Discussions are taking place with the Little Red River, Tallcree and Beaver First Nations regarding a number of specific resource management issues and possible economic development initiatives. These issues, however, are of a bilateral nature and do not involve the development of an integrated resource plan.<sup>1</sup>*

- 2003: Government of Alberta News Release - Government accepts facilitator's recommendations (December 2)

*"Through the process, Alberta sought clarity, not confrontation," said Calahasen. "The recommendations serve as an excellent long-term blueprint for both First Nations and Industry in following the guiding principle of the Aboriginal Policy Framework, which is to improve the participation, in a fair and reasonable way, of Aboriginal people and business in the economic opportunities associated with resource development"*

- 2005: Release of Report on AAMD&C-AUMA Advisory Committee on Aboriginal Issues. The report included 5 recommendations, one of which was to:

*Continue the work of the present advisory committee by establishing a smaller implementation committee, with the goal of developing strategies and resource materials to help municipalities and Aboriginal communities develop more effective working relationships and partnerships around common interests, in cooperation with the Province of Alberta and representatives of Aboriginal communities.*

- 2006: Meeting between County and Tallcree administrative representatives. Mackenzie County requested a meeting with Tallcree administrative

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence from Ken Boutillier, Assistant Deputy Minister of Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to Mackenzie County dated July 2, 2003 re: MOU between Alberta, the Little Red River Cree Nation and the Tallcree Nation.

representatives in order to propose draft agreements for the County's on-going provision of treated water to the Tallcree Reserve 173B, which is directly adjacent to the hamlet of Fort Vermilion. The Chief Executive Advisor for the Tallcree First Nation indicated that the Nation is a government body, that those elected represent their constituency, and that it runs itself, as an upstanding government should. He believed that First Nations are rendered to treaty status and should be treated as any ratepayer or user of services. He wished to have a general understanding in the form of terms of reference before proceeding with negotiations. No further meetings took place nor was subsequent feedback received from the Tallcree Nation.

- 2006: County protocol for negotiations with First Nations. Mackenzie Councillor made a motion to draft a County protocol for negotiations with First Nations located in the County. No policy was prepared or approved because of a lack of information on potentially productive steps that a municipality can take in order to achieve results without involvement of the Provincial and/or Federal governments.
- 2006: AAMDC visits County. During the visit, the County highlights difficulties that have been encountered with certain County's projects.<sup>2</sup> In June 2006, AAMDC met with the Honourable Pearl Calahasen. The Minister's response was:

*The Minister acknowledges that work needs to be done on the conflicts that exists between municipal and aboriginal governments. Consultation is key to resolving issues. The Government of Alberta's First Nations Consultation Policy on Land Management and Resource Development is available to rural administrators. The fact that all of Alberta is under Treaties means that, ultimately, the Supreme Court of Canada will decide all land disputes. Both municipalities and companies are under obligation to consult with Aboriginal governments before any work commences on traditional (crown) land.*

- 2008: Mackenzie County invites the Chiefs of the Tallcree, Beaver, Little Red River Cree and Dene Tha' Nations) to a meeting with Council. Although they had initially agreed to participate, the Chiefs later decided not to do so.
- 2008: Mackenzie County request for update on 2005 AAMD&C Report recommendations. The AAMDC response stated that:

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2 For example, the Assumption Road by-pass was delayed and later cancelled due to the County's inability to reach an agreement with the Dene Nation. Difficulties encountered during Agricultural Land Exchange Task Force meetings.

*“A draft document entitled **Common Interests, Mutual Gains: Building Relations with Aboriginal People** has been produced and circulated to key stakeholders for comments. There have been delays in getting comprehensive feedback so the two associations continue to work with stakeholders”. Furthermore, “the recommendations in Building Relationships were aimed at strengthening municipal-First Nations relationships and address municipal concerns with related provincial and federal policy. The AAMDC continues to work towards that goal through these avenues.*

- Mackenzie County Council First Nations Committee. Council created this committee but soon dissolved it upon realizing that any formal meetings between the municipality and the Bands should be Council-to-Council.

## Negotiation and Agreements

- 1995 to present: Water services. The County provides water services to Tallcree and Beaver Nations without a formal agreement. Payments are made based on monthly invoices. These services predate 1995 when the Municipal District (now a County) was first established.
- 1995 to present: Road Maintenance. Alberta Transportation and Mackenzie County signed an agreement that the County would maintain any roads in the Tallcree, Beaver and Dene Tha’ Nations that are also used as “through” roads by County residents.
- 1998 to present: Exchange of Crown land and County agricultural lands. An Agricultural Land Task Force was established with representatives of Mackenzie County, the Town of High Level, Alberta Sustainable Development, four First Nations and the forest companies that are located within County boundaries. The Task Force was established in order to review and prepare a recommendation relating to Mackenzie County’s request for a transfer of Crown lands from a Green Zone to a White Zone designation. This request followed a provincial request in 1994 that the County surrender certain agricultural lands back to the province for conversion back to woodlands. The County’s understanding at the time was that the province would make certain Crown lands available to the County for agricultural purposes as an exchange for the lands that were surrendered. Representatives of each of the County’s four First Nations were invited to all Agricultural Land Task Force meetings to participate in the negotiations. In 2010, Mackenzie County Council made two presentations to the Alberta Minister of Sustainable Resource Development and a presentation to Alberta’s Premier

regarding the land exchange. The first phase of negotiations were completed in June 2010 and approximately 54,000 acres are being made available as new agricultural land before the end of the year.

- 2010 County negotiations with Tall Cree Nation. Mackenzie County Council passed a motion directing its Finance Committee to negotiate service agreements with the Tallcree First Nations. These included the formalization of the provision of water services as well as initiating the provision of fire protection and other utility services, and recreational services. In response to their request, the County also issued a letter to the Tallcree Nation stating that it will support one voting representative on the Fort Vermilion recreation Board. Facilities. Two meetings have taken place and negotiations are well under way. Once both Councils have approved the draft agreements, the final step will be to solicit the approval of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada as the federal department will be granting funds to the Tallcree Nation for part of the costs that would be incurred.

## Greetings from Val Marie, Saskatchewan<sup>1</sup>

Greetings from Val Marie! Or rather, greetings from Whitemud, the lone grocery store in this tiny Saskatchewan village (population 137). The only other store nearby of any notable size is 76 kilometers north in Ponteix — a long haul for groceries. So a couple of years ago, when Whitemud (named after the clay banks of the nearby Frenchman River) was threatened with closure, co-owner Catherine Macaulay came up with the idea of selling shares.

A corporation and board were formed, hand-drawn posters declaring SAVE OUR GROCERY STORE were passed out — and 96 shares were sold at \$1,000 each. Even the village council bought in. Macaulay retains control, but the newly renovated Whitemud now has 45 owners—about 20% of its clientèle — many of them farmers and ranchers.

Saving Whitemud may have also saved Ken Jensen's campground/vacation and RV business, just outside the village. It definitely saves Trudy Hayes (who ranches to the south) the 25-kilometre drive she would have had to take just for a quart of milk.

After you've had a look around the store—with its magazine and greeting-card display, fresh potted flowers and bouquets, deli counter, and veggie and dairy coolers—settle in at Coffee Corner. That's the place to be, sitting in the sunshine at one of two small tables, gazing out the big windows to Centre Street and the hills beyond.

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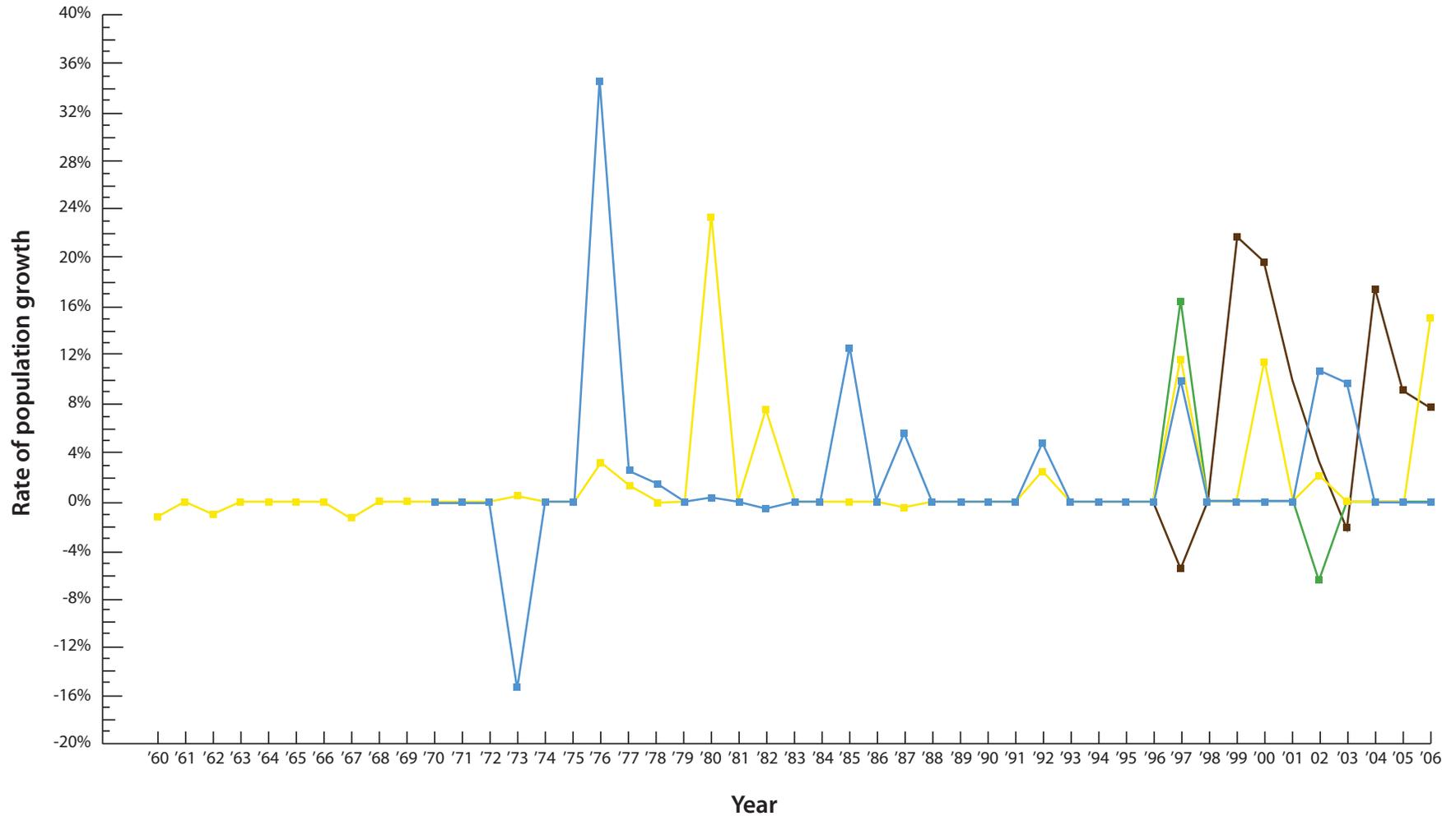
<sup>1</sup> Margoshes, Dave. *Greetings from Val Marie, Saskatchewan* (Reader's Digest Postcard Series). Reader's Digest. July, 2010, p. 109.



# Population Growth Rate

■ Mackenzie County  
 ■ Grande Prairie County  
 ■ MD of Big Lakes  
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Rate of population growth for each of four municipalities 1960-2006



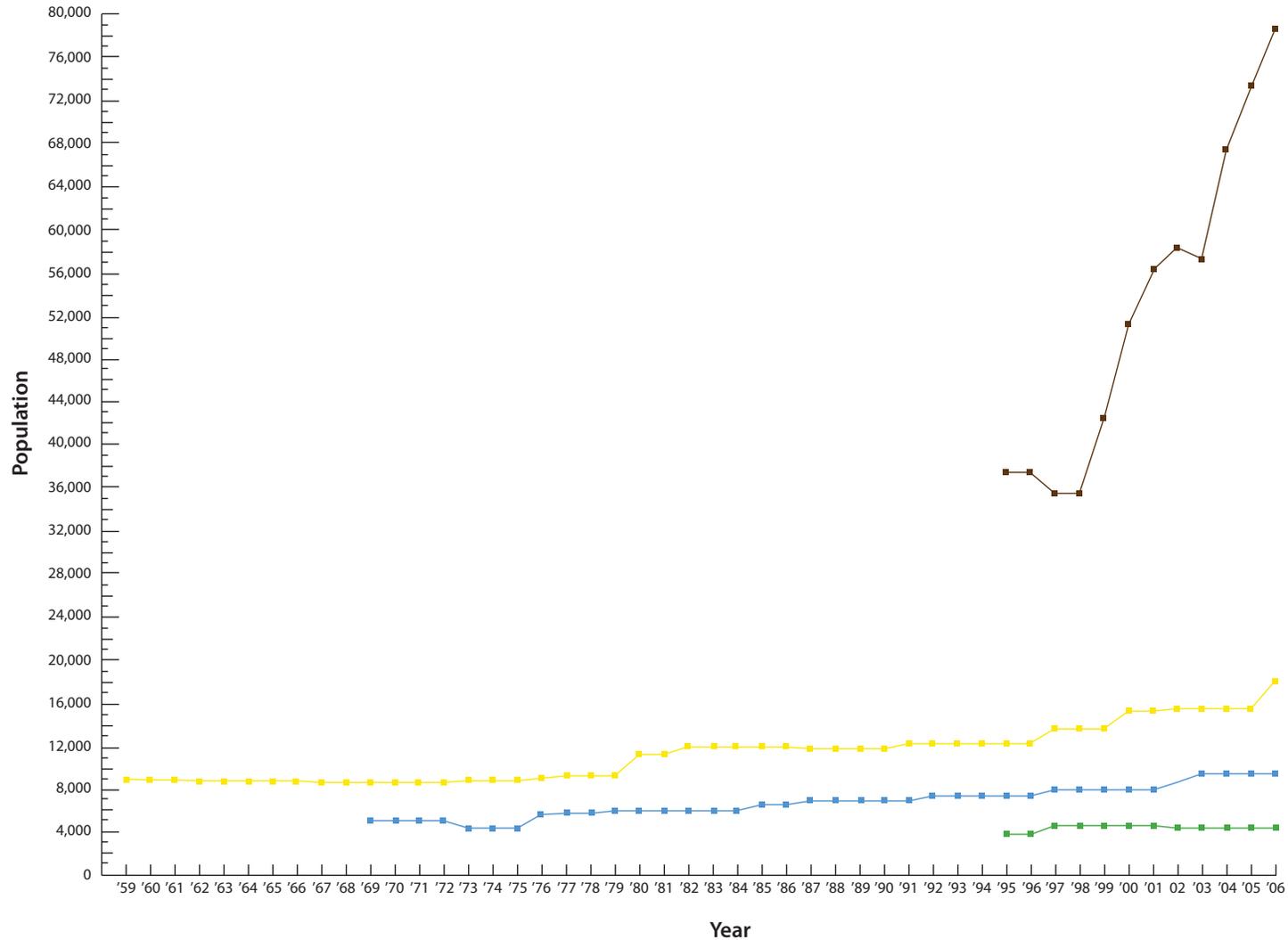
Data Source: Statistics Canada. /2006 Community Profiles: Mackenzie County / (table). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa, Ontario  
 Graph Source: Activation Analysis Group Inc. 2010



# Population

■ Mackenzie County  
 ■ Grande Prairie County  
 ■ MD of Big Lakes  
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Official population figures for four municipalities 1959-2006

