




MACKENZIE COUNTY

# REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

**OCTOBER 25, 2023  
10:00 AM**

FORT VERMILION COUNCIL  
CHAMBERS

 780.927.3718

 [www.mackenziecounty.com](http://www.mackenziecounty.com)

 4511-46 Avenue, Fort Vermilion

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**Mackenzie County**



**MACKENZIE COUNTY  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**Wednesday, October 25, 2023  
10:00 a.m.**

**Fort Vermilion Council Chambers**

**Fort Vermilion, Alberta**

**AGENDA**

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<b>CALL TO ORDER:</b>	1.	a) Call to Order	
<b>AGENDA:</b>	2.	a) Adoption of Agenda	
<b>ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:</b>	3.	a) Minutes of the October 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting	7
		b) Business Arising out of the Minutes	
		c)	
<b>CLOSED MEETING:</b>		<i>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Division 2, Part 1 Exceptions to Disclosure</i>	
	4.	a) Joint Use Planning Agreement – Fort Vermilion School Division No. 52 ( <i>FOIP Sections 23, 24, 25 and 27</i> )	
		b) Sewer Encroachment ( <i>FOIP Sections 23, 24, 25 and 27</i> )	
		c) Policy Matter ( <i>FOIP Sections 23 and 24</i> )	
<b>TENDERS:</b>	5.	a) None	
<b>PUBLIC HEARINGS:</b>	6.	a) None	
<b>DELEGATIONS</b>	7.	a) None	
<b>GENERAL REPORTS:</b>	8.	a) None	
		b)	
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>	9.	a) None	

**SERVICES:**

		b)	
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES:</b>	10.	a) None	
		b)	
<b>FINANCE:</b>	11.	a) Conditional Grant Agreement – Interest Revenue	21
		b) Financial Reports – January 1 – September 30, 2023	23
		c) Councillor Expense Claims	51
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		f)	
<b>PROJECTS &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE:</b>	12.	a) Waterline East of La Crete	55
		b) La Crete Stormwater Master Plan - Request for Proposals (RFP) Awarding	59
		c)	
<b>OPERATIONS:</b>	13.	a) AWD 160M Graders x3 (2021) 2023 Capital Budget Funding Amendment	63
		b)	
		c)	
<b>UTILITIES:</b>	14.	a) Fort Vermilion and La Crete Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) & Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC) Upgrade Grant Application	67
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		c)	
<b>PLANNING &amp; DEVELOPMENT:</b>	15.	a) Development Options for Infrastructure	69
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		c)	Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Revision	77
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		e)		
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	16.	a)	FIN028 Credit Card Use Policy – Review and Amendment	159
		b)		
		c)		
<b>COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ITEMS:</b>	17.	a)	None	
<b>COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:</b>	18.	a)	Council Committee Reports (verbal)	
		b)	Municipal Planning Commission Meeting Minutes	169
		c)		
		d)		
<b>INFORMATION / CORRESPONDENCE:</b>	19.	a)	Information/Correspondence	181
<b>NOTICE OF MOTION:</b>	20.	a)		
<b>NEXT MEETING DATES:</b>	21.	a)	Regular Council Meeting November 14, 2023 10:00 a.m. Fort Vermilion Council Chambers	
		b)	Regular Council Meeting November 28, 2023 10:00 a.m. Fort Vermilion Council Chambers	
<b>ADJOURNMENT:</b>	22.	a)	Adjournment	





**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Darrell Derksen, Chief Administrative Officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Minutes of the October 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting</b>

## **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

Minutes of the October 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting are attached.

## **OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

## **COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

## **SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:**

## **COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Approved Council Meeting minutes are posted on the County website.

## **POLICY REFERENCES:**

**Author:** L. Flooren      **Reviewed by:** L. Flooren      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

- Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the minutes of the October 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting be adopted as presented.

**Author:** L. Flooren      **Reviewed by:** L. Flooren      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**MACKENZIE COUNTY  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**Wednesday, October 11, 2023  
10:00 a.m.**

**Fort Vermilion Council Chambers  
Fort Vermilion, AB**

**PRESENT:**

Josh Knelsen	Reeve
Walter Sarapuk	Deputy Reeve
Peter F. Braun	Councillor
David Driedger	Councillor
Ernest Peters	Councillor (left the meeting at 4:15 p.m.)
Garrell Smith	Councillor
Lisa Wardley	Councillor
Dale Wiebe	Councillor

**REGRETS:**

Jacque Bateman	Councillor
Cameron Cardinal	Councillor

**ADMINISTRATION:**

Darrell Derksen	Chief Administrative Officer
Don Roberts	Director of Community Services
Jennifer Batt	Director of Finance
Caitlin Smith	Director of Planning and Agriculture
Byron Peters	Director of Projects and Infrastructure
Andy Banman	Manager of Operations
Louise Flooren	Manager of Legislative & Support Services/ Recording Secretary

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting for Mackenzie County held on October 11, 2023 in the Council Chambers at the Fort Vermilion County Office.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**1. a) Call to Order**

Reeve Knelsen called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**AGENDA:**

**2. a) Adoption of Agenda**

**MOTION 23-10-727**

**MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That the agenda be adopted with the following additions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 4. d) Agricultural Lands (*FOIP Sections 23 and 24*)
- 4. e) Mitigation (*FOIP Sections 17, 19 and 22*)
- 10. c) Waste Disposal
- 12. a) Waterline East of La Crete

**CARRIED**

**OATH OF OFFICE: 1. b) Oath of Office**

**MOTION 23-10-728 MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That the Oath of Office be administered to Councillor Wiebe by Don Roberts, Director of Community Services.

**CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: 3. a) Minutes of the September 19, 2023 Regular Council Meeting**

**MOTION 23-10-729 MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That the minutes of the September 19, 2023 Regular Council Meeting be adopted as presented.

**CARRIED**

**ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: 3. b) Business Arising out of the Minutes**

**CLOSED MEETING: 4. Closed Meeting**

**MOTION 23-10-730 MOVED** by Councillor Peters

That Council move into a closed meeting at 10:05 a.m. to discuss the following:

- 4.a) Proposed Subdivision – Fort Vermilion Fire Hall Access (Plan 2938RS, Block 06, Lot 16) (*FOIP Sections 23, 24, 25 and 27*)
- 4.b) Organizational Chart (*FOIP Sections 23, 24 and 27*)
- 4.c) CAO Report (*FOIP Sections 16, 17, 23 and 24*)
- 4. d) Agricultural Lands (*FOIP Sections 23 and 24*) (ADDITION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. e) Mitigation (*FOIP Sections 17, 19 and 22*)  
(ADDITION)

**CARRIED**

The following individuals were present during the closed meeting discussion. (*MGA Section 197*)

- All Councillors Present excluding Councillor Bateman and Councillor Cardinal
- Darrell Derksen, Chief Administrative Officer
- Don Roberts, Director of Community Services
- Jennifer Batt, Director of Finance
- Caitlin Smith, Director of Planning and Agriculture
- Byron Peters, Director of Projects and Infrastructure
- Andy Banman, Manager of Operations
- Louise Flooren, Manager of Legislative & Support Services/ Recording Secretary

Administration left the meeting at 10:50 a.m. excluding Darrell Derksen, Chief Administrative Officer.

**MOTION 23-10-731**

**MOVED** by Councillor Wiebe

That Council move out of a closed meeting at 11:50 a.m.

**CARRIED**

Reeve Knelsen recessed the meeting at 11:50 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 12:37 p.m.

**CLOSED MEETING:**

**4. a) Proposed Subdivision – Fort Vermilion Fire Hall Access**

**MOTION 23-10-732**

**MOVED** by Councillor Braun

That administration proceed with the proposed subdivision as presented.

**CARRIED**

**CLOSED MEETING:**

**4. b) Organizational Chart**

**MOTION 23-10-733**  
Requires 2/3

**MOVED** by Deputy Reeve Sarapuk

That the 2023 Operating budget be amended by \$13,519 with funding coming from the General Operating Reserve.

**CARRIED**

**MOTION 23-10-734**  
Requires 2/3

**MOVED** by Councillor Driedger

That the Organizational Chart be approved as presented.

**CARRIED**

**CLOSED MEETING:**

**4. c) CAO Report**

**MOTION 23-10-735**

**MOVED** by Councillor Peters

That the CAO Report be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**CLOSED MEETING:**

**4. d) Agricultural Lands (ADDITION)**

**MOTION 23-10-736**  
Requires Unanimous

**MOVED** by Councillor Smith

That the Agricultural Lands discussion be received for information.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**CLOSED MEETING**

**4. e) Mitigation (ADDITION)**

**MOTION 23-10-737**  
Requires Unanimous

**MOVED** by Councillor Braun

That the Mitigation discussion be received for information.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**GENERAL  
REPORTS:**

**8. a) Director & Manager Reports for September 2023**

**MOTION 23-10-738**

**MOVED** by Deputy Reeve Sarapuk

That the Director & Manager reports for September 2023 be received for information.

**CARRIED**

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\_\_\_\_\_



**TENDERS: 5. a) La Crete Stormwater Master Plan - Request for Proposals (RFP) Opening**

**MOTION 23-10-739 MOVED** by Councillor Peters

That the proposals received for the La Crete Stormwater Master Plan be opened.

**CARRIED**

<b>Bidder</b>
Kerr Wood Leidal
MPE Engineering Ltd.
Invistec Consulting Ltd.
Associated Engineering Ab. Ltd.
Beirsto and Associates
CAP Engineering
McElhanney Ltd.

**MOTION 23-10-740 MOVED** by Councillor Peters

That administration score the proposals for the La Crete Stormwater Master Plan and provide a detailed report and recommendation for awarding to the October 25, 2023, Regular Council Meeting.

**CARRIED**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS: 6. a) None**

**DELEGATIONS: 7. a) None**

**AGRICULTURE SERVICES: 9. a) None**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES: 10. a) Janelle’s Park – Proposal**

**MOTION 23-10-741 MOVED** by Councillor Braun

That Mackenzie County collaborate with the Fort Vermilion School Division for the purchase and installation of a disability playground in the hamlet of La Crete.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**CARRIED**

**MOTION 23-10-742**

**MOVED** by Councillor Braun

That the designation of “Janelle’s Park” change locations from the corner of 112 St and 99 Ave to Fort Vermilion School Division property and administration proceed with the process of renaming the park at this new location.

**CARRIED**

**MOTION 23-10-743**  
Requires 2/3

**MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That an additional \$25,000 from the Hamlet Park Development project be allocated to the New Hamlet Park (Janelle’s Park) budget, and to be utilized as a cost sharing contribution for funds raised by community fundraising and/or grants.

**CARRIED**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES:**

**10. b) ADM053 Flags and Flag Protocol – Policy Amendment**

**MOTION 23-10-744**

**MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That Policy ADM053 Flags and Flag Protocol be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES:**

**10. c) Waste Disposal (ADDITION)**

**MOTION 23-10-745**  
Requires Unanimous

**MOVED** by Councillor Smith

That the unauthorized waste disposal on public lands be publically advertised to discourage illegal dumping.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Reeve Knelsen recessed the meeting at 1:37 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 2:08 p.m.

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**FINANCE: 11. a) March 2023 - FIN028 Credit Card Use Policy - MasterCard Loyalty Reward Points**

**MOTION 23-10-746** **MOVED** by Deputy Reeve Sarapuk

That the October 2023 FIN028 Credit Card Use Policy - MasterCard Loyalty Reward Points report be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**FINANCE: 11. b) High Level Agricultural Exhibition Association – Farm Credit Canada Grant**

**MOTION 23-10-747** **MOVED** by Deputy Reeve Sarapuk  
Requires 2/3

That the 2023 operating budget be amended to include \$24,000 for the High Level Agricultural Exhibition Association towards their Indoor Riding Arena project, with funding coming from Farm Credit Canada.

**CARRIED**

**FINANCE: 11. c) Proposed 2024 Budget Council Meeting Dates**

**MOTION 23-10-748** **MOVED** by Councillor Braun

That October 30, 2023 be identified as a Budget Workshop.

**CARRIED**

**MOTION 23-10-749** **MOVED** by Councillor Braun

That Budget Council meetings be scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, October 31, 2023
- Tuesday, November 21, 2023
- Wednesday, November 22, 2023
- Wednesday, December 6, 2023
- Thursday, December 7, 2023

**CARRIED**

**FINANCE: 11. d) Town of High Level Regional Service Sharing Agreement Payment**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MOTION 23-10-750**      **MOVED** by Deputy Reeve Sarapuk

That the Town of High Level Regional Service Sharing Agreement payment be released.

**CARRIED**

**PROJECTS &  
INFRASTRUCTURE:**

**12. a) Waterline East of La Crete (ADDITION)**

**MOTION 23-10-751**  
Requires Unanimous

**MOVED** by Councillor Driedger

That administration bring back options and a cost estimate for the implementation of a Waterline East of La Crete to the Regular Council Meeting on October 25, 2023.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**OPERATIONS:**

**13. a) None**

**UTILITIES:**

**14. a) None**

**PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT:**

**15. a) Development Statistics Report – January to  
September 2023**

**MOTION 23-10-752**

**MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That the development statistics report for January to September 2023 be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT:**

**15. b) Bylaw 1308-23 Land Use Bylaw Amendment to  
Rezone Part of Plan 052 2048, Block 2, Lot 3 from  
Hamlet Country Residential “H-CR” to Recreation 1  
“REC 1”**

**MOTION 23-10-753**

**MOVED** by Deputy Reeve Sarapuk

That first reading be given to Bylaw 1308-23 Land Use Bylaw Amendment to Rezone Part of Plan 052 2048, Block 2, Lot 3 from Hamlet Country Residential “H-CR” to Recreation 1 “REC 1”, subject to public hearing input.

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**CARRIED**

Reeve Knelsen recessed the meeting at 3:25 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 3:44 p.m.

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT:**

**15. c) Bylaw 1309-23 Land Use Bylaw Amendment to Rezone Part of NE-9-106-15-W5M from Hamlet Residential 1A “H-R1A” to Hamlet Residential 2 “H-R2”**

**MOTION 23-10-754**

**MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That first reading be given to Bylaw 1309-23 being a Land Use Bylaw Amendment to rezone Part of NE-9-106-15-W5M from Hamlet Residential 1A “H-R1A” to Hamlet Residential 2 “H-R2”, subject to public hearing input.

**CARRIED**

**ADMINISTRATION:**

**16. a) Councillor Bateman Absence**

**MOTION 23-10-755**

**MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That Council accepts the resignation of Councillor Bateman with regret and that a By-election be held for the Councillor vacancy in Ward 9 as follows:

- Nomination Day – November 15, 2023
- Advance Vote – December 8, 2023
- Election Day – December 13, 2023

**CARRIED**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ITEMS:**

**17. a) Business Arising out of Committee of the Whole**

None.

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**18. a) Council Committee Reports (verbal)**

Councillor Peters left the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

**MOTION 23-10-756**  
 Requires 2/3

**MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

\_\_\_\_\_  
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That the 2023 one time project budget be amended by \$11,000 with funding coming from other sources for the Forest Capital of Canada Project.

**CARRIED**

**MOTION 23-10-757**      **MOVED** by Councillor Smith

That the Council Committee Reports (verbal) be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE  
REPORTS:**

**18. b) Development Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION 23-10-758**      **MOVED** by Councillor Wiebe

That the unapproved September 21, 2023 Development Ad Hoc Committee meeting minutes be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE  
REPORTS:**

**18. c) Inter-municipal Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION 23-10-759**      **MOVED** by Councillor Wardley

That the unapproved Inter-municipal Planning Commission meeting minutes of September 14, 2023 be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE  
REPORTS:**

**18. d) Municipal Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION 23-10-760**      **MOVED** by Councillor Driedger

That the approved Municipal Planning Commission meeting minutes of September 14, 2023 be received for information.

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**CARRIED**

**INFORMATION/  
CORRESPONDENCE:**

**19. a) Information/Correspondence**

**MOTION 23-10-761**

**MOVED** by Councillor Wiebe

That the information/correspondence items be accepted for information purposes.

**CARRIED**

**NOTICE OF MOTION:**

**20. a) None**

**NEXT MEETING  
DATES:**

**21. a) Next Meeting Dates**

Organizational Meeting  
October 24, 2023  
10:00 a.m.  
Fort Vermilion Council Chambers

Regular Council Meeting  
October 25, 2023  
10:00 a.m.  
Fort Vermilion Council Chambers

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**22. a) Adjournment**

**MOTION 23-10-762**

**MOVED** by Councillor Driedger

That the Council meeting be adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

**CARRIED**

These minutes will be presented for approval at the October 25, 2023 Regular Council Meeting.

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Joshua Knelsen  
Reeve

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Darrell Derksen  
Chief Administrative Officer

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**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Jennifer Batt, Director of Finance</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Conditional Grant Agreement – Interest Revenue</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

As part of the conditional grant agreement for the Fort Vermilion flood mitigation, 90% of the grant funds was received as an advance towards costs incurred. Expenses incurred to offset this advance are applied against these funds, and interest is calculated on the balance. Interest earned from funds received by a Provincial Grant are normally incorporated into available funds through these grants.

The conditional grant interest was calculated for a total of \$23,096 for the 3rd quarter in 2023. Administration is requesting that the 2023 Capital Budget for the FV – Flood Mitigation project be amended to include these funds.

In addition, a mitigation structure purchased through the June 2023 auction did not follow the auction agreement, and has had the funds of \$935 returned to them leaving the County owners of this structure again. Administration is working on another buyer for this structure, and will update Council on the outcome.

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

N/A

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

2023 allocated interest for the balance of advance funds, and auction revenue refunded.

**SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:**

N/A

**Author:** J. Batt      **Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

N/A

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

- Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the 2023 Capital Budget be amended by \$23,096 for the FV – Flood Mitigation project for interest earned in the third quarter of 2023, and reducing other sources income by \$935 for return of auction proceeds.

Author: J. Batt      Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_      CAO: D. Derksen \_\_\_\_\_



**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Jennifer Batt, Director of Finance</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Financial Reports – January 1 – September 30, 2023</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

The Finance Department provides financial reports to Council as per policy, which the January – September 30, 2023 reports are attached for review.

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

Financial Reports to Council

Council shall receive the following reports monthly:

- Statement comparing actual operating revenues and expenditures to budget for the year-to-date (January – September 30,2023);
- A report of funds invested in term deposits and other securities (January – August 2023).
- Project progress reports including expenditures to budget until September 30, 2023.
- Reports will be presented in April, July, October and January.

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

N/A

**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

**Author:** J. Batt      **Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

Policy FIN010 – Financial Reports

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the quarterly financial reports for January to September 30, 2023 be received for information.

Author: J. Batt      Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_      CAO: D. Derksen

Mackenzie County  
Summary of All Units January - September 2023

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
100-Municipal Taxes	\$26,842,350	\$26,811,035	\$31,315
101-Lodge Requisition		(\$121)	\$121
102-School Requisition	\$6,379,443	\$6,385,818	(\$6,375)
103-Designated Ind. Property	\$73,830	\$73,825	\$5
124-Frontage	\$35,000	\$49,166	(\$14,166)
261-Ice Bridge	\$130,000	\$135,000	(\$5,000)
420-Sales of goods and services	\$1,084,586	\$1,484,411	(\$399,825)
421-Sale of water - metered	\$3,861,992	\$2,839,686	\$1,022,306
422-Sale of water - bulk	\$951,093	\$871,464	\$79,629
424-Sale of land	\$10,000		\$10,000
510-Penalties on taxes	\$300,000	\$171,561	\$128,439
511-Penalties of AR and utilities	\$25,000	\$23,606	\$1,394
520-Licenses and permits	\$54,000	\$64,136	(\$10,136)
521-Offsite levy	\$20,000	\$44,672	(\$24,672)
522-Municipal reserve revenue	\$80,000	(\$20,297)	\$100,297
526-Safety code permits	\$350,000	\$399,064	(\$49,064)
525-Subdivision fees	\$125,000	\$54,901	\$70,099
530-Fines	\$9,000	\$15,170	(\$6,170)
531-Safety code fees	\$12,000	\$12,786	(\$786)
550-Interest revenue	\$425,000	\$861,278	(\$436,278)
551-Market value changes		\$84,464	(\$84,464)
560-Rental and lease revenue	\$203,367	\$135,275	\$68,092
570-Insurance proceeds			\$0
597-Other revenue	\$25,000	\$26,076	(\$1,076)
598-Community aggregate levy	\$85,000		\$85,000
630-Sale of non-TCA equipment	\$500	\$1,610	(\$1,110)
830-Federal grants			\$0
840-Provincial grants	\$973,704	\$416,119	\$557,585
909-Other Sources -Grants	\$107,963	\$68,113	\$39,850
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$1,521,240		\$1,521,240
940-Contribution from Capital Reserves	\$51,944		\$51,944
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$43,737,012</b>	<b>\$41,008,816</b>	<b>\$2,728,196</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$37,283,739</b>	<b>\$34,549,293</b>	<b>\$2,734,446</b>

Mackenzie County  
Summary of All Units January - September 2023

	2023	2023 Actual	\$ Variance
	Budget	Total	(Remaining)
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$7,383,659	\$4,606,721	\$2,776,938
132-Benefits	\$1,582,330	\$978,437	\$603,893
136-WCB contributions	\$84,904	\$18,280	\$66,624
142-Recruiting	\$15,000		\$15,000
150-Isolation cost	\$57,600	\$19,864	\$37,736
151-Honoraria	\$615,761	\$471,088	\$144,673
211-Travel and subsistence	\$389,038	\$156,062	\$232,976
212-Promotional expense	\$43,000	\$23,508	\$19,492
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$144,656	\$83,063	\$61,593
215-Freight	\$127,950	\$67,413	\$60,537
216-Postage	\$52,000	\$31,795	\$20,205
217-Telephone	\$119,930	\$82,732	\$37,198
221-Advertising	\$80,100	\$74,780	\$5,320
223-Subscriptions and publications	\$11,700	\$6,508	\$5,192
231-Audit fee	\$120,000	\$105,500	\$14,500
232-Legal fee	\$85,000	\$93,212	(\$8,212)
233-Engineering consulting	\$217,000	\$32,051	\$184,949
235-Professional fee	\$219,100	\$199,047	\$20,053
236-Enhanced policing fee	\$780,501	\$112,815	\$667,686
239-Training and education	\$85,938	\$16,930	\$69,008
242-Computer programming	\$228,655	\$61,974	\$166,681
243-Waste Management	\$462,067	\$291,309	\$170,758
251-Repair & maintenance - bridges	\$159,500	\$15,238	\$144,262
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$139,850	\$86,223	\$53,627
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$471,550	\$287,034	\$184,516
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$117,300	\$67,147	\$50,153
258-Contracted Services	\$762,152	\$428,370	\$333,782
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$2,072,000	\$630,463	\$1,441,537
260-Roadside Mowing & Spraying	\$465,801	\$362,579	\$103,222
261-Ice bridge construction	\$125,000	\$82,458	\$42,542
262-Rental - building and land	\$67,100	\$63,585	\$3,515
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$66,253	\$16,549	\$49,704
266-Communications	\$155,967	\$94,905	\$61,062
271-Licenses and permits	\$15,300	\$24,393	(\$9,093)
272-Damage claims		\$13,500	(\$13,500)
274-Insurance	\$705,431	\$504,491	\$200,940
342-Assessor fees	\$247,820	\$102,335	\$145,485
290-Election cost	\$3,000		\$3,000
511-Goods and supplies	\$1,211,062	\$783,330	\$427,732
515-Lab Testing	\$52,000	\$44,723	\$7,277
521-Fuel and oil	\$1,162,604	\$637,425	\$525,179
531-Chemicals and salt	\$428,800	\$190,574	\$238,226
530-Oil Dust Control	\$100,000	\$91,546	\$8,454
532-Calcium Dust Control	\$130,000	\$69,094	\$60,906
533-Grader blades	\$143,000	\$150,870	(\$7,870)
534-Gravel (apply; supply and apply)	\$1,767,084	\$1,152,356	\$614,728
535-Gravel reclamation cost	\$50,000	\$2,548	\$47,452
994-Change in Inventory	(\$467,084)		(\$467,084)
543-Natural gas	\$202,061	\$115,758	\$86,303
544-Electrical power	\$878,157	\$552,185	\$325,972
550-Carbon Tax	\$200,000	\$125,818	\$74,182
710-Grants to local governments	\$2,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,000,000
735-Grants to other organizations	\$2,390,744	\$2,238,127	\$152,617
747-School requisition	\$6,379,443	\$3,210,941	\$3,168,502
750-Lodge requisition		\$561	(\$561)
760-Designated Ind. Property	\$73,830	\$58,151	\$15,679
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$4,371,489		\$4,371,489
810-Interest and service charges	\$22,360	\$17,900	\$4,460
831-Interest - long term debt	\$333,735	\$140,971	\$192,764
832-Principle - Long term debt	\$1,183,120	\$587,671	\$595,449
921-Bad Debt/922-Tax Cancellation/Writeoff	\$1,005,000	89611	\$915,389
Non-TCA projects	\$1,389,694	\$534,709	\$854,985
DRP Expenses		\$241,264	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$43,737,012</b>	<b>\$22,598,492</b>	<b>\$21,379,784</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$37,283,739</b>	<b>\$19,328,840</b>	<b>\$18,044,510</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$9,978,821</b>		<b>\$9,978,821</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
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<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
132-Benefits	\$50,728	\$35,290	\$15,438
136-WCB contributions	\$5,535	\$1,147	\$4,388
151-Honoraria	\$529,461	\$315,230	\$214,231
211-Travel and subsistence	\$254,098	\$106,542	\$147,556
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$70,425	\$50,175	\$20,250
217-Telephone	\$7,700	\$4,839	\$2,861
221-Advertising	\$1,000	\$678	\$322
235-Professional fee	\$8,000	\$950	\$7,050
239-Training and education	\$2,800		\$2,800
266-Communications	\$15,615	\$9,364	\$6,251
274-Insurance	\$2,194	\$1,828	\$366
290-Election cost	\$3,000		\$3,000
511-Goods and supplies	\$9,700	\$2,416	\$7,284
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$960,256</b>	<b>\$528,459</b>	<b>\$431,797</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$960,256</b>	<b>\$528,459</b>	<b>\$431,797</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$960,256</b>	<b>\$528,459</b>	<b>\$431,797</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$960,256)</b>	<b>(\$528,459)</b>	<b>(\$431,797)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
420-Sales of goods and services	\$39,500	\$32,332	\$7,168
510-Penalties on taxes	\$300,000	\$171,561	\$128,439
511-Penalties of AR and utilities	\$13,000	\$8,330	\$4,670
550-Interest revenue	\$425,000	\$861,278	(\$436,278)
551-Market value changes		\$84,464	(\$84,464)
560-Rental and lease revenue	\$77,800	\$39,768	\$38,032
597-Other revenue	\$25,000	\$24,978	\$22
598-Community aggregate levy	\$85,000		\$85,000
630-Sale of non-TCA equipment	\$500		\$500
840-Provincial grants	\$190,370	\$10,820	\$179,550
909-Other Sources -Grants	\$53,963		\$53,963
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$696,797		\$696,797
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,906,930</b>	<b>\$1,233,531</b>	<b>\$673,399</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$1,906,930</b>	<b>\$1,233,531</b>	<b>\$673,399</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$2,011,178	\$1,215,146	\$796,032
132-Benefits	\$454,920	\$243,729	\$211,191
136-WCB contributions	\$19,924	\$4,667	\$15,257
142-Recruiting	\$15,000		\$15,000
150-Isolation cost	\$14,400	\$10,800	\$3,600
211-Travel and subsistence	\$38,500	\$13,772	\$24,728
212-Promotional expense	\$25,000	\$17,355	\$7,645
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$23,156	\$8,921	\$14,235
215-Freight	\$9,000	\$3,740	\$5,260
216-Postage	\$24,500	\$31,297	(\$6,797)
217-Telephone	\$44,050	\$36,754	\$7,296
221-Advertising	\$68,000	\$65,076	\$2,924
223-Subscriptions and publications	\$5,700	\$3,321	\$2,379
231-Audit fee	\$120,000	\$105,500	\$14,500
232-Legal fee	\$75,000	\$93,212	(\$18,212)
233-Engineering consulting		\$620	(\$620)
235-Professional fee	\$65,000	\$84,928	(\$19,928)
239-Training and education	\$8,758	\$2,047	\$6,711
242-Computer programming	\$126,510	\$25,039	\$101,471
243-Waste Management	\$7,800	\$4,286	\$3,514
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$45,350	\$28,565	\$16,785
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$10,100	\$8,368	\$1,732
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$6,000	\$5,814	\$186
258-Contracted Services		\$3,555	(\$3,555)
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$8,353	\$5,670	\$2,683
266-Communications	\$51,880	\$29,693	\$22,187
271-Licenses and permits	\$100	\$252	(\$152)
274-Insurance	\$119,906	\$89,916	\$29,990
342-Assessor fees	\$247,820	\$102,335	\$145,485
511-Goods and supplies	\$104,906	\$76,651	\$28,255
521-Fuel and oil	\$35,166	\$13,492	\$21,674
543-Natural gas	\$29,257	\$19,601	\$9,656
544-Electrical power	\$97,324	\$68,493	\$28,831
710-Grants to local governments	\$2,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,000,000
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$394,489		\$394,489
810-Interest and service charges	\$21,000	\$17,100	\$3,900
921-Bad Debt/922-Tax Cancellation/Writeoff	\$1,000,000	\$89,611	\$910,389
Non-TCA projects	\$433,513	\$297,263	\$136,251
DRP Expenses	0	\$82,678	(\$82,678)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$8,011,560</b>	<b>\$4,159,269</b>	<b>\$3,852,291</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$8,011,560</b>	<b>\$4,159,269</b>	<b>\$3,941,902</b>
<b>995- Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$322,004</b>		<b>\$322,004</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$8,333,564</b>	<b>\$4,159,269</b>	<b>\$4,174,295</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$6,426,634)</b>	<b>(\$2,925,737)</b>	<b>(\$3,500,896)</b>



	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>2023 Actual Total</b>	<b>\$ Variance (Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
420-Sales of goods and services	\$126,000	\$587,009	(\$461,009)
909-Other Sources -Grants	\$15,000		\$15,000
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$15,000		\$15,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$156,000</b>	<b>\$587,009</b>	<b>(\$431,009)</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$156,000</b>	<b>\$587,009</b>	<b>(\$431,009)</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$45,408	\$30,291	\$15,117
132-Benefits	\$8,112	\$6,832	\$1,280
136-WCB contributions	\$509	\$105	\$404
151-Honoraria	\$86,300	\$155,858	(\$69,558)
211-Travel and subsistence	\$9,000	\$10,761	(\$1,761)
212-Promotional expense	\$3,000		\$3,000
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$3,630		\$3,630
215-Freight	\$1,000	\$2,259	(\$1,259)
217-Telephone	\$27,440	\$18,221	\$9,219
239-Training and education	\$36,180	\$3,840	\$32,340
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$11,500	\$12,621	(\$1,121)
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$42,000	\$24,188	\$17,812
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$12,000	\$5,951	\$6,049
258-Contracted Services	\$8,500		\$8,500
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$1,500	\$3,698	(\$2,198)
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$27,000	\$2,530	\$24,470
266-Communications	\$69,012	\$44,457	\$24,555
271-Licenses and permits	\$4,000	\$28	\$3,972
274-Insurance	\$53,211	\$40,323	\$12,888
511-Goods and supplies	\$128,984	\$44,722	\$84,262
521-Fuel and oil	\$23,859	\$16,216	\$7,643
543-Natural gas	\$23,818	\$12,529	\$11,289
544-Electrical power	\$20,899	\$12,287	\$8,612
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$100,000		\$100,000
Non-TCA projects	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
DRP Expenses	\$0	\$137,906	(\$137,906)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$776,862</b>	<b>\$585,622</b>	<b>\$191,240</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$776,862</b>	<b>\$585,622</b>	<b>\$191,240</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$195,023</b>		<b>\$195,023</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$971,885</b>	<b>\$585,622</b>	<b>\$386,263</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$815,885)</b>	<b>\$1,387</b>	<b>(\$817,272)</b>

Mackenzie County  
25-Ambulance/Municipal Emergency

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023 Actual</u>	<u>\$ Variance</u>
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(Remaining)</u>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
560-Rental and lease revenue	\$40,500	\$30,375	\$10,125
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$40,500</b>	<b>\$30,375</b>	<b>\$10,125</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$40,500</b>	<b>\$30,375</b>	<b>\$10,125</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$7,000	\$2,879	\$4,121
274-Insurance	\$4,599	\$2,500	\$2,099
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$11,599</b>	<b>\$5,379</b>	<b>\$6,220</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$11,599</b>	<b>\$5,379</b>	<b>\$6,220</b>
<b>995- Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$12,328</b>		<b>\$12,328</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$23,927</b>	<b>\$5,379</b>	<b>\$18,548</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>\$16,573</b>	<b>\$24,996</b>	<b>(\$8,423)</b>

Mackenzie County  
26-Enforcement Services

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
520-Licenses and permits		\$5	(\$5)
530-Fines	\$9,000	\$15,170	(\$6,170)
560-Rental and lease revenue	\$13,827	\$10,370	\$3,457
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$22,827</b>	<b>\$25,545</b>	<b>(\$2,718)</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$22,827</b>	<b>\$25,545</b>	<b>(\$2,718)</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$15,136	\$10,253	\$4,883
132-Benefits	\$2,704	\$2,010	\$694
136-WCB contributions	\$170	\$35	\$135
211-Travel and subsistence	\$2,000	\$30	\$1,970
217-Telephone	\$1,200		\$1,200
223-Subscriptions and publications	\$2,500	\$3,187	(\$687)
235-Professional fee	\$2,000	\$920	\$1,080
236-Enhanced policing fee	\$780,501	\$112,815	\$667,686
239-Training and education	\$8,000	\$2,520	\$5,480
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$12,050	\$194	\$11,856
258-Contracted Services	\$8,000	\$8,036	(\$36)
266-Communications	\$500	\$405	\$95
274-Insurance	\$6,240	\$5,521	\$719
511-Goods and supplies	\$1,000	\$3,824	(\$2,824)
521-Fuel and oil	\$2,668	\$1,127	\$1,541
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$844,669</b>	<b>\$150,877</b>	<b>\$693,792</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$844,669</b>	<b>\$150,877</b>	<b>\$693,792</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$6,404</b>		<b>\$6,404</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$851,073</b>	<b>\$150,877</b>	<b>\$700,196</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$828,246)</b>	<b>(\$125,332)</b>	<b>(\$702,914)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
124-Frontage	\$35,000	\$30,872	\$4,128
261-Ice Bridge	\$130,000	\$135,000	(\$5,000)
420-Sales of goods and services	\$262,036	\$452,529	(\$190,493)
520-Licenses and permits	\$4,000	\$3,085	\$915
560-Rental and lease revenue		\$1,200	(\$1,200)
597-Other revenue		\$298	(\$298)
630-Sale of non-TCA equipment		\$1,610	(\$1,610)
840-Provincial grants	\$242,524		\$242,524
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$50,000		\$50,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$723,560</b>	<b>\$624,593</b>	<b>\$98,967</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$723,560</b>	<b>\$624,593</b>	<b>\$98,967</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$2,925,924	\$1,757,968	\$1,167,956
132-Benefits	\$592,487	\$372,810	\$219,677
136-WCB contributions	\$32,497	\$6,790	\$25,707
150-Isolation cost	\$28,800	\$9,341	\$19,459
211-Travel and subsistence	\$15,600	\$10,065	\$5,535
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$12,450	\$645	\$11,805
215-Freight	\$28,000	\$8,868	\$19,132
217-Telephone	\$16,380	\$8,959	\$7,421
221-Advertising	\$900		\$900
223-Subscriptions and publications	\$3,200		\$3,200
233-Engineering consulting	\$90,000	\$2,882	\$87,118
235-Professional fee	\$10,000	\$18,542	(\$8,542)
239-Training and education	\$6,000	\$2,551	\$3,449
251-Repair & maintenance - bridges	\$159,500	\$15,238	\$144,262
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$28,900	\$20,082	\$8,818
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$201,000	\$141,758	\$59,242
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$60,000	\$27,252	\$32,748
258-Contracted Services	\$225,000	\$129,252	\$95,748
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$1,405,050	\$430,405	\$974,645
261-Ice bridge construction	\$125,000	\$82,458	\$42,542
262-Rental - building and land	\$3,900	\$1,725	\$2,175
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$5,000	\$1,267	\$3,733
266-Communications	\$12,740	\$8,905	\$3,835
271-Licenses and permits	\$3,225	\$11,401	(\$8,176)
274-Insurance	\$190,873	\$157,135	\$33,738
511-Goods and supplies	\$442,239	\$337,441	\$104,798
521-Fuel and oil	\$989,827	\$384,756	\$605,071
531-Chemicals and salt	\$165,000	\$1,110	\$163,890
530-Oil Dust Control	\$100,000	\$91,546	\$8,454
532-Calcium Dust Control	\$130,000	\$69,094	\$60,906
533-Grader blades	\$143,000	\$150,870	(\$7,870)
534-Gravel (apply; supply and apply)	\$1,767,084	\$1,152,356	\$614,728
535-Gravel reclamation cost	\$50,000	\$2,548	\$47,452
994-Change in Inventory	(\$467,084)		(\$467,084)
543-Natural gas	\$22,467	\$12,193	\$10,274
544-Electrical power	\$322,403	\$226,145	\$96,258
550-Carbon Tax	\$200,000	\$125,818	\$74,182
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$1,703,750		\$1,703,750
831-Interest - long term debt	\$317,623	\$136,340	\$181,283
832-Principle - Long term debt	\$942,133	\$467,607	\$474,526
Non-TCA projects		\$0	\$0
DRP Expenses		\$20,680	(\$20,680)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$13,010,868</b>	<b>\$6,404,803</b>	<b>\$6,606,065</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$13,010,868</b>	<b>\$6,404,803</b>	<b>\$6,606,065</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$6,309,770</b>		<b>\$6,309,770</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$19,320,638</b>	<b>\$6,404,803</b>	<b>\$12,915,835</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$18,597,078)</b>	<b>(\$5,780,210)</b>	<b>(\$12,816,868)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
420-Sales of goods and services	\$52,500	\$20,026	\$32,474
560-Rental and lease revenue	\$42,062	\$28,746	\$13,316
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$47,707		\$47,707
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$142,269</b>	<b>\$48,772</b>	<b>\$93,497</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$142,269</b>	<b>\$48,772</b>	<b>\$93,497</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$24,848		\$24,848
132-Benefits	\$6,565		\$6,565
136-WCB contributions	\$278	\$58	\$220
211-Travel and subsistence	\$4,000		\$4,000
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$4,500	\$3,523	\$977
215-Freight	\$1,000	\$89	\$911
223-Subscriptions and publications	\$300		\$300
235-Professional fee	\$10,000	\$2,400	\$7,600
239-Training and education	\$3,200		\$3,200
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$3,500	\$125	\$3,375
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$28,000	\$15,093	\$12,907
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$3,300		\$3,300
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$26,200	\$4,030	\$22,170
262-Rental - building and land	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$0
266-Communications	\$2,720	\$501	\$2,219
271-Licenses and permits	\$725		\$725
274-Insurance	\$7,534	\$6,096	\$1,438
511-Goods and supplies	\$1,000	\$2,137	(\$1,137)
521-Fuel and oil	\$854	\$816	\$38
531-Chemicals and salt	\$17,500		\$17,500
543-Natural gas	\$5,220	\$5,186	\$34
544-Electrical power	\$39,205	\$24,279	\$14,926
Non-TCA projects	\$47,707	\$30,235	\$17,472
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$298,156</b>	<b>\$154,567</b>	<b>\$143,589</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$298,156</b>	<b>\$154,567</b>	<b>\$143,589</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$197,221</b>		<b>\$197,221</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$495,377</b>	<b>\$154,567</b>	<b>\$340,810</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$353,108)</b>	<b>(\$105,796)</b>	<b>(\$247,312)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
124-Frontage		\$5,926	(\$5,926)
420-Sales of goods and services	\$69,000	\$54,034	\$14,966
421-Sale of water - metered	\$2,596,873	\$1,970,477	\$626,396
422-Sale of water - bulk	\$942,693	\$865,389	\$77,304
511-Penalties of AR and utilities	\$12,000	\$15,275	(\$3,275)
521-Offsite levy	\$20,000	\$44,672	(\$24,672)
597-Other revenue		\$800	(\$800)
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$207,842		\$207,842
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$3,848,408</b>	<b>\$2,956,572</b>	<b>\$891,836</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$3,848,408</b>	<b>\$2,956,572</b>	<b>\$891,836</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$578,394	\$371,911	\$206,483
132-Benefits	\$107,964	\$69,077	\$38,887
136-WCB contributions	\$6,575	\$1,342	\$5,233
150-Isolation cost	\$8,640	(\$277)	\$8,917
211-Travel and subsistence	\$39,600	\$11,557	\$28,043
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$3,020	\$1,246	\$1,774
215-Freight	\$81,600	\$50,928	\$30,672
216-Postage	\$21,500		\$21,500
217-Telephone	\$18,000	\$9,972	\$8,028
221-Advertising	\$500		\$500
233-Engineering consulting	\$51,000	\$15,537	\$35,464
239-Training and education	\$10,750	\$2,900	\$7,850
242-Computer programming	\$17,270	\$3,536	\$13,735
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$15,900	\$9,261	\$6,639
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$132,500	\$87,453	\$45,047
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$14,000	\$15,786	(\$1,786)
258-Contracted Services	\$36,600	\$37,034	(\$434)
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$102,200	\$26,569	\$75,631
262-Rental - building and land	\$3,200	\$1,860	\$1,340
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$1,500		\$1,500
266-Communications	\$2,500	\$1,070	\$1,430
271-Licenses and permits	\$950	\$374	\$576
274-Insurance	\$180,654	\$104,056	\$76,598
511-Goods and supplies	\$312,400	\$168,959	\$143,441
515-Lab Testing	\$46,500	\$44,071	\$2,429
521-Fuel and oil	\$68,606	\$31,788	\$36,818
531-Chemicals and salt	\$135,300	\$82,783	\$52,518
543-Natural gas	\$114,159	\$62,204	\$51,955
544-Electrical power	\$343,064	\$193,318	\$149,746
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$923,265		\$923,265
831-Interest - long term debt	\$9,303	\$4,955	\$4,348
832-Principle - Long term debt	\$217,529	\$108,461	\$109,068
921-Bad Debt	\$5,000		\$5,000
Non-TCA projects	\$207,842	\$21,331	\$186,511
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$3,817,785</b>	<b>\$1,539,061</b>	<b>\$2,278,724</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$3,817,785</b>	<b>\$1,539,061</b>	<b>\$2,278,724</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$1,410,469</b>		<b>\$1,410,469</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$5,228,254</b>	<b>\$1,539,061</b>	<b>\$3,689,193</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$1,379,846)</b>	<b>\$1,417,511</b>	<b>(\$2,797,357)</b>

	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>2023 Actual Total</b>	<b>\$ Variance (Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
124-Frontage		\$12,369	(\$12,369)
421-Sale of water - metered	\$1,265,119	\$869,208	\$395,911
422-Sale of water - bulk	\$8,400	\$6,075	\$2,325
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,273,519</b>	<b>\$887,652</b>	<b>\$385,867</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$1,273,519</b>	<b>\$887,652</b>	<b>\$385,867</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$351,829	\$225,977	\$125,852
132-Benefits	\$72,685	\$48,081	\$24,604
136-WCB contributions	\$4,005	\$816	\$3,189
150-Isolation cost	\$5,760		\$5,760
215-Freight	\$4,250	\$760	\$3,490
233-Engineering consulting	\$6,000		\$6,000
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$1,750	\$1,537	\$213
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$16,200	\$4,646	\$11,554
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$138,150	\$24,519	\$113,631
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$3,000	\$1,740	\$1,260
271-Licenses and permits	\$100		\$100
274-Insurance	\$13,448	\$10,753	\$2,695
511-Goods and supplies	\$10,500	\$4,600	\$5,900
515-Lab Testing	\$5,500	\$652	\$4,848
531-Chemicals and salt	\$36,000	\$33,088	\$2,912
543-Natural gas	\$6,156	\$3,530	\$2,626
544-Electrical power	\$34,394	\$17,660	\$16,734
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$539,985		\$539,985
831-Interest - long term debt	\$6,809	\$624	\$6,185
832-Principle - Long term debt	\$23,458	\$11,604	\$11,854
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,279,979</b>	<b>\$390,588</b>	<b>\$889,391</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$1,279,979</b>	<b>\$390,588</b>	<b>\$889,391</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$698,464</b>		<b>\$698,464</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,978,443</b>	<b>\$390,588</b>	<b>\$1,587,855</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$704,924)</b>	<b>\$497,064</b>	<b>(\$1,201,988)</b>

Mackenzie County  
43-Solid Waste Disposal

	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>2023 Actual Total</b>	<b>\$ Variance (Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
420-Sales of goods and services	\$432,290	\$266,783	\$165,507
909-Other Sources -Grants	\$0	\$21,968	(\$21,968)
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$7,000		\$7,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$439,290</b>	<b>\$288,751</b>	<b>\$150,539</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$439,290</b>	<b>\$288,751</b>	<b>\$150,539</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$58,584	\$29,909	\$28,675
132-Benefits	\$10,951	\$5,967	\$4,984
136-WCB contributions	\$656	\$136	\$520
221-Advertising	\$800		\$800
243-Waste Management	\$454,267	\$287,023	\$167,244
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$5,400	\$2,458	\$2,942
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$12,750	\$382	\$12,368
258-Contracted Services	\$141,352	\$93,452	\$47,900
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$36,600	\$6,241	\$30,359
271-Licenses and permits	\$200	\$5	\$195
274-Insurance	\$5,908	\$5,284	\$624
511-Goods and supplies	\$2,100	\$1,760	\$340
521-Fuel and oil	\$12,505	\$6,126	\$6,379
544-Electrical power	\$17,922	\$9,126	\$8,796
810-Interest and service charges	\$1,360	\$800	\$560
Non-TCA projects	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$5,000
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$791,355</b>	<b>\$473,669</b>	<b>\$317,686</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$791,355</b>	<b>\$473,669</b>	<b>\$317,686</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$18,112</b>		<b>\$18,112</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$809,467</b>	<b>\$473,669</b>	<b>\$335,798</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$370,177)</b>	<b>(\$184,918)</b>	<b>(\$185,259)</b>