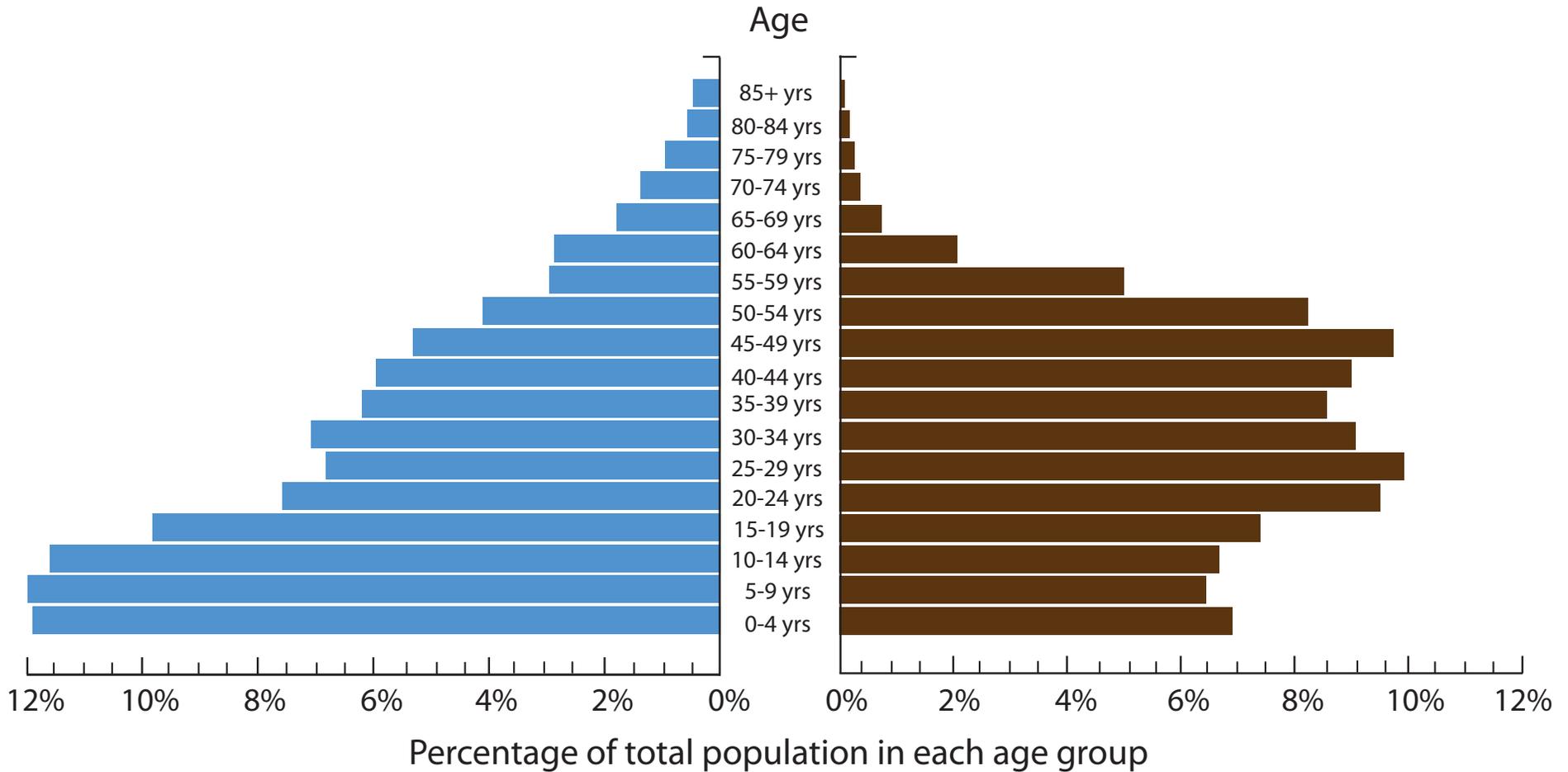


Data Source: Statistics Canada. /2006 Community Profiles: Mackenzie County / (table). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa, Ontario  
 Graph Source: Activation Analysis Group Inc. 2010



# Age of Population 2006

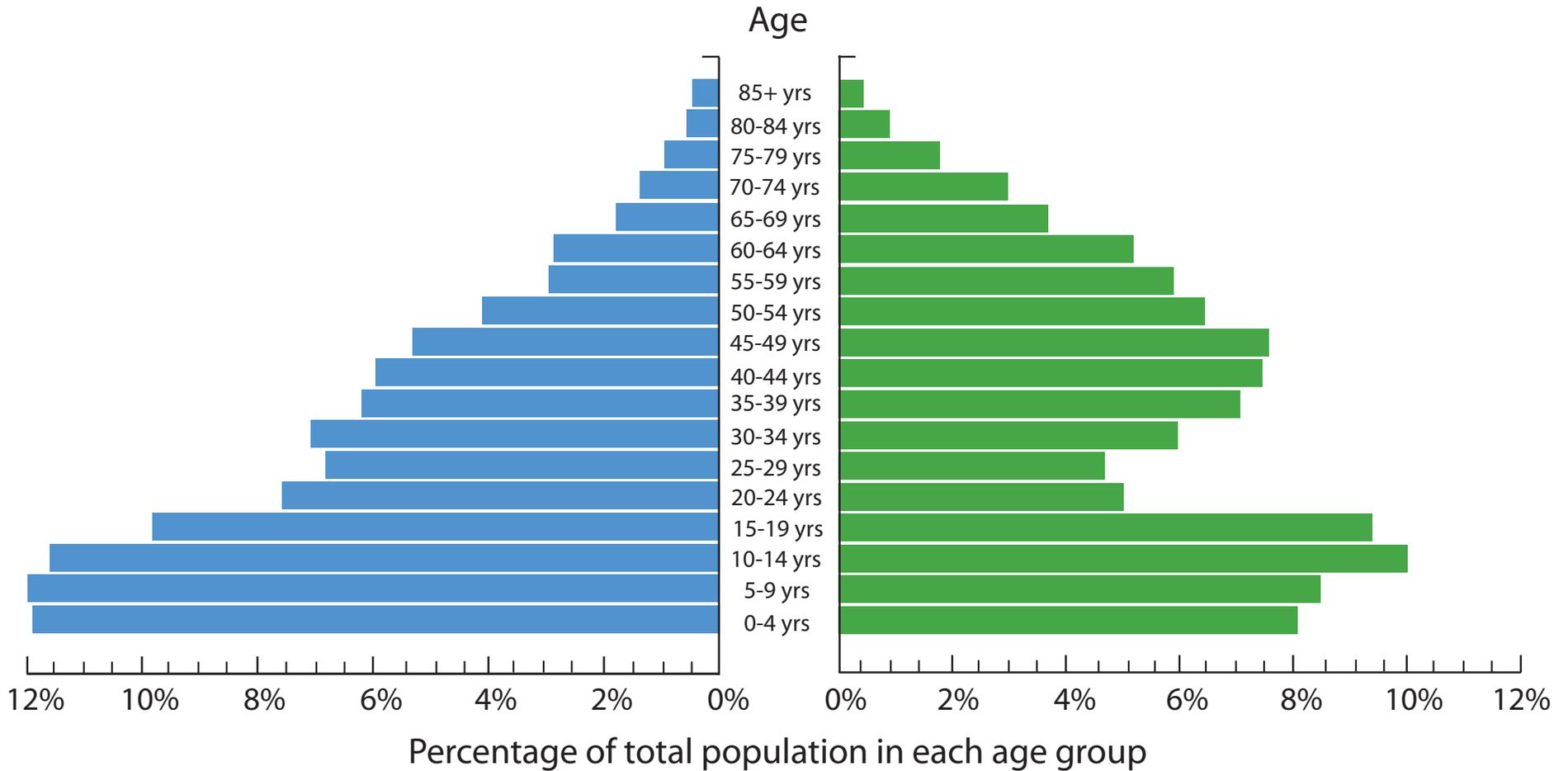
■ Mackenzie County 
 ■ Wood Buffalo





# Age of Population 2006

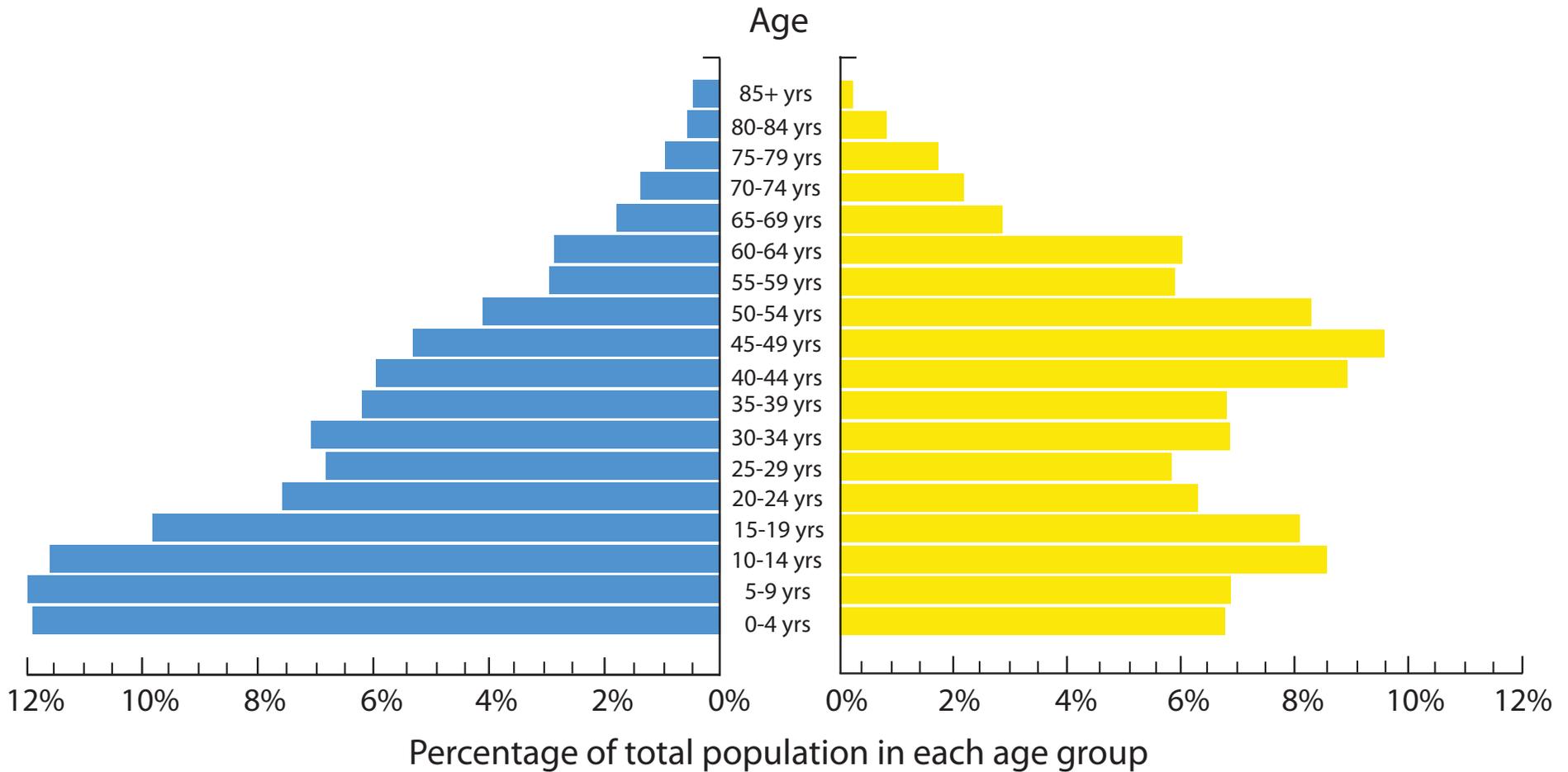
■ Mackenzie County
 ■ MD of Big Lakes





# Age of Population 2006

■ Mackenzie County
 ■ Grande Prairie County

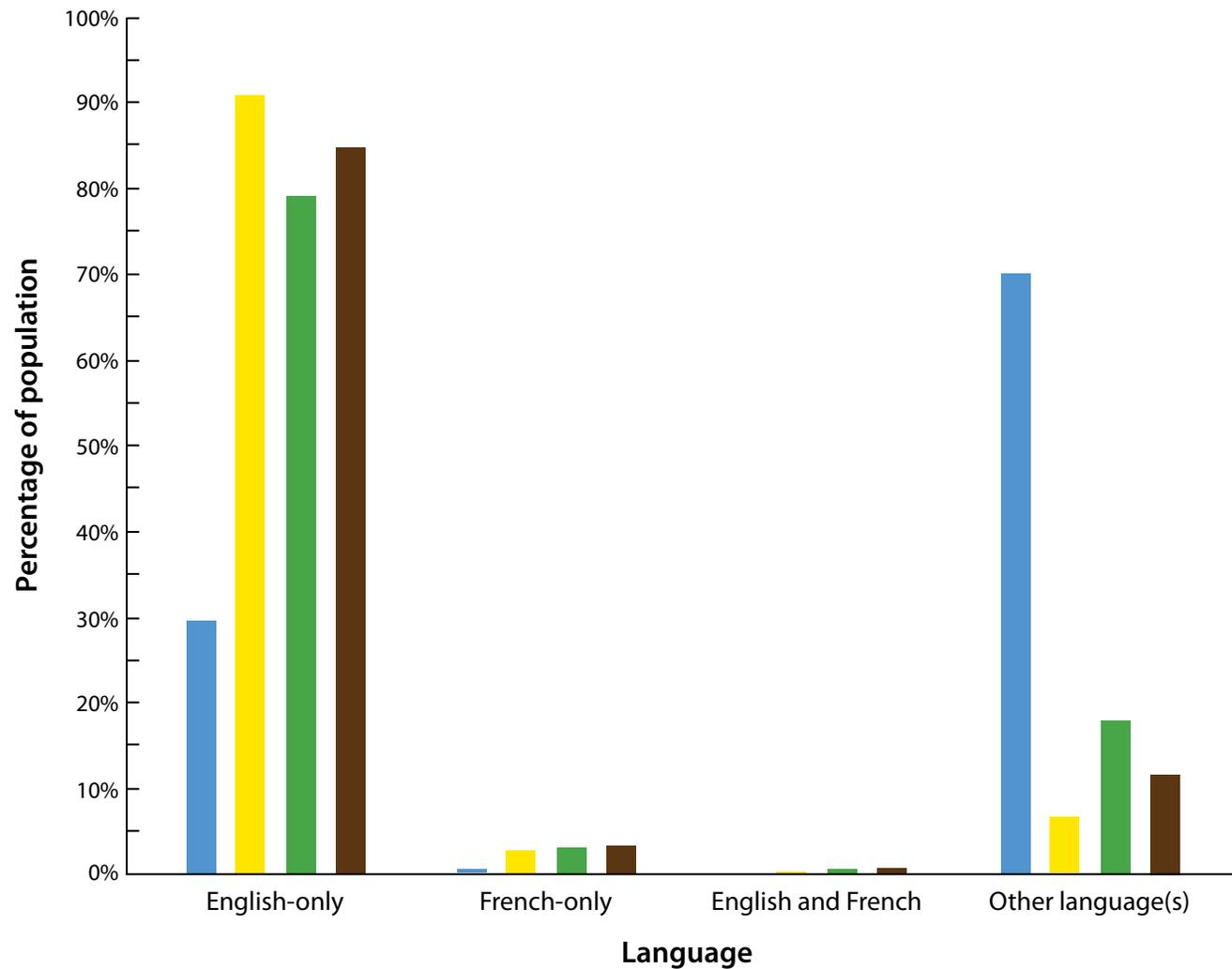




# Mother Tongue 2006

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

### Mother tongue in each of four municipalities

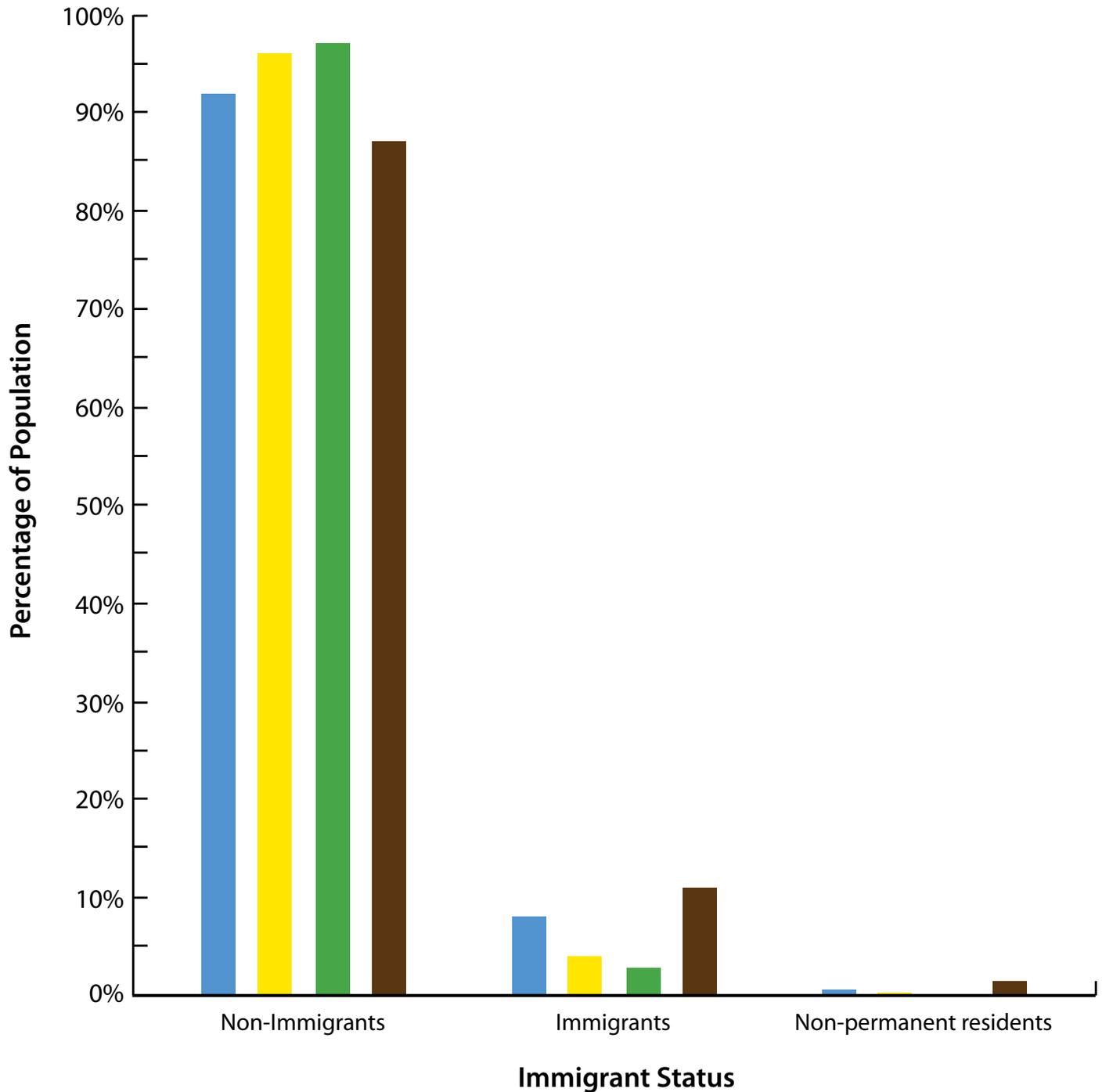




# Immigrant Status 2006

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

### Breakdown of immigrant status in each of four municipalities

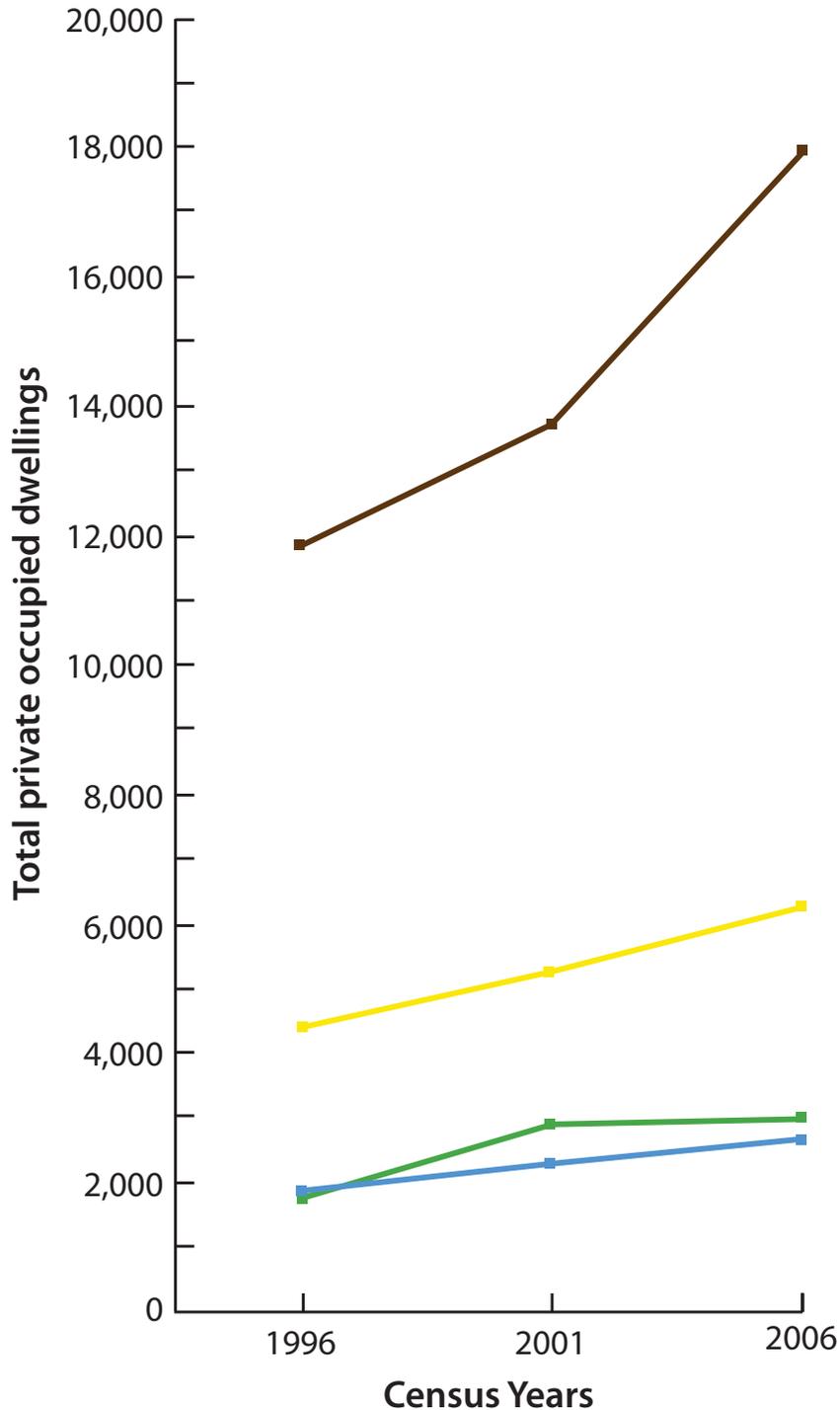




# Dwelling Units

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Historical number of private dwelling units for each of four municipalities

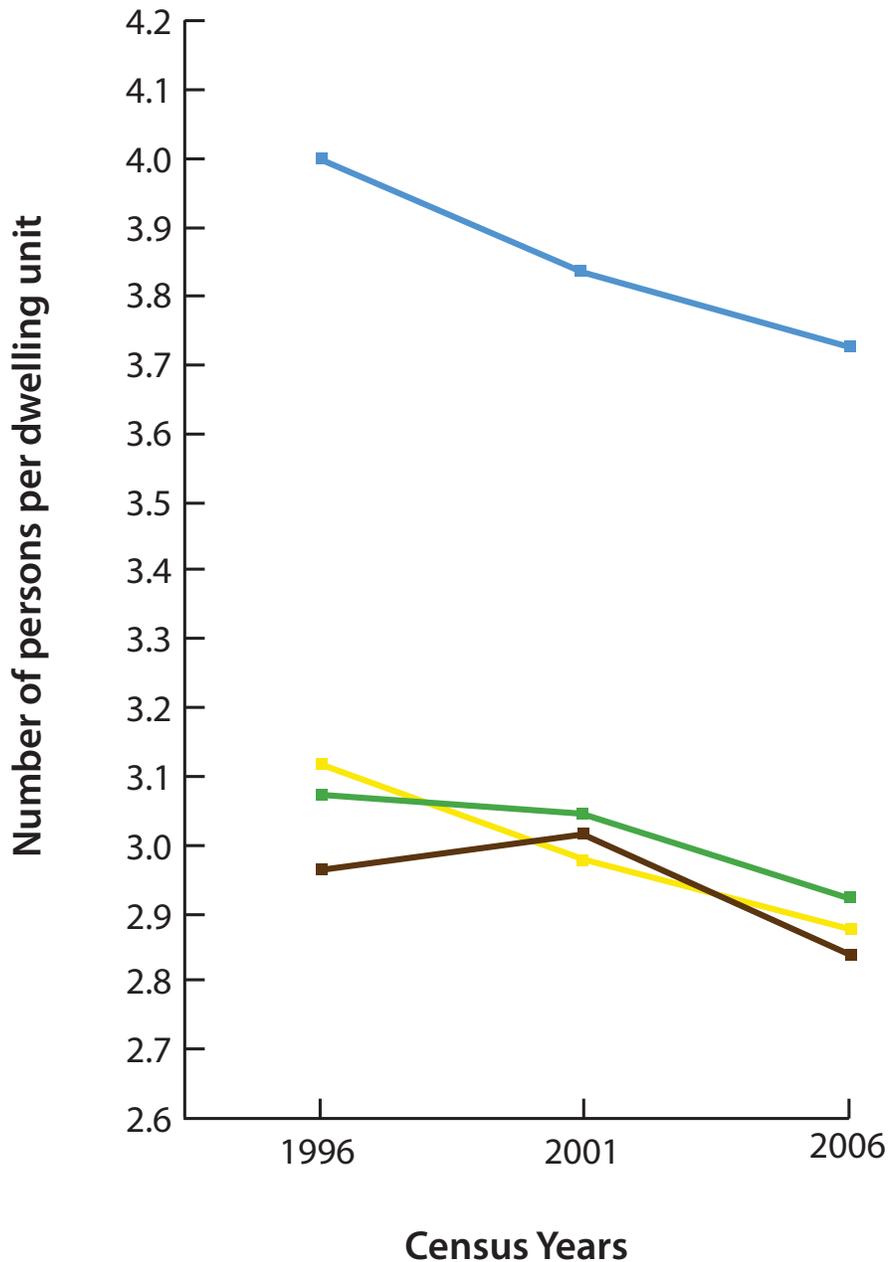




# Persons per Dwelling Unit

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Historical number of persons per dwelling unit for each of four municipalities

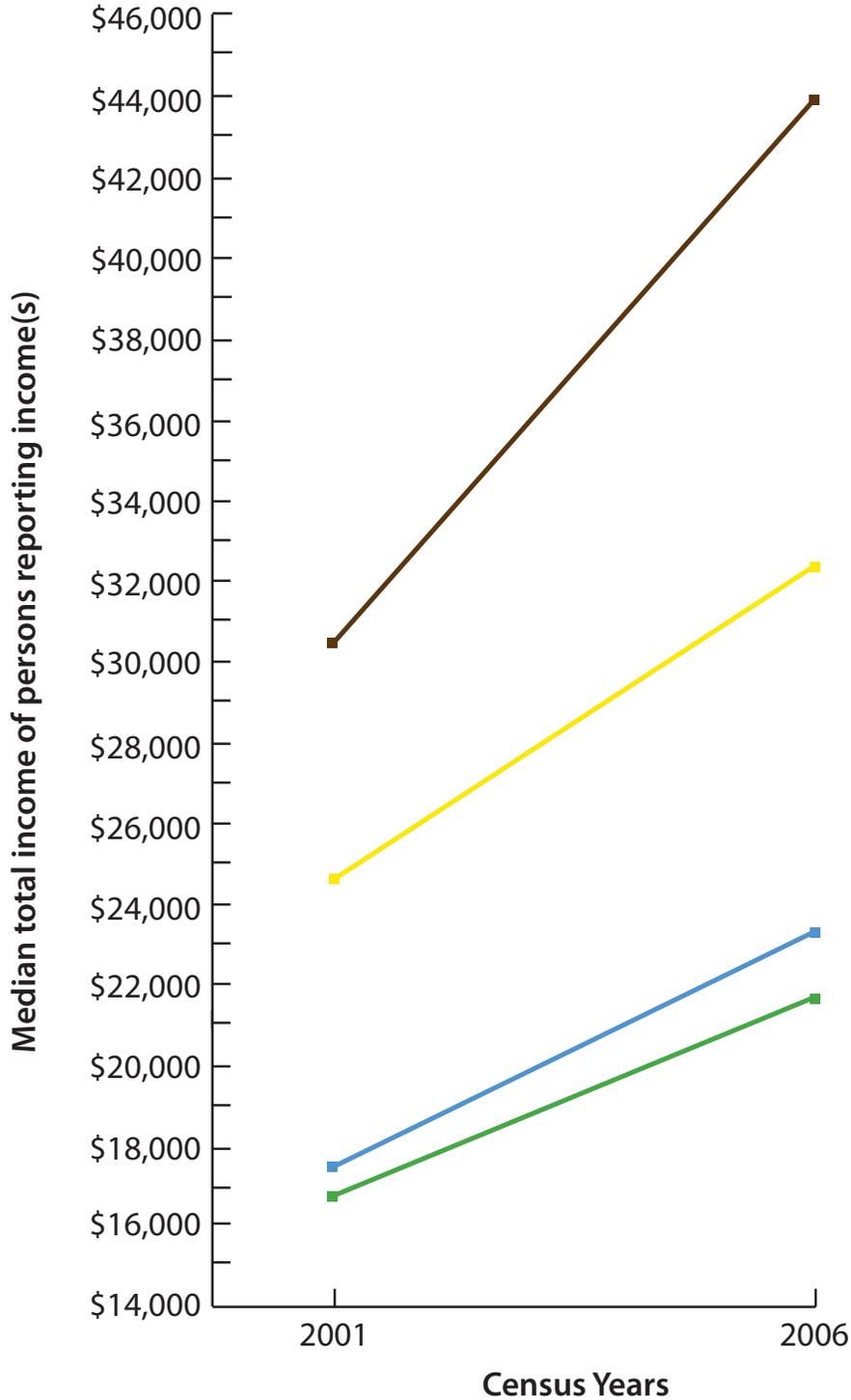




# Income

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Historical median income for each of four municipalities

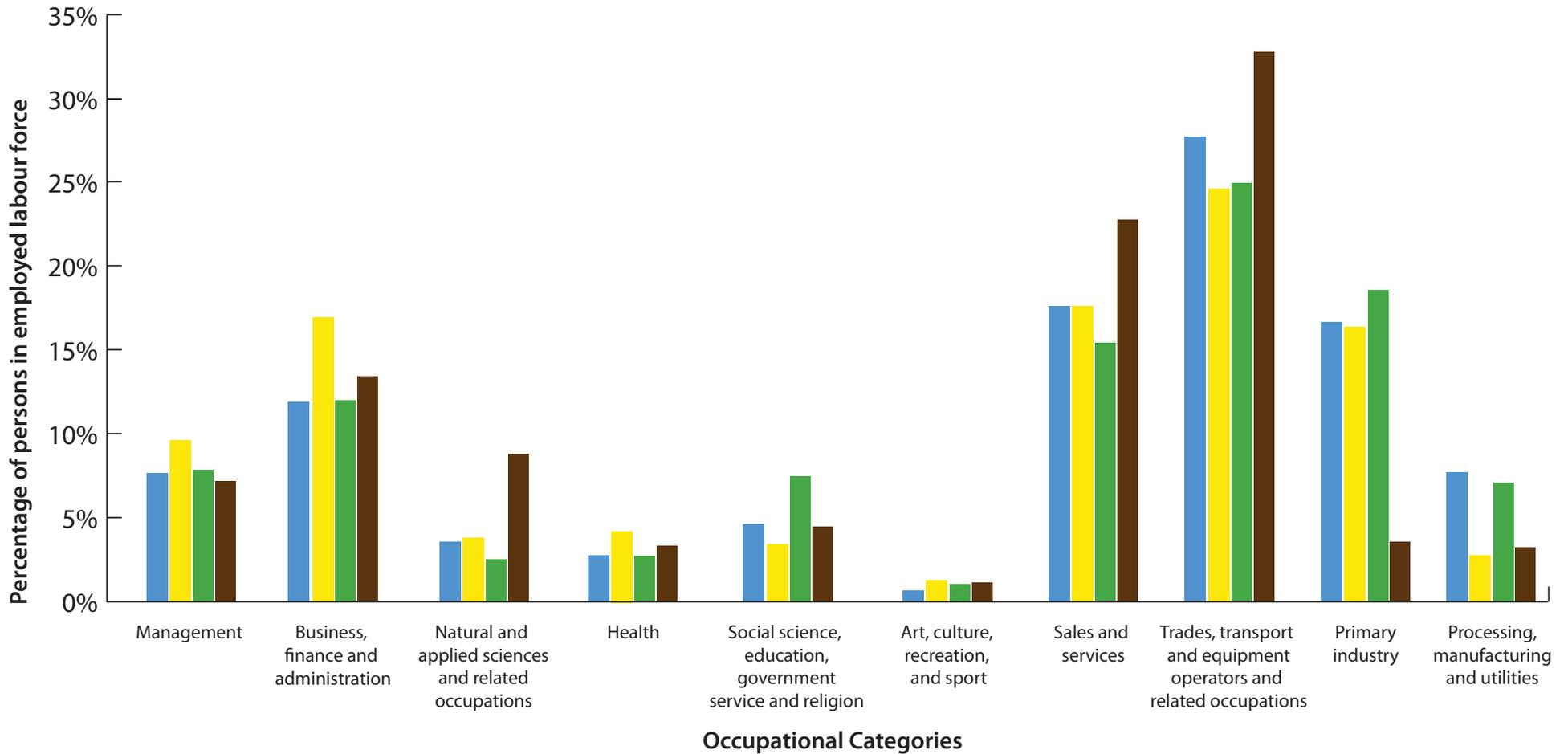




# Occupations 2006

■ Mackenzie County 
 ■ Grande Prairie County 
 ■ MD of Big Lakes 
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Proportion of residents working in specific occupations in 2006