Mackenzie County  
51-Family Community Services

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023 Actual</u>	<u>\$ Variance</u>
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(Remaining)</u>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
840-Provincial grants	\$308,763	\$229,052	\$79,711
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$2,520		\$2,520
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$311,283</b>	<b>\$229,052</b>	<b>\$82,231</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$311,283</b>	<b>\$229,052</b>	<b>\$82,231</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles		\$20	(\$20)
274-Insurance		\$355	(\$355)
735-Grants to other organizations	\$894,410	\$807,402	\$87,008
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$20,000		\$20,000
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$914,410</b>	<b>\$807,778</b>	<b>\$106,632</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$914,410</b>	<b>\$807,778</b>	<b>\$106,632</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$914,410</b>	<b>\$807,778</b>	<b>\$106,632</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$603,127)</b>	<b>(\$578,726)</b>	<b>(\$24,401)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
420-Sales of goods and services	\$23,000	\$24,115	(\$1,115)
520-Licenses and permits	\$50,000	\$61,046	(\$11,046)
526-Safety code permits	\$350,000	\$399,064	(\$49,064)
525-Subdivision fees		(\$575)	\$575
531-Safety code fees	\$12,000	\$12,786	(\$786)
840-Provincial grants	\$55,800		\$55,800
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$390,223		\$390,223
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$881,023</b>	<b>\$496,436</b>	<b>\$384,587</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$881,023</b>	<b>\$496,436</b>	<b>\$384,587</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$653,102	\$473,405	\$179,697
132-Benefits	\$138,917	\$97,713	\$41,204
136-WCB contributions	\$6,722	\$1,516	\$5,206
211-Travel and subsistence	\$9,000	\$392	\$8,608
212-Promotional expense	\$2,000		\$2,000
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$6,535	\$3,865	\$2,670
215-Freight	\$2,000	\$754	\$1,246
216-Postage	\$4,000	\$497	\$3,503
217-Telephone	\$980	\$623	\$357
221-Advertising	\$3,000		\$3,000
232-Legal fee	\$10,000		\$10,000
235-Professional fee	\$20,000	\$5,704	\$14,296
239-Training and education	\$4,400	\$754	\$3,646
242-Computer programming	\$75,875	\$33,399	\$42,476
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$2,000	\$2,893	(\$893)
258-Contracted Services	\$250,000	\$95,896	\$154,104
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$12,000	\$1,292	\$10,708
271-Licenses and permits	\$2,000	\$11,572	(\$9,572)
272-Damage claims		\$1,000	(\$1,000)
274-Insurance	\$5,060	\$4,662	\$398
511-Goods and supplies	\$14,000	\$19,415	(\$5,415)
521-Fuel and oil	\$2,506	\$3,667	(\$1,161)
Non-TCA projects	\$446,023	\$32,858	\$413,165
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,670,120</b>	<b>\$791,876</b>	<b>\$878,244</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$1,670,120</b>	<b>\$791,876</b>	<b>\$878,244</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$10,783</b>		<b>\$10,783</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,680,903</b>	<b>\$791,876</b>	<b>\$889,027</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$799,880)</b>	<b>(\$295,440)</b>	<b>(\$504,440)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
420-Sales of goods and services	\$6,700	\$14,513	(\$7,813)
560-Rental and lease revenue	\$29,178	\$24,816	\$4,362
840-Provincial grants	\$176,247	\$176,247	\$0
909-Other Sources -Grants	\$39,000	\$46,145	(\$7,145)
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$56,939		\$56,939
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$308,064</b>	<b>\$261,721</b>	<b>\$46,343</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$308,064</b>	<b>\$261,721</b>	<b>\$46,343</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$361,204	\$227,005	\$134,199
132-Benefits	\$69,161	\$46,094	\$23,067
136-WCB contributions	\$4,046	\$838	\$3,208
211-Travel and subsistence	\$12,840	\$1,954	\$10,886
212-Promotional expense	\$2,000	\$1,822	\$178
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$5,495	\$1,219	\$4,276
217-Telephone	\$2,220	\$1,809	\$411
221-Advertising	\$500	\$250	\$250
233-Engineering consulting	\$20,000		\$20,000
235-Professional fee	\$79,000	\$73,864	\$5,136
239-Training and education	\$1,450	\$190	\$1,260
242-Computer programming	\$9,000		\$9,000
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$500		\$500
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$10,000	\$1,654	\$8,346
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$8,000	\$5,158	\$2,842
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$276,500	\$101,663	\$174,838
260-Roadside Mowing & Spraying	\$465,801	\$362,579	\$103,222
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$4,000		\$4,000
271-Licenses and permits		\$84	(\$84)
272-Damage claims		\$12,500	(\$12,500)
274-Insurance	\$17,031	\$15,712	\$1,319
511-Goods and supplies	\$146,933	\$100,102	\$46,831
521-Fuel and oil	\$24,007	\$8,753	\$15,254
531-Chemicals and salt	\$75,000	\$73,593	\$1,407
735-Grants to other organizations	\$155,000	\$133,391	\$21,609
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$500,000		\$500,000
Non-TCA projects	\$87,539	\$57,970	\$29,569
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,337,227</b>	<b>\$1,228,204</b>	<b>\$1,109,023</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$2,337,227</b>	<b>\$1,228,204</b>	<b>\$1,109,023</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$40,206</b>		<b>\$40,206</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,377,433</b>	<b>\$1,228,204</b>	<b>\$1,149,229</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$2,069,369)</b>	<b>(\$966,483)</b>	<b>(\$1,102,886)</b>

	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>2023 Actual Total</b>	<b>\$ Variance (Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
424-Sale of land	\$10,000		\$10,000
522-Municipal reserve revenue	\$80,000	(\$20,297)	\$100,297
525-Subdivision fees	\$125,000	\$55,476	\$69,524
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$215,000</b>	<b>\$35,179</b>	<b>\$179,821</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$215,000</b>	<b>\$35,179</b>	<b>\$179,821</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$259,130	\$183,022	\$76,108
132-Benefits	\$52,213	\$37,025	\$15,188
136-WCB contributions	\$2,879	\$601	\$2,278
211-Travel and subsistence	\$2,000	\$488	\$1,512
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$1,225	\$725	\$500
216-Postage	\$2,000		\$2,000
217-Telephone	\$960	\$351	\$609
233-Engineering consulting	\$30,000	\$3,734	\$26,266
235-Professional fee	\$25,000	\$11,740	\$13,260
239-Training and education	\$2,000	\$928	\$1,072
263-Rental - vehicle and equipment	\$5,400	\$4,050	\$1,350
511-Goods and supplies	\$4,000	\$555	\$3,445
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$80,000		\$80,000
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$466,807</b>	<b>\$243,219</b>	<b>\$223,588</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$466,807</b>	<b>\$243,219</b>	<b>\$223,588</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$466,807</b>	<b>\$243,219</b>	<b>\$223,588</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$251,807)</b>	<b>(\$208,041)</b>	<b>(\$43,766)</b>

Mackenzie County  
71-Recreation Department

	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>2023 Actual Total</b>	<b>\$ Variance (Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$17,212		\$17,212
940-Contribution from Capital Reserves	\$31,944		\$31,944
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$49,156</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$49,156</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$49,156</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$49,156</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
274-Insurance	\$91,102	\$54,678	\$36,424
735-Grants to other organizations	\$1,079,252	\$1,042,025	\$37,227
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$60,000		\$60,000
831-Interest - long term debt		(\$949)	\$949
Non-TCA projects	\$57,070	\$42,791	\$14,279
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,287,424</b>	<b>\$1,138,545</b>	<b>\$148,879</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$1,287,424</b>	<b>\$1,138,545</b>	<b>\$148,879</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$644,710</b>		<b>\$644,710</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,932,134</b>	<b>\$1,138,545</b>	<b>\$793,589</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$1,882,978)</b>	<b>(\$1,138,545)</b>	<b>(\$744,433)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
420-Sales of goods and services	\$73,560	\$33,071	\$40,489
930-Contribution from Operating Reserves	\$30,000		\$30,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$103,560</b>	<b>\$33,071</b>	<b>\$70,489</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$103,560</b>	<b>\$33,071</b>	<b>\$70,489</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
110-Wages and salaries	\$98,922	\$81,834	\$17,088
132-Benefits	\$14,923	\$13,809	\$1,114
136-WCB contributions	\$1,108	\$230	\$878
211-Travel and subsistence	\$2,400	\$501	\$1,899
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$1,720	\$245	\$1,475
215-Freight	\$1,100	\$15	\$1,085
217-Telephone	\$1,000	\$1,204	(\$204)
221-Advertising	\$400		\$400
233-Engineering consulting	\$20,000	\$9,279	\$10,721
235-Professional fee	\$100		\$100
239-Training and education	\$2,400	\$1,200	\$1,200
252-Repair & maintenance - buildings	\$8,000	\$8,500	(\$500)
253-Repair & maintenance - equipment	\$19,000	\$3,492	\$15,508
255-Repair & maintenance - vehicles	\$12,000	\$4,274	\$7,726
258-Contracted Services	\$92,700	\$61,144	\$31,556
259-Repair & maintenance - structural	\$85,800	\$33,339	\$52,461
266-Communications	\$1,000	\$510	\$490
271-Licenses and permits	\$4,000	\$677	\$3,323
274-Insurance	\$4,018	\$2,496	\$1,522
511-Goods and supplies	\$33,300	\$20,748	\$12,552
521-Fuel and oil	\$2,606	\$596	\$2,010
543-Natural gas	\$984	\$515	\$469
544-Electrical power	\$2,946	\$878	\$2,068
763/764-Contributed to Reserve	\$50,000		\$50,000
Non-TCA projects	\$30,000	\$27,262	\$2,738
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$490,427</b>	<b>\$272,747</b>	<b>\$217,680</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$490,427</b>	<b>\$272,747</b>	<b>\$217,680</b>
<b>995-Amortization of TCA</b>	<b>\$113,327</b>		<b>\$113,327</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$603,754</b>	<b>\$272,747</b>	<b>\$331,007</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$500,194)</b>	<b>(\$239,676)</b>	<b>(\$260,518)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
<hr/>			
<hr/>			
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
212-Promotional expense	\$11,000	\$4,331	\$6,670
214-Memberships & conference fees	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$0
221-Advertising	\$5,000	\$8,775	(\$3,775)
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$28,500</b>	<b>\$25,606</b>	<b>\$2,895</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$28,500</b>	<b>\$25,606</b>	<b>\$2,895</b>
<hr/>			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$28,500</b>	<b>\$25,606</b>	<b>\$2,895</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$28,500)</b>	<b>(\$25,606)</b>	<b>(\$2,895)</b>

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>\$ Variance</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(Remaining)</b>
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>			
940-Contribution from Capital Reserves	\$20,000		\$20,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
274-Insurance	\$3,653	\$3,176	\$477
735-Grants to other organizations	\$262,082	\$255,308	\$6,774
Non-TCA projects	\$20,000		\$20,000
DRP Expenses			
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$285,735</b>	<b>\$258,484</b>	<b>\$27,251</b>
<b>Excluding Requisitions</b>	<b>\$285,735</b>	<b>\$258,484</b>	<b>\$27,251</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$285,735</b>	<b>\$258,484</b>	<b>\$27,251</b>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY)</b>	<b>(\$265,735)</b>	<b>(\$258,484)</b>	<b>(\$7,251)</b>



## Investment Report for Period Ending August 31, 2023

### Reconciled Bank Balance on August 31, 2023

Reconciled Bank Balance 31-Aug-23 \$ 16,285,517

### Investment Values on August 31, 2023

Short term T-Bill (1044265-26)	\$	0.00	
Long term investments (EM0-0374-A)	\$	8,995,463.24	
Short term notice on amount 31 days	\$	6,527,033.69	
Short term notice on amount 31 days (Mitigation)	\$	1,653,682.65	
Short term notice on amount 60 days	\$	12,539,192.70	
90 Day Non Redeemable GIC	\$	4,145,095.79	
Vision Credit Union - 2 year	\$	2,197,694.07	
<b>Total Investments</b>			<b>\$ 36,058,162</b>
<b>Total Bank Balance and Investments</b>			<b>\$ 52,343,679</b>

These balances include 'market value changes'.

### Revenues

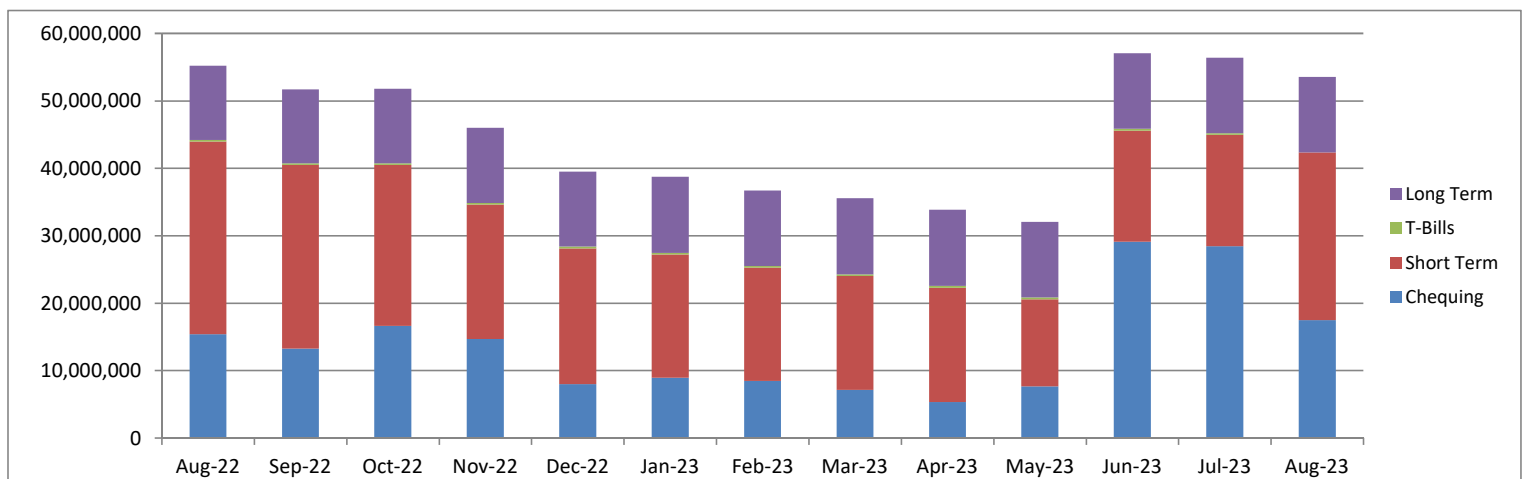
Interest received from investments  
Interest accrued from investments but not received.

Total YTD	Short Term YTD	Long Term YTD
\$ 452,398.78	\$ 317,439.43	\$ 134,959.35
\$ 254,115.23	\$ -	\$ 254,115.23
<b>\$ 706,514.01</b>	<b>\$ 317,439.43</b>	<b>\$ 389,074.58</b>

Interest received, chequing account  
**Total interest revenues before investment manager fees**  
Deduct: investment manager fees for investments  
**Total interest revenues after investment manager fees**

\$ 462,182.74	\$ 462,182.74	
<b>\$ 1,168,696.75</b>	<b>\$ 779,622.17</b>	<b>\$ 389,074.58</b>
\$ (17,655.38)		\$ (17,655.38)
<b>\$ 1,151,041.37</b>	<b>\$ 779,622.17</b>	<b>\$ 371,419.20</b>

**Balances in the Various Accounts - Last 13 Months**



**MACKENZIE COUNTY**

**ONE TIME Projects CARRIED FORWARD TO 2023**

Project Description	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	2023 BUDGET	TOTAL COSTS	2023 COSTS	2023 REMAINING BUDGET	TENDERED Y/N - Closing Date	ANTICIPATED ARRIVAL/ COMPLETION	PROJECT NOTES
<b>Director of Community Services</b>								
<b>(12) - Administration Department</b>								
FRIAA FFP22-28, FFP22-29	179,550	179,550	178,250	178,250	1,300			Complete
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>179,550</b>	<b>179,550</b>	<b>178,250</b>	<b>178,250</b>	<b>1,300</b>			
<b>(23) - Fire Department</b>								
FV - Fire Dept Training Props (2018)	30,000	30,000	-	-	30,000			Applied for and awaiting FCC AgriSpirit Grant Fund - Fall 2023
<b>Total department 23</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30,000</b>			
<b>(43) - Solid Waste Disposal</b>								
Waste Recepticals - Household (2022)	30,000	30,000	25,000	25,000	5,000			Complete
<b>Total department 43</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>			
<b>(71) - Recreation</b>								
FV - Emergent Repairs Boiler 2 (2023)	14,776	14,776	14,756	14,756	20			complete
FV - Compressor Repair (2023)	16,144	16,144	7,385	7,385	8,759			project started
LC - Hot Water Tank Replacement (2023)	10,300	10,300	10,300	10,300	-			complete
ZA - Community Hall Kitchen Connection(2023)	10,350	10,350	10,350	10,350	-			complete
LC - Splash Park (2023)	5,500	5,500	-	-	5,500			awaiting invoice
<b>Total department 71</b>	<b>57,070</b>	<b>57,070</b>	<b>42,791</b>	<b>42,791</b>	<b>14,279</b>			
<b>(72) - Parks</b>								
FV Fishing Opportunities (MARA, Tompkins Twin Ponds) (2023)	30,000	30,000	-	27,262	2,738			
<b>Total department 72</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,262</b>	<b>2,738</b>			
<b>Director of Planning &amp; Agriculture</b>								
<b>(61) - Planning &amp; Development Department</b>								
Municipal Development Plan	305,000	9,233	299,727	3,960	5,273			Ongoing, MDP to be completed in 2023
LC - Atlas Landing Dispositions (2022)	45,000	21,690	27,708	4,398	17,292			water wells, boat launch/dock corrected, Atlas gravel pit still in progress
La Crete Area Structure Plan (2022)	150,000	150,000	-	-	150,000			RFP to be awarded after MDP approval
<b>Total department 61</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>180,923</b>	<b>327,435</b>	<b>8,358</b>	<b>172,565</b>			
<b>(63) - Agricultural Services Department</b>								
Irrigation District Feasibility Study	30,000	30,000	-	-	30,000			ASB to give direction
2023 Mackenzie Agricultural Fair & Tradeshaw	57,539	57,539	57,970	57,970	(431)			
<b>Total department 63</b>	<b>87,539</b>	<b>87,539</b>	<b>57,970</b>	<b>57,970</b>	<b>29,569</b>			
<b>Director of Projects &amp; Infrastructure</b>								
<b>(12) - Administration Department</b>								
FV - Asset Management (2021)	125,000	96,301	87,699	59,000	37,301	N		project completed
Recreational Dispositions	125,000	125,000	60,013	60,013	64,988	N		all applications have been submitted and all are in active consultations
Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (2023)	114,100	114,100	24,500	24,500	89,600	N	2024	Phase 1 completed
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>364,100</b>	<b>335,401</b>	<b>172,211</b>	<b>143,513</b>	<b>191,889</b>			
<b>(33) - Airport</b>								
Airport Master Plan (CF 2016)	90,000	47,707	72,528	30,235	17,472	N	2024	Surveying completed
<b>Total department 33</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>47,707</b>	<b>72,528</b>	<b>30,235</b>	<b>17,472</b>			
<b>(61) - Planning &amp; Development Department</b>								
LC - Storm Water Plan (2022)	151,000	151,000	-	-	151,000	Y-Oct.10	2024	Recommendation for awarding being brought to Oct. 25th Council mtg
<b>Total department 61</b>	<b>151,000</b>	<b>151,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>151,000</b>			
<b>Director of Utilities</b>								
<b>(41) - Water</b>								
LC -La Crete Future Water Supply Concept (2018)	200,000	190,910	24,090	15,000	175,910		December 31, 2023	Going to start Phase 2 of the project this month.
Water Diversion License Review	55,000	16,932	44,399	6,331	10,601		June 1, 2024	Waiting for Permanent License review by AEP.
<b>Total department 41</b>	<b>255,000</b>	<b>207,842</b>	<b>68,489</b>	<b>21,331</b>	<b>186,511</b>			
<b>Manager of Legislative &amp; Support Services</b>								
<b>(12) - Administration Department</b>								
Riskpro Initiative Program	32,662	32,662	-	-	32,662			Purchases made, awaiting final invoicing
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>32,662</b>	<b>32,662</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,662</b>			
<b>(74) - Library</b>								
LC Library - Building Extension Engineering	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000			Redrafting a smaller expansion
<b>Total department 74</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20,000</b>			
<b>TOTAL 2023 ONE TIME Projects</b>	<b>1,826,921</b>	<b>1,389,694</b>	<b>944,674</b>	<b>534,709</b>	<b>854,985</b>			
<b>2022 Contingent on Grant Funding</b>								
Bridge Maintenance (7 bridges)	250,000	-	-	-	-			
<b>2022 Contingent on Grant Funding- Total</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>			

**MACKENZIE COUNTY**

**TCA Projects CARRIED FORWARD TO 2023**

Project Description	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	2023 BUDGET	TOTAL COSTS	2023 COSTS	2023 REMAINING BUDGET	TENDERED Y/N - Closing Date	ANTICIPATED ARRIVAL /COMPLETION	PROJECT NOTES
<b>Director of Community Services</b>								
<b>(23) - Fire Department</b>								
FV - Training Facility (2017)	20,000	1,733	18,267	-	1,733			Applied for and awaiting FCC AgriSpirit Grant Fund - Fall 2023
LC - Training Grounds (2022)	33,000	2,562	30,438	-	2,562			Complete
AFRRCs Radios	181,650	181,650	161,664	161,664	19,986			95% Complete Additional Equipment on Order
LC - Thermal Imaging search and rescue / drone	10,000	10,000	-	-	10,000			Ag Department have Thermal Drone - Camera is Ordered
Vacant Lot Purchase 10165-100 Ave (2023)	310,000	310,000	310,920	310,920	(920)			All paperwork is completed and signed - Awaiting Land Title.
<b>Total department 23</b>	<b>554,650</b>	<b>505,945</b>	<b>521,289</b>	<b>472,584</b>	<b>33,361</b>			

<b>(71) - Recreation</b>								
FV - Outdoor Rink Repairs (2020)	14,000	14,000	-	-	14,000			No update received
FV - Purchase Outhouses for Rodeo Grounds (2020)	10,000	3,675	6,325	-	3,675			Complete
LC - Northern Lights Recreation Center New Arena (2021)	6,632,288	361,110	6,271,178	-	361,110			Fubndraising ongoing
FV - Main lobby epoxy floor (2022)	8,400	8,400	-	-	8,400		Fall 2023	
FV - Roof leak exploration and repair (2022)	15,000	15,000	-	-	15,000		Fall 2023	In Progress
FV - Boiler Replacement (2023)	13,474	13,474	13,474	13,474	0			Complete
LC - Wheel Chair Lift Project (2023)	96,000	96,000	12,500	12,500	83,500			Project started
LC - Parking lot repair (2023)	150,000	150,000	-	-	150,000			Project started - awaiting invoice payment October
LC - Infrared Camera (2023)	7,000	7,000	-	-	7,000			Complete - awaiting invoice in October
<b>Total department 71</b>	<b>6,946,162</b>	<b>668,659</b>	<b>6,303,476</b>	<b>25,974</b>	<b>642,685</b>			

<b>(72) - Parks &amp; Playgrounds Department</b>								
Hutch Lake Campground Improvements (2017)	112,000	2,228	110,110	338	1,890		Fall 2023	Funding to be amalgamated with 6-72-30-41
Vanguard Subdivision Playground Equipment (2019)	30,000	580	29,420	-	580			Complete
Wadlin Lake Dock Piling Improvements - Firewood Compound (2019)	13,000	10,045	2,955	-	10,045		Fall 2023	Awaiting Quotes - May combine with 6-72-30-40
FV - Streetscape (2017)	150,000	111,641	50,359	12,000	99,641			Project Development
Streetscape - La Crete (2020)	21,000	291	20,709	-	291			Project Development
New Hamlet Park (Jannelles Park LC) (2021)	38,000	8,685	29,315	-	8,685			Requires further development - No Longer Jannelles Park
Water Line Extension at Jubilee Park (2021)	17,955	17,955	7,020	7,020	10,935		Fall 2023	Completed
FV - Streetscape Second dock project (2021)	25,394	15,365	10,029	-	15,365		Fall 2023	Contractors have been engaged.
Wadlin Lake Campground - Major Improvements (2022)	50,000	16,559	35,078	1,638	14,922			Awaiting Quotes - May combine with 6-72-30-30
Hutch Lake Campground - Major Improvements (2022)	50,000	50,000	4,916	4,916	45,085		Fall 2023	Funding to be amalgamated with 6-72-30-14
Bridge Campground - Major Improvements (2022)	100,000	100,000	210	210	99,790			Public Consultation Completed - CS 2023-10-26
Hamlet Park Development (2022)	50,000	50,000	2,000	2,000	48,000			Project Development
Janelles Park Development - Cost Share	-	-	-	-	-			Funding updated in October 2023
Wadlin Lake Campground - Pickleball (2023)	55,000	55,000	-	-	55,000		Spring 2024	Concrete poured - Completion Spring 2024
La Crete Walking Trail 109 ave to 113 street (2023)	64,000	64,000	-	-	64,000		Fall 2023	In progress
Machesis Lake Campground Improvements (2023)	30,000	30,000	-	-	30,000			Project Development
<b>Total department 72</b>	<b>806,349</b>	<b>532,348</b>	<b>302,121</b>	<b>28,121</b>	<b>504,228</b>			

<b>Director of Finance</b>								
<b>(12) - Administration</b>								
FV - Flood Mitigation (2021)	16,083,740	4,241,011	14,253,129	2,410,399	1,830,611			Ongoing. Requesting extension to 2025 due to delays in services, and construction of sites
FV-Interim Housing Project (2022)	500,000	122,373	294,926	(82,701)	205,074			6-Trailers still on location to assist with resident moves. 2 sold to mitigation program
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>16,583,740</b>	<b>4,363,384</b>	<b>14,548,054</b>	<b>2,327,698</b>	<b>2,035,686</b>			

**MACKENZIE COUNTY**

**TCA Projects CARRIED FORWARD TO 2023**

Project Description	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	2023 BUDGET	TOTAL COSTS	2023 COSTS	2023 REMAINING BUDGET	TENDERED Y/N - Closing Date	ANTICIPATED ARRIVAL /COMPLETION	PROJECT NOTES
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**Director of Planning & Agriculture**

**(12) - Administration**

LC - 100 Street Plan (2020)	65,000	45,457	29,633	10,090	35,367			Agreements complete, North lots to be signed this week. Project to be completed by December.
PLS 140031-South of High Level Lands (2023)	1,313,858	1,313,858	-	-	1,313,858			Offer to Purchase signed, awaiting docs from the province for land transfer
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>1,378,858</b>	<b>1,359,315</b>	<b>29,633</b>	<b>10,090</b>	<b>1,349,225</b>			

**(61) - Planning & Development**

GIS Computer (2022)	7,500	7,500	-	-	7,500			To be ordered in 2023, waiting for new product release
<b>Total department 61</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,500</b>			

**Director of Projects & Infrastructure**

**(12) - Administration**

Land Purchase - South of High Level (2022)	25,000	25,000	13,448	13,448	11,552			future planning in progress
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>13,448</b>	<b>13,448</b>	<b>11,552</b>			

**(32) - Transportation Department**

Gravel Reserve (CF 2014)	150,000	17,714	132,286	-	17,714			
LC - 9 Street Lights - 94 Ave 106 St to Pioneer Drive (2019)	75,000	75,000	69,959	69,959	5,041	N	Oct-23	complete
LC - 109 Avenue Widening (2021)	32,463	(0)	32,463	-	(0)			remove
BF 78209 NW 17 105 14 W5M - Teepee Creek (2022)	550,000	538,504	17,673	6,177	532,327	N	2024	Drafting Tender
288m asphalt upgrade 91 st (2022)	130,000	130,000	-	-	130,000			Construction complete finalizing payment
BF 81124 (2022)	500,000	498,070	41,874	39,943	458,126	Y	Oct-23	Construction Complete
98 street/98 avenue Asphalt (2023)	900,000	900,000	-	-	900,000			Project on hold
113 Street Asphalt - North Rgd RD 154/155 - ENGINEERING ONLY (2023)	50,000	50,000	-	-	50,000			engaging engineers
109 Ave traffic lights (2023)	467,275	467,275	5,368	5,368	461,907	Y		civil works to be completed in Nov. & lights completed beginning of 2024
Bridge File 76278 Engineering (2023)	50,000	50,000	-	-	50,000			STIP Funding denied, engineering moving slowly forward
Bridge File 78209 Engineering (2023)	50,000	50,000	-	-	50,000			duplicate
Bridge File 81336 Engineering (2023)	40,000	40,000	-	-	40,000			STIP Funding denied engineering moving slowly forward
Bridge Maintenance (2023)	380,000	380,000	56,995	56,995	323,005	N	ongoing	quotes have been requested none have been received as of yet
LC - 101 St/109 Ave Intersection Upgrade (2023)	235,000	235,000	3,243	3,243	231,757	Y		Storm improvements, road widening base and curb & gutter complete
Asphalt Paving 105 Avenue (2023)	52,944	52,944	43,064	43,064	9,880	N		Construction complete
LC- Crosswalk 100st/94 ave (2023)	80,000	80,000	-	-	80,000	y	Nov-23	Concrete walks/pararamps complete
<b>Total department 32</b>	<b>3,742,682</b>	<b>3,564,507</b>	<b>402,924</b>	<b>224,750</b>	<b>3,339,758</b>			

**(33) - Airports**

FV -Airport - Lighting Upgrade (2022)	260,000	41,922	218,078	-	41,922		early 2024	
LC - Heated Airport Storage Shed - Incl PW Storage Shed (2023)	170,000	170,000	1,500	1,500	168,500			expected completion by end of 2023
<b>Total department 33</b>	<b>430,000</b>	<b>211,922</b>	<b>219,578</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>210,422</b>			

**(41) - Water Treatment & Distribution Department**

LC-North Sanitary Trunk Sewer (2021)	280,000	82,927	207,367	10,294	72,633		completion 2025	trunk main design complete/lift station near completion/looking at AMWWP funding
<b>Total department 41</b>	<b>280,000</b>	<b>82,927</b>	<b>207,367</b>	<b>10,294</b>	<b>72,633</b>			

**MACKENZIE COUNTY**

**TCA Projects CARRIED FORWARD TO 2023**

Project Description	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	2023 BUDGET	TOTAL COSTS	2023 COSTS	2023 REMAINING BUDGET	TENDERED Y/N - Closing Date	ANTICIPATED ARRIVAL /COMPLETION	PROJECT NOTES
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**(42) - Sewer Disposal Department**

LC - North Storm-Pond A (2021)	1,520,000	133,771	1,386,709	480	133,291			project complete
<b>Total department 42</b>	<b>1,520,000</b>	<b>133,771</b>	<b>1,386,709</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>133,291</b>			

**Manager of Operations**

**(32) - Transportation Department**

OR01 New Road Infrastructure Endeavour to Assist (2020)	1,605,615	500,000	1,153,877	48,262	451,738		Ongoing	Ongoing
30 m Right of way for road widening - various locations (2021)	200,000	104,870	97,986	2,856	102,014		Ongoing	Ongoing
Rebuild TWP Rd 1044 (1 mile) (2021)	300,000	220,428	166,429	86,857	133,571		Complete	
Washout & Culvert Upgrades (2021)	852,000	447,417	406,607	25,098	422,319		Ongoing	Ongoing
TWP RD 1050 (27 baseline) 2 miles (2022)	700,000	686,819	537,063	523,881	162,937		Complete	brush burning to be done in November
Zama Pavement Repair (2022)	1,000,000	872,928	127,072	-	872,928		Maint. Ongoing	Maint. Ongoing
Range Road 154 - In 108-15 (2022)	175,000	175,000	152,763	152,763	22,238		Complete	brush burning to be done in November
Rebuild 2 miles Heliport Road (Twp 1102 - Rge Rd 184-190) (2022)	250,000	232,700	168,738	151,439	81,262		Complete	
Machesis Lake - Road Rebuild and section Repairs (2022)	100,000	100,000	99,081	99,081	919		Complete	
Rebuild Fox Lake Road (2 miles) - spot repair (2022)	85,000	77,866	34,729	27,595	50,271		Complete	
Rebuild Rge Rd 155 (2022)	1,100,000	127,326	1,065,334	92,659	34,666		Complete	
Twp 1092 - repack, gravel, oil (2023)	275,000	275,000	143,836	143,836	131,164		Complete	
Buffalo Head Prairie/Blue Hills Road Rebuild (2023)	250,000	250,000	32,509	32,509	217,491		Complete	
Angle Road HL South - Rebuild (2023)	250,000	250,000	206,127	206,127	43,873		Complete	brush burning to be done in November
Lambert Point Intersection TWP 1085 RR 122 (2023)	60,000	60,000	37,223	37,223	22,777		Complete	
Culvert Erosion Repair TWP 1090 - RR 150 (2023)	125,000	125,000	105,073	105,073	19,927		Complete	
<b>Total department 32</b>	<b>7,327,615</b>	<b>4,505,354</b>	<b>4,534,446</b>	<b>1,735,258</b>	<b>2,770,096</b>			

**Director of Utilities**

**(41) - Water Treatment & Distribution Department**

LC - Well Number 4 (2016)	1,348,966	722,257	923,963	297,254	425,003		December 31, 2023	Pipe weld issues now. Commissioning once that is done.
ZA - Water Treatment Plant Upgrading (2017)	1,153,569	168,116	1,014,817	29,364	138,752		January 2, 2024	Warranty over in January. Have one change order in progress but otherwise complete.
FV - Frozen Water Services Repairs (River Road) (2015)	280,700	20,443	260,257	-	20,443		December 31, 2023	Have last frozen service scheduled with Green Acres.
LC - Waterline Bluehills (2015)	833,250	690,722	142,528	-	690,722		N/A	Have add preliminary discussion with engineers on grant funding.
FV - Rural Water Supply North of the Peace River (2018)	420,000	166,251	253,749	-	166,251		N/A	Have add preliminary discussion with engineers on grant funding.
Water Point Building Replacements (BHP) (2023)	31,900	31,900	27,509	27,509	4,391		November 1, 2023	Buildings complete and installed. Some eavestroughing left to do.
FV - Water Treatment Plant - Clarifiers Valves (2023)	83,800	83,800	27,143	27,143	56,657		December 31, 2023	Valves have arrived in July. Need to schedule with Ranwal for install.
WTP Scada Upgrade Zama (2023)	65,000	65,000	51,973	51,973	13,027		October 31, 2023	Project complete. Follow up to fix glitches and bugs left.
<b>Total department 41</b>	<b>4,217,185</b>	<b>1,948,489</b>	<b>2,701,939</b>	<b>433,243</b>	<b>1,515,246</b>			

**(42) - Sewer Disposal Department**

FV - Sewer Upgrades (2022)	1,226,000	1,218,382	8,551	933	1,217,449		N/A	Will use some of the funds for sewer repairs in Fort Vermilion in the next year.
<b>Total department 42</b>	<b>1,226,000</b>	<b>1,218,382</b>	<b>8,551</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>1,217,449</b>			

**Manager of Fleet Maintenance**

**(12) - Administration**

Truck/Vehicle - Office FV (2023)	35,000	35,000	34,973	34,973	27		complete	
Truck/Vehicle - Office LC (2023)	35,000	35,000	34,973	34,973	27		complete	
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>69,946</b>	<b>69,946</b>	<b>55</b>			

**MACKENZIE COUNTY**

**TCA Projects CARRIED FORWARD TO 2023**

Project Description	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	2023 BUDGET	TOTAL COSTS	2023 COSTS	2023 REMAINING BUDGET	TENDERED Y/N - Closing Date	ANTICIPATED ARRIVAL /COMPLETION	PROJECT NOTES
<b>(32) - Transportation Department</b>								
AWD 160M Graders X3 (2021)	1,714,101	1,714,101	1,714,101	1,714,101	-		complete	
Truck - Director of Projects & Infrastructure, CAO, AG (2023)	189,000	189,000	185,498	185,498	3,502		complete	
Sidewalk Sweeper - FV (2023)	71,400	71,400	-	-	71,400		on-order Oct 2023	on-order Oct 2023
AWD 160M Graders X3 (2023)	2,103,759	2,103,759	-	-	2,103,759		On-order May 2024	On-order May 2024
ZA - Vehicle Hoist (2023)	24,000	24,000	20,987	20,987	3,013		complete	
<b>Total department 32</b>	<b>4,102,260</b>	<b>4,102,260</b>	<b>1,920,586</b>	<b>1,920,586</b>	<b>2,181,674</b>			
<b>(72) - Parks &amp; Playgrounds Department</b>								
Mogul Master Trail Groomer (2022)	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	-		complete	
<b>Total department 72</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>-</b>			
<b>Manager of Legislative &amp; Support Services</b>								
<b>(12) - Administration</b>								
LC - Photocopier (2023)	55,000	55,000	43,182	43,182	11,818			Project is Complete no extra funds needed.\$5,000 received for trade
LC - Dell Server (2023)	33,500	33,500	-	-	33,500			Server to be ordered by the end of 2023.
<b>Total department 12</b>	<b>88,500</b>	<b>88,500</b>	<b>43,182</b>	<b>43,182</b>	<b>45,318</b>			
<b>TOTAL 2023 Capital Projects</b>	<b>49,313,001</b>	<b>23,394,763</b>	<b>33,219,750</b>	<b>7,324,586</b>	<b>16,070,177</b>			
<b>Contingent on Grant Funding</b>								
ZC - Access Pave (PH V) (CF 2014)	6,000,000	6,000,000	-	-	6,000,000			
ZA - Sewage Forcemain (2018)	1,085,000	1,085,000	-	-	1,085,000			
<b>Carry Forward Contingent on Grant Funding- Total</b>	<b>7,085,000</b>	<b>7,085,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,085,000</b>			<b>CONTINGENT</b>
<b>2022 Contingent on Grant Funding</b>								
FV - New Hockey Boards and Glass with Protective Netting	199,500							Contingent on Grant Funding 50/50
FV - Fitness Centre Expansion	99,000							Contingent on Grant Funding 50/50
FV - Baseball Netting	75,000							Contingent on Grant Funding 50/50
<b>2022 Contingent on Grant Funding- Total</b>	<b>373,500</b>							
<b>Total of Contingent Funding</b>	<b>7,458,500</b>	<b>7,085,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,085,000</b>			



**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Louise Flooren, Manager of Legislative &amp; Support Services</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Councillor Expense Claims</b>

## **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

Councillor Honorariums and Expense Claims are reviewed by Council on a monthly basis.

A copy of the following councillor Honorariums and Expense Claims will be presented at the meeting:

- September – All Councillors excluding Councillor Bateman (resignation October 10, 2023) and newly acclaimed Councillor Wiebe who was sworn in on October 11, 2023.

## **OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

## **COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

2023 Operating Budget

## **COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

## **POLICY REFERENCES:**

1272-22 Honorariums and Expense Reimbursement Bylaw

**Author:** T. Thompson      **Reviewed by:** L. Flooren      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the Councillor Expense Claims for September 2023 be received for information.

**Author:** T. Thompson      **Reviewed by:** L. Flooren      **CAO:** D. Derksen





**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Darrell Derksen, Chief Administrative Officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>5 Year 2023-2027 Capital Plan Review</b>

## **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

As the 2024 Operating and Capital plan are being developed, administration is requesting some review of the 5 year Capital plan, to ensure administration dedicates their time towards projects the current Council wish to move forward with. Handout to be provided.

Any changes brought forward in this meeting will assist in the development of the 2024-2028 Capital plan, and will form some of the discussion in the upcoming Council Budget Workshop.

## **OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

N/A

## **COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

2024 Budget

## **SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:**

N/A

## **COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

**Author:** J.Batt      **Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

N/A

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

For discussion.

Author: J.Batt      Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_      CAO: D. Derksen



**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Byron Peters, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Waterline East of La Crete</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

Administration was approached by a developer about the possible installation of a 10-inch waterline east of La Crete. At the October 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting the following motion was made:

**MOTION 23-10-751**  
*Requires Unanimous*

**MOVED** by Councillor Driedger

*That administration bring back options and a cost estimate for the implementation of a Waterline East of La Crete to the Regular Council Meeting on October 25, 2023.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The waterline is proposed to connect at the east end of 102 Avenue in North Point Business Park. The 10-inch water main would run east for two miles to Range Road 150. Administration will bring alignment options to a meeting at a later date.

Administration will conduct testing and work with engineers to complete water modeling for the proposed waterline. Preliminary conversations with engineers don't guarantee that the line will provide the required flows for the developer, but that it should. The most likely constraint is pumping capacity into the distribution network.

The project would be completed by the end of April 2024.

Other landowners east of La Crete have been inquiring about water for several years, administration will reach out to these landowners to gauge the likelihood of additional laterals being constructed in the short term. This would not affect sizing, but would positively impact cost recovery options.

**Author:** J. Schmidt      **Reviewed by:** J. Zacharias      **CAO:** D. Derksen

## **OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

The County has options to collect funds through an Off-site Levy and by Endeavour to Assist.

Administration is proposing to impose an Off-site Levy bylaw to recover the cost of the waterline. Through Endeavour to Assist provisions in a Development Agreement, the developer may be reimbursed for a portion of the costs they pay towards the construction of the waterline.

Off-site Levy is a bylaw determining a specific benefitting area used for the County to recoup costs on its own investment.

Endeavour to Assist is a bylaw determining a specific benefitting area used for the County to recoup costs on behalf of the developer.

In discussions with the developer, he is willing to fund up to \$350,000 for the project, with the potential to recover 50% (\$175,000) of his portion through levies over the next 5 years.

It was determined that the most efficient method to recuperate the costs of the waterline is to define a benefitting area. The County and developer would each keep 50% of revenue received from levies until such time as the developer recuperates \$175,000 or 5 years expires which ever comes first. After that time the County retains all funds collected through levies.

## **COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

The estimated total project cost is \$700,000 including contingencies. Administration feels that engineering fees can be less than the typical 12% range due to the project not being technically complex.

## **COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Affected land owners will be notified.

## **POLICY REFERENCES:**

DEV007 – Rural Development Standards

**Author:** J. Schmidt      **Reviewed by:** J. Zacharias      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Motion 1:

- Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That administration proceeds with the planning and design of the Waterline East of La Crete Project from Northpoint Business Park east to Range Road 150 by amending the 2023 One Time Project Budget by \$50,000 for engineering.

Motion 2:

- Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the Waterline East of La Crete Project be considered during the 2024 Capital Budget deliberations which include the funding model for the levies and development charges.

**Author:** J. Schmidt      **Reviewed by:** J. Zacharias      **CAO:** D. Derksen





**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Byron Peters, Deputy Chief Administrative officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>La Crete Stormwater Master Plan - Request for Proposals (RFP) Awarding -</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

Administration was given direction to proceed with issuing an RFP at the September 6, 2023 Regular Council Meeting.

Administration posted the RFP on Alberta Purchasing Connection (APC) on September 7, 2023, with a closing date of October 10, 2023. Council authorized Administration to open proposals on October 11, 2023. Administration was then to score each proposal and bring back a recommendation for awarding at the Regular Council Meeting on October 25, 2023.

Proposals received were opened at the October 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting, where the following motions were made:

**MOTION 23-10-739**      **MOVED** by Councillor Peters

*That the proposals received for the La Crete Storm Water Master Plan be opened.*

<b>Bidder</b>
Kerr Wood Leidal
MPE Engineering Ltd.
Invistec Consulting Ltd.
Associated Engineering Ab. Ltd.
Beairsto and Associates
CAP Engineering
McElhanney Ltd.

**Author:**     S Gibson          **Reviewed by:**     B Peters          **CAO:**     D. Derksen

**MOTION 23-10-740**

**MOVED** by Councillor Peters

*That administration score the proposals for the La Crete Stormwater Master Plan and provide a detailed report and recommendation for awarding to the October 25, 2023, Regular Council Meeting.*

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

Administration has scored the proposals received and has attached a detailed report and recommendation to award the project to the successful proponent for the La Crete Stormwater Master Plan based on the scoring matrix below.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Mark (%)</b>	<b>Points available</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>
Experience and Qualifications		25	
Project Team		25	
Project Understanding & Proposed Methodology		30	
RFP total bid price		20	
Total points available		<b>100</b>	

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

One Time Project funding of \$151,000.

**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

The RFP was posted on APC and a link was provided on the Mackenzie County website under Bid Solicitations.

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

FIN025 Purchasing Authority Directive and Tendering Process  
Mackenzie County General Municipal Improvement Standards (GMIS)

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

- Simple Majority
  Requires 2/3
  Requires Unanimous

**Author:** S Gibson      **Reviewed by:** B Peters      **CAO:** D. Derksen



That the La Crete Stormwater Master Plan project be awarded to MPE Engineering.

**Author:** S Gibson      **Reviewed by:** B Peters      **CAO:** D. Derksen

October 17, 2023, scoring and evaluation of proposals for the La Crete Stormwater Master Plan  
Summary Sheet

Proponent	Score	Notes
Associated Engineering	88	Price adjusted b/c of assumptions
Beairsto & Associates	90	
CAP Engineering	80	
Invistec Consulting	76	
Kerr Wood Leidal	84	
<b>MPE Engineering</b>	<b>91</b>	
McElhenney Ltd	87	Price adjusted b/c of assumptions

Average \$/hr rates varied from \$130/hr to \$200/hr. Most are in the \$170/hr range.

Number of hours estimated to complete the project varied from 388 hours to 1052 hours. Significant variability in all the bids, but big firms consistently estimated fewer hours than smaller firms.

Proposals were reviewed and scored in accordance with the following matrix:

Mandatory Criteria		
Section	Description	Evaluation
1	Professional Accreditation	Pass/Fail
2	WCB Clearance	Pass/Fail
3	Provide evidence of insurability for professional liability, comprehensive general liability and automobile coverage, each in an amount of not less than \$2,000,000.00 per occurrence.	Pass/Fail

Evaluation Requirements and Points System: Statement of Qualifications meeting the Mandatory Requirements will be evaluated based on the following for each Project:

Section	Evaluation Requirements	Points
1	Experience and Qualifications	25
2	Project Team	25
3	Project Understanding & Proposed Methodology	30
4	RFP total bid price	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>



**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Willie Schmidt, Fleet Maintenance Manager</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>AWD 160M Graders x3 (2021) 2023 Capital Budget Funding Amendment</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

The grader replacement schedule identifies 3 graders to be purchased in 2022, 2023, and 2024. In November 2021, administration was notified of delays in receiving graders for the upcoming 2022 year, and recommended that Council provide a budget authorizing administration to order 2022 graders. Funding in the amount of

Project	Budget	MSI Grant	Other Source (non-grant)
AWD 160M Graders X3 (2021)	\$1,714,101	\$1,039,101	\$675,000

Unfortunately, these graders were delayed until 2023.