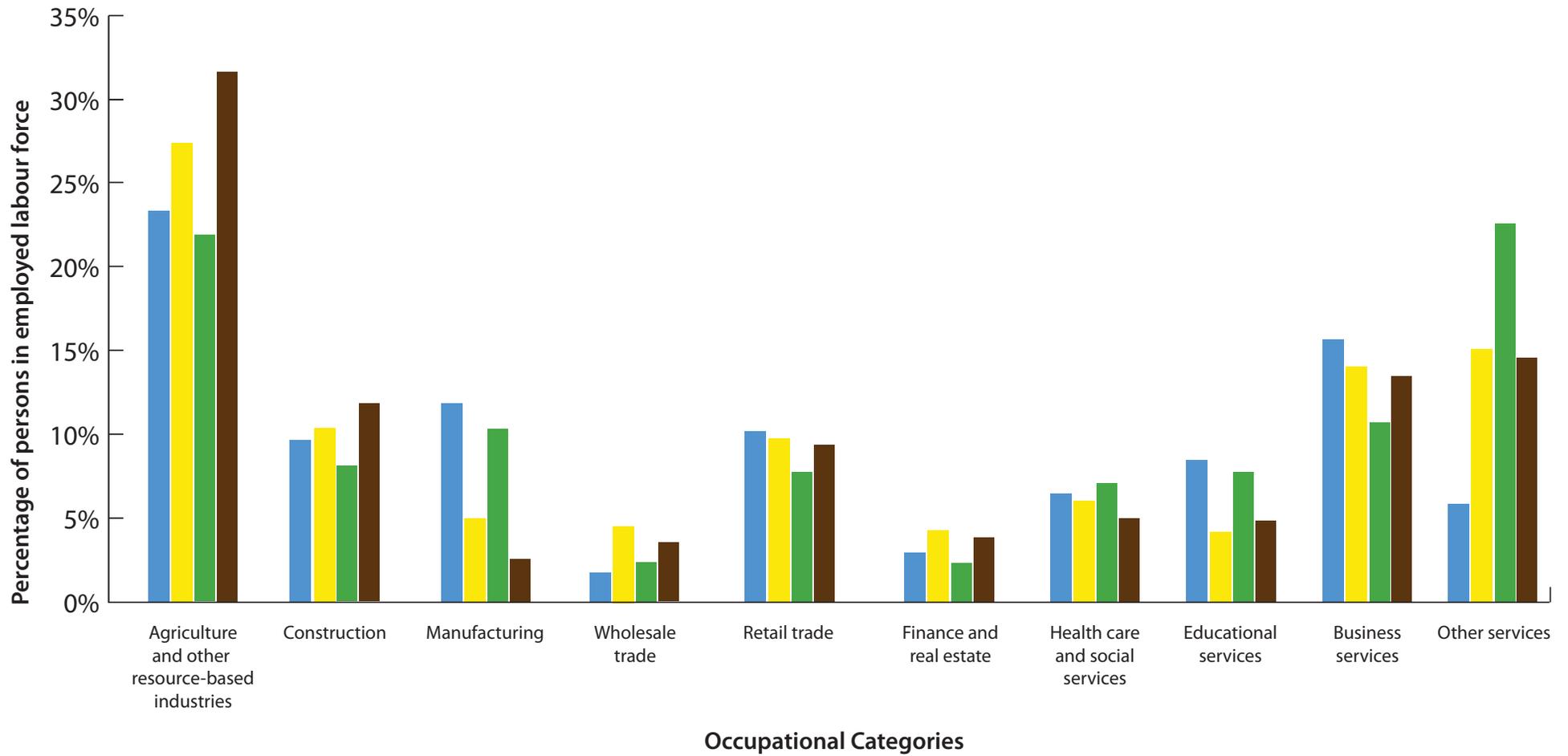




# Industry

■ Mackenzie County 
 ■ Grande Prairie County 
 ■ MD of Big Lakes 
 ■ Wood Buffalo

Proportion of residents working in specific industries in 2006

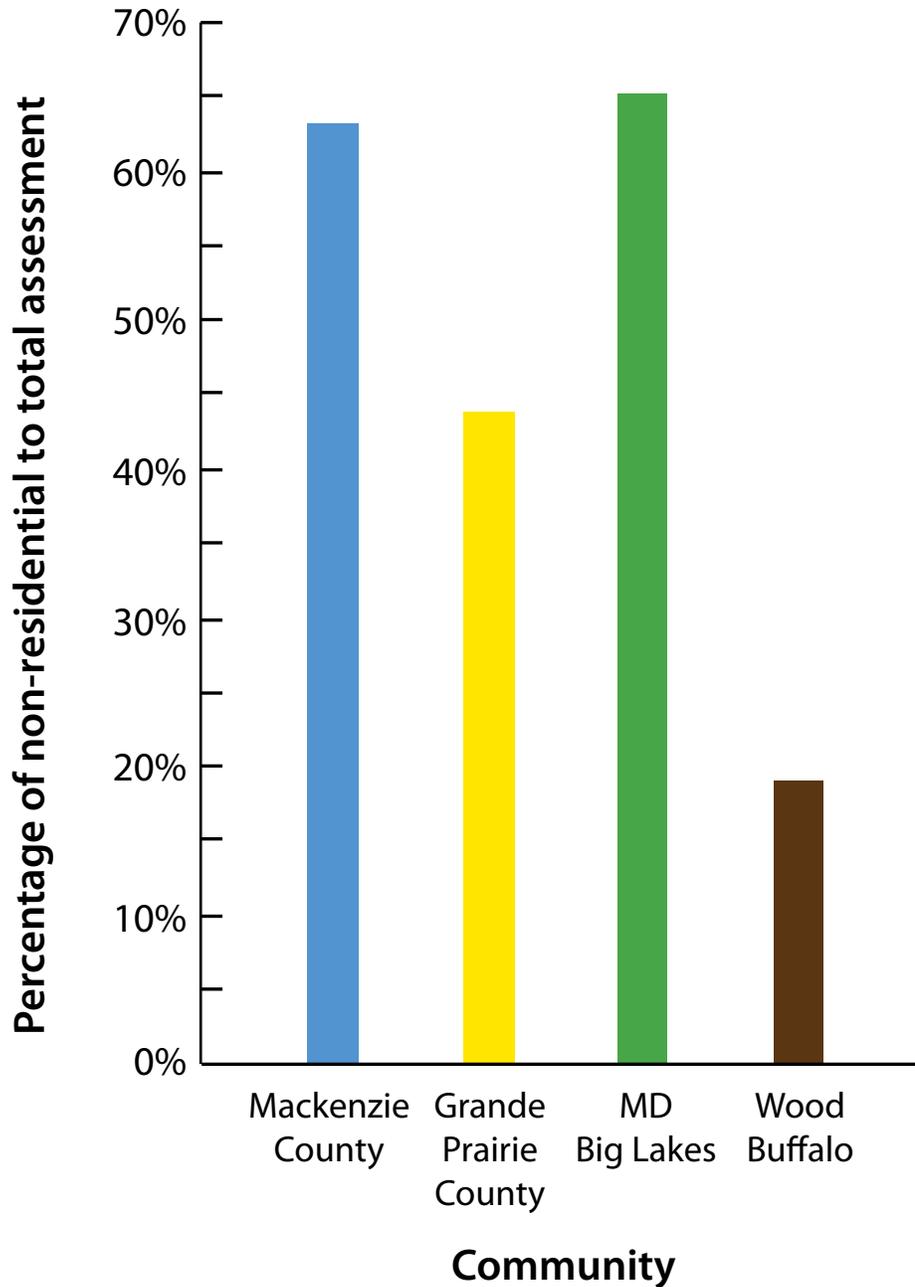




# Assessments

Mackenzie County   Grande Prairie County   MD of Big Lakes   Wood Buffalo

Proportion of non-residential to total assessment in each of four municipalities in 2009



## Appendix J

# Community Infrastructure Sustainability

- J1. Municipal Infrastructure
- J2. Organizational Chart
- J3. Transfer Stations
- J4. Capital Plan for Rural Water Line
- J5. Utility Infrastructure

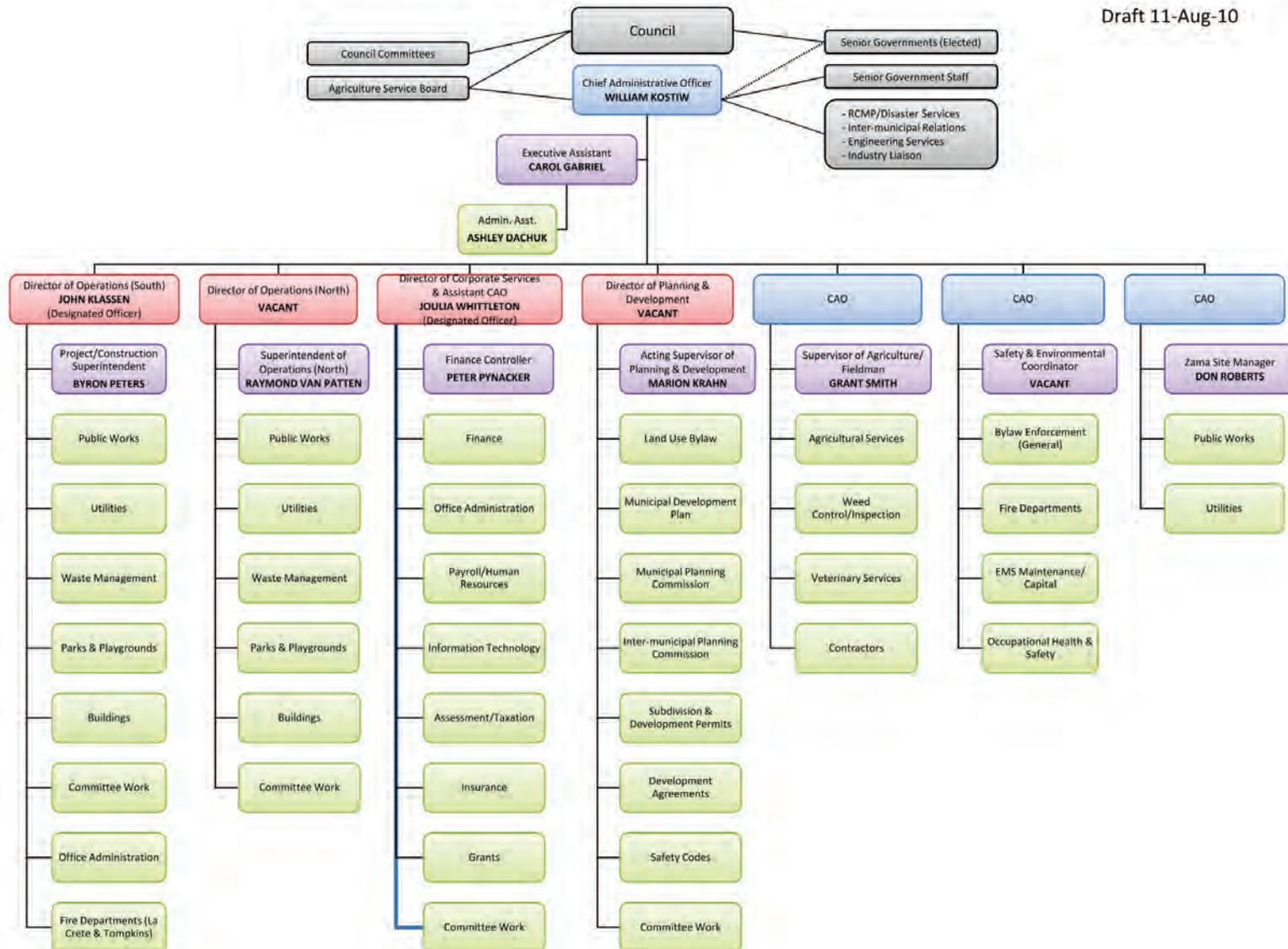
# Mackenzie Municipal Infrastructure

Hamlet	Facility	Built	Renovation or Addition	Equipment	Status	Gaps
Blue Hills	Community Hall	Info N/A				
Fort Vermilion	Airport Building	1983		Most original		
Fort Vermilion	County office	2003	2010-2011A	Most original		Replaced in 2006
Fort Vermilion	EMS	1982		Most original	leased to province	
Fort Vermilion	Fire Hall	1980		Most original		Wireless spotty in some areas
Fort Vermilion	Maintenance shop	1979	2003	Most original		
Fort Vermilion	rec centre	1984	1991	Most original		
Fort Vermilion	water treatment	1978	2002	Most original		
La Crete	Airport Building	N/A				
La Crete	County office	2010		New		Replaced in 2010
La Crete	EMS	1980	2001A	Most original	leased to province	
La Crete	Fire Hall	1980	2001A	Most original		Rural satellite station south of La Crete needed; Wireless spotty.
La Crete	Maintenance shop	2010		Most original		
La Crete	rec centre	1982	1992	Most original		
La Crete	water treatment (old)	1980		Most original		
La Crete	water treatment (new)	2005		Most original		
Rocky Lane	Community Hall	Info N/A				
Zama	Airport Building	N/A				
Zama	Fire Hall	2010		New		Wireless spotty in some areas
Zama	county office/library	1978		Most original		Facility to be replaced/demolished in 2011
Zama	county office/library	+2010-2011		New		
Zama	community hall	1985	2004A	Mech upgrade		
Zama	water treatment	1980	2010	Most original		

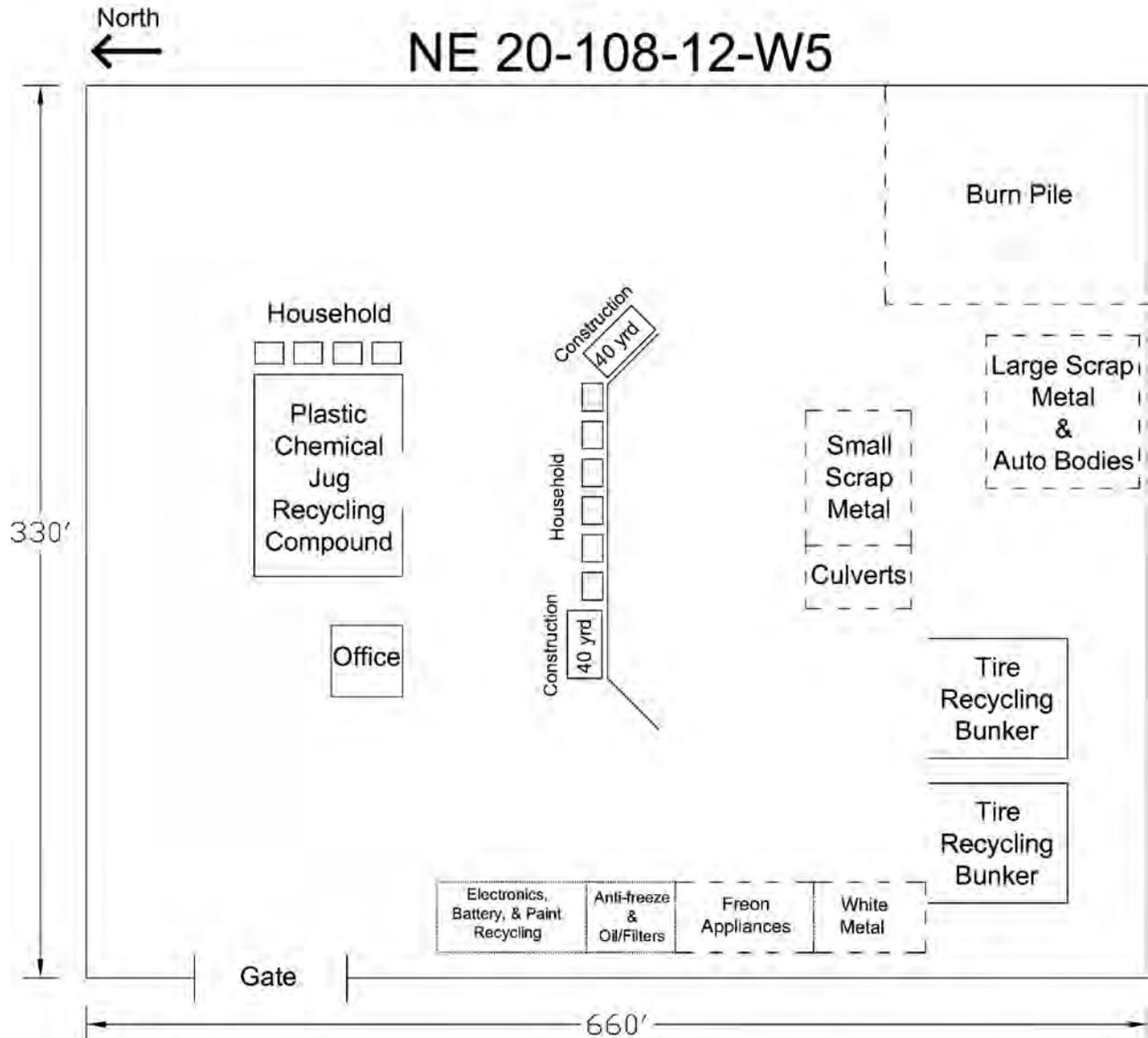
Sources: Atco EnergySense Reports  
Alberta Airport Inventories

# Mackenzie County Organizational Chart

Draft 11-Aug-10



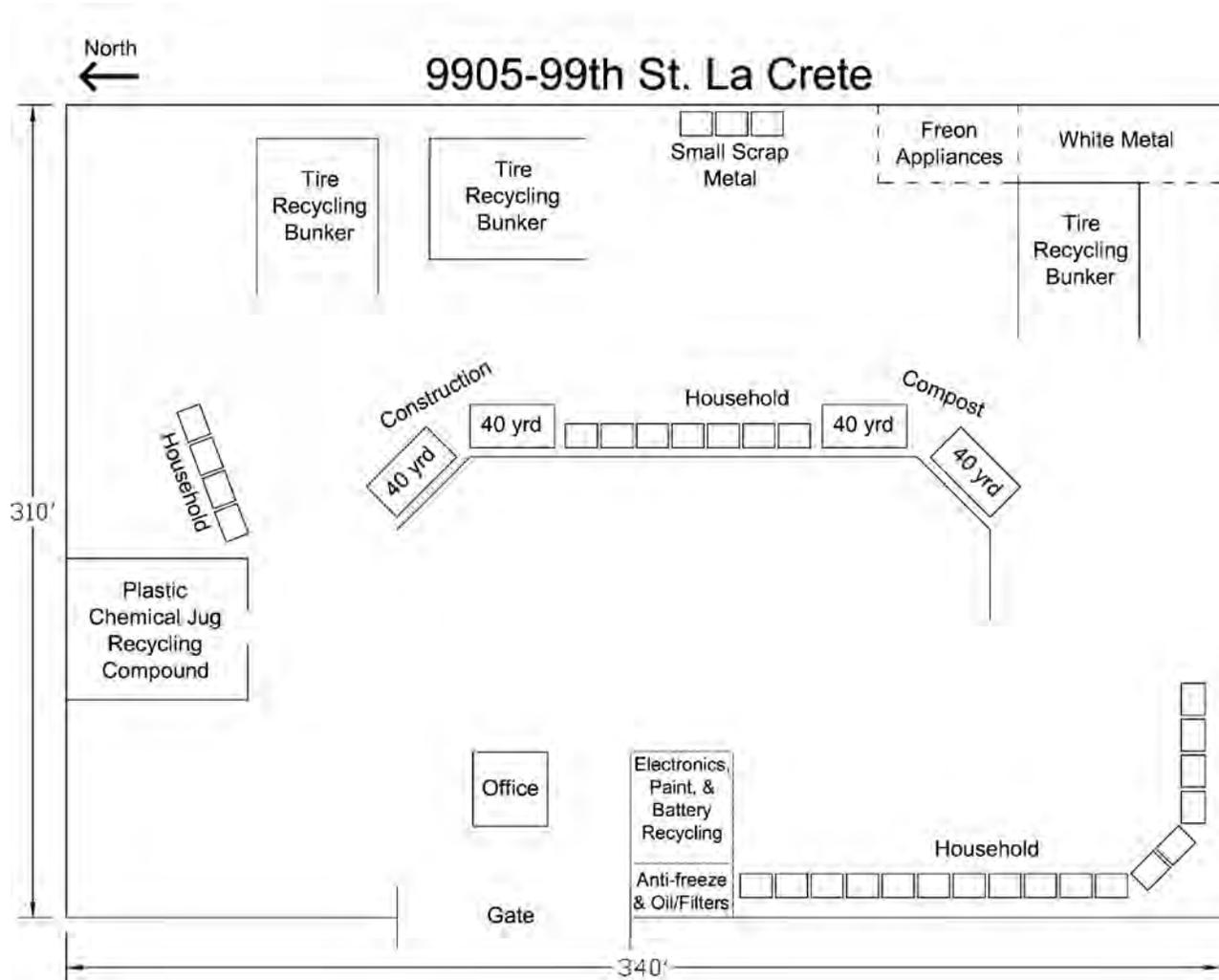
# Fort Vermillion Waste Transfer Station



Source: Mackenzie County. *Environmental Services: Solid Waste Transfer Stations.*

Retrieved 2010 08 18 from [http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16](http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16)

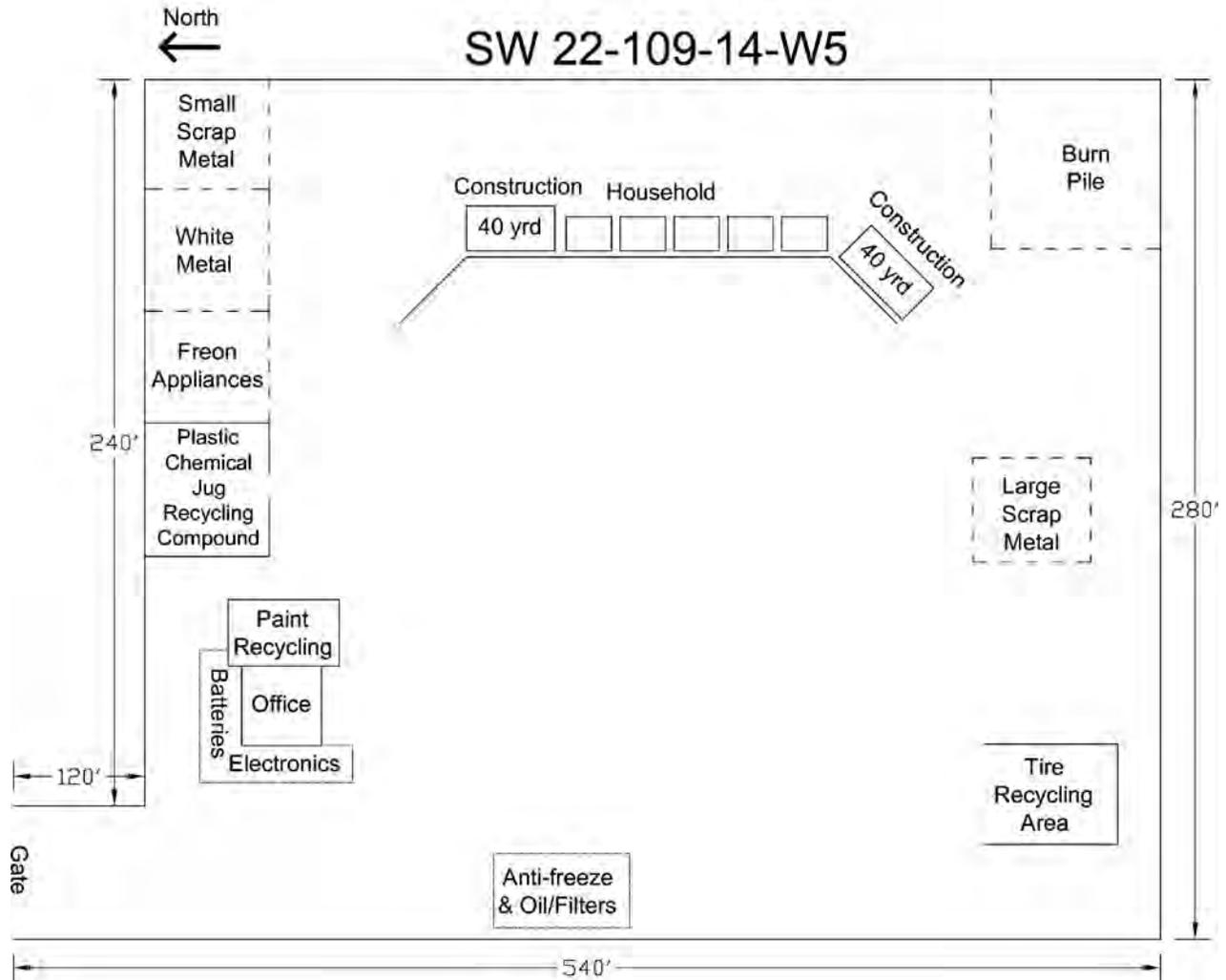
# La Crete Waste Transfer Station



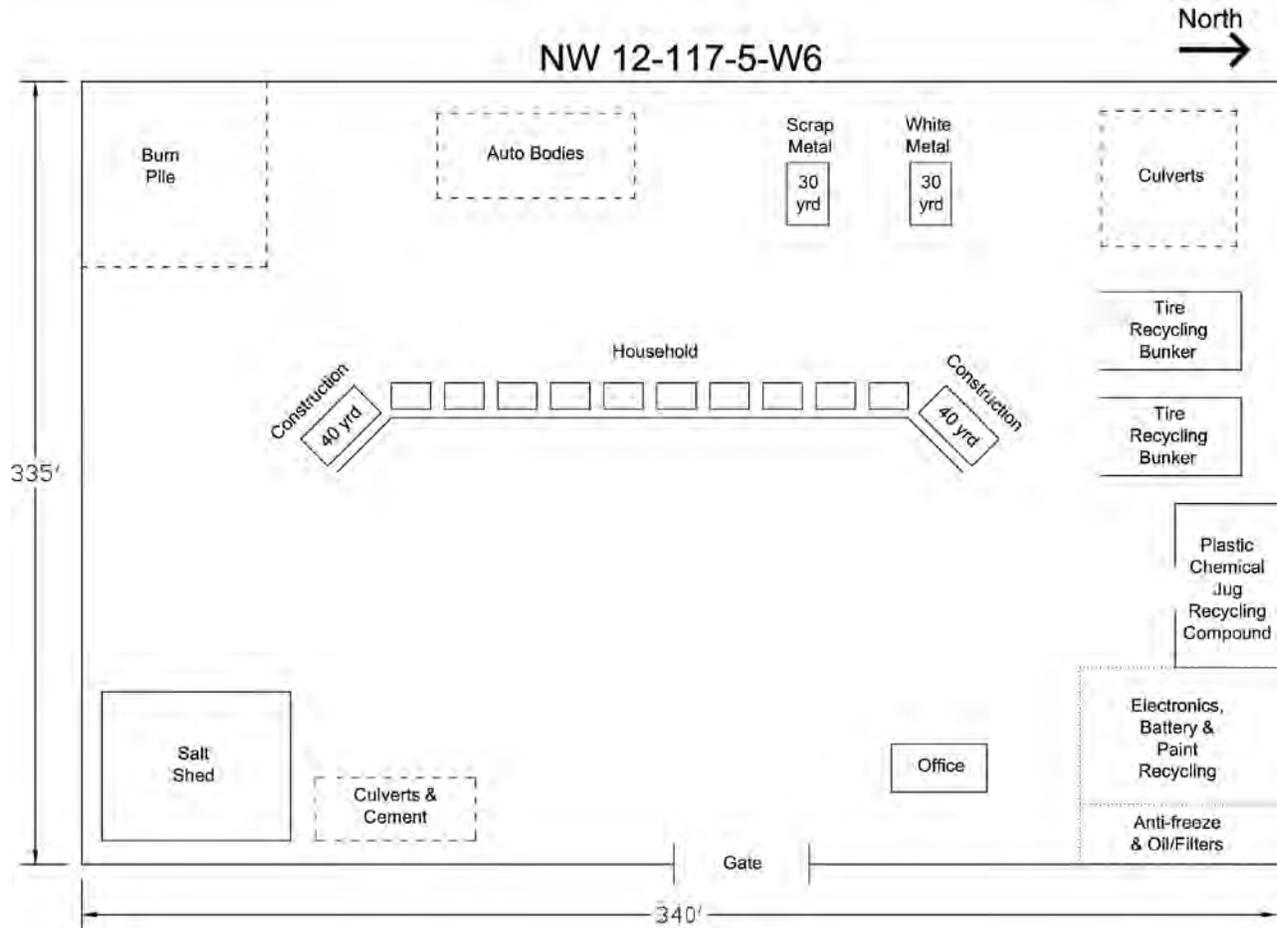
Source: Mackenzie County. *Environmental Services: Solid Waste Transfer Stations.*

Retrieved 2010 08 18 from [http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16](http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16)

# Rocky Lane Waste Transfer Station



# Zama Waste Transfer Station



Source: Mackenzie County. *Environmental Services: Solid Waste Transfer Stations.*

Retrieved 2010 08 18 from [http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16](http://www.mackenziecounty.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21&Itemid=16)

## Mackenzie County Multi-year capital plan (DRAFT)

Please note that the plan includes some of the major projects from the 2009 project list. This is done in order to show comparatively the magnitude of work scheduled for 2009 and future years.

LC - La Crete; FV - Fort Vermilion; BH - Blue Hills; RL - Rocky Lane

Category	Sub-category/location	Description/location	Planned activities	Total	Grants or other funding	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Rural Water Line</b>												
	Rural	Phase I	Engineering and design	\$287,539		\$87,539	\$200,000					
	Rural	Phase II	Construction to 94th Avenue	\$25,000			\$25,000					
	Rural	Phase III	Fort Vermilion to 88 Connector	\$3,500,000			\$3,500,000					
	Rural	Phase IV	La Crete to Bluehills	\$2,000,000				\$2,000,000				
	Rural	Phase V	88 Connector to Tall Cree	\$3,000,000					\$3,000,000			
	Rural	Phase VI	La Crete to 88 Connector	\$2,000,000						\$2,000,000		
	Rural	Phase VII	Fort Vermilion to Boyer	\$2,400,000							\$2,400,000	
	Rural	Phase VIII	High Level to rural High Level	\$1,500,000								\$1,500,000
<b>Total Rural Water Line</b>				<b>\$14,712,539</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$87,539</b>	<b>\$3,725,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,400,000</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>

## WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE'S CAPACITY FOR POPULATION GROWTH IN MACKENZIE COUNTY

Service	Fort Vermilion	La Crete	Zama
Water Treatment	Raw water supply is excellent (Peace River).	Although the two wells were upgraded in 2009, raw water supply may reach its capacity in near future (due to increase in consumption; life of the wells, etc).	Raw water supply is good. New wells.
Water Distribution	Renewal program continues and expansion plans are underway.	Distribution system in La Crete should not be a limiting factor for growth.	Renewal program recently completed and expansion is underway.
Wastewater Treatment	Existing system should not limit growth.	Existing lagoon is reaching capacity. Expansion opportunities are available. Sewage treatment should not be a limiting factor to growth.	New treatment facility opened.
Wastewater Collection	Distribution system upgrade is complete. Current collection system should not be a limiting factor.	Current collection system should not be a limiting factor to growth.	Current collection system should not be a limiting factor to growth

Adapted from: Activation Analysis Group Inc. *Infrastructure: Benefits and Needs in the REDI Region*. 2009. Report to Regional Economic Development Initiative Association for Northwest Alberta.



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E1 on Transportation**

**Goal**

- E1**            The County's transportation system:
- reduces travel time
  - increases safe, comfortable and efficient travel between its communities and between the County and major destinations beyond its borders
  - provides economically efficient access to business and industrial markets outside County boundaries.

**Strategies**

- E1.1**            Maintain a strong and consistent approach with Alberta Transportation
- to request the completion and upgrade of northern transportation corridors
  - to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of goods to, from and within the County
  - to strengthen economically, socially and environmentally sustainable opportunities for the movement of people, as well as agricultural and resource sector goods.
- Council/CAO
- E1.2**            Determine attendance levels of non-residents at community events<sup>1</sup> by holding a draw for prizes using tickets that identify ticket holders' postal codes.
- Council/CAO

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E1**

- |               |   |            |
|---------------|---|------------|
| <b>E1.KP1</b> | Number of non-hamlet residents at hamlet events* increases 15% over baseline measures (Source: ticket draws)        | 2014.12.31 |
| <b>E1.KP2</b> | Increase in number of trips to other hamlets to offer products and services onsite made by business owners/managers | 2014.12.31 |
| <b>E1.KP3</b> | 25% of 2010 key performance indicators have been achieved for Transportation goals (E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7)         | 2012.12.31 |
| <b>E1.KP4</b> | 50% of 2010 key performance indicators have been achieved for Transportation goals (E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7)         | 2015.12.31 |
| <b>E1.KP5</b> | 90% of 2010 key performance indicators have been achieved for Transportation goals (E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7)         | 2020.12.31 |

Note 1    Community events include social, cultural and recreational activities



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E2 on Transportation (Highway 88)**

**Goal**

**E2** Highway 88 is a fully-paved, two-lane highway with shoulders, passing lanes and rest stops that provides a well-maintained, year-round link between Highway 58 and Slave Lake.

**Strategy**

**E2.1** Encourage the establishment of a coalition of partners to form a Highway Association that would pursue a provincial commitment to pave the remaining 150 km of Highway 88 in a timely fashion and would market Highway 88's tourism and economic development potential.