In May 2022, Council passed the following motions regarding the graders:

**MOTION 22-05-406**      *That administration advertise the 140M AWD Grader publicly for sale with a reserve bid of \$ 225,000.*

**CARRIED**

**MOTION 22-05-407**      *That administration advertise the 160M AWD Grader publicly for sale with a reserve bid of \$ 270,000.*

**CARRIED**

The 2021 budgeted graders (2022 graders) were delayed, and did not arrive until 2023.

Since the 2021 budget (2022 graders) were approved, Council has amended the Organizational chart by including a full-time grader operator to Zama (2022), and adding a fulltime project operator (2023). Due to the delay in receiving the graders, there was some confusion between the 2022 & 2023 graders.

**Author:**     S Wheeler          **Reviewed by:**     J. Batt          **CAO:**     D. Derksen

At the August 15, 2023 Committee of the Whole Meeting there was discussion concerning the disposal of an older 2016 – 140M grader, as its disposal was not successful at the public auction.

At the August 16, 2023 Regular Council Meeting, the following motion was made:

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ITEMS: 17. c) Grader Replacements - Budget**

**MOTION 23-08-649**      **MOVED** by Councillor Driedger  
Requires 2/3

That administration be authorized to list the 2016 – 140M grader at the Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers heavy equipment sale on September 6-8, 2023.

**CARRIED**

The Ritchie Bros. Auction was moved to beginning of October in Grande Prairie.

Administration approached Council again in September with schedule change.

At the September 6, 2023 Regular Council Meeting, the following motion was made:

**ADMINISTRATION: 16. a) 2016 140M AWD Grader Sale Date**

**MOTION 23-09-695**      **MOVED** by Councillor Smith

That administration be authorized to list the 2016 – 140M grader at the Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers heavy equipment sale on October 3 - 5, 2023.

**CARRIED**

At the auction the 2016-140M grader was sold for \$235,000, after commission realizing \$211,318.

As the budget for these grader replacements was developed on the sale or trade in of 3 graders to fund the Other Source (non-grant) portion of the budget in the amount of \$675,000, there is a deficit of funding approved by Council in the amount of \$141,998:

<b>Budget</b>	<b>\$675,000</b>
160 M Sale	\$321,684
140M Sale	\$211,318
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>-\$141,998</b>

Administration is requesting a funding amendment to this Capital project.

**Author:** S Wheeler      **Reviewed by:** J. Batt      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

Allocate funding in the amount of \$142,000 from the Vehicle & Equipment Reserve, and reducing the Other Source (non-grant) amount by \$145,000.

Allocate funding in the amount of \$142,000 from the General Capital Reserve, and reducing the Other Source (non-grant) amount by \$142,000.

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Municipal Sustainability Grant  
Other Sources (non-grant)

**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

Policy FIN029 – Asset Disposal Policy

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

- Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the 2023 AWD 160M Graders X3 (2021) Capital project funding sources be amended by allocating \$142,000 from the Vehicle & Equipment Reserve, and reducing the Other Source (non-grant) amount by \$142,000.

Author: S Wheeler      Reviewed by: J. Batt      CAO: D. Derksen





**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>John Zacharias, Director of Utilities</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Fort Vermilion and La Crete Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) &amp; Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC) Upgrade Grant Application</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

The SCADA software at the Fort Vermilion and La Crete Water Treatment Plants is outdated and requires an upgrade. The Fort Vermilion (PLC) Programmable Logic Controllers are in critical need for replacement.

MPE has assessed the components and created a report to justify grant-funding application. Alberta Municipal Water/Wastewater Partnership (AMWWP) provides cost-sharing funding to help build municipal facilities for water supply and treatment, and wastewater treatment and disposal. Funding is calculated as a percentage of eligible project costs based on the municipality’s official population when the grant is approved. Mackenzie County is estimated to receive a grant for 31.8% of the total project cost.

Applications are due November 30, 2023 and will be awarding in the Spring 2024.

Administration will be recommending this project for 2024 in the 5-year Capital plan, and would request this project be considered under contingent on grant funding. Once AMWWP grant approvals are released, administration will bring this project forward to Council for final capital budget consideration.

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

The PLC components are a critical piece of infrastructure and are used daily for operational control within the County. The current systems are functional but were flagged as a possible failure point in the system after a power outage this summer which would make running our water treatment system extremely difficult. With this upgrade we would be able to prevent any emergency in the future and be confident in our system for the next 15-20 years.

**Author:** J. Schmidt      **Reviewed by:** J. Zacharias      **CAO:** D. Derksen

### **Option 1**

Apply for the grant to upgrade the Fort Vermilion & La Crete SCADA and Fort Vermilion PLC upgrade, and provide Council any updated information once grant approvals are released.

### **Option 2**

Apply for the grant to upgrade the Fort Vermilion & La Crete SCADA and Fort Vermilion PLC's. If the grant is not received, bring the Fort Vermilion PLC upgrade project forward with a recommendation of funding coming from the Water Sewer Infrastructure Reserve.

### **COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

The total project cost is estimated at \$541,000, with the upgrade of the Fort Vermilion and La Crete SCADA program being \$150,000 and the PLC Upgrades in Fort Vermilion being \$391,000. The estimated costs for the PLC upgrade does not include the cost of SCADA programming under the approach this work would be completed during the SCADA systems upgrade and therefore are included in those costs.

31.8% of project costs are proposed to be grant funded. Alberta Municipal Water/Wastewater Partnership (AMWWP) funding \$172,038. The remaining \$368,962 is recommended to be funded from the Water Sewer Infrastructure Reserve.

### **COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

### **POLICY REFERENCES:**

N/A

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That Mackenzie County apply for a grant through Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors for the Alberta Municipal Water/Wastewater Partnership to upgrade the SCADA systems in Fort Vermilion and La Crete and the Fort Vermilion PLC upgrade.

**Author:** J. Schmidt      **Reviewed by:** J. Zacharias      **CAO:** D. Derksen





**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Caitlin Smith, Director of Planning and Agriculture</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Development Options for Infrastructure</b>

## **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

Administration has been working with the Development Ad Hoc Committee to determine how best to move forward with infrastructure costs at time of development. The committee has requested for administration to research different options that have been presented to the committee for their review. This included reducing development standards to which the committee members were not interested in as they would like to keep the development standard to curb and gutter.

The following summarizes the options that were discussed and generally agreeable by the Development Ad Hoc committee for the reduction of Offsite Levy fees. The developers would be amenable to options presented as is or a combination of:

### 1. Cost Sharing between Mackenzie County and Developers

Developers discussed a municipal subsidy of total development cost between Mackenzie County and participating developers for new infrastructure including but not limited to water sewer mains, transportation (roads, interchanges, pathways, bikeways, etc.). This would be done via offsite levy where Council determines a percentage of cost to be undertaken by the municipality.

### 2. Deferral of Offsite Levy fees

Developers with levies could defer payment over a period of time to reduce the upfront costs at time of development. This could be done via offsite levy bylaw with a percentage of payment required over a period of time.

### 3. Endeavour to Assist (Developer construct and fees be returned over time with each connection)

**Author:**   K Tan        **Reviewed by:**   C Smith        **CAO:**   D. Derksen

The Developer and Mackenzie County would enter into an agreement under which the County will recoup costs on behalf of the Developer from a subsequent developer. They would be reimbursed their costs as subsequent developers tie into their infrastructure. This would require an identified area of benefit similar to an offsite levy but the costs would be fronted by the developer.

#### 4. Consolidated Offsite Levy fees

Through a consolidated offsite levy bylaw which would fairly distribute offsite levy fees through out the hamlet to help reduce costs and support upgrades to existing infrastructure and new infrastructure.

#### 5. Increased Connection Fees at time of Development Permit

50% payment of Offsite Levy fees at time of subdivision and 50% payment at time of connection. Developers are able to spread the cost between themselves and the end user, this would keep land values down but would require a large connection fee for the end user.

#### 6. Developer incentives for infill developments by keeping fees lower in older areas

Create an Infill Incentive Program designed to incentivize the expeditious development and redevelopment of infill properties. Keeping lower fees to areas with existing development for the program will enhance and benefit established neighbourhoods and the community as a whole through revitalization and economic stimulus.

The development community as a whole add to the overall tax base and keep our communities growing. We need to keep our communities growing and support new development. It should be noted that the purchaser of these lots do end up paying for their lot in full. Developers would like to keep their cash in hand to continue with projects.

### **OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

Supporting growth in the municipality and adding additional tax revenue is a positive for the municipality.

Any subsidy given to developers is taken on by the tax base as a whole and should be considered as to what is in the best interest of the municipality.

### **COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

N/A

### **COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Author:     K Tan     Reviewed by:     C Smith     CAO:     D. Derksen

Options that Council can agree on will be presented to the Development Ad Hoc Committee prior to implementation for comment. All bylaws will be advertised per MGA requirements.

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

DEV001 Urban Development Standards

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That administration proceed with drafting a detailed proposal for Council's consideration regarding development levies, fees and incentives as discussed.

**Author:**     K Tan          **Reviewed by:**     C Smith          **CAO:**     D. Derksen





Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That Administration proceeds with a Land Use Bylaw Amendment as discussed.

Option 2

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That Administration proceeds with creating a new zoning district for the Land Use Bylaw that includes a required setback of 25 feet but allows for the same uses as the Hamlet Residential 1 'H-R1' zoning.

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

N/A

**COMMUNICATION:**

N/A

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

That Administration proceeds with a Land Use Bylaw Amendment as discussed.

**Author:** L Braun      **Reviewed by:** C Smith      **CAO:** D. Derksen

## Section 9 | Land Use District Regulations

### 9.17 Hamlet Residential 1 (H-R1)

#### Purpose

- 9.17.1 The purpose of the Hamlet Residential 1 (H-R1) district is to provide for single family dwellings, within all HAMLETS, through a variety of building forms while considering medium density residential forms permitted context compatibility.



#### Permitted and Discretionary Land Use Classes

- 9.17.2 Land use classes within the following table shall be permitted or discretionary within the Hamlet Residential 1 (H-R1) district of this BYLAW.

Permitted	Discretionary
ACCESSORY BUILDING	BED AND BREAKFAST BUSINESS
BUILDING DEMOLITION OF REMOVAL	DAY CARE FACILITY
DWELLING - SINGLE FAMILY	DAY CARE HOME
GARAGE - ATTACHED	DWELLING – DUPLEX
GARAGE - DETACHED	DWELLING – GROUP HOME
MANUFACTURED HOME - MOBILE	DWELLING – MULTI-FAMILY
MANUFACTURED HOME - MODULAR	DWELLING – ROW
SECONDARY SUITE	DWELLING – STACKED ROW HOUSING
	HOME BASED BUSINESS MEDIUM
	HOME BASED BUSINESS MINOR
	RESIDENTIAL SALES CENTRE
	TOURIST HOME

## Section 9 | Land Use District Regulations

### Regulations

- 9.17.3 In addition to the regulations contained in Section 8, the following standards shall apply to every DEVELOPMENT in this LAND USE DISTRICT.

Regulation	Standard
<b>Max. Lot Area</b>	
<b>Min. Lot Dimensions</b>	
Width	16.8m (55.0ft)
Depth	33.5m (110.0ft)
<b>Min. Setback</b>	
Yard – Front	7.6m (25.0ft)
Yard – Interior Side	1.5m (5.0ft)
Yard – Exterior Side	3.1m (10.0ft)
Yard – Rear	2.4m (8.0ft) with overhead utility servicing 1.5m (5.0ft) with underground utility servicing

### Additional Regulations

- 9.17.4 All new subdivisions shall have underground servicing.
- 9.17.5 In addition to Section 8.33 of this BYLAW, the Development Authority may require any DISCRETIONARY USE to be screened from view with a vegetated buffer strip and/or other SCREENING of a visually pleasing nature, satisfactory to the Development Authority.
- 9.17.6 The architecture, construction materials and appearance of buildings and other structures shall be to accepted standards and shall complement the natural features and character of the site to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.
- 9.17.7 The Development Authority may decide on such other requirements as are necessary having due regard to the nature of the proposed DEVELOPMENT and the purpose of this LAND USE DISTRICT.





**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Caitlin Smith, Director of Planning and Agriculture</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Municipal Development Plan Revision</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

Administration has been reviewing and updating the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) to meet the needs of the public, Council, and the municipality. The intension of the MDP is to determine future land use for the municipality and is part of the strategic direction for the municipality.

Attached are all the captured comments from Council that has been integrated into the document.

Administration would like to proceed with a Public Hearing and complete this project.

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

Once approved, the MDP is good for a minimum of 5 years and will give administration and Council direction with land development.

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

None at this time.

**SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:**

N/R

**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**Author:** C Smith      **Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_      **CAO:** D. Derksen

A public hearing will need to be scheduled prior to second reading.

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

N/R

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That administration advertise the Municipal Development Plan for Public Hearing.

Author: C Smith      Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_      CAO: D. Derksen

<p>Pg. 15 Add Longlake fire (2023) importance of oil and gas and the potential effects of losing our oilfield. Include the effects of the provincial moratoriums. Add REDI map (will send)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long Lake fire included with Chuckegg Creek fire, now on pg. 16.</li> <li>• Importance of oil and gas further emphasized, including effects of moratorium under Oil and Gas Economic Impact section.</li> <li>• Alberta REDI map added to pg. 11.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 16 Add language regarding using Ag land as a FireSmart measure, which includes grazing leases, grazing reserves, consider creating grazing leases in burnt crown lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under Agricultural Expansion section on pg. 17, grazing leases and FireSmart measures included in 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg.18/19 Section 2.2 Need access to resources, utilize irrigation and proper water management in agriculture, create a self sustaining economic environment which includes manufacturing our own product, facilitate industrial use on crown lands, add Oil and Gas to economic expansion, REDI corridor works (emphasize the need for access to market and additional transportation corridors), add non-profits to building regional partnerships and Alberta Transportation. Remove the term “climate change” use climate shift.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under section 2.2, irrigation included under Agriculture sub-section. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Under Building Regional Partnerships sub-section, non-profits and Alberta Transportation included.</li> <li>○ Climate change replaced with climate shift under Responding to a Changing Environment sub-section.</li> <li>○ Economic Expansion sub-section expanded to include access to markets, access to resources, facilitating industrial on Crown land, supporting oil and gas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 21 Please add <b>every effort to gain access to resources</b> at the end of the last paragraph (theme throughout the document) General comment define resources are and provide examples (government funding, transportation corridors, crown lands, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under section 3.1, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph reworded to include pursuing opportunities to gain access to resources.</li> <li>• The term Resources has been added to the Glossary.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 22 add the following under objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to resources</li> <li>• Add Invest Alberta</li> <li>• Removal of land moratoriums with the provincial government/shall consult with municipalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives under section 3.1 revised to include access to resources, Invest Alberta and removal of land moratoriums.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 22 Add rail ready business under policies Remove h) language (County to support these initiatives not be the financier)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New policy 3.1 l) added to include rail ready business.</li> <li>• Policy 3.1 h) revised to remove the County as the financier.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 23 Define smart employment growth and use a different term other than employment lands g) Policy needs to be expanded upon, which growth lands, define intensification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under section 3.1, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph reworded to remove the term employment lands.</li> <li>• Under section 3.2, objective bullet #3 reworded to remove the term smart employment growth.</li> <li>• Policy 3.2 b) revised to remove term employment lands.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 3.2 g) revised to specify increased utilization of industrial land and growth of businesses is encouraged.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 24 Refrain from using the term high level and use overarching instead</p> <p>Add language that we are surrounded by the most accessible crown land to recreate in, we are surrounded by the Boreal Forest and there is tons of natural beauty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First paragraph under section 3.3 revised to place more emphasis on tourism and its economic potential and that there is lots of accessible crown land to recreate in.</li> <li>• Policy 3.3 a) revised to use the word overarching.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 25 General comments – need to highlight economic potential with tourism, need to ensure there are more opportunities for site readiness/shovel ready projects, lake access, campground access/expansion</p> <p>Less emphasis on plans</p> <p>Remove the term forms use types</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 3.3 b) reworded to highlight the need for shovel-ready projects, increasing lake access.</li> <li>• Policy 3.3 g) removed, subsequent policies renumbered accordingly.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 27 Emphasis on provincial agricultural participation, encourage a seat on provincial Ag task force, add Mackenzie Agriculture (<a href="https://www.mackenzieagriculture.com/">https://www.mackenzieagriculture.com/</a>)</p> <p>f) add grazing in front of reserves</p> <p>General comment – should state how many acres of white zone and green zone in the County/percentage/should consider the Forest Management Areas throughout the County. County should work with government, forestry, ensure forestry sustainability and unallocated FMA lands</p> <p>Promote land based/natural resource based GDP throughout the County in general.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New policy 4.1 d) added to include greater participation with the Province on agricultural matters. Subsequent policies renumbered accordingly.</li> <li>• Policy 4.1 f) reworded to advocate to the Province for the conversion of Crown Land to agricultural as identified by the County.</li> <li>• Percentage of White Zone compared to Green Zone not included since this number doesn't create an argument for a particular land use policy direction.</li> <li>• Paragraph 2 under section 4.1 agricultures contribution to GDP promoted.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 28 Remove seed cleaning use</p> <p>Define CFO in terms of size what would the trigger be for NRCB</p> <p>Consider the replacement of ag lands when taken out of ag use (province to let us open more lands)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 4.2 c) revised to remove seed cleaning. Policy now indicates a CFO as regulated by the NRCB.</li> <li>• Policy 4.2 f) has been added to indicate new ag lands should replace any land removed from agricultural use.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 31 under objectives, expand on rural character, what that means</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective #2 under section 5.1 expanded to state promoting growth that reflects the values of County residents.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 32 j) emphasize and include sub-regional plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.1 j) split into two policies to separate out sub-regional plans into its own policy, now policy k). Subsequent policies renumbered accordingly.</li> </ul>

<p>Pg. 33 5.2.1 what is considered an appropriate use, council doesn't care for that term Under objective add economically feasible for provincial funding and support c) rather than shall encourage change to shall consult Encourage more land use on crown lands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.1 objectives adjusted to include expanded use of Crown lands and expanded uses on Crown land.</li> <li>• Under objectives, a third bullet was added to include public access of Crown lands where economically feasible for provincial funding and support.</li> <li>• Policy 5.2.1 c) wording adjusted to reflect 'consult' word change.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 34 b)vi remove natural features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.2 b)vi) removed.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 35 a) ii) remove mention of Town of High Level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.3 a)ii) Town of High Level removed.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 36 b) exclude Zama</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.3 b) revised to exclude Zama City.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 37 i) remove Boreal Housing and change to Housing Authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.4 i) adjusted as requested.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 38 k)ii) remove satisfaction of neighbours and add satisfaction of development authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.4 k)ii) adjusted as requested.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 39 d)iii) remove mention of Town of High Level and Rainbow Lake Add corridor development and ag development along corridors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.5 d)iii) revised to remove Town of High Level and Rainbow Lake. (now on pg. 40)</li> <li>• New Policy 5.2.5 h) added to prioritize corridor development in proximity to hamlets. Subsequent policies renumbered accordingly.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 40 add industrial development on Crown lands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.1 objectives adjusted to include potential industrial use expansion.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 41 h) Remove entirely 5.2.7 c) clarify what heavy industrial use is</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.2.6 h) removed and policies renumbered accordingly.</li> <li>• Policy 5.2.7 c) adjusted to provide examples of heavy industrial use.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 43 Under objectives add public accessibility to Crown lands (needs to be an easier process) c) Less mention of important wildlife corridor and habitat more of a balance of development and respecting the natural resource</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullet #5 on pg. 44 added about improved access to Crown lands.</li> <li>• Policy 5.3 c) adjusted to reflect balance of development and natural function.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 44 h) not preserve but balance again Add may include all lakes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.3 h) reworded as requested. (now on page 45).</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 46 m) no adjacent municipalities include non-profit instead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.4 m) reworded to not include adjacent municipalities. (now on page 47).</li> </ul>

<p>s) add winter recreation such as snowmobiling, ice fishing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy 5.4 s) reworded to include snowmobiling and ice fishing.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 48 Add creation of rural road transportation plan within the municipality/ proper corridor planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new policy 5.6.1 b) now on pg. 49 was added to include a rural road transportation plan. Subsequent policies renumbered accordingly.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 54 c/d) Delete e) expand uses such as grazing leases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies 6.3 c) and d) deleted, policies renumbered accordingly.</li> <li>• Policy 6.3 d) on page 55 includes grazing leases as a method of FireSmart mitigation strategies.</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 55 Need to include non-profit organizations such as ag societies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural societies included in list of non-profit organizations in 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph (now on pg. 56).</li> </ul>
<p>Pg. 56 d) (mis-numbered) d) iv) remove</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Partnerships policy numbering corrected, policy d) is now letter e).</li> <li>• Policy d)iv) removed and renumbered.</li> </ul>
<p>Council would like to see better pictures that I will provide throughout the document and better mapping they feel it looks too much like pixels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New pictures have been added throughout the document.</li> <li>• Map 1 has been recreated to be more like the existing MDP County wide land use map.</li> </ul>



# MACKENZIE COUNTY MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2023 | PUBLIC CIRCULATION DRAFT







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# **PART I**

# **VISION AND CONTEXT**

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PURPOSE

Mackenzie County's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is a document that provides clear direction for growth and development in the County over the next 20 years. Working in tandem with the Land Use Bylaw and other statutory plans, the MDP provides a framework for the County's future and is an important decision-making tool for Council, County Administration, developers, residents, and other stakeholders. The intent of this MDP is to support well-managed and fiscally sustainable growth and development that will ensure a high quality of life for all County residents now and in the future.

The County has grown substantially over the past several years and is anticipated to grow to 26,000 people over the next 20 years. However, this growth has occurred unevenly across the County, and it is important for the MDP to set a vision for how to accommodate this growth in a fiscally sustainable manner.

To ensure the County appropriately plans for this growth, this MDP:

- Updates the vision, policies, and actions of the 2009 MDP;

- Describes the County's preferred direction with respect to growth areas, land uses, infrastructure investments, business development, and provision of County services;
- Provides a comprehensive land use policy framework that outlines where and how development and growth may take place across the County;
- Informs County bylaws, policies, and programs; and
- Helps residents and landowners understand how their land may be used now and in the future.

This MDP update revisits the goals and vision of the 2009 MDP to build upon recent successes, but also recognizes and responds to the considerable changes that have occurred since 2009. The MDP's vision, goals, and objectives were affirmed through County-wide public engagement to ensure that the vision and priorities of Mackenzie County residents and community leaders were accurately reflected.

# 1.2 AUTHORITY

The Municipal Development Plan is a statutory document required by the Province of Alberta as specified by the Municipal Government Act. The following section provides an overview of the legislative planning framework for Alberta, as well as provides guidance for interpreting the policies within the MDP.

## 1.2.1 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The planning framework outlines the key planning documents that guide land use and development in Mackenzie County, providing context for how each document interacts and informs the others. Plans at the top of the framework, such as Intermunicipal Development Plans and the MDP, provide broad

high-level policy direction, while lower-level plans are subordinate to the plans above and must be consistent with the policies and direction of the higher-order plans. As part of the municipal planning process, the County may develop more specific Area Structure Plans (ASP) and Area Redevelopment Plans (ARP) to provide detailed direction for smaller areas within the region. These ASPs and ARPs must be consistent with the policies and land use concept of the MDP. The level of detail and specificity in policies increases the further down the plan is in Figure 1, the County's planning framework diagram.

When there is no ASP or other subordinate plan, the MDP will determine whether a subordinate plan is required to provide greater planning detail.

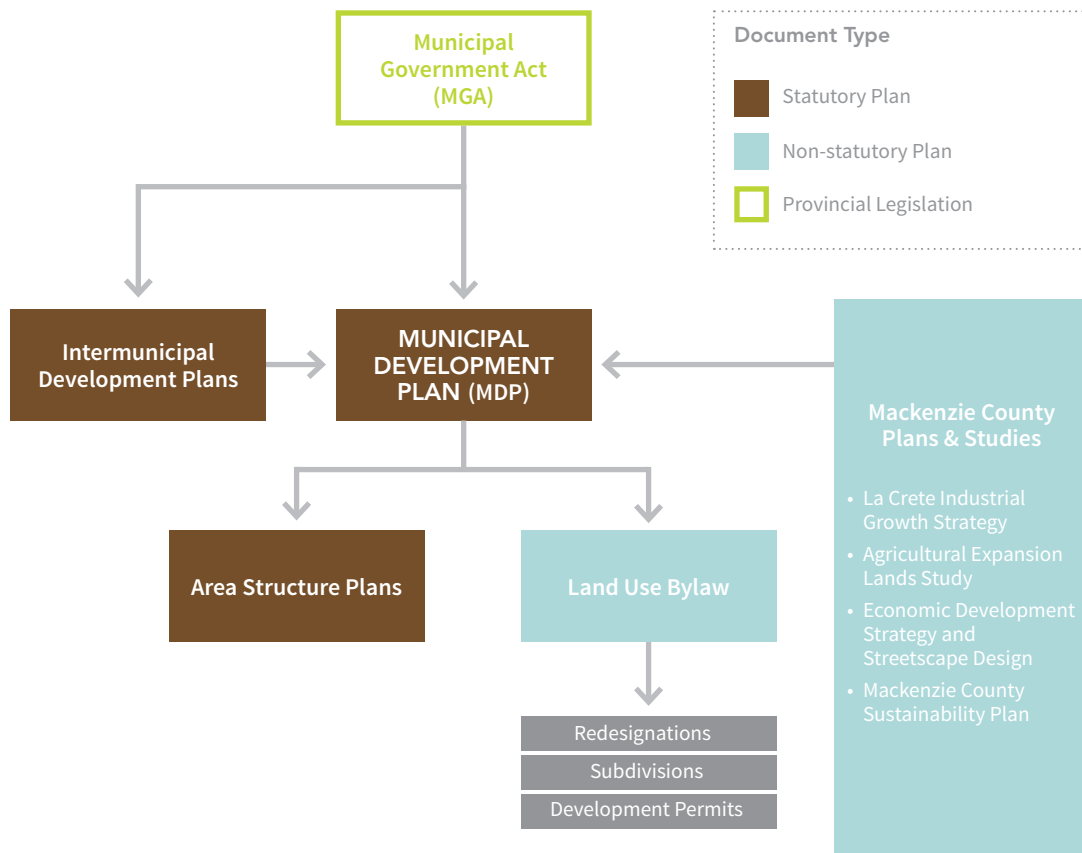


Figure 1: The Planning Framework in Mackenzie County



## MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

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

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

Part 17 of the Municipal Government Act regulates planning and development and empowers municipalities to prepare plans:

- To achieve the orderly, economical, and beneficial development, use of land and patterns of human settlement; and
- To maintain and improve the quality of the physical environment within which patterns of human settlement are situated in Alberta, without infringing on the rights of individuals for any public interest except to the extent that is necessary for the overall greater public interest.

The MGA requires all municipalities to adopt and maintain a Municipal Development Plan. This Municipal Development Plan must be consistent with all Intermunicipal Development Plans established between the municipality and the municipalities adjacent to it.



## INTER-MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDP) provide coordinating policies to guide land use and growth management between partnering municipalities that share a border. These plans may include how the two municipalities will work together, develop joint lands, and/or co-ordinate parks, open space, recreation, transportation, water, utilities, and other municipal services across boundaries. IDPs must be approved by Council in both partnering municipalities. Mackenzie County has an approved IDP with the Town of High Level.

An alternative to an IDP is an Inter-Municipal Collaboration Framework (ICF). These frameworks include how adjacent municipalities will work and communicate together on matters of interest and importance similar to an IDP. Inter-Municipal Collaboration Frameworks are non-statutory agreements. Mackenzie County has ICFs in place with all adjacent municipalities.

## MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The MDP is the County's principal statutory plan, providing strategic growth direction and overall guidance for land use planning policy. The MDP also provides specific policy guidance for areas that do not fall within the boundaries of an area structure plan or other subordinate plan. As identified in Section 632 of the MGA, Municipal Development Plans must provide policy direction for the following key items:

- Future land use throughout the County and how it is intended to be developed;
- Coordination of land use, growth, and infrastructure with adjoining municipalities;
- Policies regarding provision of transportation systems and municipal servicing;
- Guidance on land-use compatibility and regulation near sour gas facilities;
- Policies regarding municipal and school reserve; and
- Policies respecting the protection of agricultural operations.





## AREA STRUCTURE PLANS

ASPs are statutory plans that are subordinate to the MDP and provide more specific growth direction and land use policy for specific areas of land in the County. ASPs contain maps, goals, and policies that set out general locations for major land uses, major roadways, utility servicing, and open space.

## LAND USE BYLAW

The Land Use Bylaw is a regulatory bylaw of the County, required by the MGA, that implements the land use direction provided in the Municipal Development Plan. Every parcel of land in the County has a land use district, which specifies the permitted and discretionary uses in each district and regulates the development of land and buildings in the County.

## 1.2.2 PLAN INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of the MDP follows a broad hierarchy of plan outcomes, policies, terms, and definitions, as described here.

### Plan Outcomes and Policies

The MDP's vision, goals, and outcomes will be achieved through the application of the policies and objectives of each policy section. Policies provide guidance to decisionmakers and the public about how the County should grow and develop, while objectives are the targets for individual policy sections that achieve the County's vision and guiding principles.

### Policy Terms

The following key terms outline how policies should be interpreted and implemented by the County.

**Shall:** The MDP is intended to guide development through an understanding that flexibility is required. However, certain policies related to human safety, fiscal responsibility, legal obligations, and other factors are mandatory. In these contexts, the term 'shall' is used to indicate actions that must be complied with, without discretion, by administration, developers, Council, and any other authority involved in land use development approvals.

**Should:** Where policy is not mandatory but still relates to a strongly preferred course of action, the less restrictive term 'should' is used.

**May:** This term is used in policies that are discretionary in nature, meaning that the policy could be enforced by the County dependent on the circumstances of the proposal in question.



## 1.3 PLANNING PROCESS

The MDP's land use policies guide development throughout the County and identify growth areas for new residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial development. These growth areas, presented as the MDP's Growth Concept, provide a planning framework that balances fiscally sustainable development with providing a high quality of life and diverse range of residential and economic opportunities for County residents.

County-wide policies within the MDP provide high level direction on County services and operations regardless of land use. They are intended to improve County services, enhance quality of life, and strengthen community identity.

Implementation of the MDP will occur through several mechanisms and processes, including:

- Ongoing administration of the development review process and periodically reviewing and amending area structure plans and the land use bylaw;

- Carrying out next steps required to implement the vision, goals, and objectives of the MDP; and
- Collaborating with neighbouring municipalities on planning and development matters.

The MDP will be monitored and regularly reviewed based on a series of performance measures to ensure development is being effectively guided. The responsibility for this implementation, monitoring, and review of the MDP rests with County Council, committees of Council, and administration.

The update of the MDP and Land Use Bylaw involved engagement with the public as well as stakeholders. The project team conducted on-line engagement to determine the vision, pillars, and guiding principles. Additional engagement was held virtually and in person in 2021 and 2022 to receive feedback on the ideas and on the draft document. Feedback was incorporated into the document prior to first and second readings.

## 1.4 HOW TO USE THE MDP

The Mackenzie County Municipal Development Plan consist of three parts:

**Part I – Vision and Context** provides the overall introduction, vision, and context for the County. It provides the introduction and current background of Mackenzie County, and the future vision over the next 20 years.

**Part II – Policies** contain the economic, agricultural and land use policies of the MDP. These policies describe how the County will achieve the vision as set out in part 1.

**Part III – Implementation** contains policies and directions for how to interpret and implement part 2 of the MDP. This section also describes the monitoring component of the MDP; monitoring is necessary to determine the effectiveness of the policies and to determine if the vision is being achieved.



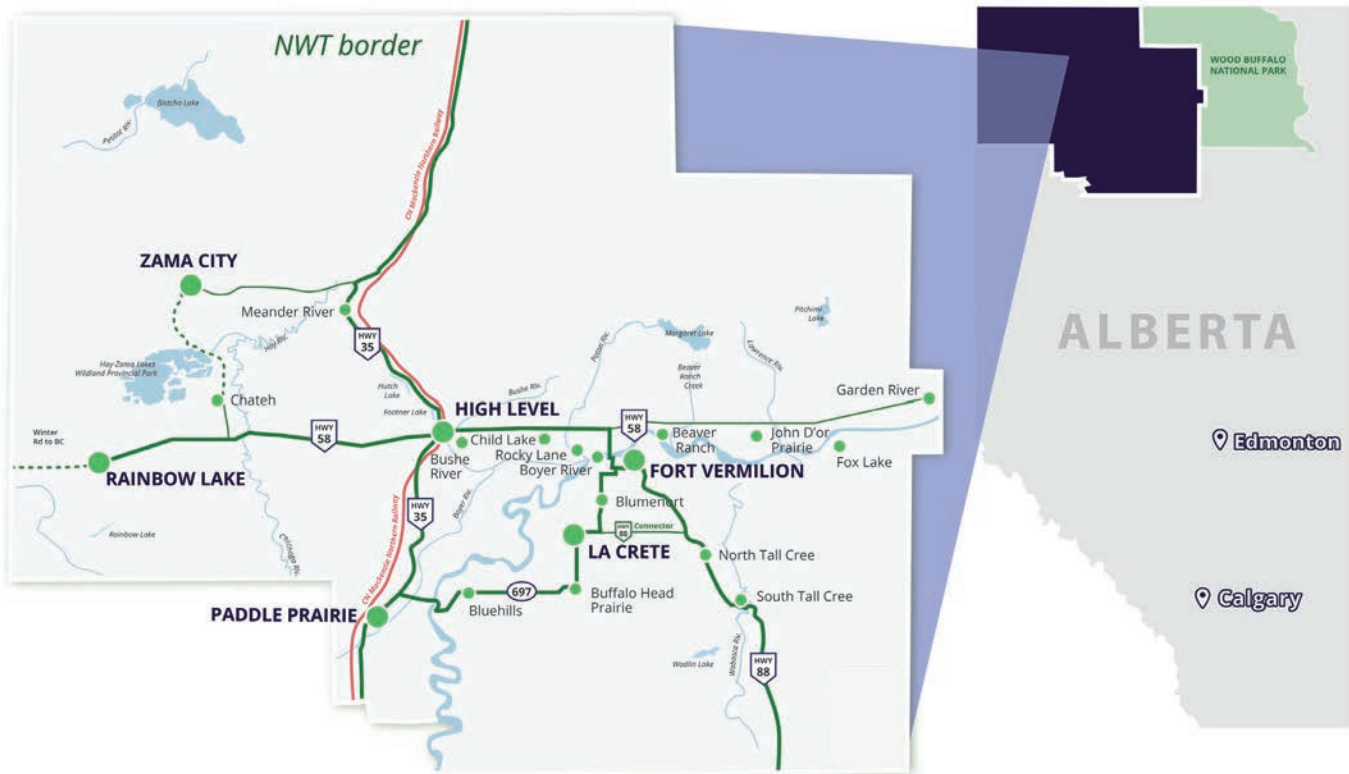
# 1.5 HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Mackenzie County is blessed with a variety of dramatic landscapes consisting of vast mixed wood and boreal forest to the north and west, and hills to the south and east. The Caribou Mountains, Cameron Hills, and Buffalo Head Hills are all part of Mackenzie County and provide Crown Land access to some of the last unspoiled natural beauty in Alberta. Rich agricultural lands are located north of the Peace River and in the south and eastern portions of the County, and many lakes and rivers, including the mighty Peace River, braid their way throughout the County.

Through a ministerial order the Mackenzie County area was included within Improvement District No. 23 in 1968 and managed by the Province of Alberta. In 1994 the Province created The Municipal District of Mackenzie No. 23 effective January 1, 1995. In 1999, the Municipal District became a specialized

municipality to recognize the complexities of such a large municipal area. Finally, in 2007 the name was changed from the Municipal District to Mackenzie County.

With a deep history, the County today is built on a solid economic foundation balanced between the agriculture, oil and gas, and forestry industries. Emerging light machining and secondary manufacturing industries also promise to provide future employment and economic growth throughout the County. With strong population growth and emerging opportunities across all sectors, the future of Mackenzie County is bright.



# 1.6 COMMUNITIES BUILT ON HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Mackenzie County has been an incorporated, locally managed municipality since 1995, but the County's history extends much further into the past. Each community in the County has a distinct story to tell and brings unique flavour and perspective to the region. Importantly, the County will only be able to realize its greatest potential if a culture of understanding and cooperation can be fostered between all of these communities. As such, the MDP seeks to establish a clear baseline understanding of each community's distinct needs and desires. These

needs and interests should be further articulated and clarified through local area planning where appropriate, but regardless are imperative for both County and broader societal success. Figure 2 illustrates the historical population back to the 1991 federal census year and the absolute and percentage change from the previous census.

FEDERAL CENSUS YEAR	POPULATION	NET CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE
1991	7,260	N/A	N/A
1996	7,980	720	9.9%
2001	8,829	849	10.6%
2006	10,002	1,173	13.3%
2011	10,927	925	9.2%
2016	11,171	244	2.2%
2021	12,804	1,633	14.6%

Figure 2: Historical Population Source: Statistics Canada Census Data





### **Fort Vermilion**

The Hamlet of Fort Vermilion was founded in 1788 as a post for the North West Company, and has a history intrinsically tied to the Mighty Peace River. While the Beaver, Dene and the Cree have a long history of inhabiting the area, the onset of the fur trade in the late 1700's saw traditional ways of life shift to accommodate the new, burgeoning fur trade industry. As one of Alberta's oldest communities, Fort Vermilion has a wealth of historic buildings and artifacts that make it one of the most unique places in the province.

For most of its history, riverboats were the primary means of access to Fort Vermilion, remaining a vital transportation link until the final commercial riverboat ran in 1952. In 1974 the bridge across the Peace River was opened, creating a permanent and reliable link between Fort Vermilion and the rest of the region across the river. While from this time forward the river played a less integral role in the local economy of Fort Vermilion, it continues to shape and affect the community. Recent flooding events in 2018 and 2020 profoundly influenced the community, and while residents have been forced to overcome significant adversity, the future of Fort Vermilion remains as bright as ever. Recent funding announcements from the Provincial government have ensured the community is able to appropriately respond to the continued threat of floods from the Peace River, and with a new community plan in the works, Fort Vermilion is ready to face a new tomorrow.

### **La Crete**

The Hamlet of La Crete is a Mennonite community that has its origins in the 1930s. Surrounded by some of the County's most productive agricultural lands, La Crete is the economic and commercial heart of the region south-east of the Peace River. As the fastest growing community in the County, La Crete has an important role to play as industrial, commercial, and agricultural opportunities continue to come to the community. Despite this growth, at its heart La Crete remains a friendly, family-oriented community with a strong sense of pride in its heritage.





## Zama City

Located almost 150 kilometres northwest from the Town of High Level, the Hamlet of Zama City was founded in the late 1960's as a hub for the developing energy industry. The area is also home to the Hay-Zama Wood Bison Herd, which can be seen in and around the area and hamlet on a regular basis. Zama City is home to Alberta's most northern library, multiple recreation opportunities, and a vast wilderness to explore. Zamanites embrace living in a smaller community where everyone knows their neighbours. Zama's transient worker populations during busy times of the year dwarf the full-time population of roughly 100. Moving forward it will be important to explore economic opportunities outside of the oil and gas industry including increased tourism as the County continues to grow.

## Indigenous Communities

There are four First Nations communities across multiple Reserves that are located in the Mackenzie County area. These Nations are the Beaver First Nation, Tallcree First Nation, Little Red River Cree Nation, and the Dene Tha First Nation.

These Nations include approximately 9,000 people that also use the amenities and services in Mackenzie County and support local development and expansion.



## 1.7 RECENT EVENTS SHAPING THE COUNTY

Several significant events have occurred that have shifted the way growth and development has happened throughout the County. The economic impacts to the oil and gas industries in late 2014 and 2015, the Caribou Range Planning affecting new oil and gas, mining and tourism projects, the 2018 and 2020 overland floods, and 2019 Chuckegg Creek and 2023 Long Lake wildfires have all had profound impacts on the entire municipality but have also impacted different parts of Mackenzie County separately.

### **Oil and Gas Economic Impact**

The moratorium on new land sales, leases and permits in species at risk areas since 2012 and the decline of the global oil and gas industry's market prices in late 2014 and through 2015 have led to an economic situation where one of the County's core industries has been forced to significantly streamline and optimize operations in order to remain viable. As a result of these prolonged conditions, projections in the 2009 MDP about Zama City's future growth have not been realized. The changing energy landscape creates a new opportunity for the County to explore economic growth in other natural resource-based economies such as earth metal extraction and in brine-hosted mineral development. New alternative energy sources are increasing the demand for earth metals such as lithium.

At the same time, the existing oil and gas industry remains important to the County's overall economic future. The risk of losing further economic activity due to the moratorium cannot be overstated, the County will continue to be a strong advocate for lifting the moratorium and ensuring the oil and gas industry remains well-positioned for continued success over the timeline of this plan.

### **Species at Risk Planning**

Woodland caribou in Alberta are designated as Threatened under Alberta's Wildlife Act. Four boreal caribou ranges are either wholly or partially located within Mackenzie County. The Province is in the process of creating a woodland caribou range plan to address the conservation of the species. In response to the species at risk planning the Province has currently implemented an interim restriction on provincial leases, including the sale of mineral rights, tourism, mining and energy leases within all caribou ranges in Alberta. This restriction primarily affects new oil and gas production in the County, however the caribou range plan will affect other important economic industries in the County such as the forestry and tourism industries moving forward. The Province established the Bistcho Lake Sub-Regional Task Force to develop recommendations for this sub-regional area. The task force consists of local stakeholders including government officials, industry representatives and interest groups.





## 2018 and 2020 Ice Jam Floods

The Peace River is a tremendous asset for the County, providing residents with clean drinking water, a stunning recreational amenity, and a storied history of exploration and adventure. However, life on the mighty Peace also comes with risk, and riverside communities throughout the County experienced these risks firsthand when the 2018 and 2020 ice jam floods hit. The impacts of these floods have been profound, with over 50 percent of Fort Vermilion residents evacuated during the 2020 floods, and the historic settlement of Buttertown almost completely inundated. As a result of changing environmental conditions, shifting policy for park management in Wood Buffalo National Park, and a revised framework for provincial and national disaster relief funding, the County must now critically reflect on the future of its riverfront communities. This MDP provides an opportunity to broadly implement high-level policy that empowers responsible development near the Peace River and enables local area planning to provide clear direction for future growth in these locations. While many difficult decisions and conversations must be had on this path to recovery, this plan ensures that a more resilient community will continue to develop into the future.

## 2019 Chuckegg Creek and 2023 Long Lake Wildfires

The risk of wildfires throughout the County is high, as the entire municipality is surrounded by extensive natural boreal forests. While FireSmart measures have been employed in the past to protect the County's communities, the 2019 Chuckegg Creek wildfire and 2023 Long Lake wildfire have exposed just how vulnerable the County truly is to this form of disaster. Many lessons have been learned from the 2019 and 2023 fires, and this MDP incorporates new best practices and emerging approaches to fire risk management into municipal policy in order to keep residents safe from future wildfire risk without being overly burdensome and prescriptive.



## 1.8 OPPORTUNITY

With the County's northern and natural contexts, deep history, proud heritage, and emerging responses to a range of significant events that have impacted the municipality, there are a broad range of opportunities that can be acted on through the implementation of the MDP. With a rapidly growing population and local economy there exist substantial opportunities for agricultural expansion and recreation into Crown Land and emerging secondary industrial operations to support this growth. Flood recovery funding from senior levels of government also provide opportunities to rethink how Mackenzie County's riverfront communities look and feel today and will continue to grow into tomorrow. Finally, there exist many opportunities to partner and collaborate with local and regional neighbours to build meaningful relationships and find mutual benefit for all.

### **Agricultural Expansion**

Mackenzie County's agriculture industry is some of the northernmost in the country, and due to its plentiful sunlight throughout the summer months, boasts some of the highest quality crops anywhere in Canada. As the successes of existing farms as well as agricultural innovations in new, emerging high-demand crops place ever increasing demand on the existing opened farmland in the County, there exists a need to explore opportunities to expand the lands available to agriculture themselves.

The County has already undertaken considerable work identifying priority areas to responsibly open up new Crown Land in an environmentally conscious manner. This work should be leveraged in a coordinated way to ensure the Province is aware of the economic, social, and environmental opportunities that are just waiting to be seized upon by expanding Mackenzie County's agricultural areas.

Agricultural expansion goes beyond increasing arable land within the County. Where recent forest fires have razed substantial amounts of previously forested Crown Land, there now exists opportunities to potentially open up these lands through grazing leases or reserves. Such an approach would serve as a FireSmart measure helping protect the County while also increasing agricultural productivity and utility of burnt Crown Lands.

Beyond traditional agricultural uses, the opportunity to increase value-added agricultural processing and local food production should also be explored. These types of agricultural uses have different land requirements and may be found within agricultural, industrial and commercial areas.

### **Industrial and Corridor Development**

Part and parcel with the continued expansion of the agricultural sector in Mackenzie County is the growth of its industrial sector. With a range of agricultural, forestry, aggregate mining, and oil and gas industries





existing throughout the County, the continued success of these sectors begets investment in both up and downstream operations to support them.

Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) has been working on promoting the development of the region's existing corridors and promoting new transportation corridors. A large opportunity exists in the development of a multi-modal transportation system within the northwest Alberta economic region. Better transportation connectivity will help get products to market quicker and lead to increased investment and growth in the region. There is potential to connect these new multi-modal links to port facilities in Alaska and Prince Rupert.

Ensuring the work Mackenzie County has already done to coordinate ongoing industrial development is carefully considered and incorporated in the MDP is as important as providing a framework for industrial development that leverages recent investments in critical servicing infrastructure throughout the County.

### **Population Growth**

Mackenzie County has been blessed with a population growth rate that is one of the highest in the country, driving knock-on growth effects in the education, healthcare, development, and other industries. While the growth rate is not evenly distributed throughout the County, areas that benefit from this growth must be provided a development framework that is simultaneously responsive to the intense pressures that can come with rapid

population expansion while sensitive to the social and cultural needs of those who call these locales home.