CAO/Council

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E2**

<b>E2.KP1</b>	Communicate with the Reeve of the MD of Big Lakes to seek the County's written support for completing the Highway 88 paving.	2011.03.31
<b>E2.KP2</b>	The province's 20 year capital plan specifies its commitment to complete the paving of Highway 88 by 2015.	2012.12.31
<b>E2.KP3</b>	The Highway Association is established and its minutes reflect its progress on a plan for marketing strategies.	2012.12.31
<b>E2.KP4</b>	CAO Report to Council summarizing implications of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway 88 South of Highway 58 NW of Boyer</li> <li>• Highway 88 West of Highway 697 W of Fort Vermilion</li> </ul> (Source: <i>Alberta Highways 1 to 986 Traffic Volume History</i> )	2012.12.31
<b>E2.KP5</b>	Highway 88 is fully paved.	2015.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal E3 on Transportation (Highway 58)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>E3</b>	Highway 58 is a paved, two-lane highway with shoulders and passing lanes that extends from the BC border to Wood Buffalo National Park.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>E3.1</b>	Work with regional stakeholders to pursue a provincial commitment to complete the widening of Highway 58 as soon as possible.		Council
<b>E3.2</b>	Undertake comparative research of the NE British Columbia and NW Alberta economies in order to identify potential incentives for BC to extend its NE road system to its border with Alberta.		CAO/Council
<b>E3.3</b>	Work with relevant organizations and interested parties in northeastern BC to promote the link jointly with both provincial governments.		Council
<b>E3.4</b>	Continue to promote a permanent road link between Fort Nelson and Rainbow Lake via an extension of Highway 58 to the BC border to ensure that the province of Alberta maintains it in its 20-year capital plan.		Council/REDI
<b>E3.5</b>	Work with the region's MLA, Alberta Transportation and regional stakeholders to assess the best alignment/route for connecting Highway 58 to BC's paved Sierra Yoyo Desan road.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal E3</b>			
<b>E3.KP1</b>	CAO Report to Council summarizes implications of <i>Annual Average Daily Traffic</i> (AADT) counts at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway 58 East of Highway 88 NW of Boyer</li> <li>• Highway 58 West of Highway 88 NW of Boyer</li> <li>• Highway 58 East of Highway 35 at High Level</li> <li>• Highway 58 West of Highway 35 at High Level</li> </ul> (Source: <i>Alberta Highways 1 to 986 Traffic Volume History</i> )	Annual	12.31
<b>E3.KP2</b>	Key representatives from business, industry, and stakeholders from BC's Northern Rockies Regional Municipality and from Mackenzie County adopt a joint resolution at a forum to support the extension of Highway 58.	2012.12.31	
<b>E3.KP3</b>	MLAs representing the relevant provincial constituencies commit verbally or in writing to promote the link jointly with their respective governments.	2012.12.31	
<b>E3.KP4</b>	The province's 20 year capital plan specifies its commitment to complete the paving of Highway 58.	2013.12.31	
<b>E3.KP5</b>	The Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwest Alberta's Board meeting minutes and Mackenzie County's Council meeting minutes record that their respective Board members/Councillors support the alignment/route proposed by Alberta Transportation.	2013.12.31	
<b>E3.KP6</b>	Widening of Highway 58 is completed.	2014.12.31	
<b>E3.KP7</b>	Extension of Highway 58 from Rainbow Lake to BC border is completed.	2020.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal E4 on Transportation (Zama Road)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>E4</b>	Zama Road is a paved secondary highway.		
<b>Strategy</b>			
<b>E4.1</b>	Work with stakeholders to encourage the province to designate Zama Road as a secondary highway and to commit to paving it within a maximum of five years.		CAO/Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal E4</b>			
<b>E4.KP1</b>	CAO Report to Council summarizing implications of <i>Annual Average Daily Traffic</i> (AADT) counts at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Highway 35 South of Zama Lake Road</li> <li>· Highway 35 North of Zama Lake Road</li> </ul> (Source: <i>Alberta Highways 1 to 986 Traffic Volume History</i> )	2011.12.31	
<b>E4.KP2</b>	The province's five-year secondary highway program for the province specifies its commitment to pave Zama Road by 2019.	2013.12.31	
<b>E4.KP3</b>	Zama Road is a paved secondary highway.	2019.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal E5 on Transportation (Accessibility)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>E5</b>	Residents of La Crete, Fort Vermilion, Blumenort, Blue Hills and Buffalo Head Prairie have paved access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway 88 via the County road known as the Highway 88 Connector</li> <li>• Highway 35 via a timely, reliable, year-round river crossing over the Peace River at Tompkins Landing</li> </ul>		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>E5.1</b>	Explore cost and benefit implications for the establishment of a Hovercraft Barge to service the river crossing.		Council/CAO
<b>E5.2</b>	Adopt a Council resolution to propose that the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) undertake an assessment of the costs to users to make a detour when the river crossing at Tompkins Landing is unavailable against the benefit of a year-round hovercraft or bridge across the river.		Council
<b>E5.3</b>	Work with the province to establish timely, reliable, year-round river crossing at Tompkins Landing.		Council
<b>E5.4</b>	Establish priorities and obtain financial assistance to pave rural County roads under the Provincial Resource Road program.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal E5</b>			
<b>E5.KP1</b>	An annual CAO Report to Council summarizes year-to-year changes and implications of <i>Annual Average Daily Traffic</i> (AADT) counts at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway 35 South of Highway 697</li> <li>• Highway 35 North of Highway 697</li> <li>• Highway 697 South of Township Road 1060</li> <li>• Highway 697 West of Range Road 151</li> </ul> (Source: <i>Alberta Highways 1 to 986 Traffic Volume History</i> )	2011.12.31	
<b>E5.KP2</b>	The REDI Board approves a plan for the cost-benefit analysis in its ongoing research schedule.	2011.12.31	
<b>E5.KP3</b>	The province commits in its 20 year plan to establish a permanent river crossing at Tompkins Landing.	2015.12.31	
<b>E5.KP4</b>	Prioritized roads are paved and open for traffic.	2017.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E6 on Transportation (Rail)**

**Goal**

- E6** County businesses and shippers:
- are satisfied with communications and relationships with the company that provides County rail service
  - have access to reliable rail service on a 312-lb mainline standard
  - have access to sufficient hopper cars that can be loaded to full mainline standard to keep costs down
  - enjoy comparable service to that provided elsewhere on Alberta's mainline
  - are satisfied with the balance of traffic between Highways 35, 88 and the rail service.

**Strategy**

- E6.1** Encourage the establishment of a coalition or partnership of rail shippers in the Northwest Territories and in the Mackenzie and Peace regions whose mandate would be to work with CN to address gaps in car supply and to request that the province encourage CN to upgrade the line to a 286- or 312-lb rail standard. Council/REDI

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E6**

- |               |   |            |
|---------------|---|------------|
| <b>E6.KP1</b> | The coalition's leaders approve an advocacy plan for rail service.  | 2011.12.31 |
| <b>E6.KP2</b> | County businesses/shippers are satisfied with the availability of hopper cars.<br>(Source: Municipal Business Survey) | 2016.12.31 |
| <b>E6.KP3</b> | The rail company that serves Mackenzie County upgrades the rail standard for the full length of its route.            | 2020.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date            Owner**

**Goal E7 on Transportation (Air)**

**Goal**

**E7**            Scheduled air passenger services in Mackenzie County reduce the time needed to travel within and beyond County boundaries.

**Strategies**

- |             |   |         |
|-------------|---|---------|
| <b>E7.1</b> | Before permitting the purchase of land or the construction of homes along the airport's boundaries, commission a study immediately. Its purpose will be to investigate whether long term plans for the La Crete airport should involve expansion on its current site or relocation to a new site and develop a long-term plan for the La Crete airport. | Council |
| <b>E7.2</b> | Continue to support a level of infrastructure for all-weather airports in County communities.   | Council |
| <b>E7.3</b> | Promote air service providers to establish services to, from/between regional communities and beyond the County.  | Council |
| <b>E7.4</b> | Maintain effective Medevac services at the Fort Vermilion, High Level, La Crete and Zama airports.  | Council |
| <b>E7.5</b> | Add a safe, accessible heliport at the High Level and Zama airports.  | Council |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E7**

- |               |   |            |
|---------------|---|------------|
| <b>E7.KP1</b> | Funds to commission a La Crete airport study have been committed in the County budget.                              | 2011.12.31 |
| <b>E7.KP2</b> | County Council minutes record the adoption of a follow-up strategy following Council's review of site costs report. | 2013.12.31 |
| <b>E7.KP3</b> | 10% increase in air traffic at High Level airport between 2010 and 2014.  | 2015.12.31 |
| <b>E7.KP4</b> | Daily scheduled flights in and out of the County are available at the High Level airport.                           | 2015.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E8 on Agriculture (Sustainable Practices)**

**Goal**

**E8**      Agricultural lands in Mackenzie County are in optimal health because area farmers use sustainable agricultural practices that are tailored to the needs of the local climate, flora and fauna.

**Strategy**

**E8.1**      Encourage the County's Agricultural Services Board to work with the local agricultural societies, the Fort Vermilion substation of the Lacombe Research Centre and the Mackenzie Applied Research Association to identify and implement sustainable agricultural practices.

Council/ASB

**Key Performance Indicator for Goal E8**

**E8.KP1**      The Lacombe Research Centre commits to:

- adding the identification of sustainable agricultural practices specific to Mackenzie County to its research plan
- developing measures to test their effectiveness.

2011.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E9 on Agriculture (Research Centre)**

**Goal**

- E9** Fort Vermilion hosts an applied research centre of excellence focusing on human and technological adaptations to northern climates in four areas:
- human ecology
  - sustainable resource management/development
  - energy production/distribution
  - information technologies.

**Strategies**

- |             |  |             |
|-------------|--|-------------|
| <b>E9.1</b> | Explore options to establish an applied research centre of excellence in Fort Vermilion whose interdisciplinary focus would be on adaptation to northern climates in the nation's provinces.   | Council     |
| <b>E9.2</b> | Establish a research fund that would use accrued interest to grant funds for northern climate research projects and promote fund development with stakeholders throughout the County.  | Council     |
| <b>E9.3</b> | Develop a public awareness program that educates residents about the importance of the Fort Vermilion substation of the Lacombe Research Centre to the County's economy, about its accomplishments and their implications for the community and about demystifying local myths surrounding its activities. | Council/CAO |
| <b>E9.4</b> | Track local, regional and national media commentary on the national research centres and their substations.  | Council/CAO |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E9**

- |               |   |            |
|---------------|---|------------|
| <b>E9.KP1</b> | Improvement in local and regional media commentary on the national research centres and their substations.  | 2011.12.31 |
| <b>E9.KP2</b> | Plans are in place to create a vision, to garner support, to conduct a needs assessment followed by a viability assessment and to develop a plan to identify the necessary resources. | 2012.06.30 |
| <b>E9.KP3</b> | Council approves a plan to establish a research fund to be managed by a new or existing research foundation.  | 2012.12.31 |
| <b>E9.KP4</b> | Council announces its commitment to make an annual deposit of \$10,000 to the research fund.  | 2013.12.31 |
| <b>E9.KP5</b> | Research funds are granted for the first time.  | 2018.12.31 |
| <b>E9.KP6</b> | Research Centre of Excellence for Human & Technological Adaptations to Northern Climates hosts a grand opening.   | 2020.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal E10 on Agriculture (Agri-business)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>E10</b>	Youth have sustainable employment opportunities that enable them to continue to live and work in the County.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>E10.1</b>	Work with the Northern Alberta Development Council to identify external sources of strategic expertise/assistance necessary to advocate for the establishment of agri-businesses that will be eligible to participate fully in provincial marketing boards as a means to distribute their products.		Council
<b>E10.2</b>	Work in collaboration with the region's Agricultural Service Board to advocate for and support the local establishment of viable agri-business opportunities.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal E10</b>			
<b>E10.KP1</b>	Council meeting minutes record Council's approval of a written plan for advocacy.	2012.12.31	
<b>E10.KP2</b>	Agricultural Service Board's report to Council outlines the details of its progress with its advocacy initiatives.	2013.12.31	
<b>E10.KP3</b>	Number of youth aged 15-24 that leave the County for post-secondary education or employment opportunities decreases by 15% between the 2011 and 2021 federal censuses.	2021.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date Owner**

**Goal E11 on Oil and Gas**

**Goal**

- E11** Non-renewable resource companies operating in Mackenzie County are able to make profits while minimizing their environmental footprint by:
- operating to an acknowledged environmental standard
  - optimizing the recovery or distribution of the resource with which they are working
  - applying environmental remediation and restoration strategies when a site has been exhausted that will accelerate the recovery of the affected ecosystem (health, integrity and sustainability).

**Strategies**

- |              |   |             |
|--------------|---|-------------|
| <b>E11.1</b> | Continue to advocate for enhanced oil recovery (EOR) in the Mackenzie region.   | Council     |
| <b>E11.2</b> | Continue to advocate for the use of environmentally sustainable production and distribution practices in the County oil and gas fields.   | Council     |
| <b>E11.3</b> | Continue to advocate for the implementation of responsible carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) processes.  | Council     |
| <b>E11.4</b> | Research the long-term prognosis for the life of the Rainbow Lake oil and gas field and identify a role that the County can play to support the producer to develop new technologies to increase the life of its field and to practice environmentally sustainable production and distribution.   | Council/CAO |
| <b>E11.5</b> | Keep informed about and/or explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the evolution of the plans for two proposed Arctic pipelines including the Mackenzie Valley pipeline</li> <li>• other exploration opportunities planned for the southern Northwest Territories</li> <li>• the potential impact of exploration opportunities on County environment (e.g., need for roads/tributary lines)</li> <li>• the implications for economic development opportunities in the County</li> </ul> | Council/CAO |
| <b>E11.6</b> | Develop a procedure to co-ordinate plans for the establishment of new infrastructure being made by commercial, government and public service organizations in rural and wilderness areas.   | Council     |
| <b>E11.7</b> | Promote bitumen production in the County's southeast corner with both government and the oil and gas industry.  | Council     |
| <b>E11.8</b> | Develop initiatives and infrastructure that support the sustainability of the County's oil and gas industry.  | Council     |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E11**

- |                |   |            |
|----------------|---|------------|
| <b>E11.KP1</b> | The County has initiated discussions with the producer in the Rainbow Field.  | 2011.03.31 |
| <b>E11.KP2</b> | Council minutes indicate that the CAO has presented a semi-annual report to Council on new information acquired concerning emerging oil, gas and pipeline opportunities in or near the County, their potential environmental impacts and their implications for local economic development. | 2011.04.30 |
| <b>E11.KP3</b> | Inter-agency body meets regularly to co-ordinate new roadway infrastructure in County rural and wilderness areas.   | 2012.12.31 |
| <b>E11.KP4</b> | The producer in the Zama field reports using enhanced oil recovery technologies in that field.  | 2014.12.31 |
| <b>E11.KP5</b> | Producers' formal commitment or statement of intent to use specific environmental practices.  | 2014.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E12 on Forestry**

**Goal**

- E12** Timber that has commercial value in Mackenzie County is harvested in a manner that is:
- as environmentally sustainable as possible
  - legally allowable
  - physically possible
  - financially feasible
  - optimally productive

**Strategies**

- |              |   |  |         |
|--------------|---|--|---------|
| <b>E12.1</b> | Arrange for Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) to hold local workshops that would educate local residents and businesses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to purchase timber that has been harvested in a responsible and sustainable manner</li> <li>• the advantages to the buyer for purchasing such timber</li> </ul> |  | Council |
| <b>E12.2</b> | Promote the direct sale of timber cleared from the Alberta/ Mackenzie County land exchanges to local forest companies.  |  | Council |
| <b>E12.3</b> | Ensure that future land exchanges with the province take into account their implications for existing forestry resource agreements with local sawmills.   |  | Council |
| <b>E12.4</b> | Work with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development to develop a mechanism for County input during negotiations for local Forest Management Agreements.  |  | Council |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E12**

- |                |  |            |
|----------------|--|------------|
| <b>E12.KP1</b> | 20% increase in number of SRD small lot regulation clearance certificates issued between 2012 and 2015   | 2015.12.31 |
| <b>E12.KP2</b> | 90% of timber from newly acquired lands exchanged with the province are processed in local sawmills<br>(Source: Alberta Sustainable Resource Development Data) | 2011.12.31 |
| <b>E12.KP3</b> | 60% of stakeholders are aware of privately held, local wood supply that becomes available (Source: Municipal Business Survey)                                  | 2012.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E13 on Public Services (Health)**

**Goal**

**E13**      Access to health services offered in the county is comparable to or exceeds those of other rural health regions in the province.