Above and beyond being ready for growth and prepared to accommodate it, there must also be consideration given to ensuring those who are moving to the County or who are growing up here are provided plentiful opportunities to live, learn, and stay long-term. Expanding post-secondary educational options, further diversifying the job market, and more broadly creating the conditions that will make those in Mackenzie County choose to stay long-term are all important for capturing the maximum potential of the County's high growth rate.

### **Flood Recovery**

While massively impactful to those communities that directly experienced the floods in April 2020 and previous years, the recently announced Provincial recovery funding has the opportunity to profoundly shape the County's response in a way that could yield tremendous social, economic, and cultural benefits for generations to come. The MDP must make sure it works in tandem with ongoing planning work in flood-affected areas to enable a long-term solution to flooding that makes a better, stronger, and safer Mackenzie County for all.





# 2 VISION

*The MDP's vision statement and goals are built around the core values of Mackenzie County residents and guide the overall direction of the Plan. The vision outlines the ideal future for Mackenzie County while the goals provide themes for policy objectives that implement the priorities of the community. Developed through public and stakeholder engagement, the vision, goals, and objectives together inform the Plan's policies and framework for growth.*

## 2.1 VISION

This vision provides the inspiration supporting implementation of the MDP and is unified by a community spirit that makes Mackenzie County a desirable place to live and to raise a family. Mackenzie County offers:

- A unique cultural history;
- An inclusive place where people live, work and visit supporting a diverse local economy through all stages of life;

- An innovative and prosperous community located in a beautiful natural environment that is valued and protected for its recreational and economic opportunities; and
- A resilient forward-thinking community that remains nimble and adaptable to a changing environment.

## 2.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

There are five core goals/focus areas that the 2023 MDP uses to guide its policy and the development trajectory for Mackenzie County over the next 20 years. These goals are Agriculture, Growing Communities, Building Regional Partnerships, Responding to a Changing Environment, and Economic Expansion. These goals provide the framework for the MDP, acting as the main chapters of the document.

### Agriculture

The Agriculture goal is predicated on four key pillars that will ensure the County's farming community is provided the tools not only to continue over the next 20 years, but to expand and thrive. These pillars are:

- Intentional Expansion
- Utilizing Irrigation & Proper Water Management
- Supporting Diversification
- Protecting the Right to Farm



## **Growing Communities**

As Mackenzie County continues to grow it is critically important that the MDP respond accordingly, in a manner that supports all residents throughout Mackenzie, and all communities both small and large. This goal focuses on four key pillars:

- Enabling Housing Options
- Responsible Expansion
- New Approach to Country Residential
- Allocating Growth in Appropriate Location

## **Building Regional Partnerships**

Look at a municipality's ability to build partnerships and collaboration and you will find its ability to succeed. This is more true in the remote and northern context of Mackenzie County, and as such building new partnerships and expanding those that already exist is critically important for the County's long-term economic success. Three key pillars work to achieve this goal:

- Building Relationships within the County
- Building Relationships with Intermunicipal Partners for a strong region
- Building Relationship with Indigenous communities
- Building Relationships with Non-Profits
- Building Relationships with Alberta Transportation

## **Responding to a Changing Environment**

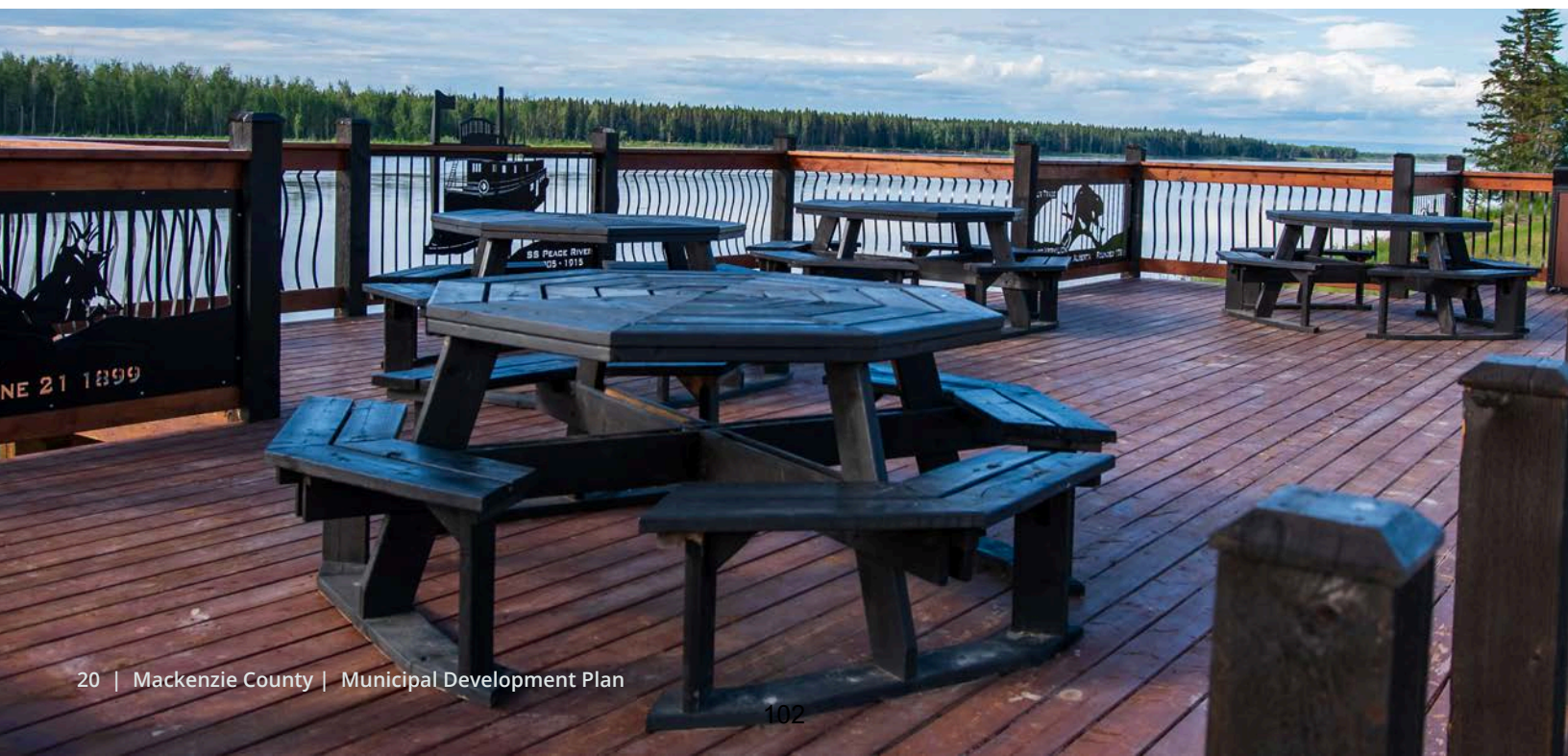
Natural disasters and a shifting climate present significant challenges but also intriguing new opportunities for economic growth, revitalization, and expansion. Ensuring the County continues to grow responsibly in light of these challenges is of critical importance over the next 20 years, and the responses to these challenges are highlighted in these three key pillars:

- Fire Safety
- Flood Safety
- Seizing Environmental Economic Opportunities

## **Economic Expansion**

As the County's economy continues to grow, the MDP must chart a clear path forward that provides the necessary framework to enable long-term success. The key pillars that will support sustained economic expansion are:

- Clear Framework for Industrial Growth
- Prioritizing Access to Markets and Transportation Corridor Expansion
- Access to Resources
- Creating a Self-Sustaining Economic Environment
- Facilitating Industrial Use on Crown Land
- Supporting Oil and Gas & Emerging Sectors
- Pursuing Critical Infrastructure Opportunities



# PART II POLICIES

# 3 EXPANDING THE ECONOMY AND INDUSTRY



Mackenzie County residents are industrious and hard-working. Over the past several generations the County's communities have enjoyed the benefits of their labour, experiencing sustained economic growth alongside its expanding population. However, as the global economy continues to shift and the lasting impacts of the 2019 global pandemic continue to be felt, there is a necessity to reflect on the economic successes of the past and plan appropriately for lasting opportunity into the future.

As Mackenzie County continues to grow, it will be imperative that the County provides room for existing successful businesses to grow while at the same time supporting continued diversification.

Steps have been taken to develop new industries adjacent to the County's core agriculture, forestry, and gas sectors, while the opportunities associated with approaching tourism from a regional level are only beginning to be explored.

Seizing on these opportunities and emerging trends will help Mackenzie County continue to provide opportunity for all who are willing to work for it well into the future.

## 3.1 ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

The world is changing faster than ever before, and nowhere is this truer than in our economy. Global perspectives on Mackenzie County's core industries have altered considerably over the past decade, but for the next 20 years it is certain that these sectors will continue to be the major economic drivers of the region. There is substantial opportunity to further diversify the local economy both within these industries and outside of them.

Policies in this MDP speak to many of these opportunities, including agricultural expansion, building the tourism industry, pursuing opportunities to gain access to resources, and providing land for expanding and new businesses. Coordinating these endeavours is an important task for the County so the greatest economic impact is felt from municipal decisions.

### Objectives

- Identify emerging economic sectors and provide a foundation that attracts them to Mackenzie County and support their development.
- Leverage and support existing hubs of economic development and diversification in the County.
- Support increased access to resources.
- Remove land moratoriums in conjunction with the Provincial government.
- Leverage partnerships with organizations such as the Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI), Invest Alberta, and Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA).

### Policies

- a) The County should update the County Economic Development Strategy to align with the Province's diversification goals as well as their own and formulate a clear framework for stimulating and providing economic initiatives.
- b) The County should conduct an "Ease of Doing Business" check as part of developing the new Economic Development Strategy that identifies barriers and challenges faced by Mackenzie County businesses. The findings of this check should become County priority action items.
- c) As part of the Economic Development Strategy update, the County should prioritize existing hubs of economic activity and diversification, such as the Mackenzie Applied Research Association.
- d) New and emerging technologies and industries not contemplated by County plans and policies should be interpreted in the most favourable lens possible within the existing planning framework.
- e) The County should regularly reassess its economic priorities following senior level of government changes to ensure the County best positions its economic prerogatives to benefit from economic development funding streams.
- f) The County will work closely with regional partners on infrastructure projects that increase the economic competitiveness of the region.
- g) New and emerging forms of agriculture, particularly those that take advantage of the County's high crop quality and long summer days, should be embraced by the County.
- h) The County should support agencies operating seed-funding programs offering microloans or grants to residents with new business ideas, supporting entrepreneurs in the County.
- i) Support the acquisition and development of Crown Land where it may be utilized for economic activities, including tourism and recreation.
- j) Ensure land supply can accommodate new and emerging commercial and industrial industries.
- k) Identify and support the development of tourism and recreation opportunities.
- l) Identify and support the development of rail-ready business.



## 3.2 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

With a range of agricultural, forestry, aggregate mining, tourism and oil and gas industries throughout the County, the continued success of these sectors begets investment in both up and downstream operations to support them. Ensuring the work Mackenzie County has already done to coordinate ongoing industrial development is carefully considered and incorporated in the MDP is as important as providing a framework for industrial development that leverages recent investments in critical servicing infrastructure throughout the County.

Already Mackenzie County has developed an industrial growth strategy for La Crete, and sustained advocacy efforts by the County to senior levels of government have resulted in business-supporting investments in natural gas infrastructure that will benefit the County and County residents for decades to come. By committing to creating a municipal environment that recognizes the need to maintain the County's enviable quality of life while supporting industry, Mackenzie County will continue to achieve sustained business growth.

### Objectives

- Build on the successes of the La Crete Industrial Growth Strategy and expand it into a County-wide framework for industrial growth.
- Ensure appropriate lands are provided to meet the growing needs of an ever-changing and growing local economy.
- Foster a municipal government that supports intentional employment growth.

### Policies

- a) The County should endeavour to prepare a comprehensive Industrial Growth Strategy encompassing the entire County in partnership with REDI Northwest Alberta.
- b) Following completion of the Industrial Growth Strategy the County should revisit and revise the MDP and local area plans to ensure that appropriate lands are provided to meet the County's projected need for different types of businesses.
- c) Where municipal infrastructure may not be able to service potential future employment growth in an area of the County, a business case from the developer should be used to advocate to senior levels of government for support in funding projects that create sizable employment growth.
- d) Mackenzie County should investigate opportunities to develop a streamlined or expedited approvals process for development applications that are well-aligned with the findings of the Industrial Growth Strategy and other relevant municipal policy.
- e) The County should develop a policy that prioritizes spending municipal funds within Mackenzie County to the greatest extent possible so that money spent in the County stays in the County, thereby supporting the local economy to the greatest extent possible.
- f) The County should investigate opportunities to provide economic development training to members of Council and employees of the County so that decision-making is well-informed from an economic growth and opportunities perspective.
- g) Increased utilization and growth of businesses in the County's existing industrial areas are encouraged.
- h) New and year-round tourism opportunities are encouraged to support the expansion of employment growth.

## 3.3 TOURISM

Mackenzie County enjoys some of the best, most accessible access to Crown Land and nature in all of Alberta. With pristine boreal forest and waterbodies found throughout, there are few better places to recreate in. At the same time, a deep-rooted Indigenous presence and some of the earliest western settlement in the province has provided Mackenzie County with substantial cultural heritage. This combination of nature, unique cultures, and long and storied histories sets the stage for tourism potential that to date has not been fully leveraged. Tourism holds substantial economic potential for the County, and to date has not yet been fully realized. Supporting this growth will help expand the County's economy.

As Mackenzie County continues to grow there is the potential to lay the groundwork for a successful tourism industry that builds on the assets it is already blessed with. Identifying and recognizing the potential of these assets is imperative, as is ensuring the County is working collaboratively with regional partners such as the Mackenzie Frontier Tourism Association (MFTA) to support this form of economic growth in a coordinated way across northwestern Alberta. With a clear sense of where this industry could go, the County can then appropriately allocate funds and apply for funding that will help spur on tourism in Mackenzie to new heights.

### Objectives

- Foster Mackenzie County's burgeoning tourism industry and support its growth into a new pillar of the County's economic portfolio.
- Identify along with the MFTA, key tourism and visitor experience focus areas for investment, protection, and promotion throughout the County.
- Ensure the growing tourism sector is appropriately considered and supported in the County's broader strategy for economic development in collaboration with the Regional Economic Development Initiative.

### Policies

- a) Mackenzie County should prepare an overarching regional tourism plan in collaboration with MFTA, identifying core areas of focus the County should support to foster a growing tourism industry.





- b) The Regional Tourism Plan should highlight the need for supporting site readiness, shovel-ready projects, increasing lake access, and expanding campground capacity and options.
- c) The County should identify the development of undeveloped areas and natural features and recreational amenities as priority projects for tourism grant applications to senior levels of government.
- d) The County will work closely with local, regional and private partners from across northwestern Alberta when developing the regional tourism plan to ensure it is aligned with and supports existing initiatives in the area.
- e) Where hubs of tourism potential are identified, the County should develop policies to protect the economic potential of these sites, including targeted investment in upgrades to support tourism activities and promotion of these areas through social media channels.
- f) Local area plans for Mackenzie County's communities should be revised where appropriate to ensure that new and existing tourism businesses do not face unnecessary regulatory barriers to the success of their business.
- g) Vacation rentals should be provided through a variety of accommodations such as hotels/motels, campgrounds, bed and breakfasts, Airbnb.
- h) The identification and marketing of trails and recreational access routes is encouraged to inform residents and tourists of County recreation opportunities.





# 4 SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE



Agricultural and farm practices are a significant economic and cultural driver in the County. Accounting for over 50 percent of Mackenzie County's non-Crown Land, farming is tightly intertwined with the region's identity, history, sense of community, and ebbs and flows of everyday life. As the seasons change, so does the pulse of Mackenzie County, from seeding to harvest.

Providing strong support for the County's agricultural industry today and ensuring its success in the future isn't just a matter of dollars and cents – it's a means for protecting and preserving a way of life and passing on the opportunities this land has provided us to another generation. Achieving these goals requires the County to maintain a clear approach to supporting agriculture over the next 20 years, and this approach is rooted on intentional expansion of agricultural lands, strong supports for agricultural growth and diversification, and protecting agricultural land from development.

## 4.1 AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION

Intentional and evidence-based expansion of agriculture into newly opened up Crown Land is critical to the long-term sustainability of the region's agriculture. As the successes of existing farms as well as agricultural innovations in new, emerging high-demand crops place ever increasing demand on the existing opened farmland in the County, there exists a need to explore opportunities to expand the lands available to agriculture themselves.

Expansion improves economies of scale and reduces costs to all farmers in the County, while it simultaneously enables a new generation of farmers to be able to build their own life off the land. As the primary driver of the County's GDP, agricultural expansion is critically important for residents. Mackenzie County has already put considerable thought into how and where the most appropriate expansion of agricultural lands should take place. This work should be leveraged in a coordinated way to ensure the Province is aware of the economic, social, and environmental opportunities by expanding Mackenzie County's agricultural areas.

### Objectives

- Expand agricultural lands in a logical way.
- Utilize resources wisely in the conversion of Crown land to Agricultural land.
- Consider broader objectives in the expansion of land, including economic goals, land fragmentation, and conversion of highest quality lands.

### Policies

- a) The County should develop a comprehensive Agricultural Lands Expansion Strategy that builds on the existing work conducted to prioritize lands for conversion of Green Area to White Area for the purposes of agriculture.
- b) The County should clearly develop as part of an Agricultural Lands Expansion Strategy the framework for preserving lands identified as ecologically important and that should not be converted to agricultural uses.
- c) The Agricultural Lands Expansion Strategy should contemplate not just where the best lands for agricultural uses are located, but also where new agricultural activity can best support overall County growth, industry, and economic development.
- d) The Agricultural Lands Strategy should also encourage participation by the County and agricultural organizations such as Mackenzie Agriculture in Provincial agricultural matters, including through the Provincial Agriculture Task Force and other initiatives as they arise.
- e) The County will take a balanced approach to protecting the natural forests and wilderness landscapes that County residents value while strategically expanding the economic potential of the County's core industry.
- f) The County will actively advocate to the Provincial government to prioritize the conversion of the lands identified in the Agricultural Lands Expansion Strategy.
- g) Advocating for the expansion of grazing lands and grazing reserves from the Province is encouraged.
- h) Support the growth of value added agricultural processing and urban agriculture through the Land Use Bylaw.
- i) In collaboration with industry and non-profit partners, explore ways to attract new agricultural related businesses to strengthen local food production and diversify the agricultural industry.



## 4.2 PROTECTING AGRICULTURAL LAND

As Mackenzie County continues to grow, incremental urbanization will occur adjacent to existing agricultural lands. Creating an environment that is staunchly supportive of the right to farm and to engage in normal farming practices is critically important to the success of all agricultural operations in Mackenzie County. At the same time, it is also important that development does not actively contribute to furthering conflict points or creating unnecessary tension. Thoughtful planning around how and where development should occur, particularly when close by to existing agricultural lands, is required.

### Objectives

- Reduce friction between more intensive agricultural uses and residential development.
- Protect against the fragmentation of agricultural land.
- Preserve agricultural land for agricultural uses.

### Policies

- a) While Mackenzie County is an overwhelmingly rural County and has largely avoided conflicts between residential areas and agricultural areas, the County maintains a position of support for the right to farm and protection of farmers when conducting normal farming practices.
  - b) To avoid the encroachment of residential areas into agricultural land, multi-lot country residential subdivisions greater than three lots should be located within designated growth areas or areas with existing clustered residential development.
- c) Intensive agricultural uses such as Natural Resources Conservation Board regulated confined feeding operations and rendering and processing operations must not locate within 3.2km (2 miles) of the surrounding Hamlet areas.
  - d) Land uses incompatible with the operation of a confined feeding operation shall not be supported when proposed within the minimum distance of separation of the confined feeding operation.
  - e) Better Agricultural Land shall be preserved for agriculture operations.
    - i) Mackenzie County shall encourage the maintenance of the 64.8 ha (160 acre) quarter-section or river lot as the basic farm unit.
    - ii) Mackenzie County shall encourage the retention and/or development of windbreaks between agricultural parcels and shelterbelts around farmsteads.
  - f) Where lands are taken out of agricultural use, the County should petition the Province to allow the replacement of these lands with new agricultural lands released by the Province.



## 4.3 AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION

While one of the oldest industries in the world, agriculture has modernized at a rapid pace over the past several decades. As the rate of change and impacts of technological innovation continue to increase, Mackenzie County is well-positioned to benefit from the opportunities for agricultural diversification that can arise from this changing landscape.

The County already has a distinct edge in trialling new best practices and emerging ideas at the Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA) site. The County should continue to actively advocate for recognition of and investment in agricultural applied research.

At the same time, farms themselves are becoming more diversified and vertically integrated than ever before. Agricultural operators seeking to incorporate on-farm diversified uses onto their property should be encouraged, with the County developing a clear roadmap for how and where these businesses can locate when they get to be too big for the farm.

### **Objectives**

- Build upon existing initiatives to support innovation and research in the agricultural sector.
- Support diversified agricultural practices.

### **Policies**

- a) Mackenzie County will prepare an Agricultural Diversification Strategy that is co-created with industry partners, local stakeholders, adjacent municipalities, and MARA.
- b) This Agricultural Diversification Strategy should prioritize provincial and federal funding opportunities, including research grants, for development and investment in northern agricultural research.

- c) The Agricultural Diversification Strategy should explore new economic opportunities related to local production, packaging, and marketing to get products direct to market and derive greater value from the local agricultural economy.
- d) The County should investigate opportunities to brand itself as a “Centre for Excellence in Northern Climate Agriculture,” and seek to partner with post-secondary academic institutions that are thought leaders in the agricultural industry.
- e) Encourage value-added agricultural industries and services to develop in proximity to complementary agricultural producers.
- f) Identify existing initiatives and emerging opportunities that would benefit from additional research, funding, and direction.
- g) The County will develop policy that permits subdivision for diversified, higher intensity, and/or higher yield agricultural operation that requires less land than an agricultural unit of land (quarter section).
- h) The development of agriculture beyond growing field crops is encouraged, such as confined feeding operations, peat farming, and fruit/vegetable greenhouses.

# 5 GROWING OUR COMMUNITIES



Continued economic prosperity in Mackenzie County requires growing our communities in a strategic and efficient manner. This includes a shared vision between stakeholders outlining the types of new communities desired, how existing communities can continue to grow, as well as support for the continued investment of infrastructure and amenities to create a high quality of life. Attractive communities attract new residents and new jobs to the area. The following general policies ensure the County achieves this shared vision.

## **Policies**

- a) Future development in Mackenzie County shall conform to the land use areas illustrated on Map 1, County Land Use.
- b) Mackenzie County encourages early dialogue with the public, development industry, and other affected stakeholders regarding municipal process and policy to ensure mutual understanding and to support shared goals and objectives.
- c) The Land Use Bylaw shall establish standards for development in Mackenzie County and implement the policies of this Plan.

## 5.1 STRATEGIC GROWTH

Mackenzie County has been experiencing growth in two main growth areas – La Crete and Rural residential areas. Along with community growth comes investment in amenities and services that attracts businesses to the area. The growth of Mackenzie County requires a partnership between the County, existing residents, and developers to share in and mitigate the risks of continued growth. Priority growth areas have been identified on Maps 5 and 6. The growth areas represent areas identified through previous studies and areas that reflect a contiguous and logically serviceable growth pattern that preserve agricultural land and natural features.

### Objectives

- Accommodate growth and development that is orderly, meets County guidelines and standards, and enhances Mackenzie County.
- Maintain the rural character of the County, promoting growth that reflects the values of County residents.
- Involve the community in the planning process.
- Ensure an adequate and suitable land base exists to accommodate hamlet growth.



### Policies

- a) The County shall monitor growth and maintain a corresponding infrastructure plan to service future growth opportunities.
- b) The County shall prioritize investment in infrastructure to support growth in the following order:
  - i) Development shall be focused within the hamlet boundaries;
  - ii) Development shall be focused within identified and planned growth corridors and nodes on Maps 1, 5 and 6; and
  - iii) Development that is creating a new development node or is within the rural area.
- c) New development in the County should be contiguous to existing developed areas.
- d) Mackenzie County shall plan for development that contributes to its fiscal, social, and environmental well-being. The County shall monitor its growth of commercial, industrial, and residential land and adjust necessary bylaws and plans.
- e) Mackenzie County shall facilitate economic development through planning and implementation strategies developed in Intermunicipal Development Plans, joint agreements, and Area Structure Plans.
- f) Mackenzie County shall discourage the removal of Better Agricultural Land from production and protect from premature fragmentation through the orderly progression of development.



- g) The County shall prioritize infill development within existing serviced areas followed by areas where infrastructure can be economically extended. Development within hamlets shall be orderly, efficient, and contiguous.
- h) Mackenzie County may require the adoption of an Area Structure Plan, to be prepared in accordance with Section 633 of the Municipal Government Act, or the approval of a Neighbourhood Structure Plan, or an Outline Plan prior to subdivision or development. These Plans shall address the following issues to the satisfaction of the County:
  - i) conformity with this Plan, other statutory plans, and the Land Use Bylaw;
  - ii) impacts on adjacent uses and mitigation methods, such as the provision of any suitable buffers or setbacks;
  - iii) proposed land uses and population projections;
  - iv) proposed methods of water supply, stormwater management and sewage disposal;
  - v) access and internal circulation;
  - vi) allocation of municipal and environmental reserve;
  - vii) suitability of the development site in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage;
  - viii) a method by which developers pay for off-site costs; and any other matters identified by the municipality.
- i) The County will work with the Province to promote access to Crown land through lease or purchase.
- j) The County shall be engaged in the provincial Land Use Framework and encourage development of the Lower Peace Regional Plan.
- k) The County will prioritize the development of sub-regional plans that specifically address the sustainable use of Crown lands.
- l) Within rural growth nodes, multi-lot subdivisions may be permitted.



## 5.2 LAND USE POLICIES

The County's general land use concept (Map 1, County Land Use) illustrates the general land use intent for Mackenzie County. The general land use concept reflects the constraints and opportunities, existing development patterns, the Green and White areas and future expansion areas. The general land use patterns within the three hamlets are illustrated in Maps 2 through 4 in more detail.

### 5.2.1 CROWN LAND

A majority of Mackenzie County is owned by the Provincial Crown and is commonly referred to as public lands. These lands, shown in Map 1, are managed by the Province and the use of the land is also set forth by the Province. This area of Mackenzie County is commonly referred to as the Green lands. The remaining land in the County is commonly referred to as the White lands and is land primarily owned by private individuals and corporations. Mackenzie County will continue to work with the Province to advocate for the appropriate use of Crown Lands within the County.

#### Objectives

- Encourage expanded use of Crown Lands.
- Encourage the expansion of permitted uses on Crown Lands, including potential industrial use expansion.
- Facilitate public access to Crown Land areas where deemed suitable, desirable, and economically feasible for provincial funding and support.

#### Policies

- a) Mackenzie County shall support the use of Crown Lands for renewable and non-renewable resource development, grazing, tourism, conservation, and recreational use.
- b) Mackenzie County shall pursue discussions with relevant government agencies to ensure that they are fully aware of any future proposed use of Crown Lands.

- c) Mackenzie County shall consult on the preparation of an integrated resource management plan between the municipality and the Province.
- d) Land owners shall work with the Province to determine any Crown interests in water bodies prior to any development activity.

### 5.2.2 AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is one of the main industries in Mackenzie County and is the primary use of land within the White Area outside of the hamlet and surrounding town boundaries. The agricultural areas face continued challenges from the location of other uses in close proximity. It is important to protect the agricultural area from premature fragmentation and non-compatible uses. As the County moves forward over the next 20 years, opportunities to grow the agricultural sector and diversify within the industry will become important to creating additional jobs for the growing population.

#### Objectives

- Preserve Better Agricultural Land for agricultural land uses.
- Encourage the diversification and sustainable intensification of agricultural practices.
- Minimize the impact of non-agricultural uses on existing agricultural operations.

#### Policies

- a) The primary use of lands in the White Area, illustrated on Map 1, shall be for agricultural purposes.
- b) In addition to agricultural uses, lands in the White Area may also be developed for highway commercial uses, home-based businesses, public uses and utilities, recreational uses, resource extraction industries, and rural industrial land provided that:
  - i) the proposal is in conformance with statutory plans and the Land Use Bylaw;



- ii) they cannot logically be used for agricultural purposes;
  - iii) they do not disrupt existing agricultural operations (i.e., creation of weed problems);
  - iv) they are suitable in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage; and
  - v) they are accessible, serviced, or in serviceable locations.
- c)** Mackenzie County supports and encourages sustainable agricultural practices which reduce impacts on the natural environment. These practices include nutrient management, sustainable grazing and riparian management, integrated crop management, responsible pest management and greenhouse gas awareness.
- d)** Confined feeding operations (CFO) should be located in areas where there will be minimal conflict with existing land uses and will not conflict with future urban expansion areas and future country residential areas.
- e)** Confined feeding operations shall meet the minimum distance separation setback as set out in the *Standards and Administration Regulation, (Alta Reg 267/2001)* and shall not be located within
- i) 3.2 kilometres (km) from an adjacent municipality, hamlet, Indian Reserve, or a multi-lot country residential subdivision; and
  - ii) 1.6 km from any federal, provincial, or municipal park, water body, swamp, gully, ravine, coulee, or natural drainage course, and may not be located in an area subject to flooding.
- f)** In consultation with the NRCB, Mackenzie County shall maintain an inventory of all CFOs in the County.
- g)** CFOs should be located on land that is of poor quality for the growing of crops.
- h)** The subdivision of land for specialized or intensive agricultural operations, such as greenhouses and other horticultural businesses, may be considered if the following criteria are met:
- i) a detailed description of the operation, such as a business plan and any other information deemed necessary by the County; and
  - ii) the proposed lot is greater than 4.05 hectares (10 acres) in size.
- i)** The subdivision of land to accommodate a farmstead separation may be permitted if:
- i) the parcel contains an existing, habitable residence; and
  - ii) the proposed parcel size can accommodate a sewer system which complies with Provincial regulations.
- j)** The subdivision of an unsubdivided quarter section is discouraged under the Agriculture land use designation. The County may consider an application to subdivide a quarter section once into a maximum of three parcels of land if the new proposed parcels will be:
- i) located on poor agricultural soils and not subject to flooding or located within a Rural Growth Node as shown on Map 1. No structure should be located below the grade of the road surface;
  - ii) severed from the balance or otherwise not viable to farm;
  - iii) able to accommodate on-site amenities and services and is not below the elevation of the road;
  - iv) not interfere with existing agricultural operations both on the balance and on adjacent lands; and

- v) able to provide legal and physical access and clustered together.
- k) A farmstead separation or a vacant first parcel out of an unsubdivided quarter section may be refused if it interferes or conflicts with:
  - i) agricultural operations in the area;
  - ii) existing or future roads or utilities; or
  - iii) the logical and economic expansion of a nearby urban area.
- l) One dwelling unit is permitted per parcel in the Agriculture zone. When a parcel is located on marginal soils, additional dwellings may be permitted at the discretion of the Approving Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Land Use Bylaw.
- m) In the Agricultural area, land owners may receive Municipal Reserve credit for the dedication of road widening at time of development.

### 5.2.3 COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL

Mackenzie County continues to face country residential development pressure in the areas surrounding La Crete and Fort Vermilion. The policies in this section look to guide rural residential development in a manner that promotes natural features and protects Better Agricultural Land from fragmentation.

#### **Objectives**

- Recognize agriculture, its related activities, and industries as the predominant land use in the rural area.
- Recognize country residential development as a legitimate land use in the rural area, while minimizing potential conflicts with non-residential uses.
- Provide for the establishment of attractive, well-planned, and properly serviced country residential development.

- Maintain the rural character of the County and to allow for growth of the established urban areas.

#### **Policies**

- a) To reduce conflicts with hamlet growth and industrial and agricultural operations, and to minimize the cost of maintaining roads and other municipal services, country residential communities shall be located in a well-defined area, as shown on the maps within the hamlet and industrial Area Structure Plans, leaving the rest of the County primarily agricultural or crown land. These country residential areas are located in accordance with the following principles:
  - i) have poor soils (CLI Class 5), except where the use of better soils may be justified because the land is adjacent to urban areas, recreational lakes, or river valleys;
  - ii) do not limit the logical expansion of the hamlets of Fort Vermilion, La Crete or Zama City;
  - iii) located near existing or proposed recreation areas;
  - iv) have potable water supply and are adequately serviced or where municipal servicing can be provided in an efficient and economical manner;
  - v) will maintain the minimum separation distance from sour gas facilities, gas and oil wells, wastewater treatment plants, landfills, existing CFOs and existing sand and gravel extraction sites as defined by Municipal Government Act, AOPA, or any other relevant legislation; and
  - vi) do not create potential land use conflicts by locating adjacent to areas which have existing or are proposed for heavy industrial uses.

- b) Notwithstanding Zama City, Mackenzie County shall require that bareland condominium residential developments meet the same requirements and standards as conventional country residential subdivisions.
- c) Wherever possible, a landscaped or treed buffer should be provided along the boundaries of country residential lots that are located adjacent to non-residential uses.
- d) If a quarter section being subdivided contains significant areas of Better Agricultural Land, those areas must normally be left as a single large parcel, with the residential lots concentrated on the poorer soil.
- e) Mackenzie County supports home-based businesses in residential areas provided that the residential character of the home and the area is maintained.
- f) Mackenzie County shall discourage the expansion of rural country residential settlements that are not identified in an area structure plan.
- g) Any future subdivisions located adjacent to a highway shall take place in a manner that protects the integrity of the highway corridor and may require a service road, subject to the requirements of Alberta Transportation.
- h) The number and type of livestock allowed in country residential neighbourhoods shall be controlled through the Land Use Bylaw.
- i) Rural residential development should tie into municipal servicing where possible.
- j) Redesignation of an agriculture parcel greater than 4 hectares (9.9 acres) in size to a residential use should be discouraged if not located on poor agricultural land.

- k) The Land Use Bylaw will consider larger sized multi-lot development as suitable locations for hobby farms in specific areas of the municipality as a way to reduce agricultural land fragmentation.

#### 5.2.4 HAMLET RESIDENTIAL

Hamlets should be the priority location for new residential development over the next 20 years. This development pattern would ensure protection of agricultural land and be a more efficient development pattern to service with municipal infrastructure. Hamlets should become the location where a range of housing choice is provided to a diverse demographic through well connected residential neighbourhoods. The ability for people to age in place will become important to maintaining a high quality of life for residents. Residential development that is constructed with durable, resilient materials provides for more cost-efficient homes over the life of the building.

##### Objectives

- To provide for orderly and staged residential growth.
- To allow a full range of housing types to meet the demands of various income groups and lifestyles.
- To promote high standards of design, safety, convenience, and amenity in all residential areas.

##### Policies

- a) Mackenzie County shall develop residential neighbourhoods in general accordance with the area structure plans for the hamlets of La Crete, Fort Vermilion and Zama City.
- b) All new residential development must be connected to municipal services.
- c) The County will encourage the provision of a mix of residential unit types and sizes within developments and on the same street.

- d) Secondary suites may be supported on large lots in existing residential areas if parking is accommodated on site. Garden suites may be considered where appropriate.
- e) The County will ensure that complete community design principles are incorporated in area structure plans, outline plans, and plans of subdivision including:
  - i) The designation of local commercial nodes and services where appropriate;
  - ii) The provision of complete streets that encourage different modes of travel;
  - iii) A well-connected network of local streets; and
  - iv) High quality parks, open spaces, and the preservation of natural features.
- f) Developers should use current best practices and industry standards when preparing Area Structure Plans or Outline Plans to ensure that development improves the economy, the community, and the environment. Mackenzie County should encourage that the design of neighbourhoods include:
  - i) distinguishable boundaries, recognizable entrances, and one or more neighbourhood focal points to give neighbourhoods distinct identities;
  - ii) varying housing styles and front yard setbacks to generate visual diversity;
  - iii) the provision of deeper lots on collector roads and corner lots to allow greater housing setback to reduce visual and noise intrusion;
  - iv) provide a variety of park types and sizes to meet the neighbourhoods needs;
- v) orienting as many lots as possible adjacent to and within reasonable walking distance of schools, open spaces, and other amenities to permit simple access from residences to neighbourhood amenities;
- vi) providing an internal trail system linking residential uses with adjacent development and connecting to Mackenzie County's trail system;
- vii) designing gradual curves in road alignments to reduce vehicular speeds, coincide with natural contours, and add to neighbourhood attractiveness; and
- viii) preservation and integration of open space and natural features.
- g) Infill housing is supported on underutilized sites provided:
  - i) the development is attuned to the height, mass, scale, and appearance of existing adjacent housing;
  - ii) the development is compatible with adjacent uses;
  - iii) infrastructure capacity is not compromised; and
  - iv) the County provides opportunity for public input.
- h) The provision of all public neighbourhood amenities and infrastructure in manufactured home parks is to be the same standard as in conventional residential areas.
- i) The County will work in collaboration with housing authorities and stakeholders to identify appropriate sites for affordable housing, and medium and high density housing. When determining whether a site proposed for medium or high density residential uses is suitable for such use, the County should use the following criteria as a guide:

- i) adjacent to collector roads, or in convenient proximity to community amenities, schools, recreation opportunities, and commercial areas where the greater amenity and infrastructure capacity can afford to sustain higher densities;
  - ii) dispersed throughout a neighbourhood; and,
  - iii) attuned to the height, mass, scale, and appearance of existing adjacent housing and other lands uses.
- j) Provision shall be made in the Land Use Bylaw to ensure that medium and high density residential uses provide adequate amenity areas that serve the specific density, location, and type of multiple family development.
- k) Home based businesses shall be supported provided they:
- i) meet the intent of the Land Use Bylaw; and;
  - ii) have no significant off-site effects, or those effects are reduced or managed to the satisfaction of the development authority.

### 5.2.5 COMMERCIAL

Commercial development within the County has primarily been located within the hamlet boundaries. Commercial areas are important to provide jobs and services to residents and visitors to the County. Over the next 20 years commercial development will continue to be primarily located within the hamlets and in the designated highway corridor areas. The following policies direct where and how commercial areas will be developed.

#### Objectives

- Provide suitable and appropriately located areas for urban and rural commercial activities.
- Emphasize each hamlet as principal retail and service centres in Mackenzie County.

- Minimize conflict between rural and urban commercial operations.
- Broaden the County's economic base by taking advantage of retail opportunities.
- Ensure that Mackenzie County's commercial areas are attractive to tourist, regional, and local customers.

#### Policies

- a) The location of commercial uses shall be limited to existing commercial areas, the junction of Highway 58 and Highway 88, and the locations shown in the area structure plans for the hamlets of La Crete, Fort Vermilion and Zama City or in the commercial land use areas shown outside the hamlets on Map 1.
- b) Mackenzie County should promote the development of a compact, viable central business district within each hamlet, as illustrated in each of the Area Structure Plans for the hamlets of La Crete, Fort Vermilion and Zama City.
  - i) Mackenzie County should consider the implementation of a hamlet design concept to give a theme to each central business district and may undertake the necessary steps to implement such a theme.
- c) Except for agricultural industries, highway commercial uses, home-based businesses, public uses and utilities, recreational uses, resource extraction industries, and rural industrial land uses, commercial uses shall not be permitted to locate on Better Agricultural Land, unless no suitable alternative location is available.
- d) All commercial developments proposed in the agricultural area shall be evaluated according to the following:
  - i) conformity with relevant statutory plans and the Land Use Bylaw;
  - ii) quality of agricultural land;

- iii) the location and impacts of the proposed development in relationship to other commercial uses in the hamlets;
  - iv) the servicing requirements of the proposal;
  - v) suitability of the site in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage; and
  - vi) provisions for access and impacts on the transportation network.
- e) Any proposed commercial development adjacent to Provincial highways shall be referred to Alberta Transportation for review and comment prior to a decision being issued by the County.
  - f) At the time of development, the developer shall pay special attention to the scale, design, and colour of commercial uses to maximize the compatibility of development with adjacent uses, and may require the provision of buffers, such as landscaping, fences, and berms.
  - g) Commercial uses catering to large vehicles shall be located outside of the main street or commercial core areas.
  - h) Corridor development should be prioritized in close proximity to hamlets in order to protect existing agricultural uses and development in close proximity to corridors.
  - i) Local commercial uses should be provided in proximity to residential neighbourhoods to support the day-to-day needs of residents.
  - j) Highway commercial uses should be located in areas that do not compete from the commercial uses provided within the hamlets.
  - k) Commercial uses within hamlets shall be concentrated to the main streets and commercial core of the hamlets.
- l) Commercial development located along a main street or within the commercial core shall be of high quality urban design that:
    - i) Contributes to a sense of place;
    - ii) Creates a pedestrian friendly environment and streetscape;
    - iii) Provides parking to the rear or side of buildings; and
    - iv) Aligns with the Streetscape Design Plan in place for the hamlets of Fort Vermilion and La Crete.

### 5.2.6 INDUSTRIAL

Industrial development within Mackenzie County is an important source of employment and the economy. While oil and gas are the main industry occupying industrial lands, providing industrial land for the agricultural and forestry sectors is also key to the economic stability of Mackenzie County. The following policies ensure industrial development is provided in a manner that is compatible with adjacent uses and can accommodate and attract a variety of industrial development in the future.

#### Objectives

- Facilitate industrial developments that support agriculture.
- Support a concentrated pattern of industrial development.
- Emphasize the forestry sector as a key component of Mackenzie County's economy and to facilitate its continued growth and diversification.
- Support Mackenzie County's role as a centre for oil and gas exploration and development in the surrounding fields.
- Promote and diversify Mackenzie County's economy by emphasizing manufacturing, transportation, and the supply of industrial goods and services.



- Minimize the negative impacts of rural industrial development.
- Ensure all industrial areas in Mackenzie County are attractive as feasible.

### **Policies**

a) The location of urban and rural industrial uses, apart from farm-based industries and resource extraction operations, shall be limited to existing industrial areas, industrial parks, and the industrial policy areas shown in the hamlet and industrial Area Structure Plans.

- i) Farm-based industries are supported in agricultural areas which include but are not limited to livestock auction marts; concentrated livestock feed operations; grain elevators and feed mills; bulk fertilizer and/or bulk agricultural chemical distribution plants; implement dealerships; crop spraying; greenhouses; and accessory commercial operations.
- ii) Mackenzie County may support resource extraction operations in agricultural areas, which include, but are not limited to the following: cement plants, sand and gravel operations, extraction and processing of natural gas and petroleum, logging and forestry operations, and coal or mineral extraction.
- iii) Support for mineral extraction operations shall be contingent on the mitigation or minimization of the impacts upon adjacent land uses and soil, water, and farming operations.

b) Industrial development may be allowed in locations other than those described in Policy 5.2.6a provided they meet the following criteria:

- i) caters to the needs of agriculture, forestry, or natural resource extraction;
- ii) is not suited to an urban area;

- iii) nuisance impacts to adjacent parcels, such as emissions, noise and traffic generation can be mitigated;
- iv) the site is suitable for the proposed development in terms of soil stability, groundwater level, and drainage;
- v) has minimal transportation and utility servicing requirements; and
- vi) the County provides opportunity for public input.

c) Industrial parks or industrial uses shall:

- i) conform to relevant statutory plans;
- ii) minimize impacts on the surrounding agricultural activities and urban areas;
- iii) have adequate separation distances and transition between industrial and non-industrial uses;
- iv) have simple and direct access to truck routes, highways, or rail networks;
- v) are suitable to the provision of required infrastructure and services;
- vi) have sufficient on-site water storage for the fire protection purposes; and
- vii) can accommodate a variety of types and sizes of industries.

d) Through provisions in the Land Use Bylaw, the County shall ensure that adequate buffers or transitional land uses are maintained between industrial and non-industrial uses when the potential exists for significant land use conflicts regarding noise, vibration, dust, odour, environmental hazards or other safety risks.

- e) Except for home-based businesses and farm subsidiary occupations, rural industrial development shall not be permitted to locate on Better Agricultural Land, unless no suitable alternative location is available.
- f) Mackenzie County may require the preparation of a risk assessment at the cost of the developer, when considering an industrial use or determining the location of a potentially noxious industry that may pose potential environmental contamination or cause nuisance.
- g) Mackenzie County shall require that development and subdivision applications near sour gas facilities meet the standards of the *Subdivision and Development Regulation (Alberta Regulation 43/2002)* and Alberta Energy Regulator guidelines, with respect to minimum separation distances, between sour gas facilities and other land uses.
- h) An adequate inventory of industrial designated sites of various lot sizes and type should be maintained to meet the needs of business and industry.
- i) The County encourages value-added manufacturing and the diversification of industrial uses.
- j) Heavy industrial uses involving dangerous goods shall be located in areas where impacts to commercial and residential uses can be mitigated.
- k) Light industrial uses that are contained wholly within a building may be located adjacent to existing and planned residential development.
- l) Outdoor storage should be appropriately screened or buffered from adjacent roads, highways, and non-industrial land uses.

## 5.2.7 MIXED USE EMPLOYMENT

Along major roadway corridors there is an opportunity to attract higher density employment uses that may include a mix of commercial and industrial development. The policies in this section encourage development to be more sensitive in design to the prominent location along corridors.

### Objectives

- Facilitate employment uses in a more compact form.
- Outline the requirements for improved urban design standards.

### Policies

- a) Development should consist of higher quality building materials and urban design that contributes to the public realm and street.
- b) Promote a mix of commercial and light industrial development at higher intensities.
- c) Higher impact industrial uses, such as pulp and paper mills or aggregate distribution, should not locate along major roads.
- d) Outdoor storage shall be screened from the adjacent roadway so as to not be visible to passing motorists and pedestrians.



## 5.2.8 SPECIAL PLANNING AREA

A special planning area overlay exists over a portion of Fort Vermilion as illustrated on Map 2, Fort Vermilion Land Use. Lands within the special planning area are subject to flooding by the Peace River and development within this area should proceed only after thorough assessment of all flood hazard impacts.

### Objectives

- Enable flood risk mitigation.
- Establish a future land use plan for the area subject to flooding and determine an appropriate density.

### Policies

- a) The County and Province should explore opportunities to relocate existing development within the flood hazard area to undeveloped areas within Fort Vermilion outside of the flood hazard area.
- b) A comprehensive land use plan should be developed for the area identified as Special Planning Area to determine appropriate future development.
- c) The County should explore opportunities to expand the open space network along the river and River road.



## 5.3 UNDEVELOPED AREAS AND NATURAL FEATURES

The enjoyment of undeveloped areas and natural features by residents of Mackenzie County for a variety of recreation, tourism and economic development pursuits is a priority. Natural features exist throughout the County and provide a benefit to the residents of Mackenzie County through the provision of ecological functions such as water regeneration areas and wildlife corridors. Ensuring a light footprint on the landscape is an important aspect of ensuring these areas continue to provide value to residents for generations to come. The policies in this section strike to maintain this balance of recreational, tourism and economic development opportunities with sustainable environmental management practices.

### Objectives

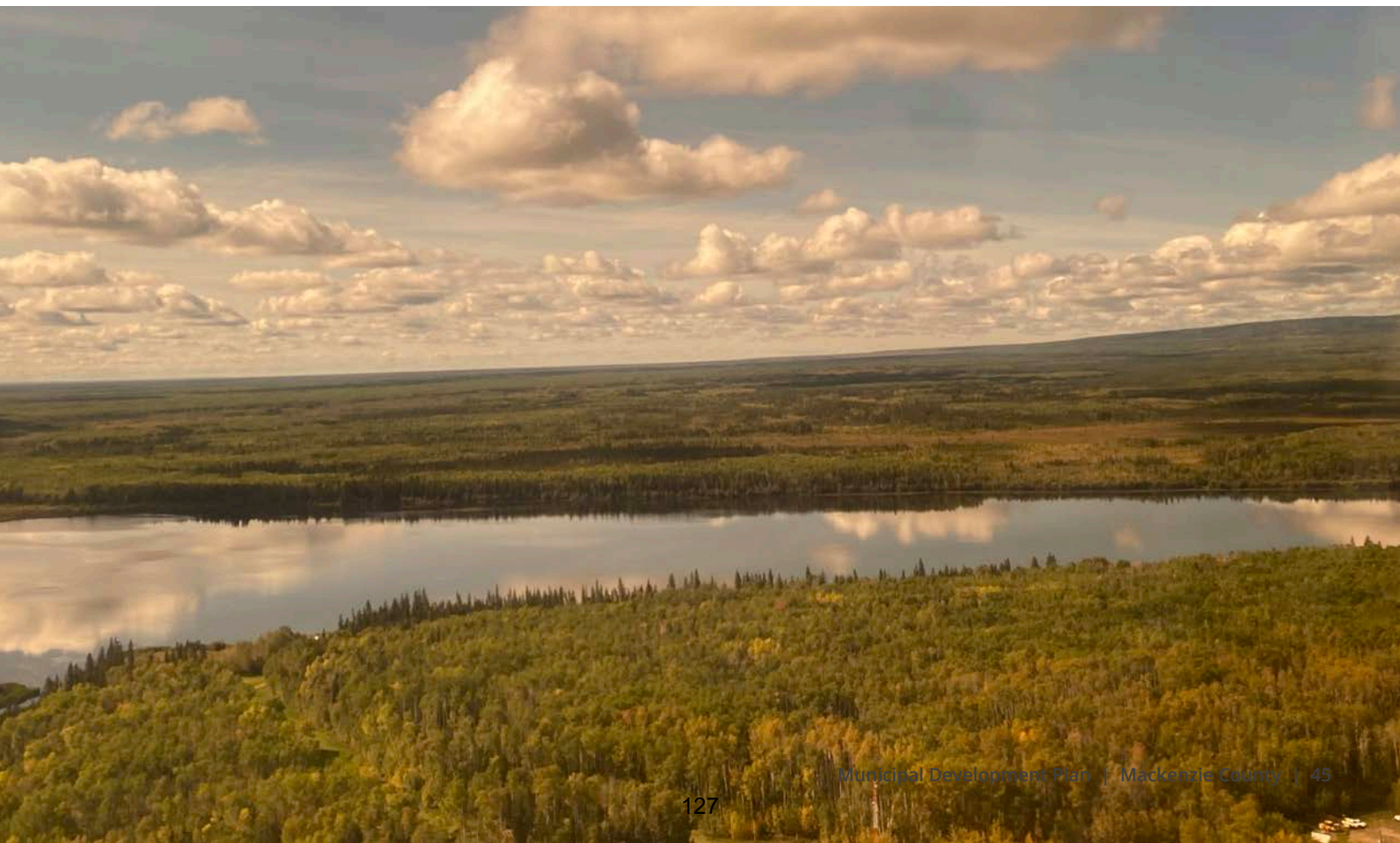
- Outline the requirements for the planning and development of land within or adjacent to natural features.
- Identify and mitigate against areas susceptible to flooding, and other significant erosion prone areas.
- Sustainably manage wildlife, waterfowl staging areas, lakes, river shore-lands, valley slopes, unique topographic features, and vegetative types which may be considered environmentally sensitive.
- Maintain public accessibility to lakes and major rivers through the use of reserves at the time of subdivision.
- Improve ease of access to Crown Land for public use and enjoyment.
- Reduce the risk of wildfire, loss of property or loss of life from wildfires.

### Policies

- a) Area Structure Plans, Outline Plans, or subdivision applications, as Mackenzie County deems appropriate, shall:
  - i) confirm the location and geographic extent of any natural features, hazard lands, or historic or archaeological sites. A detailed analysis shall be undertaken by a qualified consultant with all costs borne to the developer.
  - ii) integrate natural features into the design of developments to form part of the linked and integrated parks and open space system, including the retention of forests, wildlife corridors, muskeg areas, and the provision of stormwater ponds and parks to form continuous open spaces.
- b) The conservation of natural features by dedication of Environmental Reserve and Municipal Reserve, the provision of Environmental Reserve easements and conservation easements, or by other statutory means as defined by the Municipal Government Act is encouraged.
- c) The Peace River is an important natural feature. Recreation uses such as pathways, trails, campgrounds, and river access for boats should be developed in a manner that balances development with respect for the natural function of the Peace River.
- d) Mitigation measures should be implemented to prevent the contamination of groundwater and elimination of environmentally significant areas as determined by the County.



- e) Wherever possible, continuous greenways with enhanced public access should be created.
- f) In keeping with Alberta's "Water for Life" strategy, watershed functions and surface and groundwater quality should be maintained in conjunction with development and recreation opportunities.
- g) Emergency response plans should be developed in partnership with industry where there are potential impacts to source water protection.
- h) The land surrounding lakes shall be developed in a manner that balances the quality and quantity of water to support the needs of fish and wildlife with recreation opportunities. All lakes, but especially Thurston Lake, Bistcho Lake, Margaret Lake, Pitchimi Lake, Semo Lake, Eva Lake, Rocky Island Lake, Wentzel Lake, Platapus (Johnson) Lake, Wadlin Lake, Hutch Lake and Machesis Lake are regarded as recreational lakes and shall be sustainably managed to maintain the recreational value of the above lakes for future generations.
- i) Natural features should be accessible to people through the incorporation of trails, pathways, and benches.



## 5.4 OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND TRAILS

Open spaces and parks are vital to the quality of life in Mackenzie County. They provide an opportunity for passive and active recreation uses and contribute to attracting new residents, businesses, and guests to the County. Cooperation among different partners is key to allowing and promoting the use and maintenance of Crown land for recreational opportunities that will benefit all residents of the region. Continued investment in recreation opportunities will be required for the duration of this plan to promote a health lifestyle. The policies in this section are intended to support the creation and promotion of an integrated network of open spaces and parks that provide the enjoyment during all seasons.

### Objectives

- Support an integrated network of open spaces, parks, and pathways within Mackenzie County.
- Promote four season use through a variety of activities and ensure the development and design of open spaces and parks allow for all people in all stages of life to enjoy.
- Support and promote the use of the vast undeveloped public open space occupying the County for recreational opportunities.

### Policies

- a) Ensure that the design and development of parks, open space and recreation areas are suited to the goals of the community and within the financial limitations of the County.
- b) An open space plan should be developed for Mackenzie County and the hamlets to identify recreation opportunities and sites. The Plan may include, but not be limited to, the identification of recreation sites and the identification of all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile trail systems, or marina's and/or docks linking recreation sites and urban centres.
- c) Mackenzie County shall require 10% of the gross developable area of a subdivision be dedicated for Municipal Reserves or School Reserves or any combination of as a condition of subdivision approval to ensure that community open space requirements for neighbourhood, hamlet, and County level facilities are provided. Municipal Reserve shall be provided in the form of land unless otherwise determined by the Subdivision Authority.





- d) Where possible, Municipal Reserve should be allocated to lands adjacent to natural features and stormwater management facilities to facilitate public access to these areas.
- e) Mackenzie County shall not accept land as either Municipal Reserve or School Reserve, or any combination of both, that by virtue of its characteristics is more appropriately designated as Environmental Reserve as defined by the Municipal Government Act.
- f) Where there is no need for park space in an area that is the subject of a subdivision, cash in lieu of reserve may be required in accordance with the Act.
- g) Municipal Reserve dedication in a subdivision that borders a lake shall be configured in such a manner that approximately 20% of the lakeshore frontage forms part of the municipal reserve parcel.
- h) Partnerships should be formed to develop recreation opportunities throughout the County. This could include recreation centres, arenas, sports facilities, trails, etc.
- i) Mackenzie County shall locate parks so that open space is easily accessible from every residence and the site maximizes opportunities for pedestrian access and connectivity to other amenities and uses.
- j) Provide an appropriate mix of small, medium, and large parks to meet the varied needs of the County's population.
- k) Design parks to ensure visibility and safety, according to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles.
- l) Prioritize investment in recreational infrastructure based on identified population needs.
- m) Partner with non-profits in the provision of community and recreation services where mutual benefit can be achieved.
- n) Prioritize the investment in community infrastructure that will provide a multi-purpose function.
- o) When new County public facing facilities such as recreation centres and libraries are constructed, they should be designed as barrier free. The County should examine existing County public facing facilities and if feasible add barrier free access.
- p) Abandoned oil and gas dispositions that may be used for public recreation should be acquired for public use.
- q) Public access should be acquired and constructed to connect residents and tourists to recreational opportunities and locations as identified by Mackenzie County.
- r) Promote and include recreation opportunities as a key attraction when developing a tourism plan with the Mackenzie Frontier Tourism Association (MFTA).
- s) Working with the Province, the development of a recreational trail system including staging areas should be established on Crown Land to support off-highway vehicles, hiking, cycling, skiing, wilderness camping, snowmobiling, ice fishing, and horseback riding.
- t) Recreational development opportunities around water bodies on Crown Land should be identified and explored with the Province.

## 5.5 CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mackenzie County supports a variety of recreational and cultural amenities in partnership with the hard work and dedication of non-profit and volunteer groups across the region that contribute to the quality of life of residents in the County. These amenities include the historic sites across the County, the community recreation centres, schools, libraries, museums and other community services. In addition, a large array of outdoor activities is available in Mackenzie County that draw tourists from all areas of Alberta and beyond.

### Objectives

- Support the preservation of historic resources within Mackenzie County.
- Promote Mackenzie County's historic sites and recreation areas as tourist destinations.
- Continue to grow partnerships with non-profit and volunteer organizations to provide these recreational and cultural services while being efficient.

### Policies

- a) Mackenzie County should:
- i) Ensure that identified and designated federal, provincial, and municipal historic resources are protected from adverse impacts associated with on-site development and adjacent land uses;
  - ii) Collaborate with communities, community groups, organizations, and individuals to promote the preservation of historic resources; and
  - iii) Work with the Province for advice and information regarding existing and/or potential historic sites.
- b) Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing heritage structures.

- a) Support and promote cultural programs and activities that create a sense of pride and local identity.
- b) Preserve and promote historically significant buildings and support local initiatives that promote culture and heritage.
- c) Mackenzie County should:
  - i) promote and celebrate areas which have been identified as having significant historic or recreation potential.
  - ii) prepare or amend management plans for historic or recreational areas; and
  - iii) prepare economic or partnership development plans to help ensure the long term viability of historic sites and recreation areas.





## 5.6 MOBILITY AND SERVICING

### 5.6.1 TRANSPORTATION

Mackenzie County's roads, railways and airports are integral to how people move within and to and from the region. The rural road network in Mackenzie County mostly utilizes the Provincial Highway network. Highways 35, 58, 88 and 697 link Fort Vermilion, La Crete and Zama City to the Towns of Rainbow Lake and High Level and to the Northwest Territories and the rest of Alberta. The intent of the policies in this section is to provide for the efficient movement of people and goods.

#### Objectives

- Provide an efficient and effective transportation network for the movement of people and goods in Mackenzie County.
- Guarantee sufficient right-of-way provision for roads to allow their expansion in the future, if necessary.
- Strive for an attractive roadside environment.
- Increase active transportation modes over time within hamlets.

#### Policies

a) The County should prepare and maintain a Transportation Master Plan guiding future improvements and additions to the County's transportation system.

- b) A Rural Road Transportation Plan should be prepared as part of the Transportation Master Plan in order to support proper corridor planning.
- c) Mackenzie County should work with Provincial and Federal governments to secure funding for highway network maintenance and enhancement, including a bridge at Tompkins Landing.
- d) All Area Structure Plans, Outline Plans, rezoning, subdivision and development applications that include land located within 1.6 kilometers of a highway shall be referred to Alberta Transportation for comment.
- e) In the evaluation of subdivision and development proposals, the need for widening and/or upgrading of any roads adjacent to the proposal shall be determined at the time of development application. All road upgrades are to be included as part of the development.
- f) All rural roads should have a 30 metre road right-of-way.
- g) A subdivision or development permit should not be approved unless the lot has access to a maintained public road. Access through an easement is not preferred.



- h) The incorporation of pedestrian and bicycle paths designed as integral parts of municipal parks and neighbourhoods is encouraged.
- i) Opportunities to increase active modes within the hamlets should be explored.
- j) Where a subdivision or development is proposed within 100m of a railway line, the County may require the developer to build berms and/or fences to separate residences from railway lines.
- k) Cooperation should occur with adjacent municipalities and interested government agencies regarding the protection of railway, airport, road network and other transportation corridors.
- l) Area structure plans and outline plans should provide the minimum building setback and buffering from active rail lines in accordance with best practices and the land use bylaw.
- m) The expansion and increased usage of the airports and aerodromes is supported.
- n) The following land uses may develop adjacent to an airport if the use does not adversely affect the airport operation:
  - i) General agricultural operations;
  - ii) Recreational land uses; and
  - iii) Airport industrial lands.
- o) Potential new rail and highway corridors should be identified and protected from non-compatible development.
- p) The rural road network should be developed while considering future access requirements.

## 5.6.2 UTILITIES

Utilities, such as waste, water, and power, are essential to support businesses and residents in Mackenzie County. Utilities should be well planned and integrated with future growth areas, as well as consider the impacts of a changing climate and economy. The intent of the policies in this section is to provide quality, safe, and efficient utilities to serve the needs of Mackenzie County.

### Objectives

- Ensure the efficient and effective provision of water supply, sewage treatment, stormwater run-off control, and sanitary waste disposal facilities to County residents.
- Responsibly maintain and upgrade existing utility systems as budgets allow.

### Policies

- a) A comprehensive long-term plan to upgrade and expand water supply and sewage treatment systems in alignment with budget priorities should be established.
- b) When locating water and sewer mains, and when consulted by external agencies regarding oil or gas pipeline or major power transmission line routes, the County should emphasize the location of these in common corridors wherever possible.
- c) All lots of a proposed subdivision are required to be connected to municipal water and sewer systems when the lots are developed except where, in the County's opinion, the proposed subdivision is far enough away from existing trunk mains that extension of the mains is not economically feasible. Where connection of new lots to municipal water and sewage systems is not intended, yet in the County's opinion, such connection is desirable and feasible, the proposed development may be refused.

- d) Additional water connection points and water fill stations should be provided in strategic locations.
- e) Water conservation measures which may reduce or eliminate water utilities expansion requirements is supported.
- f) Land developers should identify wetland areas as part of their subdivision applications. Mackenzie County may negotiate conservation easements or require Municipal or Environmental Reserve and/or Environmental Reserve Easements covering wetland areas.
- g) Parcel sizes must be able to accommodate on-site services such as water distribution and sewage collection where necessary.
- h) Drainage schemes that may increase the intensity of runoff are discouraged.
- i) Any multi-lot development which depends on a private water system must meet the full standards of regulatory agencies, and no contingent liability shall fall upon the municipality.
  - i) Any private water system serving multiple lots must be capable of supporting itself financially through the contributions of the landowners who benefit from it and must be set up on a proper legal basis.
  - ii) Any private water system must be owned and operated by an organization which has the legal right to levy charges on its customers.
- j) The use of low pressure sewer systems in low density developments may be considered as a cost-effective alternative to gravity lines.
- k) When a lot containing an existing house is to be subdivided from a larger parcel, the County will require all new and existing lots as part of the subdivision application to comply with servicing standards in place at the time of subdivision.
- l) Solid waste disposal sites are to be located and developed in a manner that shall minimize any impacts on surrounding land uses.
- m) Recycling and composting of waste where appropriate and financially feasible is encouraged.
- n) The integrity of pipelines and utility corridors shall be maintained, and shared corridors created where possible, while planning for growth and development.
- o) Large utility structures, such as cellular towers, microwave towers, radio towers, wind turbines or similar infrastructure, shall be located in non-residential areas. Small cellular towers that do not extend beyond the height of a principal structure may be located in residential areas.
- p) Guidelines with respect to minimum separation distances between sour gas facilities and other land uses through the subdivision and development process as determined by the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) shall be applied.
- q) Pipeline easements or rights-of-way in a proposed subdivision shall only be accepted as Municipal Reserve if it can be shown that the easements or rights-of-way shall form part of a trail system which is integral to a residential subdivision.
- r) Large, land intensive electrical generating facilities shall not be located on agricultural lands.





# 6 RESPONDING TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

## 6.1 SAFE & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

The ability of municipalities to respond to external factors is becoming more important to ensure safe and resilient communities. External factors directly affecting Mackenzie County include a changing climate and natural hazards, changes in the energy sector and changes in technology. The County has very little control on these external factors but can prepare resilience plans, construct new infrastructure, and adjust operationally to help mitigate negative impacts from these external forces. The following policies guide the County in how to adapt and respond to a changing environment and remain resilient.

### Objectives

- Establish natural hazard, economic and technological resiliency to ensure safe communities.
- Mitigate against a changing environment through the design of County infrastructure and County operational practices.

- Identify and support resilience within at risk local communities.

### Policies

- a) A resilience plan that addresses the potential hazards, probability of occurrence and mitigative action over the life of this plan should be developed for the County.
- b) Consider natural features as green infrastructure, recognizing the economic, social, and environmental benefits that they provide to the community.
- c) Encourage developers to retain existing wetlands rather than providing compensation to the Province.
- d) Naturalize stormwater management facilities wherever possible to enhance their ecological value and recreational benefits.



- e) Increase the use of native, low-maintenance, and low-water species in the design and maintenance of parks.
- f) Encourage durable building materials and energy efficiency in building design.
- g) The County shall promote natural hazard awareness and solutions to mitigate against those hazards where appropriate.
- h) Infrastructure plans should consider the long term financial impacts to the County.
- i) Work with federal and provincial governments and external partners to ensure environmental and economic sustainability are considered in decisions affecting the County.
- j) Work with other levels of government to secure sustainable sources of municipal funding for both the capital and operational needs of the County.
- k) Accommodate growth through the optimization and use of existing infrastructure and services. New infrastructure should be provided and managed in an affordable and cost-effective manner over the long-term life cycle of the asset.

## 6.2 FLOOD HAZARD RESILIENCY

Due to recent flood events that have impacted the County's communities, in particular Fort Vermilion, a rational and responsible approach to land use management is required. To protect the residents of the County, their homes, and their livelihoods, additional policy is provided to provide clear direction for land use and structural setbacks in accordance with Provincial flood hazard mapping.

### Objectives

- Establish safe setback areas that respond to recent flood events and Provincial Flood Hazard Maps.
- Identify and promote, where appropriate, limited and low-impact recreational amenities within flood hazard areas.
- Support the relocation of flood impacted residents within Fort Vermilion.

### Policies

- a) Incorporate updated Provincial hazard area mapping into County planning processes as it becomes available.
- b) Provide appropriate direction and development restrictions within the Land Use Bylaw that recognize the Floodway and Flood Fringe areas, as determined by the latest Province of Alberta Flood Hazard mapping.
- c) No development shall take place within the floodway or flood fringe, with the following exceptions:
  - i) Essential roads and bridges that must cross the flood risk area;
  - ii) Flood or erosion protection measures or devices;
  - iii) Pathways that are constructed level with the existing natural grades;
  - iv) Recreation facilities, provided there are no buildings, structures, or other obstructions to flow within the floodway; and
  - v) Essential utility infrastructure that is required to be located in the flood risk area for operational reasons.
- d) Update existing ARPs and ASPs to conform to the new flood mitigation policies within the MDP and the Land Use Bylaw.

- e) Proposed development within the floodway or flood fringe areas should provide a flood hazard risk study, including hazard mapping where appropriate and prepared by a qualified professional. The study should:
  - i) Identify areas at a flood risk of 1:100 or greater, and those having a lesser flood risk between 1:100 and 1:1000
  - ii) Demonstrate that there is sufficient developable area for the proposal after excluding flood way and flood fringe areas.
  - iii) Provide recommendations on locating more vulnerable developments towards lower flood risk areas (greater than 1:500, where possible) and on implementing other measures that would limit flood risk.
- f) Mackenzie County shall consider the use of flood hazard lands for such uses as recreational, agricultural, or similar such uses not requiring permanent structures, providing the developer:
  - i) submits a geotechnical study regarding the subject land;
  - ii) uses appropriate flood-proofing techniques as described in the Canada-Alberta Flood Damage Reduction Program;
  - iii) indicates to the satisfaction of the County that the flood hazard has been mitigated; and
  - iv) notwithstanding the above policies, development associated with substances of a chemical, hazardous, or toxic nature, which would be an unacceptable threat to public safety if damaged as a result of flooding, shall not be permitted to locate in the 1:100 year flood hazard area.
- g) Mackenzie County shall maintain appropriate development setbacks from lake shores, river valley breaks, an escarpment or other critical slopes as identified by Alberta Environment and Parks and/or geotechnical studies provided by the developer, to the satisfaction of the County that development can be safely undertaken.
- h) Mackenzie County should, as a condition of subdivision approval, require an environmental reserve or environmental reserve easement from the high water mark of waterbodies and/or the top of bank of watercourses to protect development from flooding and waterbodies from source water protection.
- i) The County shall monitor flood activity over time with the latest information from the Province of Alberta, and amend all relevant policies within the MDP, ARPs, and ASPs, as well as the Land Use Bylaw, in order to comply with Provincial regulations and ensure that County residents are provided with clear land use and development direction as well as protected from future impacts of flood events.
- j) The use of shelterbelts and treed buffers is promoted in low lying areas to mitigate against the risk of flooding.
- k) All rural lots should be developed in a manner that creates positive surface water drainage, to avoid flooding of structures.

## 6.3 FIRE HAZARD RESILIENCY

Mackenzie County's location in the boreal forest makes the County susceptible to wildfire hazards annually. In the County this risk includes forest fires and grassland fires. Wildfires can impact human health, wildlife habitat, infrastructure, and buildings. To protect the residents of the County, the policies included in this section are to help prevent and mitigate the impacts of wildfires when they occur.

### **Objectives**

- Protect communities against wildfire hazards.
- Identify and promote FireSmart principles across the County.

### **Policies**

- a) Existing development and infrastructure should be adapted in accordance with FireSmart principles to reduce the risk of future wildfire hazards.
- b) The County should prepare a county-wide and inter-municipal fire protection plan.
- c) Agricultural lands may be used as a fire protection measure in higher risk areas and next to development.
- d) The use of grazing leases as an approach to implementing FireSmart mitigation strategies should be encouraged.
- e) Developers must recognize FireSmart: Protecting Your Community from Wildfire design principles when preparing Area Structure Plans, Outline Plans, and subdivisions, and minimize the potential for wildfire damage through:
  - i) the provision of recreational facilities along the outer perimeter of the community so that the developed portions may be separated from undeveloped areas;
  - ii) the provision of a fire guard which will serve as a buffer between communities and the surrounding natural area; and
  - iii) the development of trails between developments and surrounding forested lands which may be used in an emergency for fire prevention purposes.
- f) The following may be required as conditions of approval for residential development which is too remote to be adequately protected by existing fire fighting services:
  - i) the provision of adequate water supplies for fire fighting purposes;
  - ii) the use of fire resistant building methods;
  - iii) the installation of spark arresters on all chimneys; and
  - iv) the provision of an emergency access to developments to help prevent property damage and the potential for loss of life.





# 7 BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Building strong relationships with neighbouring First Nations, Métis communities and adjacent municipalities can contribute to collaborative planning and economic outcomes that are mutually beneficial to all. The development of strong partnerships with local associations and non-profit organizations such as agricultural societies, the Mackenzie Frontier Tourist Association, the Regional Economic Development Initiative and the Mackenzie Applied Research Association are also important to create a singular voice when targeting strategic directives. Strategic partnerships can lead to greater advocacy about the benefits of living, working, and playing in Mackenzie County.

The Mackenzie County – Town of High Level Intermunicipal Development Plan recognizes that intermunicipal cooperation is necessary to attract private investment, enhance economic activity and ensure that land for new development is viable and sustainable. Each municipality has a mutual interest in planning and development proposals near their shared boundaries and ensures that each have an interdependent role in rendering decisions for such proposals. The policies in this section provide

direction on cooperative efforts between municipalities and other jurisdictions to achieve mutual objectives that benefit the residents and businesses in Mackenzie County.

## **Objectives**

- Maintain mutually beneficial relationships with adjacent municipalities, First Nations, or other stakeholders to achieve the objective of regional cooperation and regional planning.
- Facilitate intermunicipal communication and referral of planning and development applications.
- To encourage the preparation of Intermunicipal Development Plans and joint agreements between Mackenzie County and adjacent municipalities or other stakeholders to provide infrastructure services.
- The range of facilities and services available to residents through partnerships with adjacent neighbours and other levels of government is expanded.

## **Policies**

- a) Communication and co-ordination should occur on a regular basis with adjacent administrations to recognize and address matters of mutual interest.
- b) Development applications shall have regard for regional planning policies of the Province of Alberta, the Provincial Land-use Framework, approved intermunicipal development plans or joint intermunicipal agreements when considering Municipal Development Plan amendments, Land Use Bylaw amendments or other development proposals.
- c) Mackenzie County, when deemed necessary, should work with adjacent municipalities to prepare new inter-municipal development plans or joint intermunicipal agreements and subsequently review or update the Plan or agreements accordingly.
- d) Planning and development applications that are subject to the Mackenzie County – Town of High Level Intermunicipal Development Plan and are located within the area shown in Figure 4, shall be directed by the policies of the Intermunicipal Development Plan.
- e) The following development proposals shall be referred to adjacent municipalities:
  - i) matters of future annexation;
  - ii) the adoption or amendment to an intermunicipal development plan, or this Municipal Development Plan;
  - iii) a proposed Land Use Bylaw, proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw; and
  - iv) any referral as set out in an intermunicipal development plan.
- f) Development that would impede the operation of existing and proposed sewer lagoons and waste handling facilities should be refused in order to protect the public investment in these facilities.
- g) The cost sharing of infrastructure for development should be explored with adjacent municipalities where it can provide an economic, social or environmental benefit.
- h) Mutual notification frameworks should be developed with adjacent communities and neighbours to identify if, when and how notification should be provided when development is proposed in proximity of jurisdictional boundaries.
- i) Partnerships should be maintained and celebrated with non-profit community groups and new partnerships should be explored to further services provided in the community.

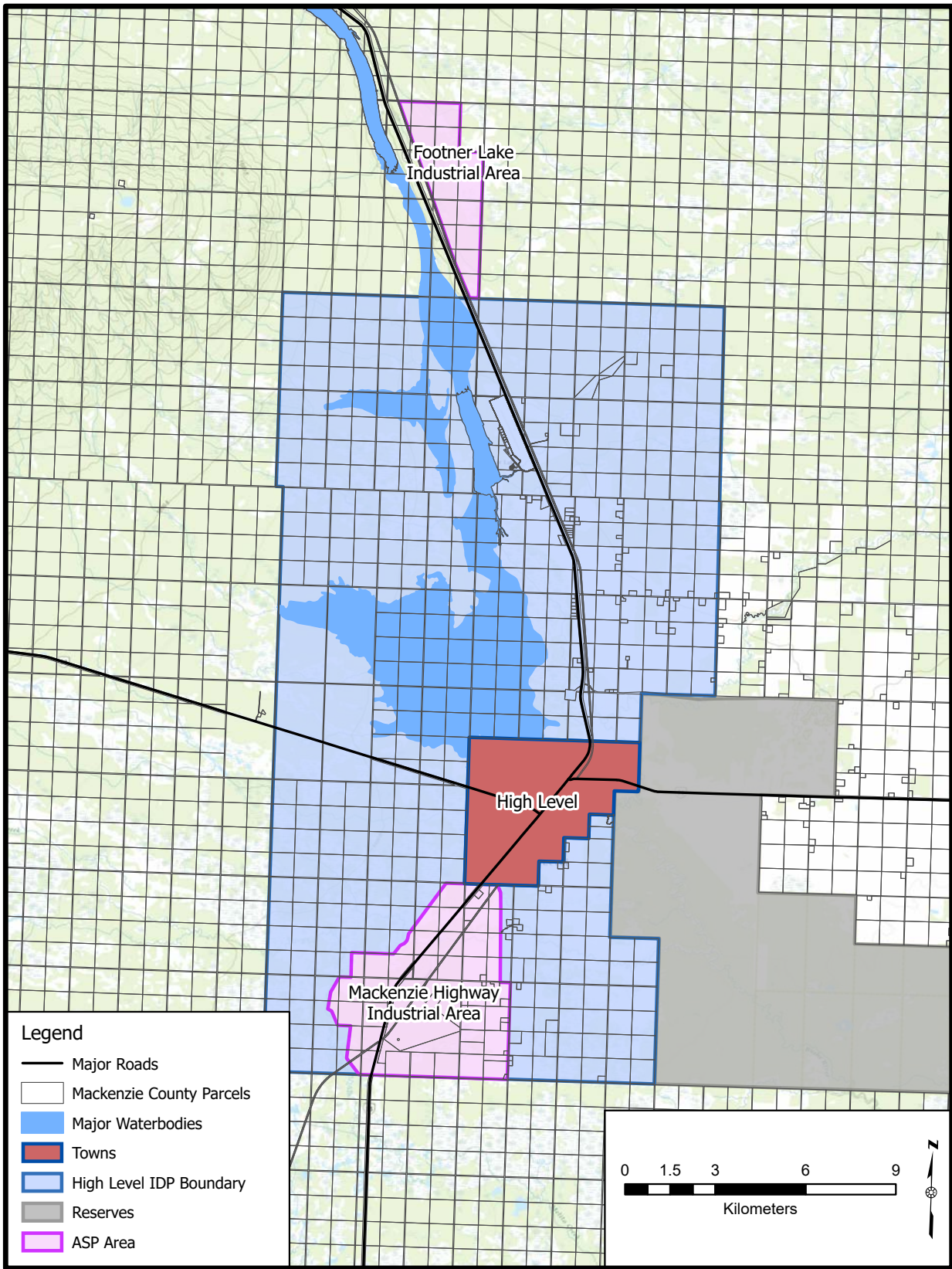


Figure 3: High Level Intermunicipal Development Plan Boundary

# **PART III**

# **IMPLEMENTATION**

# 8 IMPLEMENTATION

## 8.1 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is a dynamic document that guides strategic decisions about the future growth and development of Mackenzie County. As such, when priorities and conditions change in the County, the MDP should be kept current and up to date through amendments to the plan and implementation of its policies.

### Policies

- a) The County through their budget process will determine the timing of investment required to implement the MDP's policies.
- b) All statutory plans adopted by the County shall be consistent with the Municipal Development Plan.
- c) The policies of the MDP shall be implemented through the adoption of an Area Structure Plan or other statutory plan, an outline plan or other non-statutory plan and through the Land Use Bylaw.
- d) The policies of the MDP should be considered comprehensively and a single policy is not intended to take priority over another in the implementation of this plan.
- e) Area Structure Plans may be initiated by the County or by a private landowner and shall follow the appropriate procedures as outlined in the Municipal Government Act.
- f) If amendments are required, they shall be carried out through a transparent public consultation process.

## 8.2 MONITORING AND REVIEW

On-going monitoring is necessary to ensure the policies within the MDP are achieving the County's strategic outcomes. A comprehensive review of the MDP should occur every ten years with a targeted review of select policies occurring every five years. The policies below are intended to help keep the MDP current and able to address land use policy issues that arise as Mackenzie County moves forward with this plan.

### Policies

- a) A comprehensive review of the Municipal Development Plan shall be undertaken every five years to consider administrative updates, emerging trends, implementation progress, and policy gaps.



# 9 GLOSSARY

## 9.1 GLOSSARY

**Active Transportation Modes** includes walking and cycling, as well as other forms of human powered transportation, including rollerblading, longboarding, skateboarding, jogging, among others.

**Barrier Free** is the design of buildings and public spaces that remove or mitigate physical accessibility barriers for persons with vision, hearing, communication, mobility, or cognition challenges.

**Better Agricultural Land** are those lands that are designated as Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 by the Canadian Land Inventory Soil Capability for Agriculture and may be confirmed through site inspections and/or independent soils analysis.

**Complete Streets** are streets that are designed to enable safe access for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit.

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

**Farmstead Separation** is the subdivision of a secondary farm residence from the larger quarter section and principal farm residence.

**Gross Developable Area (GDA)** is defined, for the purpose of this Plan, as the total area of the parcel of land less the land required for environmental reserve and/or environmental reserve easement.

**Land Use Framework** is the regional planning approach being undertaken by the Province to establish an eventual regional plan for the Lower Peace Region.

**Minimum Distance of Separation** is the provincially regulated setback established between a confined feeding operation and the neighbouring residence that is in existence at the time the application is submitted, and is intended to minimize the impacts

of odour. Minimum distance of separation is measured from the outside walls of neighbouring residences to the point closest to the confined feeding operation's manure storage facilities or manure collection areas.

**Natural Features** are unmodified landscapes that may include environmentally significant areas such as rivers, waterbodies, hill country, cliffs, mountains that have not been impacted by human development.

**Resources** refers to the abundance of natural resources surrounding Mackenzie County, including but not limited to forests, oil and gas reserves, natural beauty with tourism potential, and more. Accessing these resources is important to the long-term economic success of the County, and requires increased government funding, transportation corridors, and Crown Land access.

**Secondary Suite** is a second dwelling unit wholly contained within a single-detached or duplex building or garage.

**Statutory Plan** is a plan adopted by bylaw by a municipality under Division 4 of the Municipal Government Act.

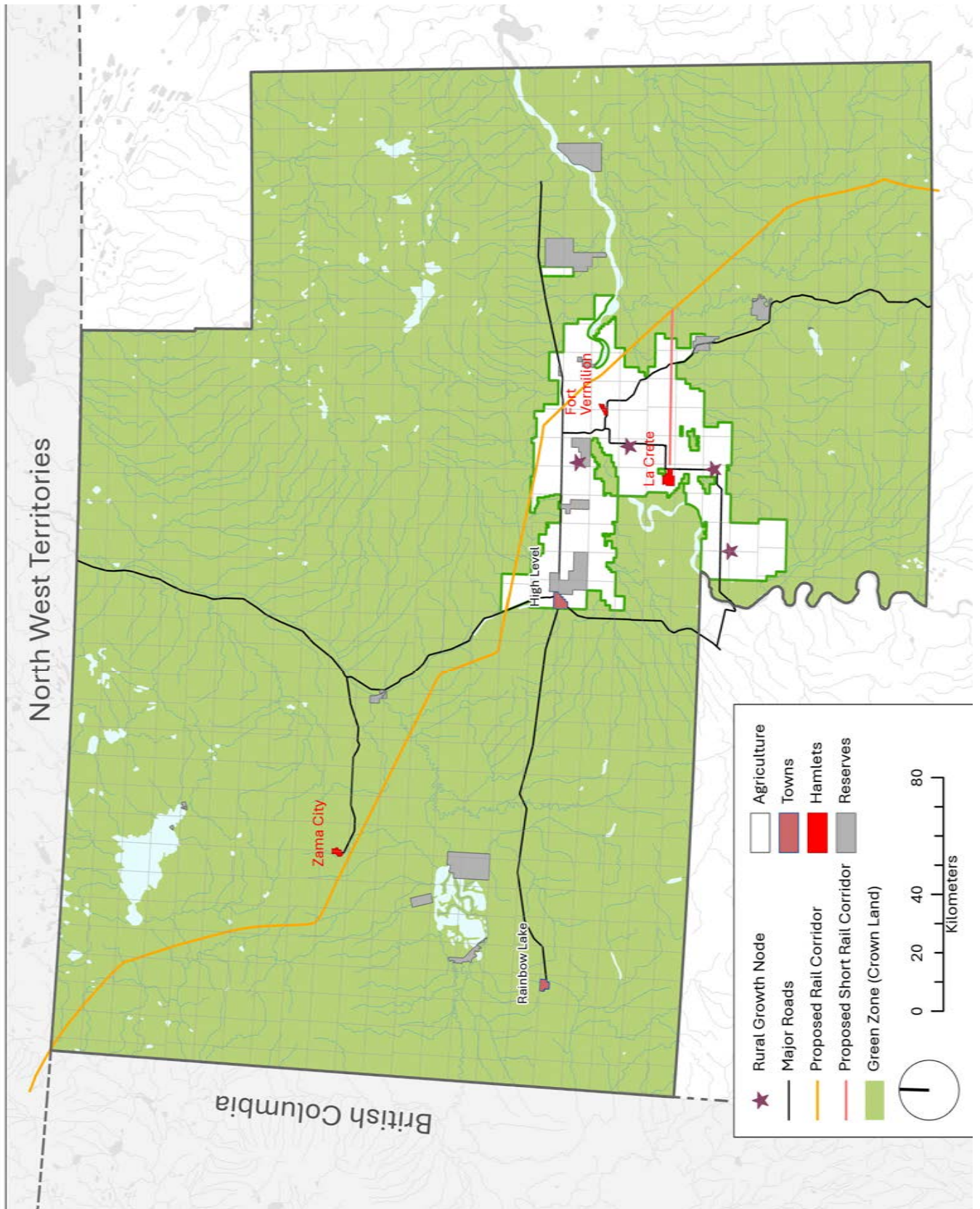
**Un-Subdivided Quarter Section** is a titled area of:

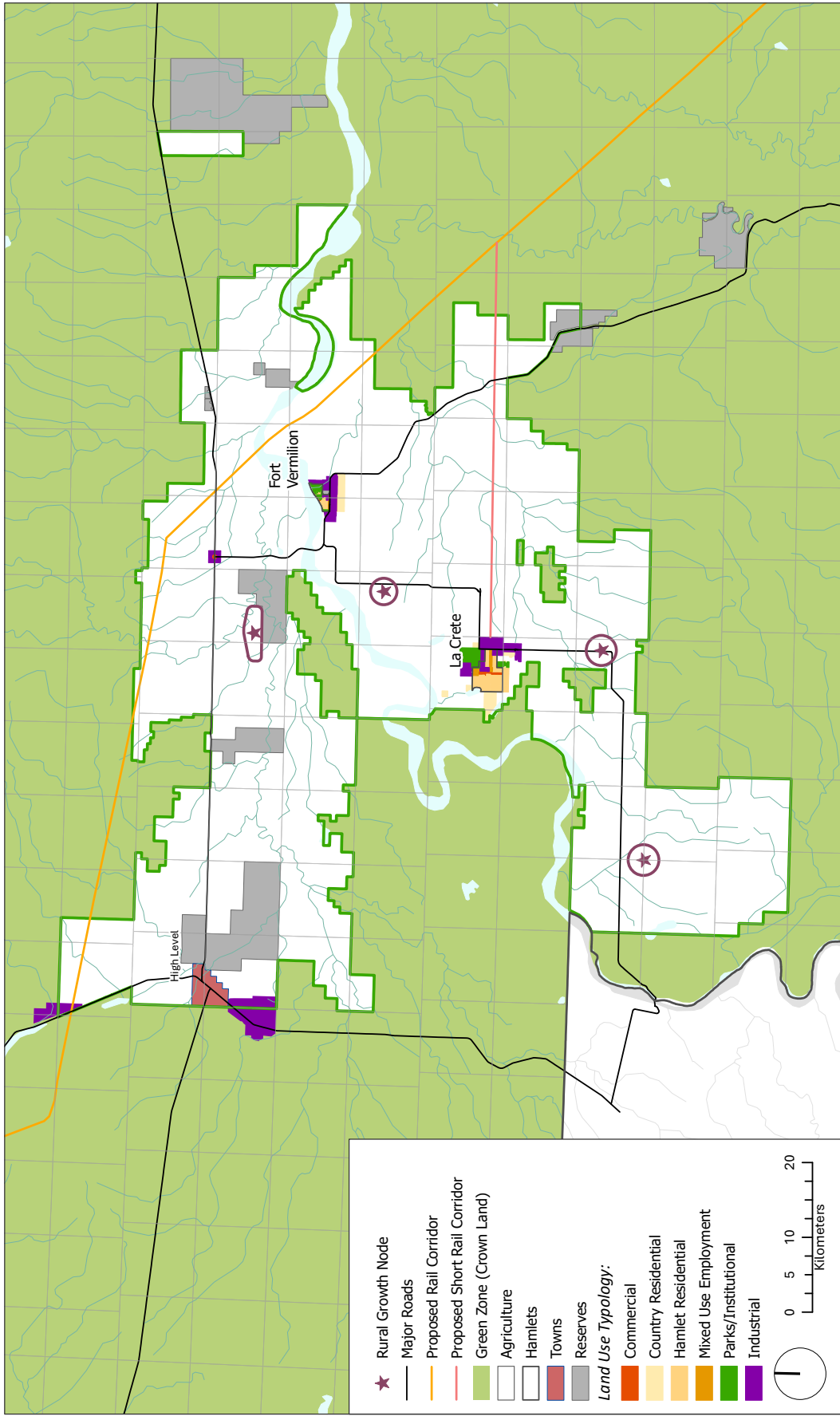
1. 64.7 hectares (160 acres) more or less;
2. Lake lot, river lot or settlement lot that has not been subdivided except for public use; or
3. A gore strip greater than 32.38 hectares (80 acres) in size, that has not been subdivided, excluding subdivisions for boundary adjustments, road widening, and public uses such as a school site, community hall, and rights of way of roads, railroads, and canals.