**Strategies**

- |              |  |  |             |
|--------------|--|--|-------------|
| <b>E13.1</b> | Establish or strengthen a municipal physician recruitment and retention committee targeted at health services for residents in hamlets, rural areas, First Nations communities and the County's large "shadow" population. |  | Council     |
| <b>E13.2</b> | Work with the organization known as the Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan <sup>2</sup> to establish community strategies to retain the physicians working in County hamlets.   |  | Council/CAO |
| <b>E13.3</b> | Work with community stakeholders to establish a strong voice with both the department of Alberta Health and Wellness and Alberta Health Services, to ensure that ongoing provincial planning meets local health needs.     |  | Council     |
| <b>E13.4</b> | Encourage Alberta Health Service's <i>Health Advisory Committee #1</i> to establish strong relationships with each municipality in the region.   |  | Council     |
| <b>E13.5</b> | Work with Alberta Health Service's <i>Health Advisory Committee #1</i> to explore joint initiatives.   |  | Council     |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E13**

- |                |  |            |
|----------------|--|------------|
| <b>E13.KP1</b> | Fort Vermilion and La Crete residents are able to access an appointment with a local family physician within 72 hours and Zama residents in the same period of time with a High Level physician (Source: Resident survey). | 2011.12.31 |
| <b>E13.KP2</b> | Physicians working in County communities remain in the County for an average of at least three years.  | 2021.12.31 |

Note 2      Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan works with rural municipalities to tailor the province's physician recruitment and retention strategies to local strengths and needs because local residents are the best ones to sell their community to potential newcomers.



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal E14 on Public Services (Education)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>E14</b>	Residents can remain living in the County while pursuing post-secondary educational opportunities in the fields of service, technology and the trades.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>E14.1</b>	Develop a detailed plan to advocate for equitable provincial post-secondary funding for the County that is based on a recognition of the County's unique demographic profile.		Council
<b>E14.2</b>	Identify/facilitate the implementation of strategies to increase the attractiveness of distance learning in the region.		Note 3
<b>E14.3</b>	Work with regional partners to expand availability and local awareness of quality distance learning opportunities, with a particular emphasis on local high school upgrading and pre-apprenticeship programs.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal E14</b>			
<b>E14.KP1</b>	County meeting minutes reflect that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an advocacy plan has been approved by Council</li> <li>• the Council's Education Task Force has tabled a strategy for Council's consideration</li> <li>• it hears semi-annual progress reports from the regional Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) and the municipal bursary program.</li> </ul>	2012.12.31 2012.12.31 2011.06.30	
<b>E14.KP2</b>	10% increase in number of students participating in Campus Alberta between 2011 and 2014.	2014.12.31	

Note 3 Council Task Force on Education



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E15 on Public Services (Telecommunications)**

**Goal**

**E15** All County residents have access to the most current telecommunication technologies to permit them to participate in global opportunities.

**Strategy**

**E15.1** Use the County's rural gas co-operative to continue to expand County and First Nations capacity for:

- broadband coverage
- cellular coverage
- video-conference capacity.

Council

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E15**

**E15.KP1** Annual increase in number of customers with access to broadband coverage

2011.12.31

**E15.KP2** 95% of residents using Internet services use broadband rather than dial-up service

2014.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal E16 on Business Climate</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>E16</b>	The County's business communities can provide local products and services to meet consumer demand.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>E16.1</b>	Consult with the County's business community to identify strategies that would strengthen the municipality's "open-for-business" attitude.		Council
<b>E16.2</b>	Undertake an assessment to determine if and how the County may be of assistance or can provide support to businesses operating under County business licenses.		Council/CAO
<b>E16.3</b>	Develop strategies to attract small- and medium-sized enterprises that provide support to the County's existing businesses and industries.		Council/CAO
<b>E16.4</b>	County participates in regional "Think local" market initiative and supports a virtual storefront for local entrepreneurs		Council
<b>E16.5</b>	Explore advantages/disadvantages of implementing a system to track local businesses, their mandates and status.		Council/CAO
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal E16</b>			
<b>E16.KP1</b>	County stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are satisfied with the County's "open for business" practices (Source: Municipal Business Survey).</li> <li>• are satisfied with the County support to local businesses (Source: Municipal Business Survey).</li> </ul>	2015.12.31	
<b>E16.KP2</b>	20% increase in use of local products and services between 2011 and 2015 (Source: Municipal Business Survey).	2015.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E17 on Business Climate**

**Goal**

- E17** Mackenzie County:
- is an attractive destination for non-residents to visit or to decide to relocate
  - remains an attractive home for County residents at all stages of their lives.

**Strategies**

- |              |  |             |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| <b>E17.1</b> | Develop a promotional program for relocation targeted at the employees/contract workers with families that are working in the Zama oil and gas field.  | Council/CAO |
| <b>E17.2</b> | Build potential newcomer and resident confidence in the region by identifying strategies to strengthen the likelihood of year-to-year availability of educational instruction in all grades in each community. | Council/CAO |
| <b>E17.3</b> | Work in partnership with regional organizations to develop strategies to promote the County including a program to involve community members in promoting the area to distant friends and family.              | Council/CAO |
| <b>E17.4</b> | Develop a detailed plan to advocate for a substantial enhancement to health service delivery models in the County.   | Council/CAO |
| <b>E17.5</b> | Encourage the establishment of, promote and support “Buy Local” initiatives.   | Council/CAO |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E17**

- |                |   |                             |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>E17.KP1</b> | See E19.KP1   | quinquennially <sup>4</sup> |
| <b>E17.KP2</b> | 5% increase in total number of dwellings units (Source: <i>Alberta Municipal Profile</i> )  | 2011.12.31                  |
| <b>E17.KP3</b> | Three affordable housing units available in Zama City   | 2011.12.31                  |
| <b>E17.KP4</b> | 10% increase of County residents that “Lived at the same address 5 years ago” over the previous Census (Source: Statistics Canada’s Community Profile for Mackenzie County) | quinquennially              |
| <b>E17.KP5</b> | Above average rating of Councillor satisfaction with the results of REDI’s promotion initiatives  | 2012.12.31                  |
| <b>E17.KP6</b> | 10% increase in number of employees/contractors residing in Zama city with their families over 2010 figures (Source: Municipal Census)                                      | 2014.12.31                  |
| <b>E17.KP7</b> | Twenty affordable housing units available in Zama City  | 2014.12.31                  |
| <b>E17.KP8</b> | Forty affordable housing units available in Zama City   | 2016.12.31                  |

Note 4    quinquennially: every five years



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date            Owner**

**Goal E18 on Tourism**

**Goal**

**E18**        Mackenzie County accommodates a thriving, destination market tourist sector without compromising its natural environment.

**Strategies**

- |              |   |              |
|--------------|---|--------------|
| <b>E18.1</b> | Work with Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) to develop strategies to adapt County infrastructure and its natural environment to foster an environmentally sustainable tourist sector (e.g., agricultural and/or eco-tourism). | Council/CAO  |
| <b>E18.2</b> | Assess whether the County's existing tourism facilities, businesses and industries are based on environmental values that are, or have the potential to be consistent with the establishment of a County-wide eco-tourist industry.     | Council/REDI |
| <b>E18.3</b> | Develop bylaws that outline environmental requirements for all tourist facilities and practices operating in the County.  | Council      |
| <b>E18.4</b> | Undertake a review every five years of the impact of local tourism on the County's natural environment and act on the recommendations emerging from the review.   | Council      |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E18**

- |                |   |            |
|----------------|---|------------|
| <b>E18.KP1</b> | County Council meeting minutes report that Council has adopted a bylaw for environmentally sustainable tourism practices.   | 2013.12.31 |
| <b>E18.KP2</b> | At least 10% of residents see tourism as a viable industry in the region. (Source: Biannual Residents' survey)  | 2015.12.31 |
| <b>E18.KP3</b> | There is tangible evidence that Council acts on the majority of the recommendations that emerge from the regular reviews of how tourism impacts the County's natural environment. | 2015.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E19 on Growth Management (Population Growth)**

**Goal**

**E19** Mackenzie County's population growth rate is about 50% every ten years and will stabilize to a more moderate rate of 10% by the year 2031.

**Strategies**

**E19.1** Foster an expansion of economic opportunities in the region using strategies identified under that sector in this report (Strategies E1-E22).

Council

**E19.2** Foster increased inter-provincial and international immigration.

Council

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E19**

**E19.KP1** Mackenzie County's total population will be approximately :

- 15,000 residents (Source: Statistics Canada's Community Profile) 2016.12.31
- 20,000 residents (Source: Statistics Canada's Community Profile) 2021.12.31
- 25,000 residents (Source: Statistics Canada's Community Profile) 2026.12.31
- 27,500 residents (Source: Statistics Canada's Community Profile) 2031.12.31

**E19.KP2** Increase of individuals/dependants registered with Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan that:

- transferred from another Canadian province/territory (2% increase over previous 10-year average) Annual 12.31
- are new arrivals from another country (2% increase over previous 10-year average) Annual 12.31

(Source: Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan Population Registry)



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E20 on Growth Management (Family Orientation)**

**Goal**

**E20**            The majority of Mackenzie County's workforce live in the County with their children and families.

**Strategies**

- |              |  |         |
|--------------|--|---------|
| <b>E20.1</b> | Work with Apache, Husky Oil and the forestry sector to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify strategies to attract employees' families to relocate to Mackenzie County</li> <li>• identify what their employees would expect before they would be willing to move their family to the County and determine whether the County or Apache are in a position to address these priorities</li> <li>• develop a joint plan to address those needs and to promote family relocation.</li> </ul> | Council |
| <b>E20.2</b> | Identify and promote each hamlet's strengths in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.  | CAO     |
| <b>E20.3</b> | Identify and address each individual hamlet's needs in relation to fostering family-friendly environments.   | CAO     |
| <b>E20.4</b> | Provide exceptional services that enhance the quality of life in County hamlets and existing rural areas as a means to dissuade residents and newcomers from moving to undeveloped areas to establish small lots or acreages.  | CAO     |
| <b>E20.5</b> | Take proactive measures to anticipate growth by preparing evidence-based plans for it but exercise considerable caution in executing major capital expenditures.   | Council |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E20**

- |                |  |            |
|----------------|--|------------|
| <b>E20.KP1</b> | The County's municipal census indicates at least a 100% increase in Zama's population between 2014 and 2019.   | 2019.12.31 |
| <b>E20.KP2</b> | According to the County's municipal census, Zama's age profile is typical of that of a family-oriented community.  | 2014.12.31 |
| <b>E20.KP3</b> | Subdivision applications for small lot acreages outside of hamlet boundaries are approved only on agricultural lands or within prescribed areas of the County's Municipal Development Plan according to standard "first-parcel-out" practices. | 2011.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E21 on Growth Management (Reliable Data)**

**Goal**

**E21**            The County has reliable and comprehensive population data to make sound decisions and municipal plans.

**Strategies**

- |              |   |  |         |
|--------------|---|--|---------|
| <b>E21.1</b> | Consult with remote, northern municipalities in other provinces to share strategies that address the difficulties in acquiring accurate municipal census data.  |  | CAO     |
| <b>E21.2</b> | Work with the province to develop a responsible yet equitable method to ensure the County's "shadow" population can be counted so that its true population can be recorded enabling it to access its fair share of transfer payments. |  | CAO     |
| <b>E21.3</b> | Undertake municipal censuses three years after every federal census and during major population shifts.   |  | Council |

**Key Performance Indicator for Goal E21**

<b>E21.KP1</b>	Decrease in the level of citizens' anecdotal feedback that they weren't counted in the municipal census taken three years after the federal census.	2014.12.31
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**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Economic Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal E22 on Growth Management (Economic Volatility)**

**Goal**

**E22** Mackenzie County's economy has the capacity to moderate the local impacts of dramatic economic up- and downturns in resource sector activities.

**Strategies**

- |              |   |  |             |
|--------------|---|--|-------------|
| <b>E22.1</b> | Use comprehensive, reliable and evidence-based data to make sound and sustainable municipal decisions and plans (this includes demographic, economic, assessment and fiscal data).  |  | Council/CAO |
| <b>E22.2</b> | When making County growth projections for planning major capital expenditures, continue to use "average 20-year growth rates" rather than using "current growth rates" that may not represent enduring growth patterns.   |  | Council     |
| <b>E22.3</b> | The County will support efforts to diversify its economic base.   |  | Council     |
| <b>E22.4</b> | Council will consider the circumstances in which they would choose to develop agreements with new industrial proponents to ensure that County investments are planned over the duration of the proposed project/activity. |  | Council/CAO |

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal E22**

- |                |   |            |
|----------------|---|------------|
| <b>E22.KP1</b> | Council passes a resolution to use a specified series of financial indicators that measure the extent to which the County's resource sector economy impacts directly on residential assessment as well as assessment from the non resource-based businesses (e.g., number of bankruptcies, tax collection rates, facilities and service usage rates). | 2011.12.31 |
| <b>E22.KP2</b> | Over a ten year period, County-adopted financial indicators show an overall decreasing relationship between the economic strength of the County's resource and non-resource sectors.  | 2020.12.31 |



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Environmental Sustainability**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal N1 on the Natural Environment (River Valleys)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>N1</b>	Mackenzie County's river valleys are maintained in their natural state and are legislated to remain as such in perpetuity.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>N1.1</b>	Protect the natural state of Mackenzie County's river valleys with strongly worded bylaws that prevent development.		Council
<b>N1.2</b>	Develop municipal policies to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and utilization practices serve to preserve the health and safety of the valleys (especially sound practices to guide the development of any future roadways that must be built over a river).		Council
<b>N1.3</b>	Develop municipal bylaws and policies to support continuing public access to the County's river valleys.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal N1</b>			
<b>N1.KP1</b>	Council passes a resolution to adopt strongly worded bylaws that prevent development in County river valleys.	2012.12.31	
<b>N1.KP2</b>	Council passes a resolution to adopt strongly worded policies for environmental protection, maintenance and utilization practices.	2013.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Environmental Sustainability**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal N2 on the Natural Environment (Environmentally Sensitive Lands)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>N2</b>	Mackenzie County’s environmentally sensitive land areas are well-preserved.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>N2.1</b>	Identify, maintain and publish an up-to-date inventory of Mackenzie County’s environmentally sensitive land areas or those that are at risk of becoming environmentally sensitive.		Council/CAO
<b>N2.2</b>	If applicable, select land areas that the County wishes to protect from development and develop rationales and strong municipal policies/standards for their protection to ensure that sound environmental protection, maintenance and on-going utilization practices serve to preserve environmentally sensitive lands.		Council
<b>N2.3</b>	Consider building an inventory of known or suspected brownfields that documents all known information about them and update contact information annually (i.e., three former gas stations in La Crete, Fort Vermilion and Meander; industrial waste site on Zama City outskirts). The inventory could include: precise geographic location, property owner contact information, nature of contamination and other relevant information.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal N2</b>			
<b>N2.KP1</b>	An inventory of environmentally sensitive land areas and of those at risk of becoming sensitive is up-to-date and accessible to all residents.	2012.12.31	
<b>N2.KP2</b>	Current and future revisions to all County land-use plans respect environmentally sensitive areas by preventing development on those lands.	2012.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Environmental Sustainability**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal N3 on the Built Environment</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>N3</b>	County-owned and private lands are responsibly developed in a manner that balances economic and environmental interests.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>N3.1</b>	Record a motion in Council minutes indicating Council's intent with respect to the next steps it will take to complete the land exchange process that was successfully finalized with the province in summer, 2010.		Council
<b>N3.2</b>	Record a motion in Council minutes indicating Council's intent with respect to whether, when and how it will pursue further land exchange negotiations with the province (i.e., white zone-green zone exchanges).		Council
<b>N3.3</b>	Initiate discussions with the province to ensure that the County's intents with respect to Alberta's Land-Use Framework are clearly articulated to and incorporated into the framework.		Council
<b>N3.4</b>	Ensure that the County's Land-Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan limit urban or non-agricultural development on unused lands that are best-suited for agriculture.		Council
<b>N3.5</b>	Request that the Agricultural Service Board offer an educational series that would increase farmers' awareness about the use, handling, storage and release of contaminated and hazardous materials, substances, or wastes including farm equipment and construction/demolition materials.		Council
<b>N3.6</b>	Explore the feasibility of establishing a bylaw or building caveats into development permits or agreements that would provide information to the County on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether/how the proponent reprocesses construction/demolition material and industrial equipment, and</li> <li>• Evidence of the organization's financial capacity and sufficient insurance protection to address any future environmental contamination</li> <li>• Strategies the organization will use to prevent the emergence of brownfields, the contamination of surface and domestic water, and the leakage of liquid waste</li> <li>• County requirements in response to the inadvertent emergence of brownfields, water contamination and liquid waste challenges including criteria for remediation outcomes</li> </ul>		
<b>N3.7</b>	If and when the bylaw or caveats are developed and implemented, develop one to two key performance indicators that will assess the economic and environmental effectiveness of agreements that are in place (Key performance indicators to be measured once every decade).		
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal N3</b>			
<b>N3.KP1</b>	County issues zero permits for non-agricultural development on lands best suited for agriculture.	2010.12.31	
<b>N3.KP2</b>	All transactions are complete under the 2010 land exchange for the sale of 58,000 acres of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development lands to residents for agricultural purchases.	2012.12.31	
<b>N3.KP3</b>	Mackenzie's land use intentions are incorporated into the provincial Land-Use Framework.	2012.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Environmental Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal N4 on Environmental Footprint (Consumption)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>N4</b>	The use and consumption of electricity, natural gas and water in County-owned and County-supported facilities is reduced from 2010 levels.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>N4.1</b>	Request that the relevant architect(s) for each new County facility and utility system erected since 2006 review the requirements for LEED Certification in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• determine which would be eligible for certification</li> <li>• apply for certification for those that are eligible</li> </ul> For those ineligible, request that ATCOEnergy Sense undertake energy management audits.		Council
<b>N4.2</b>	Insert at least three energy management upgrades into the County's ten-year capital plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• La Crete Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting)</li> <li>• Fort Vermilion Recreation Centre (heating, DDC and lighting)</li> <li>• Zama Water treatment Plant (heating, DDC and lighting).</li> </ul>		Council
<b>N4.3</b>	Update strategies, target levels, time-lines and key performance indicators annually to monitor the reduction of the consumption of each resource used in County-owned infrastructure.		Council
<b>N4.4</b>	Schedule energy management audits of all County facilities once every 15 years, to identify opportunities for enhancing energy efficiencies and develop an audit-based plan to make the necessary changes.		Council
<b>N4.5</b>	Encourage non-profit organizations that manage their facilities with County financial support for utilities to undertake energy management audits and assist them to identify funds for any necessary upgrades.		Council
<b>N4.6</b>	Provide support to rural land-owners who wish to assess their domestic water is not sourced from a regulated utility system.		Council
<b>N4.7</b>	Work with Mackenzie Regional Waste Management Commission to provide resources to residents and business on pollution prevention.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal N4</b>			
<b>N4.KP1</b>	Mackenzie County obtains LEED certification for at least three existing County facilities.	2012.12.31	
<b>N4.KP2</b>	Mackenzie County designs all new facilities to meet the standards for LEED certification.	2012.12.31	
<b>N4.KP3</b>	Measurement instruments are being used to compare electrical, gas and water consumption in County facilities over 5- and 10-year periods and take into account price, population and other fluctuations that would impact on these measures.	2011.12.31	
<b>N4.KP4</b>	Electrical and gas consumption per capita have been reduced by more than 10% in the La Crete and Fort Vermilion Recreation Centres as well as the Zama Water Treatment Plant.	2012.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Environmental Sustainability**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal N5 on Environmental Footprint (Recycling)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>N5</b>	County residents consistently recycle a large majority of their bottles, paper, plastics, cardboard, tires and electronics.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>N5.1</b>	Continue to work in collaboration with the Mackenzie Regional Waste Management Commission to monitor new developments in recycling technologies that would be economically feasible for use in the County.		Council/CAO
<b>N5.2</b>	Work in collaboration with community organizations and groups to strengthen local recycling initiatives.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicator for Goal N5</b>			
<b>N5.KP1</b>	Mackenzie Regional Waste Management Commission reports that recycling tonnage per capita has increased by 15% over 2010 levels.	2015.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Environmental Sustainability**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal N6 on Energy Efficient Transportation**