**Value-Added Agriculture** is the processing of primary agricultural products and services into secondary products to increase overall product value

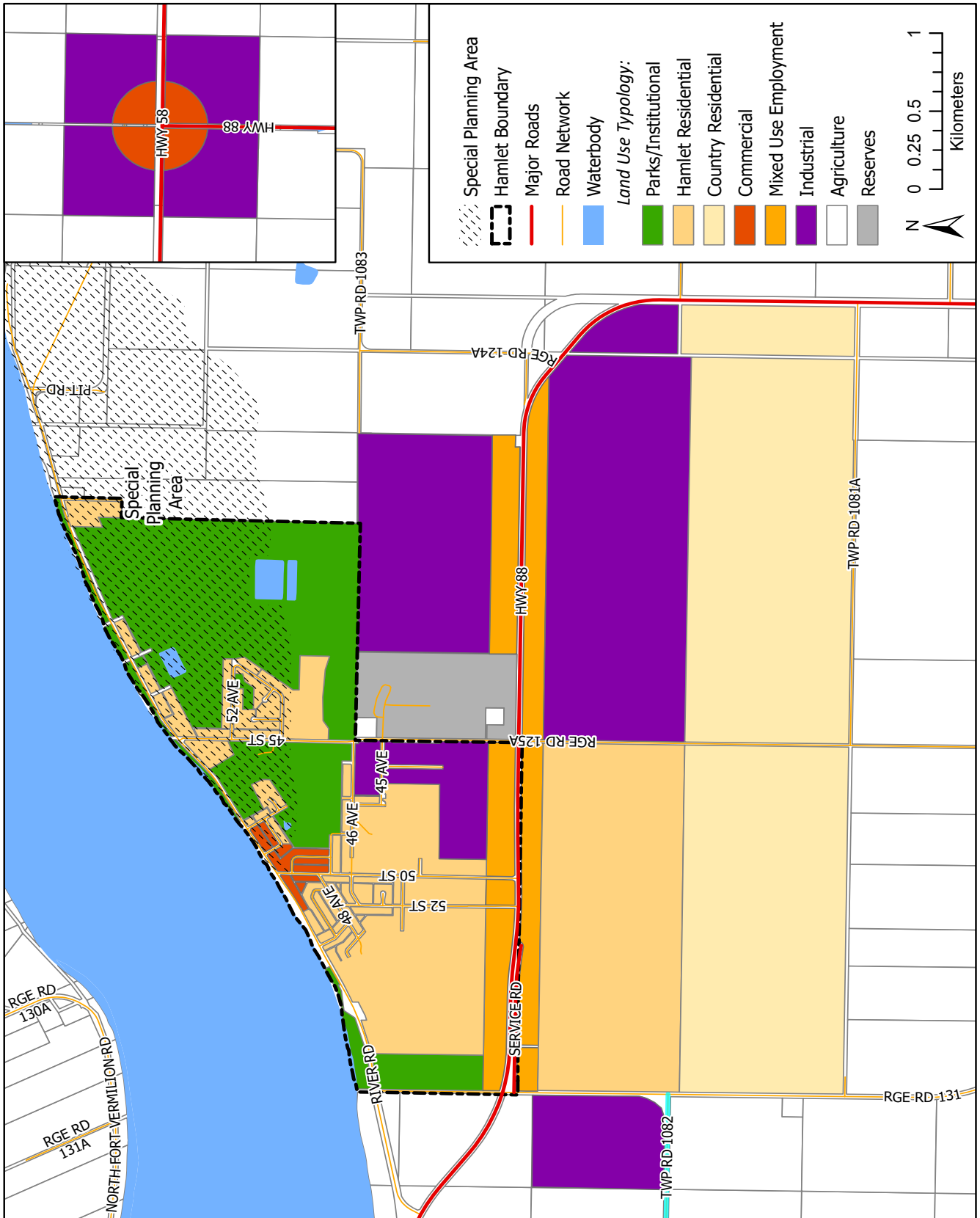
# 10 MAPS

Map 1 - County Land Use



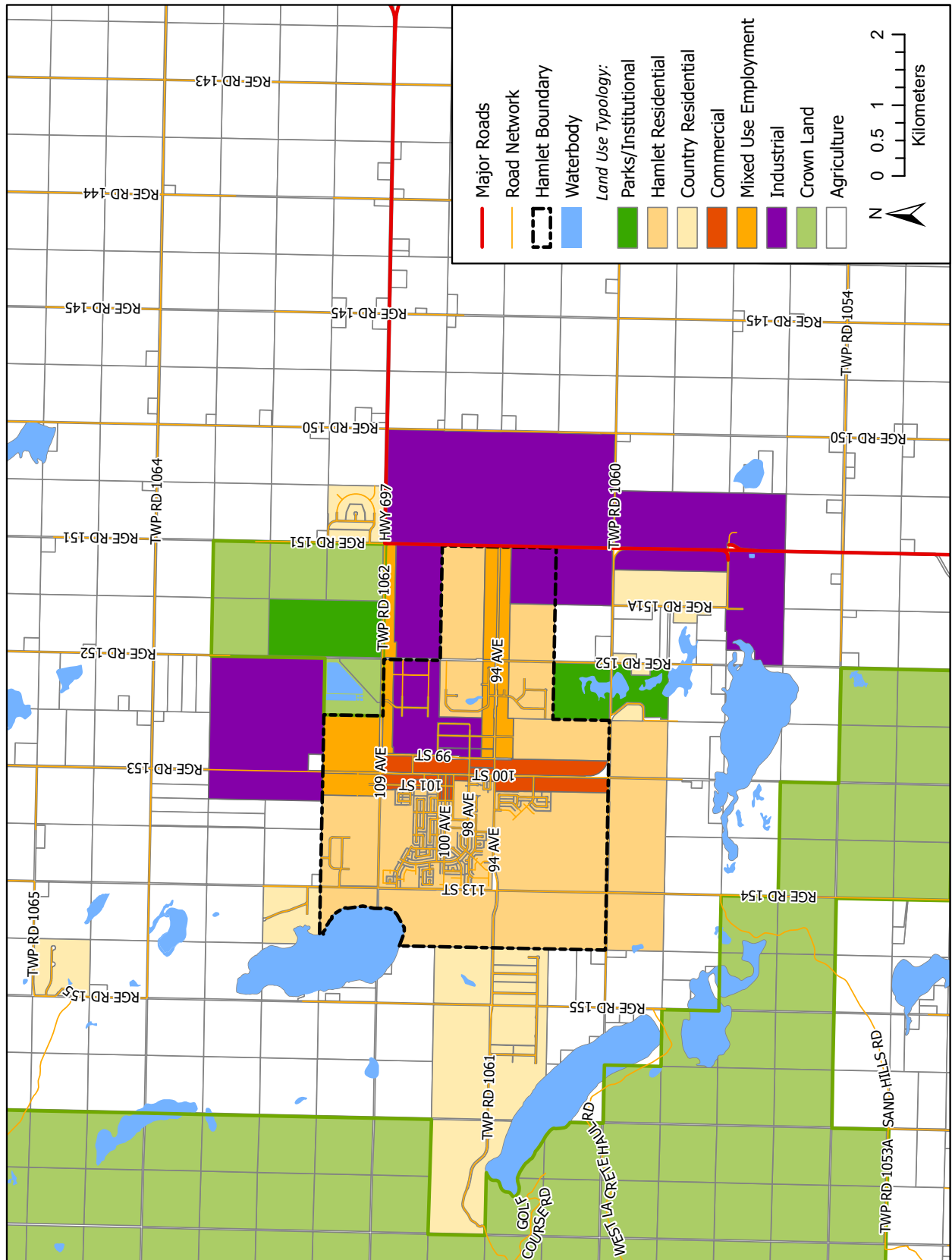


Map 2 - Fort Vermilion Land Use

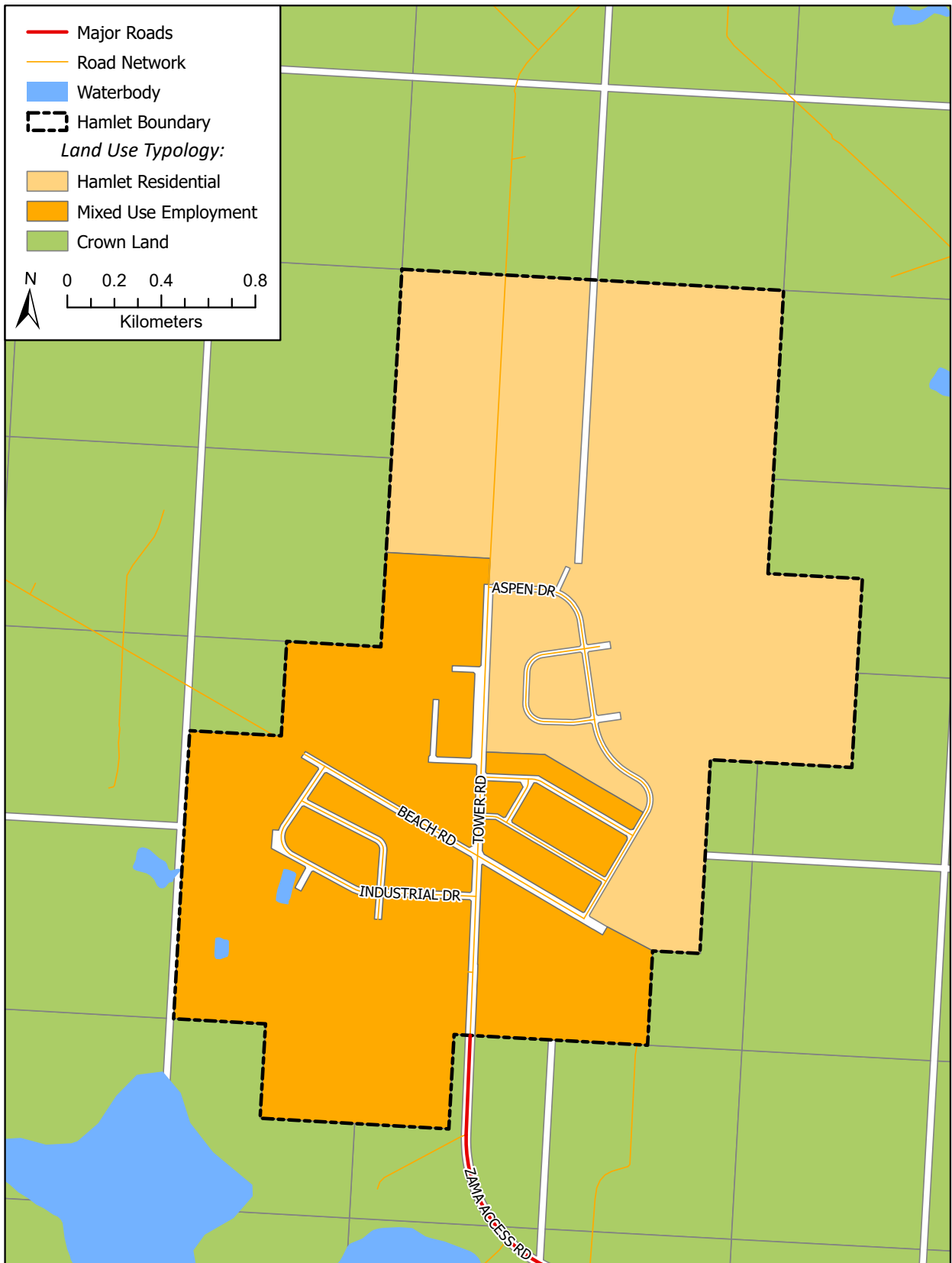




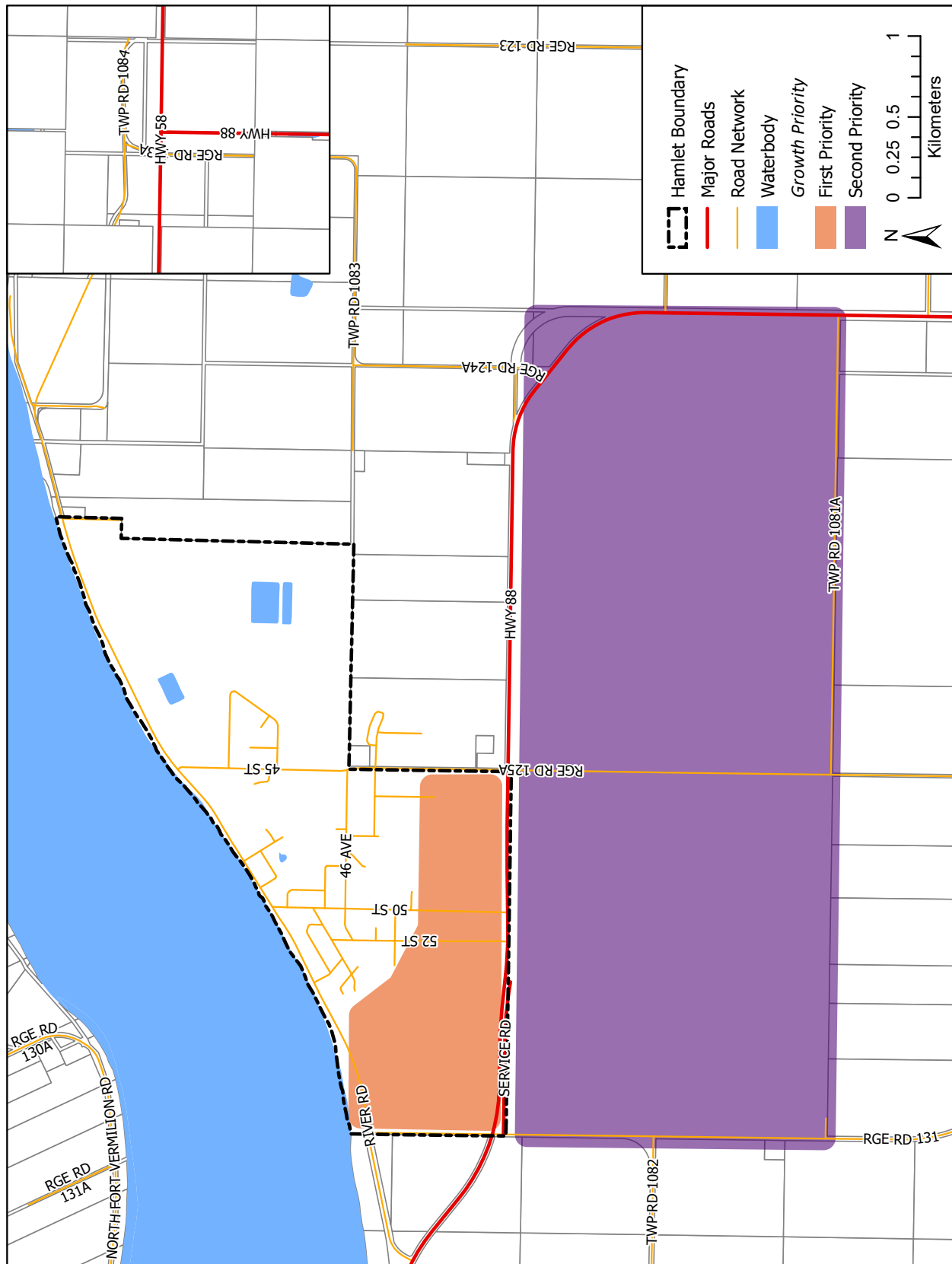
### Map 3 - La Crete Land Use



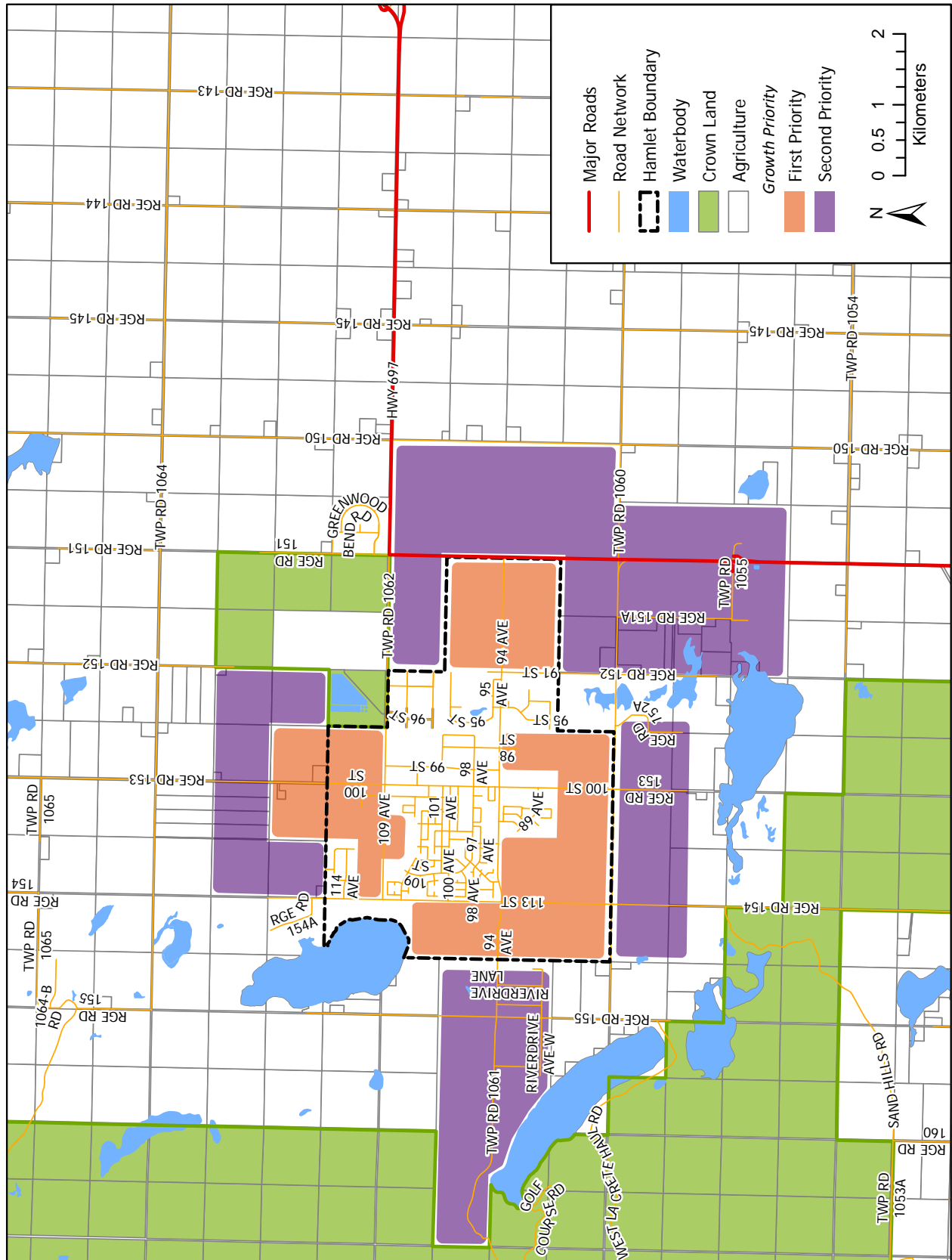
**Map 4 - Zama City Land Use**



Map 5 - Fort Vermilion Priority Growth Areas



# Map 6 - La Crete Priority Growth Areas







**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Caitlin Smith, Director of Planning and Agriculture</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>2022 Off-Site Levy Annual Report</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

The Municipal Government Act (MGA) Section 648.4 requires that municipalities *provide full and open disclosure of all off-site levy costs and payments and, on an annual basis, make a report on the off-site levy publicly available.*

The requirements of the annual report under Section 648.4(2) of the MGA, include:

- (a) the details of all off-site levies received by each contributor for each type of facility and infrastructure within each benefitting area,
- (b) the uses for each type of facility and infrastructure within each benefitting area for each capital project, and
- (c) the balances retained for each type of facility and infrastructure within each benefitting area.

Attached is the Off-Site Levy Annual Report for the 2022 calendar year.

Administration is in the process of collecting all data to provide a Summary Report for all Off-Site levies to date.

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

To accept the 2022 Off-Site Levy Annual Report for Information.

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Costs collected through Off-Site Levy Fees are to be applied to the appropriate capital project budget.

**Author:**     K Tan          **Reviewed by:**     C Smith          **CAO:**     D Derksen



**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

The report will be made publicly available on the County Website.

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

Municipal Government Act RSA 2000, Chapter M-26

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the 2022 Offsite Levy Report be received for information.

**Author:**     K Tan          **Reviewed by:**     C Smith          **CAO:**     D Derksen

## **2022 Off-Site Levy Annual Report**

### **Overview/Background**

Off-Site Levies Fees are established by Council to recoup costs of infrastructure upgrades or improvements as a method of subsidizing those costs for future development. Without Off-Site Levies, the full burden of the infrastructure improvements would fall on the developer when they trigger such improvements.

Mackenzie County current has eleven (11) off-site levy bylaws in place including one (1) transportation levy in rural La Crete, one (1) general in-hamlet levy, and nine (9) levies in La Crete. The general purpose of each levy is as follows:

Bylaw 223/00 is a Main Sewage Lift Station levy established for the replacement of the main lift station in La Crete at 105 Avenue and 99 Street and associated trunk sewer and forcemain.

Bylaw 319/02 is an Off-Site Levy established for all Hamlets to offset the increased burden on services, imposed as the intensity of lots increases with further subdivision and development.

Bylaw 338/02 is a levy established for the Gravity Sewer Main Extension to service portions of the north half of 9-106-15-W5M and the south half of 16-106-15-W5M in the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 440/04 is established for the Provision of Water and Sewer Service to section 10-106-15-W5M and NE 3-106-15-W5M in the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 474/04 is imposed for the construction of Sewage Lift Station Number 5 and associated trunk sewer and forcemain at 91 Avenue and 100 Street in the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 651/07 is imposed for the expansion of Sanitary Sewer Facilities and Lift Station Installation for the industrial areas within the west half of Section 10-106-15-W5M in the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 739-09 is a levy established for the Sanitary Sewer Trunk Main Installation south of 94 Avenue in the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 763-10 is established for the Installation of Sanitary Sewer Lift Station to service NE 10-106-15-W5M and the west half of section 11-106-15-W5M in the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 780-10 is Mackenzie County's only Transportation Levy, established for the Construction and Upgrade of Range Road 152 to provide access to SW 35-105-15-W5M, south of the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 1222-21 is the La Crete North Storm Pond Off-Site Levy, established for the construction of storm water management facilities to mediate drainage issues in the Hamlet of La Crete.

Bylaw 1225-21 is the La Crete North Sanitary Off-Site Levy, established for the expansion of sanitary sewer servicing north and west for the Hamlet of La Crete.

Off-Site Levy Fees can be charged based on development area or number of lots created, depending on what is deemed most appropriate at the time of implementation of the Bylaw. The County's off-site levy charges by bylaw are summarized in Table 1.

Bylaw	Project Cost	Cost to be Recouped*	Fee Levied	Unit
223/00	\$797,566.00	\$139,575.00	\$1,342.00	per ha
319/02	not listed	not listed	\$1,000.00	per lot
338/02	\$524,440.40	\$524,440.40	\$4,111.23	per ha
440/04	\$562,437.00	\$562,437.00	Residential \$2,653.93 Industrial \$1,421.40	per lot
474/04	not listed	not listed	Residential \$1,185.00 Industrial \$616.00	per ha
651/07	\$190,740.93	\$190,740.93	\$1,644.32	per acre
739-09	\$420,400.00	\$420,400.00	\$2,088.00	per acre
763-10	\$375,240.00	\$375,240.00	\$1,682.69	per acre
780-10	\$120,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$377.34	per acre
1222-21	\$2,353,200.00	\$2,353,200.00	\$10,810.00	per ha
1225-21	\$13,787,000.00	\$13,787,000.00	Low Pressure \$2,940.00 Gravity \$15,900.00	per ha
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$19,131,024.33</b>	<b>\$18,423,033.33</b>		

**Table 1: Off-Site Levy Charge Summary** \*Costs have not been adjusted for inflation nor have additional costs such as those associated with borrowing funds been considered.

## 2022 Contributions

The 2022 year saw the start of three (3) new subdivision projects and \$69,002.18 was collected toward one (1) Off-Site Levy Bylaw with an additional \$21,923.58 approved and expected to be collected in 2023.

FILE NO.	DEVELOPER NAME	440/04
06-SUB-22	Good Brothers Countryside Residential (Phase 1)	\$69,002.18

**Table 2: 2022 Off-Site Levy Contributions by File**



**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 23, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Darrell Derksen, Chief Administrative Officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>FIN028 Credit Card Use Policy – Review and Amendment</b>

## **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

Senior administration, and some Councillors by resolutions are assigned the use of a County credit card to assist in the operations of the County as outlined in the Purchasing Authority Directive and Tendering Policy FIN025.

As per section 1 of the Policy:

### **1. Approval authority**

A credit card shall only be issued to an employee on approval by the Chief Administrative Officer and in accordance with this policy. A credit card shall only be issued to a Councillor by resolution of Council at a Regular Council Meeting.

The CAO shall present annually to the Committee of the Whole a listing of staff /councillors that hold credit cards (including limits) issued by the County. If any changes are approved for operational reasons the CAO shall report this changes to the next scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting.

As there is no scheduled Committee of The Whole meeting schedule for currently, administration is presenting at a Regular Council Meeting.

FIN028 – Credit Card Use Policy will require an amendment, as Councillor Wardley requested that no County credit card be issued.

## **OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

**Author:** J.Batt      **Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

2023 Budget

**SUSTAINABILITY PLAN:**

N/A

**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

Policy FIN028 Credit Card Use

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the FIN028 Credit Card Use Policy be amended as presented/discussed.

Author: J.Batt      Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_      CAO: D. Derksen

## Mackenzie County

<b>Title</b>	<b>Credit Card Use</b>	<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>FIN028</b>
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<b>Legislation Reference</b>	<b>Municipal Government Act, Part 6, Section 248</b>
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<b>Purpose</b>  To establish a policy and procedure for the use of County credit cards.
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### **Policy Statement:**

The County issues credit cards to facilitate certain minor purchases such as authorized travelling arrangements and associated costs, authorized conference registration fees, training fees, specialized equipment parts etc. The County credit cards shall only be used for the purchase of goods and services for official business of Mackenzie County. Credit cards shall be used only in warranted circumstances.

### **Guidelines/Procedures:**

#### **1. Approval authority**

A credit card shall only be issued to an employee on approval by the Chief Administrative Officer and in accordance with this policy. A credit card shall only be issued to a Councillor by resolution of Council at a Regular Council Meeting.

The CAO shall present annually to the Committee of the Whole a listing of staff /councillors that hold credit cards (including limits) issued by the County. If any changes are approved for operational reasons the CAO shall report this changes to the next scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting.

#### **2. Authorized credit limit**

In accordance with the financial limits set within Policy FIN025 - Purchasing Authority Directive, the CAO shall present a list of all individual card holders and limits to the Committee of the Whole.

#### **3. Allowable Purchases**

The allowable purchase limits shall be within the individual's purchasing authorities as outlined in the Purchasing Authority Directive and Tendering Policy FIN025 and/or as authorized by the Chief Administrative Officer and as approved in the County's budgets.

#### **4. Loyalty or Reward Points**



- 4.1 Loyalty points or rewards accrued or earned by the use of a County credit card shall accrue to Mackenzie County.
- 4.2 Loyalty points or rewards accrued to an employee that are not directly attributed to a County credit card are excluded from this policy.
- 4.3 Redemption of loyalty points or rewards accrued under a County credit card is limited to business purposes.
- 4.4 Employees are encouraged to use a County credit card instead of a personal credit card for business expenses.
- 4.5 Authorized uses of loyalty points or rewards may include:
  - offset to (reduction of) the cost of future work-related travel;
  - door prizes for ratepayers' meetings;
  - employee gifts or awards (as per Years of Service Award Program Policy ADM011);
  - prizes for the County's annual charity golf tournament; and
  - volunteer recognition in the local not-for-profit sector.
- 4.6 Redemption of loyalty points or rewards shall be reported at the first Committee of the Whole meeting after the points or rewards were redeemed.
- 4.7 Loyalty points or rewards can only be redeemed via ATB's online rewards website. Access to the County's rewards account shall be limited to the Chief Administrative Officer or Director of Finance.

## **5. Responsibility of Credit Cardholders**

- 5.1 An employee/councillor shall be required to enter into a Cardholder Agreement presented as Schedule A.
- 5.2 The employee/councillor shall ensure that all credit card purchases are in compliance with the County's Purchasing Authority Directive and Tendering Policy FIN025.
- 5.3 A credit card shall only be used by the employee/councillor to whom the card is issued.
- 5.4 The employee/councillor issued the credit card is responsible for its protection and custody.
- 5.5 The employee/councillor using the credit card must submit all receipts, including documentation detailing the goods and services purchased, the associated costs, date of the purchase and the official business explanation.

- 5.6 The above said receipts and documentation must be submitted to the Finance Department along with completed Schedule B form, in a timely manner to reconcile against the monthly credit card statement.
- 5.7 A credit card shall not be used for cash advances, personal use or any other type of purchase not permitted under the County's purchasing ordinance.
- 5.8 Lost or stolen credit card shall be immediately reported to both ATB Financial and the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 5.9 All authorized cardholders must immediately surrender their assigned credit card upon resolution of Council, or conclusion of employment, or term with the County. The County reserves the right to withhold the final payroll payout until the card is surrendered.

## **6. Non-Compliance**

- 6.1 Violation of the policy may result in revocation of a credit card use privileges.
- 6.2 Unauthorized use of a County credit card may be subject to loss of credit card privileges, and may be subject to disciplinary action for employees.
- 6.3 An employee/councillor shall be required to reimburse the County for all costs associated with improper use through direct payment and/or authorize payroll deduction for reimbursement of costs.

## **7. Internal Controls**

- 7.1 Director of Finance shall be responsible for :
  - a) Assisting and maintaining record of issuance and retrieval of credit cards and overseeing compliance with this policy.
  - b) Accounting and payment of expenses.
  - c) Reconciliation of receipts and documentation to the monthly statements (See Schedule B for example).
  - d) Presentation of the monthly credit cards statements to the Committee of the Whole.
  - e) Maintaining a record of loyalty points that accumulate on the County's credit card account, and the applications of those points.
  - f) Referring all non-authorized use of loyalty points or rewards to the Committee of the Whole for review, denial, or approval.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Resolution Number</b>
<b>Approved</b>	2010-12-14	10-12-1109
<b>Amended</b>	2012-10-09	12-10-651
<b>Amended</b>	2014-04-28	14-04-286
<b>Amended</b>	2014-05-13	14-05-332
<b>Amended</b>	2015-09-08	15-09-614
<b>Amended</b>	2016-08-24	16-08-646
<b>Amended</b>	2016-12-13	16-12-909
<b>Amended</b>	2017-12-12	17-12-913
<b>Amended</b>	2019-02-12	19-02-061
<b>Amended</b>	2021-05-11	21-05-402
<b>Amended</b>	2022-06-22	22-06-466
<b>Amended</b>	2022-10-19	22-10-675
<b>Amended</b>	2023-10-25	

Sample Report to the Committee of the Whole

<b>Position</b>	<b>Credit Card Limit</b>
Chief Administrative Officer	<del>\$32,500</del> \$35,000
Director of Community Services	\$10,000
Director of Finance	\$10,000
Manager of Legislative & Support Services	\$10,000
Director of Operations	\$10,000
Director of Projects and Infrastructure	\$10,000
Director of Utilities	\$10,000
Agriculture Field Man	\$7,500
Fleet Maintenance Manager	\$7,500
Director of Planning & Agriculture	\$7,500
IT Specialist	\$7,500
Administrative Assistant ( <i>for travel arrangements</i> )	\$30,000
Councillor Knelsen (Ward 1)	\$5,000
Councillor G. Smith (Ward 6)	\$2,500
Councillor C. Cardinal (Ward 7)	\$2,500
<del>Councillor L. Wardley (Ward 10)</del>	<del>\$2,500</del>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$165,000</b>

Schedule A

**Credit Cardholder Agreement**

Requirements for use of the County Credit Card:

1. The credit card is to be used only to make purchases at the request of and for the legitimate business benefit of Mackenzie County.
2. The credit card must be used in accordance with the provisions of the Credit Card Use Policy established by Mackenzie County, as attached hereto.

An employee/councillor must immediately surrender their assigned credit card upon resolution of Council, or conclusion of employment, or term with the County. The County reserves the right to withhold the final payroll payout until the card is surrendered.

*Violations of these requirements shall result in revocation of use privileges. Employees or Councillors found to have inappropriately used the credit card will be required to reimburse the County for all costs associated with such improper use through a direct payment and/or payroll deduction. Mackenzie County will investigate and may commence, in appropriate cases, either disciplinary actions for employees, and/or Legal action against any employee/councillor found to have misused the credit card or who violates the provisions of the cardholder agreement.*

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

I acknowledge receipt of the attached Credit Card Policy and agree to abide by said Policy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CAO Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Below, for Finance Department Use Only)

**Credit Card Returned**

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_









**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Caitlin Smith, Director of Planning and Agriculture</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Municipal Planning Commission Meeting Minutes</b>

**BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

The unapproved minutes of October 12, 2023 Municipal Planning Commission meeting are attached.

**OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

N/A

**COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

N/A

**COMMUNICATION:**

N/A

**Author:** L Braun      **Reviewed by:** C Smith      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

- Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the approved Municipal Planning Commission meeting minutes of October 12, 2023 be received for information.

**Author:** L Braun      **Reviewed by:** C Smith      **CAO:** D. Derksen

**MACKENZIE COUNTY  
Municipal Planning Commission Meeting**

**Mackenzie County Office  
La Crete, AB**

**Thursday, October 12, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.**

**PRESENT:** Erick Carter Chair, MPC Member  
Andrew O'Rourke MPC Member  
David Driedger Councillor, MPC Member

**ADMINISTRATION:** Caitlin Smith Director of Planning & Agriculture  
Jackie Roberts Development Officer  
Lynda Washkevich Development Officer  
Laura Braun Administrative Assistant/Recording Secretary

**REGRETS:** Tim Driedger Vice Chair, MPC Member

**MOTION 1. CALL TO ORDER**

Erick Carter called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MPC 23-10-147 MOVED** by Andrew O'Rourke

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

**CARRIED**

**3. MINUTES**

**a) Adoption of Minutes**

**MPC 23-10-148 MOVED** by David Driedger

That the minutes of the September 14, 2023 Municipal Planning Commission meeting be adopted as presented.

**CARRIED**

**4. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

For Information.

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**5. DEVELOPMENT**

**a) 251-DP-23 Git R Dun Contracting  
Dwelling – Duplex with a 20% Setback Variance in “H-R1”  
Plan 212 0513, Block 2, Lot 14 (10305 105 Ave)(La Crete)**

**MPC 23-10-149 MOVED** by David Driedger

That Development Permit 251-DP-23 on Plan 212 0513, Block 2, Lot 14 in the name of Git R Dun Contracting be APPROVED with the following conditions:

Failure to comply with one or more of the attached conditions shall render this permit Null and Void

1. A **20% Setback Variance** for the Dwelling - Duplex is hereby granted. The Dwelling – Duplex shall be a minimum of 4 feet (1.22 meters) from the west and east property lines.
2. Remaining minimum building setbacks are: 7.6 meters (25 feet) front; and 1.5 meters (5 feet) rear yard; from the property lines.
3. The Dwelling - Duplex shall meet all National Building Code 2019 Alberta Edition requirements for Buildings and any other requirements specified by Superior Safety Codes. Failure to do so shall render this permit Null and Void.;
4. Provide adequate off street parking as follows: 6 stalls for Dwelling – Duplex. One parking space, including the driveway area, shall occupy 300 square feet.;
5. The Dwelling – Duplex is to be connected to the municipal water and sewer system and the cost of connection fees will be borne by the owner. Each unit must be serviced individually.;
6. The architecture, construction materials and appearance of accessory buildings and other structures shall compliment the natural features and character of the site to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.;
7. The Municipality has assigned an address to each unit on the Dwelling – Duplex as follows from East to West: 10305-1 105 Avenue, 10305-2 105 Avenue. You are required to display the addresses on the Units to be clearly legible from the street and be on a contrasting background. The minimum size of the characters shall be four inches in height.;
8. Where the lowest opening of the duplex is 25 feet from the front property line it is required to be at a minimum 4% grade above the

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curb level. Where the lowest opening of the duplex is 50 feet from the front property line it is required to be at a minimum 2% grade above the curb level.;

9. All DEVELOPMENT shall provide:
  - a.) Provision and access to garbage storage;
  - b.) Lighting between DWELLING UNITS;
  - c.) Orientation of buildings and general site appearance;
  - d.) Safe pedestrian access to and from the public sidewalk fronting the building; and
  - e.) Parking areas adjacent to streets must be paved.;
10. No construction or development is allowed on or in a right-of-way. It is the responsibility of the developer/owner/occupant to investigate the utility rights-of-way, if any, that exist on the property prior to commencement of any construction and to ensure that no construction or development is completed on any utility right-of-way.;
11. The total site area (lot) shall have a positive surface drainage without adversely affecting the neighbouring properties.;
12. This permit approval is subject to the access to the property being constructed to County standards. PRIOR to installation of a new access or changing location of existing access, complete a Request to Construct an Access form by contacting the Operations Department for Mackenzie County at (780) 928-3983. Access to be constructed at the developers expense.;
13. The Developer shall at all times comply with all applicable Federal, Provincial and Municipal legislation and regulations and County Bylaws and resolutions relating to the development of the lands.

## **CARRIED**

- b) **255-DP-23 1849008 Alberta Ltd.  
Self-Storage 2 (Mini Storage (8 Unit) & RV Storage (10 Unit))  
Plan 222 1701, Block 25, Lot 3 (10506 97 Street) (La Crete)**

**MPC 23-10-150** **MOVED** by Andrew O'Rourke

That Development Permit 255-DP-23 on Plan 222 1701, Block 25, Lot 3 in the name of 1849008 ALBERTA LTD be APPROVED with the following conditions:

Failure to comply with one or more of the attached conditions shall render this permit Null and Void

1. Minimum building setbacks: 9.1 meters (30 feet) front yard; 3.05

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- meters (10 feet) rear yard; from the property lines.;
2. The Self Storage 2 shall meet all National Building Code 2019 Alberta Edition requirements for Buildings and any other requirements specified by Superior Safety Codes. Failure to do so shall render this permit Null and Void.;
  3. Provide adequate off street parking as follows: The minimum parking standards are 1 space per 37.2 square meters (400 square feet) of building area. One parking space, including the driveway area, shall occupy 27.87 square meters (300 square feet).;
  4. Building to be connected to the municipal water and sewer system and the cost of connection fees will be borne by the owner.;
  5. The architecture, construction materials and appearance of buildings and other structures shall be to accepted standards.;
  6. The lowest opening of the building shall be a minimum of 2.0% above the centerline elevation of the street abutting the property.;
  7. The municipality has assigned the following address to the noted property: 10506 97 Street. You are required to display the address (10506) so as to be clearly legible from the street and be on a contrasting background. The minimum size of the characters shall be four inches in height.;
  8. No vehicle shall be located in such a way that it impedes visibility for vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic.;
  9. If a sign is placed on the property the sign shall be located a minimum of:
    - a. 20 meters (66 feet) from regulatory signs, and
    - b. 3 meters (9 feet) from the outer edge of the road or not less than 1.5 meters from the property line if on private property.
  10. The sign shall be a minimum of 2 meters in height from the bottom of the sign above the curb/sidewalk.;
  11. The sign shall:
    - a. Not obstruct the orderly and safe flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic,
    - b. Not unduly interfere with the amenities of the district,
    - c. Not materially interfere with or affect the use, enjoyment or value of neighbouring properties, and
    - d. Not create visual or aesthetic blight.;
  12. The site and sign shall be kept in a safe, clean, and tidy condition, or may be required to be renovated or removed.;
  13. The property must at all times be kept in a neat and orderly fashion.;

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14. No construction or development is allowed on or in a right-of-way. It is the responsibility of the developer/owner/occupant to investigate the utility rights-of-way, if any, that exist on the property prior to commencement of any construction and to ensure that no construction or development is completed on any utility right-of-way.;
15. The total site area (lot) shall have a positive surface drainage without adversely affecting the neighbouring properties.;
16. This permit approval is subject to the access to the property being constructed to County standards. PRIOR to installation of a new access or changing location of existing access, complete a Request to Construct an Access form by contacting the Operations Department for Mackenzie County at (780) 928-3983. Access to be constructed at the developers expense.;
17. The Developer shall at all times comply with all applicable Federal, Provincial and Municipal legislation and regulations and County Bylaws and resolutions relating to the development of the lands.

## **CARRIED**

- c) **256-DP-23 Git R Dun Contracting  
Dwelling – Duplex with a 20% Setback Variance in “H-R1”  
Plan 212 0513, Block 2, Lot 13 (10309 105 Ave) (La Crete)**

## **MPC 23-10-151 MOVED** by David Driedger

That Development Permit 256-DP-23 on Plan 212 0513, Block 2, Lot 13 in the name of Git R Dun Contracting be APPROVED with the following conditions:

Failure to comply with one or more of the attached conditions shall render this permit Null and Void

1. A **20% Setback Variance** for the Dwelling - Duplex is hereby granted. The Dwelling – Duplex shall be a minimum of 4 feet (1.22 meters) from the west and east property lines.
2. Remaining minimum building setbacks are: 7.6 meters (25 feet) front; and 1.5 meters (5 feet) rear yard; from the property lines.
3. The Dwelling - Duplex shall meet all National Building Code 2019 Alberta Edition requirements for Buildings and any other requirements specified by Superior Safety Codes. Failure to do so shall render this permit Null and Void.;
4. Provide adequate off street parking as follows: 6 stalls for Dwelling –

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Duplex. One parking space, including the driveway area, shall occupy 300 square feet.;

5. The Dwelling – Duplex is to be connected to the municipal water and sewer system and the cost of connection fees will be borne by the owner. Each unit must be serviced individually.;
6. The architecture, construction materials and appearance of accessory buildings and other structures shall compliment the natural features and character of the site to the satisfaction of the Development Authority.;
7. The Municipality has assigned an address to each unit on the Dwelling – Duplex as follows from East to West: 10309-1 105 Avenue, 10309-2 105 Avenue. You are required to display the addresses on the Units to be clearly legible from the street and be on a contrasting background. The minimum size of the characters shall be four inches in height.;
8. Where the lowest opening of the duplex is 25 feet from the front property line it is required to be at a minimum 4% grade above the curb level. Where the lowest opening of the duplex is 50 feet from the front property line it is required to be at a minimum 2% grade above the curb level.;
9. All DEVELOPMENT shall provide:
  - a.) Provision and access to garbage storage;
  - b.) Lighting between DWELLING UNITS;
  - c.) Orientation of buildings and general site appearance;
  - d.) Safe pedestrian access to and from the public sidewalk fronting the building; and
  - e.) Parking areas adjacent to streets must be paved.;
10. No construction or development is allowed on or in a right-of-way. It is the responsibility of the developer/owner/occupant to investigate the utility rights-of-way, if any, that exist on the property prior to commencement of any construction and to ensure that no construction or development is completed on any utility right-of-way.;
11. The total site area (lot) shall have a positive surface drainage without adversely affecting the neighbouring properties.;
12. This permit approval is subject to the access to the property being constructed to County standards. PRIOR to installation of a new access or changing location of existing access, complete a Request to Construct an Access form by contacting the Operations Department for Mackenzie County at (780) 928-3983. Access to be constructed at the developers expense.;
13. The Developer shall at all times comply with all applicable Federal, Provincial and Municipal legislation and regulations and County

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Bylaws and resolutions relating to the development of the lands.

**CARRIED**

**6. SUBDIVISION**

- a) 46-SUB-23 Mark and Tina Miller  
0.21 acres (1 Lot) in "H-R1A"  
Plan 032 3955, Block 22, Lot 12**

**MPC 23-10-152 MOVED** by Andrew O'Rourke

That Subdivision Application 46-SUB-23 in the name of Mark and Tina Miller of Plan 032 3955, Block 22, Lot 12 be APPROVED with the following conditions:

1. This approval is for 1 residential lot, .21 acres (0.08 hectares) in size.
2. The applicant/developer shall enter into and abide by a Development Agreement with Mackenzie County which shall contain, but is not limited to:
  - a) Prior to any development on the proposed subdivision, the developer shall obtain a development permit from the Municipality;
  - b) Provision of all sanitary systems including service lines, main and appurtenances as required by the Municipality;
  - c) Provision of all water lines, including all fittings and valves as required by the County;
  - d) Provision of municipal servicing (water and sanitary sewer) to the lot;
  - e) All drainage systems, provisions for weeping tile flow where a high water table or other subsurface conditions cause continuous flow in the weeping tile, and associated works, all as and where required by the County;

The developer shall provide the municipality with an engineered site drainage and surface water management plan that outlines the following:

- (1) Drainage of internal road system,
- (2) Erosion prevention systems, if required,

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- (3) Direction of site drainage, and
  - (4) Elevation plans for each lot
- f) Provision of utilities (power, gas, telephone, etc.) to each lot. Such utilities to be provided in a location and to a standard to be approved by the appropriate utility company and the County. Responses from utilities companies are shown in Schedule "C" hereto attached. Written confirmation of the completed utility installation is required to be submitted to the County by each utility company prior to registration of the subdivision;
  - g) Provision of and/or negotiation for utilities rights-of-way and/or easements as required by utilities companies. Any costs incurred for line relocation will be the responsibility of the developer. All utility lanes/lots must be accessible. All public utility lanes/lots shall be cleared to ground level with all tree stumps and debris removed and then landscaped. Where necessary, utility lanes/lots shall be excavated or landscaped to provide drainage for the subdivision. Any excavation or landscaping of the public utility lanes/lots shall be to engineered plans and completed prior to the installation of utilities;
  - h) The developer is responsible for site grading and landscaping to design elevation and seeding with grass or other approved landscaping, in a manner that does not negatively impact adjacent properties or infrastructure;
  - i) Provision of an agreement with the adjacent landowners for utility lanes/lots if required;
  - j) Any outstanding property taxes shall be paid in full prior to registration of title;
  - k) Provision of off-site levies as required by the County as follows:
    - i) Hamlet Off-Site Levies (**Bylaw 319/02**) are imposed for the construction and maintenance of off-site municipal services, including:
      - a) new or expanded facilities for the storage, transmission, treatment or supplying of water;
      - b) new or expanded facilities for the treatment, movement or disposal of sanitary sewage;
      - c) new or expanded storm sewage drainage

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- facilities;
- d) new or expanded facilities for the storage, transfer, or disposal of waste;
- e) land required for or in connection with any facilities described in clauses (a) to (d); and
- f) Ongoing maintenance of the facilities described in clauses (a) to (d).

The levy is calculated at \$1,000.00 per lot.

Total Off-Site Levy = **\$1,000.00**

**CARRIED**

**7. MISCELLANEOUS**

**a) Development Statistics Report  
January to September 2023**

**MPC 23-10-153** **MOVED** by David Driedger

That the development statistics report for January to September 2023 be received for information.

**CARRIED**

**8. CLOSED MEETING**

**a) None**

**9. MEETING DATES**

❖ Thursday, November 9, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m. in La Crete

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MPC 23-10-154** **MOVED** by David Driedger

That the Municipal Planning Commission Meeting be adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

**CARRIED**

These minutes were adopted this 9<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2023.

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Erick Carter, Chair

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**Mackenzie County**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Regular Council Meeting</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>October 25, 2023</b>
<b>Presented By:</b>	<b>Darrell Derksen, Chief Administrative Officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Information/Correspondence</b>

## **BACKGROUND / PROPOSAL:**

The following items are attached for your information, review, and action if required.