**Goal**

**N6** Mackenzie County's hamlets provide energy-efficient means of access between key destinations in the community.

**Strategy**

**N6.1** Ensure that the County's municipal development plan provides for safe, convenient, accessible and comfortable pedestrian pathways in each community.

Council/CAO

**Key Performance Indicator for Goal N6**

**N6.KP1** Council approves revisions to the MDPs for Fort Vermilion, Zama and La Crete that provide for pedestrian networks that link the hamlets' key destinations.

2015.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Social and Cultural Sustainability**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal S1 on Social and Cultural Sustainability (A Sense of Place)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>S1</b>	Each County hamlet and rural area hosts a concentration of social, cultural and commercial activity in one strategic location.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>S1.1</b>	Amend hamlet development plans to establish or reinforce a central core area that provides synergistic opportunities for people to gather for social and cultural opportunities, commercial activity and the provision of public services.		Council
<b>S1.2</b>	Develop customized community standards bylaws for residential and industrial properties for each County hamlet and promote their enforcement.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal S1</b>			
<b>S1.KP1</b>	Council approves revisions to MDP that highlight the central core area in each hamlet (or shows where it is intended to grow).	2011.03.31	
<b>S1.KP2</b>	Council approves community standards bylaws tailored to the needs of each hamlet and rural area.	2012.12.31	
<b>S1.KP3</b>	Hamlet land-use plans are implemented as planned and reflect actual practice.	2012.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Social and Cultural Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal S2 on Social and Cultural Sustainability (Vibrance &amp; Relationships)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>S2</b>	The County's hamlets, rural areas, First Nations communities, informal Métis settlements and Towns each have distinct and thriving cultures yet they are linked by common, broad economic and environmental conditions.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>S2.1</b>	Showcase unique features of each of the County's cultures in its hamlets, populated rural areas and Towns.		Council
<b>S2.2</b>	Work with the Towns situated within the County's geographical boundaries to showcase County cultures in their municipalities and to showcase Town cultures in County communities.		Council
<b>S2.3</b>	Publish a County calendar of events.		Council/CAO
<b>S2.4</b>	Provide concrete support for key local events through the use of municipal grants.		Council
<b>S2.5</b>	Develop a strategy to measure the level of inter-cultural tension in Mackenzie County.		Council
<b>S2.6</b>	Invite First Nations, Métis and Mennonite communities to create/display icons of their cultures in each County hamlet.		Council
<b>S2.7</b>	Encourage local organizations to involve members of First Nations communities and informal Métis settlements in the planning processes for local activities and events.		Council
<b>S2.8</b>	Develop strategies to encourage residents of First Nations, Mennonite, Métis and County communities to participate in one another's public activities and events, and to ensure they feel genuinely welcome during such experiences (e.g., local festivals, cultural, and recreational activities).		Council
<b>S2.9</b>	Continue to involve Mennonites and begin to involve representatives of First Nations and Métis communities in advocacy activities for the availability and cultural appropriateness of health services offered in the County.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal S2</b>			
<b>S2.KP1</b>	A baseline measure for inter-cultural tension in Mackenzie County has been established.	2012.12.31	
<b>S2.KP2</b>	Cultural tension in Mackenzie County exhibits a downward trend over the period from 2012-2022.	2022.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Social and Cultural Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal S3 on Social and Cultural Sustainability (County-First Nations Relations)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>S3</b>	The County and the four First Nations located within its geographical boundaries share a common vision for the region, one that maintains cultural autonomy and that harmonizes economic pursuits.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>S3.1</b>	Use a cultural interpreter to develop joint protocols with each First Nation to manage inter-cultural communication and to resolve mutual concerns.		Council
<b>S3.2</b>	Identify/prioritize goals that are common to both the County and specific First Nations, and develop joint strategies to address them.		Council
<b>S3.3</b>	Develop public awareness activities to assist residents to understand the reasons for, and how to welcome an increased number of members of another culture to their community activities.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal S3</b>			
<b>S3.KP1</b>	The County and the Tallcree Nation sign an agreement for the provision of at least three of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• water and wastewater services</li> <li>• access to specific recreational facilities</li> <li>• Tallcree representation on recreation board(s)</li> <li>• maintaining/clearing specific roads</li> <li>• provision of fire services</li> </ul>	2011.12.31	
<b>S3.KP2</b>	County has launched invitations to the governing bodies of at least one of the Beaver, Little Red River or Dene Tha' Nations to initiate negotiations on matters of mutual interest (e.g., future land exchanges, cost-sharing opportunities, increased municipal delivery on First Nation lands).	2011.12.31	
<b>S3.KP3</b>	County is involved with discussions with all four First Nations located within its boundaries to discuss matters such as those elaborated in S3.KP2.	2013.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Social and Cultural Sustainability**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal S4 on Social and Cultural Sustainability (Growing Communities)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>S4</b>	The capacity of infrastructure in County hamlets and rural communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keeps pace with their growth</li> <li>• is planned in a way that ensures their sustainability.</li> </ul>		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>S4.1</b>	Develop a strategy that can be used annually to determine whether proposed capital and operating budgets used to maintain infrastructure reflect actual growth.		Council
<b>S4.2</b>	Explore strategies to establish a retail convenience outlet in Blue Hills that could provide basic amenities for local residents (e.g., milk, gas, stamps, aspirin, and a postal service) and that would be located next to the Blue Hills Community School.		Council
<b>S4.3</b>	In order to be prepared for sudden rapid growth in Zama City, develop criteria to determine when new infrastructure would be required and what the priorities would be.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicator for Goal S4</b>			
<b>S4.KP1</b>	Level of resident and business satisfaction with local infrastructure increases over a 2011 baseline measure.	2015.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Sustainability of Community Infrastructure**

		Date	Owner
<b>Goal C1 on Community Infrastructure (Recreation and Parks)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>C1</b>	Community parks, recreational facilities and community halls are available to each community consistent with local, cultural needs.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>C1.1</b>	Assess life expectancy for current recreational facilities and prepare long-term plans to ensure the timely availability of funds to address expected maintenance requirements, facility upgrades or replacement.		CAO/Council
<b>C1.2</b>	Undertake a financial and operational review of County recreational facilities and equipment.		Council
<b>C1.3</b>	Establish policies that will ensure that residents of each hamlet have access to attractive and well-managed community park sites.		Council
<b>C1.4</b>	Work with the Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation to continue to enhance partnerships with the province and to seek long-term provincial funding for provincial campgrounds in Mackenzie County.		Council
<b>C1.5</b>	Develop strategies to minimize environmental damage on County ATV/snowmobile trail networks while strengthening opportunities.		Council
<b>C1.6</b>	Reinforce partnerships with local non-profit organizations and stakeholders to enhance and expand cross-country ski trails and facilities near each hamlet and develop strategies to minimize environmental damage.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicators for Goal C1</b>			
<b>C1.KP1</b>	see C3.KP1	2012.12.31	
<b>C1.KP2</b>	Council passes a resolution to act on specific or all recommendations from recreation review report.	2013.12.31	
<b>C1.KP3</b>	Residents are satisfied with the level of local facility availability (Source: Resident Survey).	2013.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Sustainability of Community Infrastructure**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal C2 on Community Infrastructure (Recreation and Parks)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>C2</b>	Capital-intensive recreational facilities are designed to guarantee significant and consistent levels of tourism from outside of the region.		
<b>Strategy</b>			
<b>C2.1</b>	Work with regional partners to undertake a feasibility study to determine whether the Buffalo Head slopes site could be designed to attract sufficient tourism to ensure financial viability for the establishment of a downhill ski facility.		Council/CAO
<b>Key Performance Indicator for Goal C2</b>			
<b>C2.KP1</b>	Either the NADC or REDI includes a ski area feasibility study as a priority in their medium-term plan.	2011.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Sustainability of Community Infrastructure**

**Date Owner**

**Goal C3 on Community Infrastructure (Utility Services)**

**Goal**

- C3** The County continues to provide high quality utility services (water distribution and treatment as well as waste water collection and treatment) and ensures that they:
- are available in each hamlet
  - are available in the rural areas surrounding La Crete and Fort Vermilion
  - meet quality standards consistent with current national standards and demand
  - are stable and reliable
  - are each financially self-sustaining at both operational and capital levels.

**Strategies**

- C3.1** Assess life expectancy for current facilities and prepare long-term plans for their replacement. CAO/Council
- C3.2** Provide potable rural water lines to County residents. Council

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal C3**

- C3.KP1** Replacement plan is available for all County facilities. 2011.12.31
- C3.KP2** The construction of the rural potable water line is complete from:
- Its source to 94th Avenue 2010.12.31
  - Fort Vermilion to 88 Connector 2010.12.31
  - La Crete to Blue Hills 2011.12.31
  - 88 Connector to Tall Cree 2011.12.31
  - La Crete to 88 Connector 2012.12.31
  - Fort Vermilion to Boyer 2013.12.31
  - High Level to rural High Level. 2014.12.31
- C3.KP3** Quarterly measures of water quality meet or exceed provincial standards 100% of the time. Quarterly
- C3.KP4** Residents are satisfied with quality and accessibility to rural potable water (Source: Municipal Resident Survey). 2015.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Sustainability of Community Infrastructure**

**Date Owner**

**Goal C4 on Community Infrastructure (Risk Management)**

**Goal**

- C4** Various risks associated with damage to local infrastructure (other than the risk associated with climate change):
- are minimized due to the availability of up-to-date risk assessments and plans for managing each type of risk
  - are comparable to the levels of infrastructure risk in other parts of the province.

**Strategies**

- C4.1** Carry out full risk assessments of regional infrastructure every five years and update plans to mitigate identified risks (liability, property, errors and omissions, vehicle, and environmental assessments including those associated with hazardous goods and climate change). Council
- C4.2** Conduct a joint protective service risk assessment with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake that will:
- identify opportunities to improve service quality/timeliness to protect regional infrastructure
  - address infrastructure at risk and liability issues
  - prioritize current/future issues requiring attention.
- Council
- C4.3** Work with the Towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake to develop a plan for sustainable water infrastructure and supply across the region that will address current and future requirements, including water available for fire suppression. Council

**Key Performance Indicators for Goals C4**

- C4.KP1** Council passes a resolution to adopt an Enterprise Risk Management plan to mitigate identified risks following recommendations from the risk assessment of County Infrastructure. 2011.12.31
- C4.KP2** Between 2011 and 2021, costs associated with annual infrastructure deterioration do not exceed 15% over the 2011 measure. 2021.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for Sustainability of Community Infrastructure**

		<b>Date</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>Goal C5 on Community Infrastructure (Staffing for Infrastructure)</b>			
<b>Goal</b>			
<b>C5</b>	The County's staffing complement keeps pace with the County's growing need for infrastructure.		
<b>Strategies</b>			
<b>C5.1</b>	Continue to review staffing needs annually.		CAO
<b>C5.2</b>	Undertake a formal review of the County's organizational structure at least once every three years to ensure that its staff complement continues to meet current needs.		Council
<b>Key Performance Indicator for Goal C6</b>			
<b>C5.KP1</b>	Council passes a resolution to act on specific recommendations from the tri-annual review of organizational structure.	2013.12.31	



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Implementation of the Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP)**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal Z1 on MSP Implementation**

**Goal**

**Z1**        The County has a systematic, ongoing process to monitor implementation and to assess results of its sustainability plan.

**Strategies**

**Z1.1**     Develop terms of reference and a reporting process for Council's Sustainability Plan Committee.

**Z1.2**     Develop a plan calendar.

**Z1.3**     Update key performance indicators to measure progress on priority County goals.

**Z1.4**     Schedule dedicated time at each annual Council planning session to:

- review the sustainability plan's key performance indicators
- update goals, strategies, key performance indicators and/or time lines as required.

**Z1.5**     Prepare an MSP implementation report every two years and circulate it to residents with updated key performance indicators.

Council  
Council/CAO  
Council/CAO  
Council

Council

**Key Performance Indicator for Goal Z1**

**Z1.KP1**   A biannual MSP report to the public is made available on time, and presents:

- the progress that has been made on key performance indicators
- updates to the plan's goals, strategies and key performance indicators.

2012.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Implementation of the Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP)**

**Date                      Owner**

**Goal Z2 on MSP Implementation**

**Goal**

**Z2**            Councillors share a common vision for the directions that the County should take and the strategies to get there.

**Strategy**

**Z2.1**        Undertake a systematic approach to sensitize Councillors to the situations faced in other Councillors' jurisdictions by requesting that they make a sincere commitment to listen to what one another is saying and by requesting their participation in:

Council

- at least 80% of expanded road tours
- at least 80% of community meetings in other jurisdictions
- at least 80% of targeted public social events in other jurisdictions.

**Key Performance Indicators for Goal Z2**

**Z2.KP1**    Targeted Councillor attendance levels at activities outside of their own wards are achieved.

2011.12.31

**Z2.KP2**    Each Councillor is satisfied with his/her peers' familiarity with issues in his/her own ward boundaries (Source: Council Survey).

2012.12.31



**Goals, Strategies and Key Performance Indicators for  
Implementation of the Municipal Sustainability Plan (MSP)**

**Date**                      **Owner**

**Data Sources for Select Key Performance Indicators**

- Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan Population Registry (Annual in November or May)
- Alberta Municipal Affairs. *Alberta Municipal Profiles*.  
[http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/mc\\_municipal\\_profiles.cfm](http://www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/mc_municipal_profiles.cfm) (retrieved 2010.11.09)
- Alberta Transportation. *Alberta Highways 1 to 986 Traffic Volume History (Annual)*  
<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/2639.htm> (retrieved 2010.11.09)
- Mackenzie County Council Meeting Minutes
- Mackenzie County Council Survey (Annual)
- Mackenzie County Municipal Business Survey (Bi-annual: odd years)
- Mackenzie County Municipal Census (Quinquennial )
- Mackenzie County Municipal Resident Survey (Bi-annual: even years)
- Mackenzie County Ticket draws for hamlet events
- Statistics Canada. *2011 Community Profile: Mackenzie County*. (Quinquennial )  
<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E> (retrieved 2010.11.09)