- Council Action List
- 2023-09-22 - Royal Canadian Mounted Police - Alberta Police Funding Model Resource Allocation
- 2023-10-17 - Peace River Bridge on HWY 88
- 2023-10-19 - Alberta News - Strengthening Health Care - Improving Access for All
- 2023-10-18 - Government of Alberta Criminal Code Review Board
- 2023-10-05 - CN - News Release Winter Plan 2023-2024
- 2023-10 01 - AER summary 2023
- 2023-09-01 - University of Calgary - Canadian Northern Corridor Special Series Community Engagement
- 25th Anniversary Minister's Seniors Service Awards

## **OPTIONS & BENEFITS:**

N/A

## **COSTS & SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

N/A

**Author:** T. Thompson      **Reviewed by:** L. Flooren      **CAO:** D. Derksen



## Mackenzie County Action List as of October 11, 2023

### *Council and Committee of the Whole Meeting Motions Requiring Action*

Motion	Action Required	Action By	Status
<b>February 22, 2016 Council Meeting</b>			
16-02-135	That the County covers the additional cost of the survey on Plan 5999CL, Lot E to date and have administration release a copy of the report to the landowner informing them that the initial investigation survey has been completed.	Byron	Refer to Motion 18-06-411  In progress. Meeting with landowners.  Impacted by 2020 flood.
<b>May 10, 2016 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
16-05-354	That administration be authorized to proceed as follows in regards to the Zama Crown Land Procurement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cancel PLS 080023;</li> <li>• pursue acquisition of land parcels as identified on the map presented in red;</li> <li>• identify a parcel of land to be subdivided from Title Number 102 145 574 +1 (Short Legal 0923884; 21; 1) and offered for trade or sale to Alberta Environment and Parks due to its unsuitability for a hamlet development , specifically the land use restrictions per Alberta Energy Regulator.</li> </ul>	Caitlin	PLS180027  FNC received adequacy Next steps
<b>October 9, 2018 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
18-10-763	That administration proceeds with the water diversion license's as discussed.	John	<b>Have valid TDL until May 2024. Waiting on information from TOHL meeting with AEP on a future permanent license.</b>
<b>June 5, 2020 Special Council Meeting</b>			
20-06-334	That administration continues to support a community recovery plan that includes a community engagement component.	DRT	Ongoing
<b>July 15, 2020 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
20-11-744	That the concepts and guidance provided within the La Crete Industrial Growth Strategy be incorporated into County planning documents.	Byron	Incorporated into the MDP Drafting ASP RFP
<b>November 25, 2020 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
20-11-748	That Administration proceed in developing an offsite levy bylaw for the benefitting area of the La Crete South Sanitary Trunk Sewer for the purpose in	Byron	Working on draft offsite levy bylaw. Ad Hoc Development Committee

Motion	Action Required	Action By	Status
	recovering all costs associated with the sanitary sewer trunk improvements.		
September 14, 2021 Regular Council Meeting			
21-09-623	That second reading be given to Bylaw 1231-21 being the La Crete Offsite Levy Bylaw be tabled until further date.	Byron	TABLED AD Hoc Committee
October 12, 2021 Budget Council Meeting			
21-10-697	That the north portions of 100A Street (adjacent landowners) be sold back for the same price it was originally purchased to the adjacent landowners with all associated costs being borne by the applicant.	Caitlin	<b>Land Transfer to take place.</b>
December 14, 2021 Regular Council Meeting			
21-12-854	That Policy DEV001 & DEV007 be brought back to Council for review.	Caitlin	<b>Developers have no interest in lesser development standards.</b>
February 2, 2022 Regular Council Meeting			
22-02-085	That administration move forward with the application process to purchase the following and bring back to Council any future costs related to the purchase such as FNC, survey and assessed value for deliberation and approval.  PLS140031 PLS170002 PLS180022 PLS180027 PLS190005 La Crete Ferry Campground Atlas Landing Area Bridge Campsite Machesis Lake Campground Wadlin Lake Campground	Don/Caitlin	COW 22-06-073 The TCL Leases that are in the process are as follows:  DML170039 FV Bridge campground REC2621 FV Rodeo grounds REC030012 LA Ferry campground REC090007 & 100003 Hutch Lake campground REC880027 Wadlin Lake campground  Received Offer to Purchase, negotiations with AT  <b>Received Offer to purchase PLS140031</b>
March 23, 2022 Committee of the Whole Meeting			
22-03-222	That administration communicate with the Recreation Boards regarding backup generators and bring back recommendations to council.	Don	Looking for grant funding. 2024 Budget deliberations
April 27, 2022 Regular Council Meeting			
22-04-325	That Council direct administration to bring back Bylaw 908-13 – Unsightly Premises Bylaw for review to a future Council meeting.	Don	Bringing to a future council meeting as per the Community Services Meeting. <b>2023-10-26</b>

Motion	Action Required	Action By	Status
<b>May 25, 2022 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
22-05-408	That the County enter into a ten-year lease for the trailer being used by the Fort Vermilion Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) as discussed.	Don	Awaiting signed agreement
22-05-411	That administration work with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in renewing the Memorandum of Understanding Agreement for the Enhanced Policing Agreement between Mackenzie County and the RCMP and bring back the draft agreement with changes as discussed.	Don	Awaiting signed agreement
<b>June 22, 2022 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
22-06-465	That administration draft a policy combining PW018 Hiring of Private Equipment, ADM015 Hiring Contract Suppliers and FIN 025 Purchasing Policy and bring back to future Council Meeting.	Byron	In Progress
<b>June 23, 2022 Committee of the Whole Meeting</b>			
22-06-073	That administration proceed with Public Land Sales as discussed.	Don	Refer to Motion 22-02-085 In Progress
22-09-641	That administration request a culvert be installed under Highway 35 North to allow the water to flow under it, before spring thaw 2023.	Byron/Landon	<b>Online meeting with CN on October 23</b>
<b>October 26, 2022 Budget Council Meeting</b>			
22-10-755	That administration continue to investigate options for a Special Tax Bylaw for any identified projects incorporated into the 2023 Operating and Capital Budget as approved by Council.	Jen	2024 Budget deliberations
<b>November 1, 2022 Budget Council Meeting</b>			
22-11-762	That administration review all rental agreements upon renewal and ensure that there is a cost of living clause included.	All Admin	
<b>November 2, 2022 Budget Council Meeting</b>			
22-11-774	That the Policy PW039 Rural Road, Access Construction and Surface Water Management - Cost Implications be brought back to a future Council meeting for amendments.	Byron	In Progress
<b>December 13, 2022 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
22-12-908	That Council approve the Fort Vermilion Bridge Campground and Recreational Area Plan as amended and to submit the Plan to Forestry, Parks and Tourism for their approval.	Don	Public Input to be reviewed by Community Services Committee
<b>January 25, 2023 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
23-01-051	That administration research options for charging user fees for municipal road allowances that are already cleared and farmed for profit.	Caitlin	<b>ASB Motion – recommend against. COMPLETE</b>

Motion	Action Required	Action By	Status
23-01-074	That the Municipal Planning Commission look at obtaining land in lieu of cash on rural subdivisions.	Caitlin	In Progress
February 7, 2023 Regular Council Meeting			
23-02-106	That Mackenzie County commit to \$5M in municipal funding by means of Borrowing Bylaw towards local funding required to complete this project as per motion 18-06-472 to complete the Mackenzie Community Recreation Center project.	Byron/Don/Jen	Awaiting grant approval and funding allocation
23-02-133	That administration create a new zoning district to alleviate concerns regarding agricultural use on residential acreages.	Caitlin	In Progress
April 4, 2023 Regular Council Meeting			
23-04-336	That administration work with Tallahassee Exploration Inc. on agreements.	Jen	Terms met awaiting agreement from lawyers
April 26, 2023 Regular Council Meeting			
23-04-407	That the 2023 One Time Projects budget be amended to include the Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan Project, in the amount of \$114,100 with funding of \$55,800 coming from the Northern and Regional Economic Development (NRED) Program, \$58,300 from Mackenzie County, and an in-kind donation of \$2,500 noted from each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mackenzie Frontier Tourism Association,</li> <li>- La Crete Polar Cats Snowmobile Club,</li> <li>- Regional Economic Development Agency of Northwest Alberta.</li> </ul>	Byron/Jen	Finance – COMPLETE Projects & Infrastructure – Developing RFP
May 31, 2023 Regular Council Meeting			
23-05-467	That administration sign an offer to purchase and start negotiations with Alberta Transportation for PLS 140031 – South of High Level Lands.	Caitlin	Refer to Motion 22-02-085
23-05-469	That administration research the possibility of partnering with Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) in regards to a matching bursary program.	Jen	NADC Contacted. New Bursary with criteria required. Request partnership by Nov 2023 for 2024. Reviewed
June 6, 2023 Regular Council Meeting			
23-06-491	That the Out of Scope Contracts be TABLED to a future Council meeting.	Darrell	Will bring to 2024 Budget Meetings
July 12, 2023 Regular Council Meeting			
23-07-574	That Mackenzie County agree to the transfer of ownership of the Fort Vermilion Library building and property and that administration work with Mackenzie County Library Board and the Fort Vermilion Library Society with the transfer.	Byron	<b>In the process of drafting agreements</b>

Motion	Action Required	Action By	Status
23-07-588	That Policy ADM053 Flags and Flag Protocol be TABLED to a future Council Meeting.	Don	<b>COMPLETE</b>
<b>August 16, 2023 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
23-08-604	That administration proceed as directed for the Offer to Purchase – Portion of Plan 2938RS, Block 06, Lot 16 (Hamlet of Fort Vermilion).	Caitlin	<b>Subdivision in progress</b>
23-08-614	That the Intersection Improvement Hamlet of La Crete contract be awarded to the lowest qualified bidder while staying within budget.	Byron	<b>COMPLETE</b>
23-08-647	That administration research the parameters of a housing needs assessment and bring back during budget discussions.	Byron	In Progress
23-08-648	That administration research gravel pit options for future crushing.	Byron	In Progress
23-08-650	That administration proceed with the Wadlin Lake Campground Pickleball Court with funds coming from Municipal Reserve and amend the 2023 Capital Budget not to exceed \$55,000.	Don	Project will be completed Spring 2024 Ground Work Completed. Concrete is <b>Complete</b>
23-08-654	That administration enter into an agreement with the Coalition for Far Northwest Alberta Brighter Futures Society to provide the services for the Family and Community Support Services Fort Vermilion Program.	Jen	<b>In Progress</b>
23-08-655	That administration present the Tax Recovery Auction properties with proposed dates at an upcoming Council meeting for review.	Jen	Rescheduled for 2023-Nov.
<b>September 6, 2023 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
23-09-676	That administration enter in an amended tax agreement schedule with Tallahassee Exploration Inc. as discussed.	Jen	In Progress See Motion 23-04-336
23-09-678	That the deadline for proposals be set for October 10, 2023 and administration be authorized to open and score each proposal for presentation and awarding at the October 11, 2023 Council Meeting.	Byron	<b>COMPLETE</b>
23-09-679	That a letter of support for the Proposed Bridge Locations be sent to the Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors.	Darrell	<b>Ministry suggested we wait for clarification from them.</b>
23-09-693	That the 500 cubic meters from the Filter Pit be donated to the La Crete Equine Society.	Darrell	<b>COMPLETE</b>
23-09-695	That administration be authorized to list the 2016 – 140M grader at the Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers heavy equipment sale on October 3 - 5, 2023.	Willie	<b>Council Meeting 2023-10-25</b>

<b>Motion</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>September 19, 2023 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
23-09-710	That administration proceed with disposal of mitigation items as discussed.	Jen	<b>In Progress</b>
23-09-719	That the following priority topics be discussed at the Minister meetings during the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) fall convention in November 2023 in Edmonton.  (See listing in 2023-09-19 Minutes)	Darrell/Louise	<b>In Progress</b>
23-09-720	That administration work with the local Councillor for the purchase and installation of Bison Hunt Signage and Awareness.	Don	<b>Sign Drafted</b>
<b>October 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting</b>			
23-10-732	That administration proceed with the proposed subdivision as presented.	Caitlin	<b>Refer to Motion 23-08-604</b>
23-10-733	That the 2023 Operating budget be amended by \$13,519 with funding coming from the General Operating Reserve.	Jen	<b>COMPLETE</b>
23-10-734	That the Organizational Chart be approved as presented.	Louise	<b>COMPLETE</b>
23-10-740	That administration score the proposals for the La Crete Stormwater Master Plan and provide a detailed report and recommendation for awarding to the October 25, 2023, Regular Council Meeting.	Byron	<b>Recommendation for awarding at Council Meeting on 2023-10-25</b>
23-10-741	That Mackenzie County collaborate with the Fort Vermilion School Division for the purchase and installation of a disability playground in the hamlet of La Crete.	Don	<b>In Progress</b>
23-10-742	That the designation of "Janelle's Park" change locations from the corner of 112 St and 99 Ave to Fort Vermilion School Division property and administration proceed with the process of renaming the park at this new location.	Don	<b>Community Services Meeting 2023-10-26</b>
23-10-743	That an additional \$25,000 from the Hamlet Park Development project be allocated to the New Hamlet Park (Janelle's Park) budget, and to be utilized as a cost sharing contribution for funds raised by community fundraising and/or grants.	Don/Jen	<b>COMPLETE</b>
23-10-745	That the unauthorized waste disposal on public lands be publically advertised to discourage illegal dumping.	Don	<b>In Progress</b>
23-10-747	That the 2023 operating budget be amended to include \$24,000 for the High Level Agricultural	Jen	<b>To be completed once funds are received.</b>

Motion	Action Required	Action By	Status
	Exhibition Association towards their Indoor Riding Arena project, with funding coming from Farm Credit Canada.		
23-10-748	That October 30, 2023 be identified as a Budget Workshop.	Jen	<b>Scheduled</b>
23-10-749	That Budget Council meetings be scheduled as follows:  Tuesday, October 31, 2023 Tuesday, November 21, 2023 Wednesday, November 22, 2023 Wednesday, December 6, 2023 Thursday, December 7, 2023	Jen	<b>Scheduled</b>
23-10-750	That the Town of High Level Regional Service Sharing Agreement payment be released.	Jen	<b>COMPLETE</b>
23-10-751	That administration bring back options and a cost estimate for the implementation of a Waterline East of La Crete to the Regular Council Meeting on October 25, 2023.	Byron	<b>RFD will be brought to 2023-10-25 Council Meeting</b>
23-10-755	That Council accepts the resignation of Councillor Bateman with regret and that a By-election be held for the Councillor vacancy in Ward 9 as follows:  • Nomination Day – November 15, 2023 • Advance Vote – December 8, 2023 • Election Day – December 13, 2023	Louise	<b>Nomination Day Advertised.</b>
23-10-756	That the 2023 one time project budget be amended by \$11,000 with funding coming from other sources for the Forest Capital of Canada Project.	Jen	<b>COMPLETE</b>



**COMMUNICATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

N/A

**POLICY REFERENCES:**

N/A

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Simple Majority       Requires 2/3       Requires Unanimous

That the information/correspondence items be accepted for information purposes.

**Author:** T. Thompson      **Reviewed by:** L. Flooren      **CAO:** D. Derksen

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Commanding Officer  
Alberta



Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Commandant  
de l'Alberta

September 22, 2023

Mackenzie County  
Reeve Joshua Knelsen  
PO Box 640  
Fort Vermilion, AB  
T0H 1N0

Dear Reeve Knelsen,

**Re: Alberta Police Funding Model Resource Allocation**

As you are aware, the Police Funding Model is in its fourth year of implementation. Funding provided to us from the Police Funding Model has allowed your provincial police service to grow, enabling us to deploy additional resources and implement new initiatives and technology focused on enhancing community safety.

I am pleased to advise you that as a result of the funding received in the fourth year of the Police Funding Model, we have been able to increase the resource strength in the High Level detachment by adding two additional regular member positions. This will not only increase the number of resources serving your county, but also enhances frontline services within the detachment. We also increased the administrative support within the Fort Vermilion detachment by adding one resource.

Through the first three years of implementation, we increased resource strength in the Town of High Level by adding one regular member. In addition, we increased the administrative support within the High Level detachment by adding three resources, allowing members more time to spend within the communities.

Alongside the resources added to your detachments, the additional funding has also enabled us to supplement specialized units and services that support your county. This includes additional positions for intelligence analysts, specialized investigative and support teams, Police Dog teams, and the Emergency Response Teams, among others. Although resources allocated to these areas are not always visible within your county, by providing ongoing support to detachments, taking on complex and sensitive files, and supplying specialized skills in serious or dangerous incidents, their work helps to keep your county safe and enables detachment members to focus on frontline policing. We have also invested in a number of resources to

support your detachments' efforts to address the root causes of crime, increasing resources in programs and partnerships focused on mental health and addictions.

I want to assure you that filling these positions is a top priority for the Alberta RCMP.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or Nina Sahasrabudde, Executive Director of Strategy, Business and Innovation, at 780-412-5382.

Thank you for the ongoing support you provide to your detachment.

Yours truly,



C.M. (Curtis) Zablocki, M.O.M.  
Deputy Commissioner  
Commanding Officer, Alberta RCMP

11140 – 109 Street  
Edmonton, AB T5G 2T4

Telephone: 780-412-5444  
Fax: 780-412-5445

C.C.: Sgt. Devron Dittmer, High Level Detachment Commander  
Cpl. Neil Mackay, Acting Fort Vermilion Detachment Commander  
Supt. Roberta McKale, Acting Western Alberta District Officer

**From:** [Jeff Zhang](#)  
**To:** [Darrell Derksen](#)  
**Cc:** [Louise Flooren](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Peace River Bridge on HWY 88  
**Date:** October 16, 2023 4:03:17 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Hello Darrell,

Thanks for your email.

You are correct, the bridge carrying Highway 88 over the Peace River near Fort Vermilion is scheduled for construction in 2024 and currently advertised. Our tender requires the contractor to accommodate up to 7m width during spring farming season. We also plan to provide high boy transportation for wide equipment should the width on the bridge is not sufficient. We do plan to undertake a town hall with the local MDs, farmers, transport companies to communicate the plan and ensure contacts are distributed, after contract award. We hope this will sufficiently address the needs of farming equipment mobility.

For the bridge carrying Highway 2 over the Peace River in Town of Peace River, the construction is expected to complete in 2024.

The bridge carrying Highway 88 over Wabasca River is anticipated to be open by the end of 2024.

While we are fortunate to see major projects happening in the Peace Region, I acknowledge your concern of minimizing inconvenience to the farming community. I do hope the wideload accommodation plan described above for Fort Vermilion is sufficient to address your concerns, and open to suggestions for improvement.

511 remains as the portal for up-to-date traffic accommodation information for activities happening on Alberta highways.

Thank you,

Jeff

Classification: Protected A

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**From:** Darrell Derksen <DDerksen@mackenziecounty.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 12, 2023 10:01 AM  
**To:** Jeff Zhang <jeff.zhang@gov.ab.ca>  
**Cc:** Louise Flooren <lflooren@mackenziecounty.com>  
**Subject:** Peace River Bridge on HWY 88

**CAUTION:** This email has been sent from an external source. Treat hyperlinks and attachments in this email with care.

Good Morning Jeff, I am told the you are the acting interim Regional Director for the Peace Region for Transportation and Economic Corridors.

It has come to our attention that there may be bridge work being planned being planned for the Peace River bridge on HWY 88 near Fort Vermilion in the next year. I was wondering about the timing on this as other bridges coming into the region, namely the Peace River bridge in Peace River and the Wabasca bridge on HWY 88 are currently under construction as well, this may present a problem if lane restrictions are in place at the same time for multiple bridges coming into the area. Also, please take into consideration lane restrictions and the effect on farming operations the these lane restrictions may have on farming operations. During the farming season these farmers need move wide farm equipment back and forth on the bridge.

We are very happy that this maintenance is being done and want to cooperate with you in these activities. Also if we can be of assistance in any way please let us know. Any updates you can send us with regards to the planned activities would be appreciated.

**Darrell Derksen | Chief Administrative Officer | Mackenzie County**

PO Box 640, 4511-46 Ave. | Fort Vermilion | AB | T0H 1N0

Phone: 780.927.3718 | Toll Free: 1.877.927.0677

[www.mackenziecounty.com](http://www.mackenziecounty.com)



**Subject:** News Release: Strengthening health care: Improving access for all

## **Strengthening health care: Improving access for all**

October 18, 2023 [Media inquiries](#)

Alberta's government is stabilizing and strengthening primary health care across the province so that everyone can access care when and where they need it.

Primary health care is the first point of contact Albertans have with the health care system, and includes health professionals such as family doctors, nurse practitioners and pharmacists.

Last fall, health care leaders, Indigenous partners and experts from across Canada and around the world came together to form advisory panels as part of the Modernizing Alberta's Primary Health Care System (MAPS) initiative. The panels identified immediate, medium- and long-term improvements to strengthen Alberta's primary health care system.

Alberta's government will begin moving forward on the recommendations in the final report to improve access to primary health care for all Albertans. The recommendations will be implemented through a phased approach, with several moving forward immediately, followed by medium- and longer-term improvements that will enhance community-based primary health care across Alberta.

“Today marks an important step in the work I am undertaking to enhance primary care as the foundation of our health care system. The Modernizing Alberta's Primary Health Care System (MAPS) reports clearly identify the challenges our system is facing, and their release signals this government's commitment to take immediate and ongoing action to support and stabilize primary health care in our province. I look forward to the ongoing work of implementing needed changes with our health care partners and providers.”

*Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Health*

Several immediate actions are being taken, all of which are consistent with recommendations from the panels. These actions are critical to ensuring Albertans have better access to health care when and where they need it. Alberta Health continues to work toward implementing recommendations over the medium and long term.

“The MAPS recommendations represent a huge leap forward for our primary health system – strengthening and clarifying governance, community involvement, and recognizing the importance of integrated team-based care that allows Albertans to access primary care from the most appropriate team member at the right time, in the right place. This is how we can ensure equitable access to care across our province.”

*Dr. Janet Reynolds, co-chair, MAPS strategic advisory panel*

## **Strengthening primary health care**

Alberta’s government is acting immediately on recommendations to improve primary health care and increase Albertans’ access to the medical care they need, including:

- Creating a primary health care division within Alberta Health.
- Allocating \$57 million over three years to provide family doctors and nurse practitioners with support to help manage their increasing number of patients. Each provider has the potential to receive up to \$10,000 annually.
- Working with the Alberta Medical Association to create a task force to recommend a new payment model for family physicians that encourages comprehensive primary care – where a patient has a regular family doctor who they develop a long-term relationship with and who works with them to ensure all their health care needs are met.
- Developing a memorandum of understanding with the Alberta Medical Association to collaborate on a transition to a new physician compensation model, modernize primary care governance and enable family doctors to spend more time with patients and less time on paperwork and immediately stabilize primary care.
- Expanding online mental health services, allowing doctors to bill for virtual mental health checks and therapy, and compensating them for extra time spent with patients virtually.
- Ensuring doctors get paid if patients can’t prove insurance coverage, reducing administrative burden. This is known as “good faith” claims.
- Introducing a payment system that will support nurse practitioners to open their own clinics, take on patients and offer services based on their scope of practice, training and expertise. Nurse practitioners have completed graduate studies ensuring that they are properly trained to examine patients, provide diagnoses and prescribe medication.

“We know that a strong primary health care system is foundational for better health care for Albertans, and that starts with access to a family physician and a team of dedicated providers. Primary care requires dedicated planning, resourcing and coordination. We are pleased to join the task force and believe continued collaboration and immediate action will bring us closer to our collective vision.”

*Dr. Noel DaCunha, president, Alberta College of Family Physicians*



“The Nurse Practitioner Association of Alberta is elated to see the newly released MAPs report, which provides direction for primary care reform and includes the full integration of nurse practitioners. The Government of Alberta is taking a significant and essential step in improving access to primary care for Albertans. This announcement is a win-win for Albertans and nurse practitioners, as it recognizes the valuable contributions of NPs delivering high-quality care for Albertans and their ability to decrease the stress on the health care system. We are excited about the future of primary care in Alberta.”

*Dr. Susan Prendergast, president, Nurse Practitioner Association of Alberta*

“These actions are welcome news for rural Alberta. Ensuring Albertans have access to health care professionals when and where they need it is essential. This work will help to solve some of the unique challenges for rural Albertans by encouraging health professions to practise in rural parts of the province.”

*Martin Long, parliamentary secretary for rural health*

## **Strengthening Indigenous health care**

Indigenous Peoples face many barriers to access appropriate health care. To support better health outcomes, the government will build more meaningful connections with Indigenous leaders and communities to identify improvements that reflect the unique nature of their communities. Immediate actions include:

- Creating an Indigenous health division within Alberta Health.
- Creating a \$20-million fund for Indigenous communities to design and deliver innovative primary health care services and projects.
- Creating an Indigenous patient complaints investigator and Elders roster to investigate incidences of racism during the delivery of health care and provide culturally safe support to Indigenous patients throughout the patient complaint process.
- Investing in a community-based Indigenous patient navigator program to support Indigenous peoples throughout their health care journey.

“It is unacceptable that Indigenous Peoples continue to face so many barriers when accessing primary health care. It is crucial that all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples have equitable access to community-based primary health care that is culturally safe, respects their unique needs and is free of racism. These immediate actions will help us achieve that goal.”

*Rick Wilson, Minister of Indigenous Relations*

“The panel’s recommendations provide a clear and stable pathway to create a safe, culturally appropriate primary health care system that includes Indigenous people as partners and leaders at every stage of the development, governance and delivery of health care services. The best solutions exist within our respective communities, tailored for our unique needs and priorities. The commitments made today are an important first step toward improving health equity for Indigenous Peoples, regardless of where they live in Alberta.”

*Naa Taoyi Piita Wo Taan, Dr. Tyler White, CEO, Siksika Health Services and co-chair, MAPS Indigenous Primary Health Care Advisory Panel*

## Quick facts

- Advisory panels were established through MAPS in fall 2022 to identify primary health care improvements in the short term and over the next 10 years.
- Final reports from the panels were submitted in spring 2023.
- The strategic advisory panel final report contains 11 recommendations to refocus the system around primary health care with an emphasis on:
  - access to team-based care
  - integration between primary health care and community care
  - a foundation of a coordinated and accountable primary health care system
- The Indigenous advisory panel final report contains 22 recommendations under five themes:
  - improve health equity for Indigenous Peoples
  - address Indigenous racism in health care
  - build culturally safer primary health care and an Indigenous workforce
  - create system innovation and support community capacity
  - Indigenous ownership, stewardship, design and delivery of health care services
- Budget 2023 allocated \$125 million over three years to implement recommendations from MAPS.
- The next step will be to further engage with health care partners, including Indigenous communities, to implement these immediate priorities and the broader MAPS recommendations.

## Related information

- [Modernizing Alberta’s Primary Health Care System](#)
- [Strategic Advisory Panel final report](#)
- [Indigenous Panel final report](#)

## Multimedia

- [Watch the news conference](#)

## Media inquiries

[Charlotte Taillon](#)

780-932-5381

Press Secretary, Health

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Government of Alberta  
Criminal Code Review Board



Own Motion Investigation  
October 2023

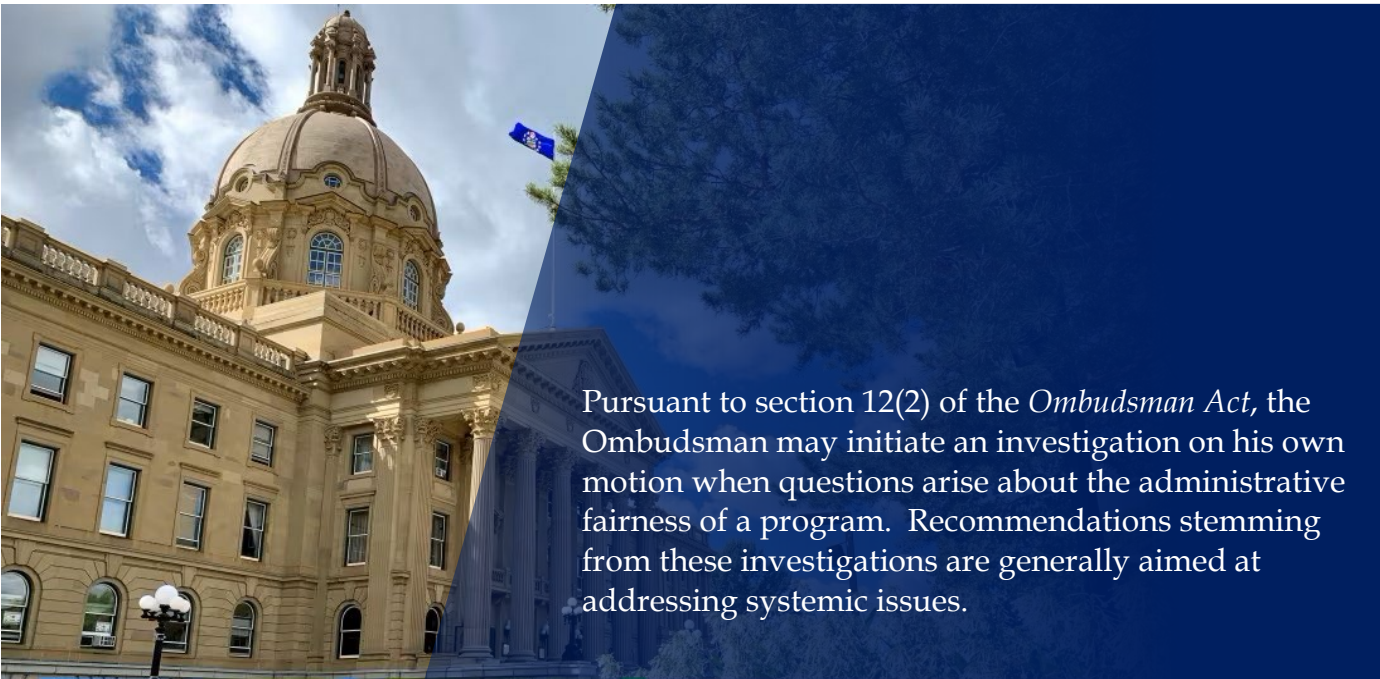
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## Alberta Ombudsman's Mandate

Every Albertan has the right to be treated fairly in the delivery of public services. As an Officer of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, the Ombudsman reports directly to the Legislative Assembly and operates independently from the Alberta government, political parties, and elected officials. The Ombudsman has jurisdiction over Alberta government departments, agencies, boards, and commissions including the Criminal Code Review Board previously named the Alberta Review Board. The Ombudsman is not an advocate for complainants nor a representative for government departments or professional organizations.

The Ombudsman ensures administrative fairness through impartial and independent investigations, recommendations, and education. People who believe they are affected by an unfair decision can raise their concerns to the Ombudsman and he may investigate. The Ombudsman is an office of last resort. Complainants must try to resolve their complaint first through all other avenues of review or appeal before the Ombudsman can consider an investigation.





672.38(1) A Review Board shall be established or designated for each province to make or review dispositions concerning any accused in respect of whom a verdict of not criminally responsible by reason of mental disorder or unfit to stand trial is rendered, and shall consist of not fewer than five members appointed by the lieutenant governor in council of the province. (Criminal Code)



## What is the Criminal Code Review Board?

When an individual is charged with a crime and the court determines they were Not Criminally Responsible on Account of Mental Disorder or Unfit to Stand Trial, the court notifies the Criminal Code Review Board (CCRB). The CCRB is established under the *Criminal Code* which says that each province and territory must have a review board to oversee these individuals. The CCRB panel is responsible for conducting all hearings for patients and determining one of three dispositions: detention in hospital, conditional discharge, or absolute discharge.

The CCRB serves both the patient and the public. In deciding about a patient's rights and freedoms, the CCRB holds public safety as the highest priority. Hearings take place, at minimum, once every 12 months for each patient.



## Complaint to the Ombudsman

The individual in this case was found Not Criminally Responsible on account of Mental Disorder in 2003. He was detained in custody at Alberta Hospital Edmonton per annual decisions by the CCRB.

The individual wrote to the Ombudsman in November 2021, with concerns about the CCRB's decision at the time to maintain his committal in hospital and continue his treatment. He believed the decision was unfair, given the progress he demonstrated.

The individual highlighted the following concerns:

- He was unable to fully participate in the hearing;
- The CCRB did not consider his evidence;
- He believed the decision makers showed a bias against him; and
- He was unaware of the process and available appeals.



# Ombudsman Investigation

## Own Motion Initiated

After receiving the complaint, our office contacted the CCRB Registrar to understand the board's decision-making process. Initially, we learned the CCRB follows what is mandated in the *Criminal Code*, but does not have formal or written policies.

At the time, the CCRB had 160+ patients under its review. Given the caseload and the gravity of its decisions on patients, victims and their families, any potential Ombudsman recommendations could impact future CCRB hearings. With this systemic aspect to consider, the Ombudsman chose to open an Own Motion Investigation.



## Issue for Investigation

The Ombudsman's goal in this investigation was to determine if the CCRB had sufficient rules, policies and procedures in place to ensure administratively fair hearings and decisions.

We wanted to know what rules were in place and how the CCRB followed those rules. We questioned how the CCRB knew how to perform its job without formal policies and processes and how we can be sure the CCRB is treating patients in a consistent and fair way.

## Jurisdictional Scan

For this investigation, we conducted a scan of review boards from other Canadian provinces and territories. We found that Ontario, Québec, and British Columbia have dedicated websites for their review boards, including comprehensive information about the role and process. Other provinces and territories, aside from Alberta and New Brunswick, have select public information. Alberta has little public information about its review board. Information about the CCRB is limited to what is provided by private law firms, news articles and Alberta Health Services.

## Review of CCRB Procedures

The Ombudsman opened this investigation with concerns about people's ability to fully participate in the CCRB decision-making process. Individuals should expect to participate in a process that is consistent, regardless of the CCRB personnel involved. There was limited information about what would happen to the CCRB process should there be staff turnover. Upon investigation, the CCRB provided several packages of information outlining how it performs its duties. We reviewed each document in detail.



## Hearings

In October 2022, the investigative team attended 20 virtual CCRB hearings. We discovered that despite varying CCRB Chairs, panel members, treatment team, Crown and defense counsel, the process ran the same way every time. We witnessed a high degree of consistency and adherence to the process outlined in the *Criminal Code*.



## File Reviews

The investigative team attended the CCRB office twice to review files and documents. From our discussion with the Registrar, we created a checklist to determine the administrative documents that should be in a patient's file. We reviewed 21 panel hearings spanning over 20 years and saw consistency in every random file we reviewed.



## External Authorities

To further our understanding, we interviewed external parties that interact often with the CCRB, including two defense lawyers, a Legal Aid Manager, two AHS liaison staff and the Edmonton North Zone Section Chief. We learned that there is a high degree of regular and transparent communication between the CCRB administration and external parties. However, we also learned that there is no easy way for external parties or the public to find information on the CCRB's process and how it functions.

## Consultations with CCRB

Throughout the investigation, the Ombudsman's office met with the CCRB Registrar and the Director of Provincial Court Administration.

Both individuals took the time to thoroughly explain the CCRB's process and answer any questions we had. The Registrar demonstrated an exceptional knowledge of the CCRB's purpose and processes.



## Findings

The Ombudsman's office began this investigation with the purpose to discover how the CCRB operates, if the patients are treated fairly, and how patients, victims and families become informed about the CCRB's processes. At the conclusion of the investigation, we can confidently answer that the CCRB has informal, written documents that outline its process. We also found these processes to be highly consistent. We attended 20 hearings, reviewed files, and spoke with external parties; in all discussions we found consistency rather than administrative weaknesses or issues. We found patients are provided the notice of hearing and medical reports, have access to legal representation, and that hearings occur at minimum every 12 months. The CCRB provides the decision after a hearing in an administratively fair manner. We found the CCRB follows the same hearing process and treats patients in an administratively fair manner, before, during and after hearings. Importantly, we also found that CCRB administrative staff and panel members care deeply about their role and believe in the importance of providing a fair process for all individuals involved. While there was strong evidence of compassion and a well-functioning system, the CCRB agreed with our team that there are always areas for improvement.

### Finding #1

The CCRB is lacking in public facing information. Along with New Brunswick, the CCRB is the only other review board in the country that does not have some information publicly available online. Most review boards either have their own websites or information on the relevant government websites. The Mental Health Review Panel in Alberta, which is comparable in its function to the CCRB, provides information to the public through a webpage on the Alberta.ca site.

The *Criminal Code* has many sections that describe the actions the CCRB must take, but it does not provide the public with a concrete understanding of the CCRB and its functions. There is no public facing information that tells a patient, family member or victim what the purpose of the CCRB is and what they can expect before, during, and after a hearing. Any information for the patient and their families comes from external sources.

In discussions with external authorities, there is limited information about the CCRB process and other professionals learn about the procedures through experience. External authorities spoke highly of their relationship with the CCRB's Registrar but commented they are unaware of timelines and practices the CCRB administration and panel follow. While we determined the CCRB gives patients notice of the hearings, we

could not confirm whether individuals have adequate information about the role and functioning of the CCRB to fully prepare for and participate in the hearing process. Unless information is forthright, a patient's ability to participate may be limited. The lack of public facing information could also potentially contribute to the sharing of misinformation about the CCRB's function and process.

## Finding #2

The CCRB is lacking formal internal policies. It has resources and guides it uses to ensure it is following the *Criminal Code*, but it does not have internal or formalized documents that explain its role and function. In the absence of rules for the CCRB panel to follow, it could be difficult to ensure consistency amongst panel hearings if there was staff turnover. That said, the CCRB currently follows a consistent process although this was not easily understandable outside a formal Ombudsman Own Motion Investigation. Nonetheless, this finding confirmed the CCRB's current practice in its hearings and review is administratively fair.



## Recommendation and Observation

At the conclusion of an investigation, the Ombudsman can make recommendations and observations. Recommendations relate to improving the fairness of a decision or a process. The Ombudsman makes observations when there is no clear compromise of the administrative fairness guidelines. They are a comment by the Ombudsman which the department or program may wish to consider.

To address the findings above, the Ombudsman made one recommendation and one observation.

### Recommendation

The Ombudsman recommends the CCRB develop publicly available information, explaining its role and process. The information should detail the CCRB's process before, during and after hearings. The CCRB may wish to look to other provinces and territories for examples of public facing information.

### Observation

Today, patients can expect to be a part of a consistent process, but the expectation is fragile because the CCRB's rules and process are not formalized. The CCRB does not have approved rules in place to safeguard its processes and continue to meet the expectations of those involved in the hearings, regardless of who the administrative staff or panel members are (i.e., staff turnover). The CCRB may wish to consolidate its current manuals and guides into one formalized policy and consider creating rules regarding its practice and procedure under section 672.44(1) of the *Criminal Code*.





## CCRB's Response and Closing

In June 2023, the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) for Court and Justice Services Division agreed with and accepted the Ombudsman's recommendation. The ADM confirmed the department had already initiated work to prepare information on its purpose and function and to formalize policy. She shared it will post this information to a newly created website, scheduled to be complete by the end of 2023. The Acting Deputy Minister confirmed her agreement as well at the end of June.

The CCRB Chair also contacted our office and expressed support for the findings and recommendation.

The Ombudsman wishes to acknowledge the positive working relationship between his office and the CCRB. Our office would like to recognize the CCRB Registrar and the Director of Court Administration for their exceptional knowledge, open communication, and cooperation.

The Ombudsman's office looks forward to seeing the new CCRB website in action.



If you have any questions about the Alberta Ombudsman, or wish to file a complaint with us, please get in touch.

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NEWS RELEASE

## CN Publishes Winter Plan for 2023-2024

*Plan Focuses on Safety, Collaboration and Transparency to Address Winter's Challenges*

Montreal, October 5, 2023 – CN (TSX: CNR) (NYSE: CNI) published its 2023-2024 Winter Plan. The document outlines the actions CN has taken to meet customer demand safely and efficiently during the winter months ahead.

“Winter conditions bring unique challenges to every part of the supply chain, from production to market. CN’s Winter Plan seeks to anticipate those challenges, mitigate their impact, and facilitate quick recovery. But the resiliency and reliability of Canada’s end-to-end supply chain require us all to work together – coordinating our planning and aligning our execution. The Canadian economy, our customers, and Canada’s position as a reliable trading partner need and expect this level of collaboration.”

- Tracy Robinson, Chief Executive Officer, CN

This year’s Winter Plan is focused on working safely, collaborating to meet the demands of customers, improving network performance and enhancing network resiliency.

### **Highlights of New Initiatives in 2023-2024 Winter Plan:**

- **Enhancing the scheduled operating plan:** The operating plan CN launched in 2022 delivered the best railcar velocity since 2016 and strong, consistent traffic movement. The company expects further enhancements to the plan will deliver incremental improvements.
- **Locomotive initiatives:** The addition of 57 high-horsepower locomotives last October, the modernization of 60 DC-traction locomotives, and CN’s locomotive reliability initiative are expected to support a more reliable and more fuel and carbon efficient fleet.
- **Rolling stock acquisition:** CN added 800 new high-capacity boxcars and 500 high-efficiency hoppers cars in 2023. A further 750 new hopper cars will join the fleet in 2024.
- **People:** Staff resourcing for 2023-24 will be in line with anticipated customer demand.

For more information on CN’s Winter Plan, please download the complete plan [here](#).

**About CN**

CN is a world-class transportation leader and trade enabler. Essential to the economy, to the customers, and to the communities it serves, CN safely transports more than 300 million tons of natural resources, manufactured products, and finished goods throughout North America every year. CN's network connects Canada's Eastern and Western coasts with the U.S. South through an 18,600-mile rail network, CN and its affiliates have been contributing to community prosperity and sustainable trade since 1919. CN is committed to programs supporting social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

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CANADIAN NORTHERN CORRIDOR SPECIAL SERIES

# THE CANADIAN NORTHERN CORRIDOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM: RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Emily Galley, Katharina Koch, G. Kent Fellows,  
Robert Mansell, Nicole Pinto and Jennifer Winter

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11575/sppp.v16i1.77585>

# FOREWORD

## THE CANADIAN NORTHERN CORRIDOR RESEARCH PROGRAM PAPER SERIES

This paper is part of a special series in *The School of Public Policy Publications*, investigating a concept that would connect the nation's southern infrastructure to a new series of corridors across middle and northern Canada. This paper is an output of the Canadian Northern Corridor Research Program.

The Canadian Northern Corridor Research Program at The School of Public Policy, University of Calgary, is the leading platform for information and analysis on the feasibility, desirability, and acceptability of a connected series of infrastructure corridors throughout Canada. Endorsed by the Senate of Canada, this work responds to the Council of the Federation's July 2019 call for informed discussion of pan-Canadian economic corridors as a key input to strengthening growth across Canada and "a strong, sustainable and environmentally responsible economy." This Research Program will benefit all Canadians, providing recommendations to advance the infrastructure planning and development process in Canada.

This paper, "The Canadian Northern Corridor Community Engagement Program: Results and Lessons Learned", falls under theme *Social Benefits and Costs* of the program's eight research themes:

- Strategic and Trade Dimensions
- Funding and Financing Dimensions
- Legal and Regulatory Dimensions
- Organization and Governance
- Geography and Engineering
- Economic Outcomes
- Social Benefits and Costs
- Environmental Impact

All publications can be found at [www.canadiancorridor.ca/research](http://www.canadiancorridor.ca/research)

**Dr. Kent Fellows**

**Program Director, Canadian Northern Corridor Research Program**

# THE CANADIAN NORTHERN CORRIDOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM: RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Emily Galley, Katharina Koch, G. Kent Fellows,  
Robert Mansell, Nicole Pinto and Jennifer Winter

## KEY MESSAGES

- Canada's infrastructure gap in mid- and northern Canada is the result of complex and intersectional factors, stemming in part from the country's colonial history and approach to land management; piecemeal infrastructure development; underrepresentation of rural, remote, and Indigenous communities in strategic decision-making; and decades-long neglect of existing infrastructure networks.
- Cross-cutting factors exacerbating the infrastructure gap are a lack of cooperation across orders of government; infrastructure asset ownership and management; the state of repair of existing infrastructure; (in)accessibility and remoteness of communities; the availability of local skills and human capacities; capacity for climate change adaptation; and limited available resources that support energy security.
- Community infrastructure priorities fall into three areas: physical and digital connectivity, local infrastructure to support community well-being, and energy security and environmental protection. All three should be included in a long-term strategic and integrated infrastructure approach for mid- and northern Canada.
- The Government of Canada, in cooperation with provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous partners, should invest in region-based assessments to determine specific local infrastructure priorities across mid- and northern Canada.
- The Government of Canada, in line with its consultations on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, should identify ways to incorporate the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent in legal and regulatory frameworks related to infrastructure and natural resource development. Resources — including but not limited to financial, legal, and logistical — should be provided to Indigenous communities and rightsholder organizations to enhance their advocacy capacity for local and regional priorities.
- All orders of government need to actively support civic engagement amongst and by smaller and remote communities through allocation of resources to facilitate community participation in hearings and processes (e.g., impact assessments).



- Social benefit-cost analyses of infrastructure developments must consider intersectional vulnerabilities and equity-deserving groups, including Indigenous Peoples. Infrastructure deficits and development disproportionately affect Indigenous communities. Their meaningful engagement in future development is crucial to meeting Canada's legal and moral obligations to Indigenous Peoples and ensuring the success of future infrastructure projects.
- Community needs are diverse and include access to housing, education, and healthcare; upgrading and maintenance of existing infrastructure; and a larger role in future infrastructure development plans.
- Universal high-speed internet is necessary to ensure that all residents of Canada have equitable access to educational, employment, healthcare, and other services and opportunities that are increasingly found online.
- Climate change and its consequences for the environment in northern Canada, such as permafrost melting, will contribute to accelerated degradation of existing infrastructure; safety features to mitigate the impacts of environmental hazards must be incorporated into any infrastructure development or maintenance.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Canadian Northern Corridor (CNC) Research Program is an investigation of the feasibility, desirability, and acceptability of infrastructure corridors in advancing integrated, long-term infrastructure planning and development in Canada. The corridor concept involves a series of multi-modal rights-of-way across mid- and northern Canada — connecting all three coasts and linked to existing corridors in southern Canada — for the efficient, timely and integrated development of trade, transportation, and communications infrastructure. Corridors are expected to make public and private infrastructure investments more attractive by reducing the uncertainty associated with project approval processes; sharing the costs associated with establishing and administering rights-of-way; decreasing negative environmental impacts; and moving to a more strategic, integrated, and long-term approach to national infrastructure planning and development. A key outcome of corridor development is decreasing the existing infrastructure gap that persists between Canada's northern and southern regions and communities. The causes of this gap are complex and will require a diverse set of tools and solutions to resolve; the CNC is a useful conceptual tool to initiate discussions on northern infrastructure and to identify feasible and lasting solutions to address Canada's infrastructure gap.

The CNC Research Program included a series of policy studies, stakeholder engagements, and community engagement involving participants from 18 communities across mid- and northern Canada.<sup>1</sup> In this report, we present a summary and thematic analysis of the data collected during the community engagement sessions and community visits which took place from March to November 2022. The purpose of the community engagement was to hear the perspectives of communities that could be significantly affected by potential corridor development and the large-scale infrastructure that could accompany it. The CNC Community Engagement Program addresses three key questions: 1) What key gaps in infrastructure, infrastructure policy and infrastructure-related research persist from the point of view of communities and community members? 2) What potential impacts, challenges, and opportunities does the corridor concept present for those communities? 3) What factors would make corridor development acceptable, or unacceptable, for a given community and its members? To answer these questions, community sessions were structured around three core themes: infrastructure needs and priorities across mid- and northern Canada; challenges that are preventing communities and regions from achieving their infrastructure development goals; and the potential effects of infrastructure corridors on the community, both positive and negative.

Participants described a variety of infrastructure priorities and challenges which can be summarized as physical and digital connectivity; community well-being; and energy and the environment. Specific issues included poorly maintained roads and highways, unreliable communications infrastructure (particularly high-speed internet), the loss of rail services, dependence on expensive and non-renewable power sources, housing quality and quantity, access to medical and educational services, and the effect of climate change on existing transportation networks. Some key concerns, such as food security and physical connectivity, were prominent in more northern communities compared to their southern

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<sup>1</sup> The Canadian Northern Corridor Community Engagement Program was reviewed and approved by the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB), University of Calgary (Ethics ID: REB21-1473) in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2).

counterparts; diesel-reliant communities in the territories raised concerns about their energy security and the high cost of living while coastal communities focused on the maintenance or establishment of port infrastructure. We also found six cross-cutting factors exacerbating the infrastructure gap between northern and southern Canada: 1) infrastructure governance and ownership; 2) the state of repair of existing infrastructure; 3) the lack of accessibility (e.g., to services or communications infrastructure) and community remoteness; 4) the existence and availability of skills and human capacity; 5) local capacities for climate change adaptation; and 6) energy security and environmental sensitivity.

All participating communities described significant issues with the availability, affordability, and quality of internet connectivity. Digital connectivity enables participation in economic and social activities and, particularly for more remote communities, allows access to essential services such as education and healthcare. We heard how unreliable internet access can trigger cascading effects on community well-being, disrupting business operations and social interactions, and compelling residents to leave communities in search of educational and employment opportunities.

Participants raised many concerns regarding the potential development of a corridor, with environmental concerns taking centre stage during discussions. Community members described experiences and grievances related to past infrastructure and natural resource development in their communities and regions. Participants felt that too often infrastructure development catered to the needs of southern Canada, leading to a perception of northern resource exploitation that does not generate benefits for local communities. Research participants frequently expressed frustration with the lack of recognition of northern needs and interests by all levels of government and with the fact that decisions about northern development are often made in southern regions by policymakers unfamiliar with the North and without sufficient consideration of that region's environmental, economic, social, and cultural conditions.

Canada's northern infrastructure gap evolved over decades, and its causes are wide-ranging and intersectional, creating and perpetuating inequities between different regions of the country. These stem from Canada's colonial history and approach to land management, piecemeal infrastructure development, underrepresentation of equity-deserving groups in strategic decision-making, and decades-long neglect of community-level infrastructure. In addition to the persistent inequities between north and south, infrastructure deficits and development disproportionately affect Indigenous communities. Many of these same communities also lack significant local capacities, frustrating their abilities to meaningfully advocate and act on behalf of their interests and to engage meaningfully with non-Indigenous governments and development proponents on equal footing. Targeted support — logistical, legal, financial, and otherwise — for Indigenous rightsholders in some regions is necessary to ensure their capacity to participate in, and lead, future development opportunities.

Future large-scale infrastructure development could benefit from a region-informed approach. Communities often expressed similar infrastructure needs across provincial and territorial borders while lamenting a lack of inter-provincial and territorial cooperation. Bureaucratic red tape and regulatory requirements often curtail or prevent effective

collaboration, particularly between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Regulatory processes and mechanisms are vital to protect the constitutional and treaty rights of Indigenous Peoples and to ensure a sustainable approach to both infrastructure and natural resource development. However, they should facilitate rather than undermine regional cooperation across provincial and territorial borders.

A region-informed approach to infrastructure development could entail region-based needs-assessments and a regional approach to assessment and development as part of a long-term, integrated national strategy. This would prevent a one-size-fits-all approach to development across Canada's diverse northern regions. Moreover, it would ensure effective participation of equity-deserving groups, and enable them to assert their regional priorities. A regional approach could also support greater local control of planning and strengthen communities' ability to make their perspectives heard in meaningful ways. It would also contribute to greater social and economic parity between regions and ultimately begin to close the infrastructure gap in Canada.

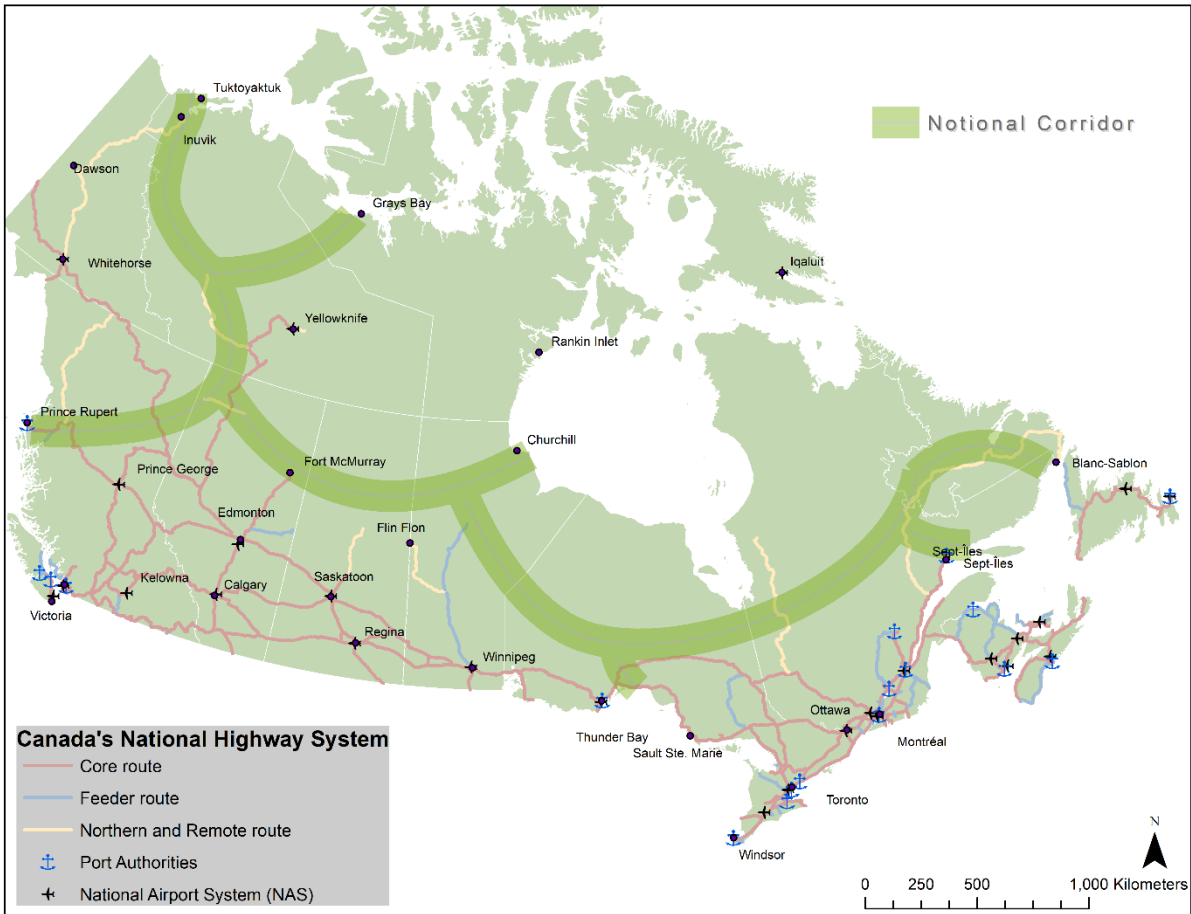
## INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Northern Corridor (CNC) Research Program is an investigation of the feasibility, desirability, and acceptability of using the corridor concept to advance integrated, long-term infrastructure planning and development in Canada. The concept involves a series of multi-modal rights-of-way across mid- and northern Canada to facilitate efficient, timely and integrated development of infrastructure, including combinations of road, rail, transmission, pipeline, communications, port, and airport infrastructure. The concept combines both linear and point-to-point infrastructure and proposes a series of interconnected corridors across mid- and northern regions with the goal of connecting all three coasts and integrating with existing infrastructure in the south. We routinely use the term ‘the North’; this denotes the territories (Northern Canada), and the middle and northern portions of BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador, sometimes referred to as ‘mid-Canada’ (Rohmer 1970; Koch 2021). The term ‘corridor concept’ indicates that the Canadian Northern Corridor is at a conceptual stage of investigation focused on informing future policy and infrastructure development, rather than assuring its development; its realization is not assumed, and investigation of the concept may determine that such a development, as currently imagined, is not feasible. Internationally, corridors are used to make moving goods and people more efficient and to support information communications technology (Öberg, Nilsson, and Johansson 2016; Gong 2019; Enns and Bersaglio 2020; Lesutis 2020; Satchwell 2023).

Corridors in Canada are not novel phenomena. In the 1960s, Richard Rohmer proposed a “Mid-Canada Development Corridor” (Rohmer 1970). Geographically, this corridor was delineated by the boreal forest, an area deemed ideal for human settlement due to its sub-Arctic climate. However, Rohmer’s corridor was not realized; the main regions it covered were long regarded as a “remote fringe area,” and no further development plans for a northern corridor had been made by the 1980s (Weller 1984). Nevertheless, corridor development in Canada’s south progressed; Munzur (2021) offers an extensive inventory of Canada’s main highways, ports, and airports (Figure 1). However, Canada faces myriad barriers and bottlenecks that negatively affect domestic supply chains and communities, due to infrastructure networks that are increasingly fragile as climate change and its effects erode existing assets (Boyle, Cunningham, and Dekens 2013; Pearce, Ford, and Fawcett 2020; Koch 2021). Furthermore, Munzur (2021, 6) emphasizes that:

Although Canada’s history is punctuated with big and bold national projects, such as the Trans-Canada Highway and the Canadian Pacific Railway, a long list of stalled or cancelled stand-alone infrastructure projects can create frustration and lead to an erosion of public confidence in established processes among certain groups of stakeholders and members of the public.

Figure 1: Canada’s National Highway System



Source: Munzur (2021). Republished with permission.

A northern corridor would utilize pre-existing infrastructure assets; however, certain segments and connections may be new additions to Canada’s infrastructure grid, creating specific questions and challenges in terms of their feasibility, desirability, and acceptability. Past development, such as the ‘national’ corridors established by highway and railway construction, have blazed pathways through Canada’s vast geography without sufficiently mitigating the effects of settler colonial visions on Indigenous communities and their traditional networks of commerce and trade, wildlife migration, and sensitive ecosystems. While some development followed traditional Indigenous transportation routes — such as the Dempster Highway, which is based on a traditional dog-sled trail (Dana, Meis-Mason, and Anderson 2008) — in other cases it involved new routes, often with significant implications for Indigenous and other communities. For example, the construction of the Alaska Highway had a “significant impact on the settlement patterns in Whitehorse, shifting traffic and people away from the Yukon River,” with great repercussions for Indigenous Peoples who left behind their traditional subsistence-based lifestyles (i.e., hunting and trapping) to seek employment in road construction and as wilderness guides (Sheppard and White 2017, 215).

The entire CNC Research Program involves studies on eight thematic issues (strategic and trade dimensions, legal and regulatory issues, organization and governance, geography and engineering, economic outcomes, social benefits and costs, and environmental impacts); 17 roundtables with stakeholders from federal, municipal, territorial, and Indigenous governments, industry, and NGOs; and 18<sup>2</sup> community engagement sessions held across mid- and northern Canada with the goal of sharing knowledge and gathering feedback from residents on the corridor concept.<sup>3</sup> Here, we present a thematic qualitative analysis of our community engagement activities that took place between March and November 2022.

The CNC Community<sup>4</sup> Engagement Program conducted as part of the CNC Research Program addresses three key questions: 1) What key gaps in infrastructure, infrastructure policy, and infrastructure-related research persist from the point of view of communities and community members? 2) What potential impact, challenges, and opportunities does the corridor concept present for those communities? 3) What factors would make corridor development acceptable, or unacceptable, for a given community and its members? The central component of the Community Engagement Program was a series of in-person and virtual visits by research team members and external consultants (Cascade Projects, an Indigenous-owned firm supporting our engagement efforts). A community engagement approach was chosen due to the potential impacts of corridor development on individual communities. Public consultations and community engagement initiatives have become more common for large projects; however, there is limited academic work addressing large-scale, national infrastructure development from a community perspective. Our community engagement research identified several infrastructure priorities related to physical and digital connectivity, community well-being, and energy and environmental infrastructure. Participants also raised concerns related to potential corridor development, such as negative environmental impacts and socio-cultural changes. While some participants were not directly opposed to development that would improve local and/or regional connectivity and enhance access to critical services such as healthcare and housing, they indicated conditions for development such as meaningful consultation processes and the involvement of Indigenous communities.

The following two sections offer further insight into community engagement as a research approach and provide an overview of the CNC Community Engagement Program. We then present a summary of key themes, followed by a more detailed and intensive presentation of the data in a “What We Heard” section, which collates participant contributions from the 18 communities we engaged. We then offer insights about the potential implications for infrastructure development based on participant perspectives and analyze the key challenges of connectivity and development in mid- and northern Canada. We conclude by discussing lessons for future engagement activities by governments, project proponents, and researchers, and suggest policy actions to improve infrastructure development in Canada.

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<sup>2</sup> We scheduled nineteen engagement sessions, but the Rankin Inlet session was cancelled while researchers were enroute, due to extreme weather that cancelled commercial flights into and out of the community.

<sup>3</sup> Throughout this document, we use the terms ‘barriers’ and ‘challenges’ to categorize community perspectives. We use ‘challenges’ to refer to the issues and problems currently or persistently facing a community and ‘barriers’ for factors inhibiting or undermining a community’s ability to address their stated challenges.

<sup>4</sup> We use a geographical, or spatial, definition of ‘community’; that is, a group of people occupying a defined space: a city, village, town, or hamlet. We also include in this working definition First Nations communities, while recognizing that such communities often occupy multiple settlements (e.g., the Dene Tha’ First Nation in northern Alberta is comprised of three separate physical communities).



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS A RESEARCH APPROACH

Public consultation and engagement on the part of government, regulatory bodies, and project proponents is common in Canada, and its use is actively encouraged by organizations such as the OECD (2001) and the United Nations (2003). Certain forms of consultation, such as those required by the Duty to Consult (Government of Canada 2021b), or conducted as part of an environmental assessment (Government of Canada 2012), are administered in order to meet legal requirements. Others, such as those conducted in advance of new municipal strategies (Campbell-Arvai and Lindquist 2021), reflect a growing consensus that mechanisms to include the public in decision-making should extend beyond the confines of the formal processes of institutionalized democracy (Head 2007). Engaging with communities about issues that affect their members — such as natural resource development projects and major policy changes — can help achieve “effective and inclusive decision-making, form partnerships, increase adherence to policy, gain support for a project, and build capacity” (Boyle et al. 2022, 3). Additionally, it can ensure that a given project “meets the needs of the public,” assigns “legitimacy to a project,” and provides “a forum for the submission and inclusion of local knowledge” and “a more comprehensive consideration of factors on which decisions are made” (Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003, 162).

In formal academic research, participatory forms of research, including community engagement, have also become increasingly popular amongst both researchers and funders (McKenna and Main 2013), particularly within the humanities, social sciences, and health-related disciplines. The level of public involvement in a given project or program can vary greatly, from the public being simply informed about the research being done, to their involvement in the creation of data, to their working alongside researchers to shape research design, questions, and outputs. This last and deepest level of involvement is found in Community-Based Participatory Research (International Association for Public Participation n.d.; Israel et al. 2012). In this context, community engagement (CE) can be hard to satisfactorily define. However, broadly speaking, CE “centres on the involvement of community members in policy and project planning, delivery, or evaluation processes through co-production between the professional sector and civil society” (Boyle et al. 2022, 3).

In the case of the Canadian Northern Corridor Community Engagement Program, we chose a community engagement approach due to the potential significant impacts on individual communities that could come with both corridor development and associated large-scale infrastructure projects. Public consultations and community engagement initiatives have become more common for large projects, such as the creation or expansion of mining operations (Natural Resources Canada 2016), and national development strategies (e.g., the Canada Green Buildings Strategy or the National Adaptation Strategy). There is limited academic work addressing large-scale, national infrastructure development from a community perspective, where research team members travel to individual communities to interact directly with participants. Public consultation on national topics is more commonly executed through a combination of knowledge mobilization tools, such as websites and advertisements, or through public comment periods. However, knowledge mobilization does not allow for the two-way exchange of knowledge between researchers and participants, and public comment periods are criticized for their inaccessibility,

exclusion of certain demographics (e.g., those unaccustomed to technocratic processes) and kinds of knowledge (e.g., Indigenous ways of knowing), and for how marginalized voices can be overlooked in the volume of data collected (Morrell 2013).

By employing more direct forms of community engagement, the CNC Research Program's goal is to amplify the voices of individual communities and their members. With too small a scope to realistically achieve representativeness in the data, the research team instead focused on soliciting a wide diversity of opinions, perspectives, and experiences from community members (Patton 2002), to highlight as many issues regarding corridor and infrastructure development as possible. This is also why we have chosen to present our participants' contributions with minimal interpretation in the "What We Heard" section. Where possible, researchers have attempted to capture exact words, phrases, and statements to better allow participants' voices to be heard and to minimize researchers' own voices in the data. Participant contributions are unattributed for the sake of individual anonymity and to allow participants to share their perspectives more freely.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The CNC Research Program included an engagement component to identify community priorities for and concerns about infrastructure development, and to identify the challenges and conditions that have contributed to Canada's current infrastructure deficit. Additionally, we aimed to investigate those issues that disproportionately or uniquely affect mid-Canada and northern communities and are often missing from the policy agendas of southern policy and decision-makers.

We present an aggregate analysis of data collected at 18 community engagement sessions (seven virtual and 11 in person) which took place between March and November 2022.<sup>5</sup> The research team engaged in community selection based on three key features: geography and proximity to the notional corridor routes and major infrastructure projects and industries (Figure 1); strategic port accessibility, which are critical transportation and trade nodes; and population size, ensuring a mix of small rural areas and larger non-metropolitan population centres. Given the significant Indigenous population in the Canadian North, we also aimed to engage at least one Indigenous community in each province and territory. Based on these criteria, the CNC research team and our partners at Cascade Projects<sup>6</sup> created a list of 50 potential community engagement sites, which was eventually narrowed down to 19 target communities. Of this list of 19 "preferred" communities, 12 agreed to participate in the engagement program; alternatives were found for the remaining seven sites (Figure 2). Alternative sites were selected from the initial list of 50 communities. In some cases, representatives of communities not included in this initial list reached out to the research team to express interest in participating in engagement activities. Where a given community matched the original selection criteria, that community was chosen as an alternative site (e.g., Hay River).

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<sup>5</sup> The Canadian Northern Corridor Community Engagement Program was reviewed and approved by the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB), University of Calgary (Ethics ID: REB21-1473) in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2).

<sup>6</sup> Cascade Projects is an Indigenous-owned and -operated consultancy contracted by the CNC Research Program to support the program's stakeholder and community engagement activities (Cascade Projects n.d.).

The most significant discrepancy between the initial and final community lists is in the number of participating Indigenous communities. This was due to a combination of circumstances encountered during pre-engagement contact with community representatives. In some cases, communities were not interested in engaging with the research team for unspecified reasons. Others described a lack of alignment with community priorities, a lack of capacity within the community to engage in a research project, and existing or recent involvement in other research programs. There were also issues related to administrative and promotional challenges (e.g., the research team was limited by the research ethics protocol in its ability to directly contact the members of Indigenous communities) as well as in accessing timely feedback from Indigenous organizations such as Tribal Councils. Ultimately, no First Nations communities were directly involved in the engagement process, a limitation of this portion of the Research Program. However, three Inuit communities — Tuktoyaktuk, Kugluktuk, and Rankin Inlet — did agree to participate. Furthermore, in other communities, such as Thompson, MB, and Île-à-la-Crosse, SK, session participants were either predominantly or exclusively First Nations or Métis. The sessions in Timmins, Thunder Bay, Churchill, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, and Kenora also involved participants who self-identified as First Nations or Inuit. Figure 2 depicts the communities we engaged.

**Figure 2: CNC Community Engagement Program Geographic Overview.**



Notes: The engagement session in Rankin Inlet was scheduled but cancelled due to inclement weather which suspended commercial flights in and out of the community.

Source: Map created by K. Koch using Esri, ArcGIS Pro, version 2.9.0 and data from Natural Resources Canada (2022); Statistics Canada (2022). Contains information licensed under Open Government Licence — Canada.

Due to the pandemic and related travel restrictions, the team conducted the first four community engagements virtually. Subsequent virtual engagements in Quebec were to accommodate French-English translation (i.e., live interpretation), and the Hay River (Northwest Territories) session was also virtual due to delays in the territorial licensing process<sup>7</sup>.

**Table 1: Community engagement overview.**

Date	Community	Format
March 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2022	High Level, AB	Virtual
March 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Thunder Bay, ON	Virtual
March 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Timmins, ON	Virtual
March 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Prince Rupert, BC	Virtual
April 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Thompson, MB	In person
April 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Churchill, MB	In person
June 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Sept-Îles, QC	Virtual
August 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Whitehorse, YT	In person
September 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Fort St. John, BC	In person
September 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL	In person
September 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Chibougamau, QC	Virtual
September 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Kenora, ON	In person
October 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Grande Prairie, AB	In person
October 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Hay River, NT	Virtual
October 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Île-à-la-Crosse, SK	In person
October 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Kugluktuk, NU	In person
October 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Tuktoyaktuk, NT	In person
November 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2022	Rankin Inlet, NU	Cancelled due to weather
November 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Corner Brook, NL	In person

Across all communities, 220 participants registered for the community engagement events, with 180 registrants participating. Both virtual and in-person engagement sessions followed the same meeting agenda (Table 2), with minor adaptations to accommodate different venues and settings. During virtual sessions, participants were first invited to introduce themselves while in-person sessions commenced with a registration period including refreshments. Facilitators would introduce the purpose of the engagement session followed by a presentation from a University of Calgary researcher and a Q&A session lasting between 10 and 60 minutes. Cascade Projects facilitators would introduce key questions followed by a discussion. Though 20 minutes were allotted to this time, facilitators did not rigidly apply this limit to ensure participants had enough time to raise all issues they felt were relevant. Facilitators adapted to circumstances and were flexible regarding how closely the discussion adhered to the planned course of questions. In situations where

<sup>7</sup> Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut all require researchers to submit their project plans to a territorial oversight body for a review of methods, ethics protocols, and other details, with particular concern for research team interactions with Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous communities. The CNC Community Engagement Program obtained research licenses from all three territorial governments.

participants were critical of the concept or research, or had concerns and interests not directly tied to the planned session agenda, such flexibility was exhibited. This sometimes led to discussions not directly related to the research questions, but rather to the broader experiences with infrastructure, community development, governance, and natural resource development in the region. The goal was to not impose the research team’s assumptions on participants and to allow space for participants to lead the discussion according to their priorities.

**Table 2: Sample Engagement Agenda Structure.**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>Time Allocated</b>
Registration and Refreshments	10 mins
Getting Started – Overview and Introductions	15 mins
Understanding the CNC Research Program and the Concept – including Q&A.	25 mins
<b>STRETCH BREAK</b>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>Topic 1: Thinking about Connectivity – Your Needs and Priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the priorities for infrastructure planning and development in your community/region?</li> </ul>	20 mins
<b>Topic 2: Strengths and Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What challenges might keep your community/region from meeting its infrastructure needs or achieving its goals? What is working well?</li> </ul>	20 mins
<b>Topic 3: Potential Impacts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways do you think the Canadian Northern Corridor could impact your community/region and its needs?</li> </ul>	20 mins
<b>Reflection and Final Thoughts</b>	Remainder

Note: Meeting logistics were adjusted based on whether the engagement was virtual or in-person.

Each community session was attended by two research team members from the University of Calgary (a presenter and a notetaker) and two discussion facilitators from Cascade Projects. Following each individual engagement session, participants were invited to provide their feedback about the meeting via post-event surveys. Each community also had a dedicated page on the engagement program’s Bang the Table<sup>8</sup> site, where participants could access information about the research program and leave comments, raise concerns, and start discussions with the researchers and other community members. Community sites were left open for 30 to 60 days after the formal engagement session, and both session participants and community members unable to attend a session were invited to access and engage with their respective community pages. When research team members were able to travel to communities for the engagement sessions, they prepared field notes to help elaborate on and contextualize the issues raised by participants during engagement sessions. We use field observations to independently verify facts and offer contextual clarifications when necessary.

<sup>8</sup> Bang the Table, acquired by Granicus after the start of the engagement program, is an online engagement platform.

The research team also prepared back-to-community (BTC) reports, which summarized data collected during engagement sessions; these were then distributed to participants in each respective community. These were not shared publicly, although we had no control over the distribution of reports once they were delivered to community members; in fact, participants were encouraged to share their community's BTC report with other interested parties as they deemed appropriate. Sessions were not recorded; instead, one of the researchers was assigned the role of notetaker. In some cases, words, phrases, and statements by participants that were accurately captured by the notetaker are used in this report to preserve participants' voices.

The session and field notes were systematically categorized with the support of qualitative research data analysis software NVivo 12<sup>®</sup> to help extract key excerpts from the material and identify key themes. We now turn to summarising our results.

## **RESULTS SUMMARY**

Our community engagement research across mid- and northern Canada identified several infrastructure priorities (Table 3). We heard about many different needs and challenges, such as digital connectivity, housing quality, and access to clean drinking water and have summarized community needs into three broad areas: physical and digital connectivity; community well-being; and energy and water infrastructure. We also identified several cross-cutting factors that undermine communities' abilities to achieve their infrastructure priorities.

Participants routinely highlighted a lack of intergovernmental cooperation, which creates friction and competition for funding resources. In contrast, participants emphasized that collaborative processes across and between governments would be a more effective approach to addressing community and regional priorities. Furthermore, the current state of repair of some infrastructure assets, including housing and roads, creates safety issues for community members and commercial and tourist traffic. Many northern and remote communities still do not have access to internet speeds that meet the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's basic service requirement (50 Mbps download/10 Mbps upload with unlimited data), emphasizing the digital inequality experienced by many northern and rural residents.

Remote communities often struggle with a shortage of local skills and capacity, compounded by challenges in attracting and retaining new skilled residents. One factor that affects every aspect of infrastructure, both existing and future, is climate change and its consequences. Climate change adaptation, such as flood-mitigation programs, will be crucial to improving the resiliency of northern communities. Moreover, with many communities relying on imported fossil fuels, a certain level of energy autonomy (e.g., through locally generated renewable energy) would improve northern energy security and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to Canada's emissions-reduction goals (Government of Canada 2022a).



**Table 3: Infrastructure priorities across participating communities.**

<b>Infrastructure Priority Areas</b>		
<b>Physical and digital connectivity</b>	<b>Community well-being</b>	<b>Energy and environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital connectivity and broadband</li> <li>• Reliable mail services</li> <li>• Railways</li> <li>• Bridge maintenance</li> <li>• Marine transportation and ports (sea lift and river transportation)</li> <li>• Road safety</li> <li>• Air infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing quality and availability</li> <li>• Utility costs</li> <li>• Food security</li> <li>• Medical services, including mental health and addictions services</li> <li>• Education, including trades and post-secondary institutions</li> <li>• Human resources and capacity</li> <li>• Access to culture and maintenance of traditional practices</li> <li>• Traditional languages</li> <li>• Emergency response and search and resource (SAR)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean drinking water</li> <li>• Wastewater and sewage facilities</li> <li>• Clean energy (particularly in diesel-reliant communities)</li> <li>• Reliable power supply</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-cutting factors inhibiting or supporting priorities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure ownership and management</li> <li>• State of repair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (In)accessibility and remoteness</li> <li>• Skills and human capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change adaptation</li> <li>• Energy security and environmental sensitivity</li> </ul>

Although we began community discussions based on the premise of a northern corridor, conversations often centered around local community priorities and challenges related to community well-being, climate change, and the environmental consequences of natural resource and infrastructure development. Using these frames, we identified several key concerns and benefits from a potential northern corridor and infrastructure development more generally (Table 4).



**Table 4: Key concerns and potential benefits from infrastructure development in mid- and northern Canada**

Infrastructure development in mid- and northern Canada	
Key Concerns	Potential Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns regarding infrastructure development and its impact on wildlife, the boreal forest, permafrost, and aquatic ecosystems.</li> <li>• Infrastructure development for the benefit of the resource extraction sector, in particular oil and gas companies.</li> <li>• Cascading effects of infrastructure development (such as a road) and resulting commercial activities (logging, mining, etc.).</li> <li>• Negative experiences with past infrastructure development (benefits were promised but never reached communities).</li> <li>• History of broken promises and a general lack of trust resulting from Canada’s settler-colonial history and the treatment of Indigenous Peoples.</li> <li>• Loss of traditional ways of life due to accessibility; influx of alcohol and drugs into communities with consequences for the social well-being of community members.</li> <li>• Infrastructure development that doesn’t meet the needs of communities.</li> <li>• Increased connectivity places a strain on local services and resources, such as housing.</li> <li>• Losing community life and cultural values including language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamlined ecological footprint with a multi-modal corridor approach.</li> <li>• Improved road and cellular communications make travel between communities safer.</li> <li>• Skill and labour retention and decrease of ‘brain drain’ in communities.</li> <li>• Improved access to services (e.g., healthcare, employment, education).</li> <li>• Maintenance of close connections between communities and safeguarding cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Economic growth through commercial activities (i.e., tourism and exports of goods).</li> <li>• Attracting new businesses.</li> <li>• Potential lower costs of living due to improved accessibility.</li> <li>• Improving local and regional resilience (e.g., food security).</li> <li>• Integrity of supply chains.</li> <li>• Increase in Canada’s international competitiveness.</li> <li>• Canada as a strategic actor in the Arctic.</li> <li>• Increase in competition for shippers/haulers leading to lower transportation costs.</li> </ul>

In addition to the practical challenges related to potential corridor development, such as financing and engineering, participants across all communities indicated reservations regarding infrastructure development that would mostly serve the private sector. Indigenous participants in particular spoke at length about the effect of previous infrastructure and resource developments in their communities and voiced concerns about the negative effects of a potential CNC on the environment and their traditional land use.

While some participants were not directly opposed to development that would also secure access to critical services such as adequate housing, healthcare, and education, they indicated that development should be done *“in the right way,”* which means adequate consultation processes and the participation and flexibility of Indigenous rightsholders to propose their own initiatives within their communities. However, to become project proponents, community members acknowledged the need for more support to increase their own capacity.

## WHAT WE HEARD

This section details the conversations that occurred during the eighteen community engagement sessions. We keep our interpretation and analysis of the data to a minimum with the goal of retaining as many of the participant's own words, phrases, and expressions as possible. Capturing a broad range of perspectives and voices was a key motivator in the Community Engagement Program and we have chosen to maximize the inclusion of participant contributions in this report. Our summary and discussion of the issues raised by participants and implications for policy can be found starting on page 58.

### 1. INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS, DEFICITS, AND PRIORITIES IN NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

Participants identified several key gaps in existing local, regional, and national infrastructure that they perceived as negatively impacting the quality of life and economic viability of their communities. These deficits include both physical infrastructure, such as communications networks and road access, and soft infrastructure, including healthcare and educational resources. In this section, we discuss the following: *Communications Infrastructure*, including internet and cellular connectivity and mail delivery; *Transportation Infrastructure*, divided into *Roads, Rail, and Bridges*, and *Air Travel, Marine Transportation, and Ice Roads*; *Housing Quality and Availability*; and *Soft Infrastructure and Access to Services*, including healthcare and educational resources.

#### Communications Infrastructure

The quality, availability, and accessibility of communications infrastructure — including internet access, cellular coverage, and mail services — were matters of concern in all 18 communities; in particular, access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet. Even in more urban and developed towns and regions (e.g., Thunder Bay or Whitehorse), internet quality was frequently described as poor and unreliable, with slow speeds detrimentally affecting households, businesses, and governments alike. One participant in Timmins described how even local municipal council meetings require two simultaneous connections — one telephone and one internet — to ensure a consistent connection for attendees. In Grande Prairie, the local Chamber of Commerce had planned an event (unrelated to the CNC Research Program) to take place virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic but changed it to an in-person event due to poor internet connectivity in the area. Participants in the virtual sessions were frequently unable to use their cameras due to a lack of internet capacity. Speed was also an issue. This was the case for both more remote communities and those not far from larger towns and cities; participants from these peripheral areas reported experiencing vastly inferior internet speed and quality compared to their larger urban neighbours.

In many communities, the cost of internet services continues to rise while quality and speed remain poor. The cost to communities of connecting their residents to high-speed internet services can be prohibitively high even where they are theoretically accessible. For example, there is already a trunk line for fiberoptic internet in northern British Columbia

and there are plans for one through the Northwest Passage<sup>9</sup> but communities in the Peace Region and on the Arctic Coast cannot necessarily afford to build the links needed to connect their residents to these mainlines. Satellite internet is a potential alternative, but the cost can be too high for many households and less expensive alternatives like landline-based connections offer inferior service. Where households are unable to afford internet access at all, they may rely on institutional access, such as through schools and libraries. However, many communities lack public institutions such as libraries, and schools are only accessible to students. Unforeseen circumstances may restrict access for students. One participant in Tuktoyaktuk described their daughter's dependence on her phone to attend lessons and complete homework during COVID-related school closures. The participant had to repeatedly top up the daughter's internet plan, which quickly added up, with \$20 buying less than an hour's access.

Where communities do have reasonable connectivity, outages can be common; participants attributed this in part to the absence of redundancies in key infrastructure. For example, many communities' connectivity in Yukon relies on a single fibreoptic line which runs along the Alaska Highway; damage to this line, which is a routine occurrence, can mean extensive outages in both Yukon and northern BC. Satellite outages in places like Kugluktuk are also common.

Participants described the consequences of this lack of access to high-speed and -quality internet. Slow, poor quality, or non-existent internet connections can prevent community members from accessing online educational, training, and employment opportunities, forcing them to either forgo those opportunities or to leave their communities to access them. This presents not only an additional cost barrier, but also separates individuals from their families and support systems, something described as particularly difficult for young Indigenous people: “. . . *young people have a hard time being away from family and community and also adapting to the South.*” Similarly, government services have been increasingly moved online, leaving those without reliable internet unable to access them. The lack of high-speed access makes attracting and retaining both businesses and new residents difficult, affecting economic development. Some participants described the sense of isolation that can come with not being able to connect with the outside world, or even with the rest of one's province or territory. Ensuring reliable and equitable access to online educational and employment opportunities could keep people who want to stay in their communities over the long term. Instead, there is a growing digital divide between communities and households that can access high-speed internet and its attendant opportunities and services and those that cannot.

Most communities that reported experiencing poor internet access also deal with poor, or absent, cellular coverage. This was described as not only an inconvenience, but as a serious safety issue in regions where communities are connected by long stretches of remote highway with no cellular service. These roads typically lack amenities or services including gas stations, rest stops, or pay phones, putting road users at risk of not being able to contact emergency services in case of accidents. In Thompson, some community members shared that they felt compelled to purchase signal boosters or other tools that allow them to retain service on greater stretches of highway, but this can be a significant expense.

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<sup>9</sup> Participants spoke of the undersea fibre-optic cable as already being in existence. However, this section appears to be the third phase of a three-phase project by Alaska-based telecommunications company Quintillion to connect Alaskan communities on the Arctic Ocean to both Asia and Europe.

Low population density and remoteness were acknowledged as reasons for poor internet and cellular service. Participants also blamed telecommunications monopolies and lack of investment by both business and government. Internet service providers may be uninterested in building or expanding telecommunication infrastructure in regions with small potential customer bases and a low potential return on investment. Participants felt that large service providers often talk about expanding their services to more remote and rural regions when seeking government support, but then fail to follow through, while government fails to hold them accountable. Many argued that expanding digital communications infrastructure would require focused intervention and investment on the part of government due to the lack of financial incentive for the private sector to do so.

Participants also discussed the reliability and cost of mail services, particularly for remote and fly-in communities. Mail may be delayed days, or even weeks, depending on weather and aircraft status. In places where many residents are dependent on government support, delays in the mail can leave people unable to pay bills or buy groceries. In Kugluktuk, one session attendee said that local elders are supposed to receive cheques from their territorial association at the beginning of each month; however, in October, when the community session took place, cheques had not been received until the 19<sup>th</sup>. Delays in receiving this money can leave elders unable to pay for expenses like groceries and utilities. Residents in remote and northern communities are charged the same rates for things like express services as those in southern communities but receive inferior service in terms of delivery times and guarantees. As one participant shared, *“we don’t get the service, but we pay the same rates.”*

## **Transportation Infrastructure**

Existing transportation infrastructure is failing to meet the social and economic needs of many communities we spoke with. This was the case even for relatively accessible communities, including Kenora, Fort St. John, and Thunder Bay, all situated along major highways. For more remote communities, poor transportation infrastructure was described as reducing access to services, the attraction and retention of residents and businesses, and, in some cases, the future viability of the communities.

### **Roads, Rail, and Bridges**

Discussions on the state of existing road networks focused on two key concerns: quality and quantity. Even major routes and highways, such as Highway 16 in northern BC or parts of the Trans-Canada highway in northern Ontario and on the island of Newfoundland, were routinely described as being in *“terrible”* condition and chronically in need of repair. More rural routes frequently remain unpaved, and sections of paved routes are often in poor condition; one participant in Manitoba described the region’s rural roads as being *“like a camel’s back.”* Routine maintenance is often neglected, whether due to lack of interest or resources. Long stretches of remote highway are, more often than not, devoid of services such as rest stops, gas stations, or a cellular signal. Session participants described an eight-hour stretch between Thunder Bay and Winnipeg without a single pull-out or truck stop outside of a settlement, which makes the drive particularly perilous in the wintertime for both commercial truckers and other travellers. Participants in Thompson and Fort St. John described similar conditions in their regions.

Major regional routes, such as Highway 97 in central and northern BC and Highway 101 in northern Ontario, were described as lacking basic safety features such as paved shoulders or dividers. The absence of passing lanes was felt to make some major routes unsuitable for industrial traffic or large transport trailers, which nevertheless must navigate them. At the time of the research team's visit, there was a petition<sup>10</sup> circulating in Thompson to bring attention to the dangers and shortcomings of Highway 6, which connects the community to Winnipeg and southern Manitoba. The highway's lack of features such as passing lanes, rumble strips, rest stops, cell service and winter maintenance is contributing to high rates of accidents and deaths. Thompson's own MLA, Danielle Adams, died in an accident along this route in December 2021 (Peters and Blunt 2021).

In rural and remote regions, where many of the communities we spoke with are located, travellers share narrow, poorly maintained roads with industrial traffic such as logging trucks and mining equipment. Not only are there safety consequences of these conditions, but these vehicles are particularly hard on road surfaces, increasing maintenance costs. At the same time, many local and regional roads have been built specifically to accommodate resource projects and are the only roads available to local residents in a given region. In Île-a-la-Croise, community members described one of the consequences of this circumstance: when resource operations shut down, road maintenance ceases and roads may be decommissioned, leaving residents to navigate increasingly decaying and dangerous routes. This dependence on resource extraction projects to create road networks was described in Labrador as well.<sup>11</sup>

The quantity of roads and extent of existing road networks were also discussed in several communities. More specifically, community members consistently cited a lack of redundancy in existing transportation networks as leading to connectivity issues, even for communities on major highways. Many communities rely on the integrity of a single highway or rail line to stay connected to surrounding communities or to access services and markets in southern regions and cities. A similar lack of redundancy in river crossings (i.e., bridges) routinely results in transportation and supply-chain interruptions: bridge closures due to accidents or weather-related damage can result in long delays. Participants provided a number of examples, including the 2019 to 2020 Chuckegg Creek Wildfire that cut off the only paved route between Alberta and the Northwest Territories; the 2021 British Columbia floods that damaged rail infrastructure and resulted in empty grocery shelves in many northern communities; a 2016 closure of the Trans-Canada bridge over the Nipigon River in Ontario, which required travellers to reroute through the United States; and, perhaps most famously, the eighteen-month shutdown of the rail line to Churchill following severe spring flooding in early 2017. In Kenora, a participant described the 2022 flooding that cut off Red Lake and its neighbouring communities as requiring impractical detours; one such detour involved travelling down a railbed (by what means was unclear).

In Thunder Bay, Ontario, participants pointed out that, while the city sits along the Trans-Canada Highway, there are few to no alternative routes in the case of a highway closure. This means that a heavy snowfall or serious accident can “cut [the community] off from one

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<sup>10</sup> Closed in summer 2022, the final petition included more than 5,500 signatures and included an incomplete list of accidents and deaths on the highway (Redman 2022).

<sup>11</sup> Or, as one participant noted, for royal visits, giving rise to a local joke that the Queen needed to come back for another visit so the province would finish paving the roads.

*side of the country*". Route 97, the main artery between northern and southern BC, similarly lacks alternative, parallel routes. More concerning to participants, Kenora, Ontario sits at a pinch point on the Trans-Canada Highway. There are no alternative routes north or south of the community, a lack of redundancy that can effectively cut the country in half in the event of a closure, which community members described as routine due to accidents, wildfire, and severe winter weather.

Rail transportation of goods and people was discussed in many communities, both those with and without rail lines. Rail was seen as an appealing alternative to dependence on car travel and potentially a more efficient way of transporting goods. Participants cited the lower environmental impacts of rail travel and the potential for passenger rail as an alternative to expensive air travel. It would also provide an alternative for those who do not own personal vehicles. However, access to rail services is limited: of the eighteen communities we spoke with, passenger rail services are only available in two: Prince Rupert and Churchill.<sup>12</sup> Rail infrastructure is present in other communities — in fact, most we spoke with had some kind of existing rail line and several had previously had access to passenger services — but is presently only available for freight operations.

Participants described problems of capacity, expense, and redundancy with those freight operations. As with roads and highways, there is a lack of redundancy in freight lines, resulting in routine bottlenecks and delaying goods' shipment; this can have particularly negative effects on industries like mining, which are largely dependent on rail transportation. In Chibougamau, participants noted how the region's limited rail infrastructure is causing significant inefficiencies<sup>13</sup> in exporting mining outputs from northern Quebec, undermining potential profitability. Accidents or damage to the line can mean significant shipping delays. Similarly, a fire on a bridge over the Peace River near Latornell, Alberta in October 2022 shut down rail traffic for nearly a week. Capacity issues also persist in Fort St. John, where participants described how a shortage of available rail cars on the main freight route through northern BC limits the quantity of goods that can be imported to and exported from the region. In Thunder Bay, one participant compared the minimal rail options available in northern regions to the density of trains and routes in southern Ontario and eastern Quebec.

Since Greyhound Canada closed its operations in 2021,<sup>14</sup> many communities have also lost access to bus services. Where new private services have emerged or expanded to fill the gap, ticket costs can still put bus travel out of reach. These circumstances perpetuate the need for private vehicle ownership. Those who are unable to afford a vehicle must rely on alternatives like hitchhiking, a high-risk activity, particularly in remote areas like northern BC and Ontario. Many participants acknowledged that low population density and long distances between communities in most northern regions deter private companies from investing in mass transit in these regions.

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<sup>12</sup> Kenora and Timmins are both within about an hour's drive from the nearest passenger depot (Redditt and Foleyet stations, respectively).

<sup>13</sup> Participants did not elaborate on the nature of these inefficiencies.

<sup>14</sup> A limited number of cross-border bus routes still operate in Ontario, Quebec, and BC (Greyhound n.d.).



## Air Travel, Marine Transportation, and Ice Roads

While most communities we visited do have access to year-round ground transportation options — paved or all-weather gravel roads, or rail — several rely heavily or completely on alternatives such as air and water transportation, and all were in regions where neighbouring communities were similarly dependent. For example, while High Level, AB is well connected by paved highways, several communities in the region, such as Fox Lake, rely on ice roads in the winter and boat transportation in the summer months. However, during shoulder seasons, when ice bridges are not yet stable and the river isn't open enough for watercraft, it can be challenging to bring essentials like groceries and medications into the community. Furthermore, winter and ice roads generally have short seasons — in northern Ontario, for example, the useful season of such routes may only be six or eight weeks — and the effects of climate change are making seasons less predictable and routes less reliable.<sup>15</sup>

Other communities described being heavily dependent on barges, ferries, and other watercraft for the transportation of both goods and people. Hay River, NWT is a key supply point for communities further north in the territory that depend on barge shipments during the open-water season to keep their residents supplied with necessities. However, the territory does not have the financial capacity to routinely dredge the river<sup>16</sup> which raises the risk of the waterway becoming unnavigable during low water levels. Participants expressed worry that as climate change brings warmer summers and changes to precipitation patterns, this may become more common. Low water levels are already affecting communities elsewhere: a participant in Timmins described how a community in northeastern Ontario that used to rely on barge shipments has not been able to receive any shipments for the past ten years due to dropping water levels along the barge's route. Arctic communities dependent on sealifts and barge shipments also depend on having a long enough season of open water for ships to safely make the trip.<sup>17</sup>

In Corner Brook, NL, participants described their reliance on inefficient marine transportation for the distribution of goods amongst the island's communities. Foodstuffs typically arrive in Newfoundland at Port aux Basques, and then are sent overland to St. John's for processing and redistribution. As a result, goods are brought "*through the longest route possible*". Many goods would pass through Corner Brook on their way to the warehouse and distribution center in St. John's before being shipped back to Corner Brook. This has obvious consequences for price, availability, and freshness. Participants attributed this to a lack of land-based trade routes across the island including the closure of the island railway, which shut down in the 1980s. This loss has also affected the island's agricultural sector: "*so much of our agriculture has gone fallow because, when we lost the train, it's become much harder to get our goods to market*".

On Quebec's North Shore, poor connections between the region's ports and highways are perceived as limiting potential economic activities in the area. There are currently three active ports in the region — Saguenay, Trois-Rivières, and Sept-Îles, all Canadian Port

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<sup>15</sup> For a discussion on the decreasing ice-road season in northern Ontario, see CBC News (2023).

<sup>16</sup> Dredging was previously funded by the federal government (Williams 2022).

<sup>17</sup> Timely sealifts also depend on extended periods of good weather, predictable open water seasons, and the conditions in communities where shipments originate. For example, missed barge deliveries in 2021 were attributed in part to flooding in Hay River and Inuvik (Blake 2022).



Authorities<sup>18</sup> — but the North Shore’s main highway connecting these ports, Route 138, does not cover the entire coast region. Participants in Sept-Îles felt that this lack of land-based transportation infrastructure is undermining the region’s economic potential and inhibiting its import and export capabilities. Expanding ground-based transportation infrastructure would likely involve the construction of several bridges to connect coastal communities, but there is a perception that government is reluctant to undertake such projects. Participants pointed to the expensive bridges connecting Prince Edward Island and the Île d’Orléans, QC, to the mainland, regions that were perceived to be of higher value due to their tourist appeal. However, despite reportedly high public support, there is still no bridge across the Saguenay River. Such a bridge would better connect both the North Shore, as well as northeastern Quebec and Labrador, to the rest of the country.

A community member in Thompson pointed out that, while the roads in the region might be in bad condition, at least a road meant that you could, theoretically, reach a remote, road-connected community for the cost of gas. With no road, the only option may be to fly. However, airfare costs are high, particularly from more remote and northern areas, placing air travel out of reach for many northern residents. Corner Brook residents reported paying as much as \$1,000 to travel between the island and mainland Labrador, while participants in Churchill observed that it can be less expensive to fly to Europe from most parts of Canada than to fly to Churchill. The cost, or absence, of transportation options to some remote communities can result in individuals becoming stranded: people who travel to larger centres seeking services or employment find they are unable to return home. As anecdotal evidence, a participant from Thunder Bay described the case of an individual who was transported to a hospital in Winnipeg as a result of a medical emergency. Upon discharge, the individual had no financial resources to return to Thunder Bay, as they had been transported from Ontario to Manitoba without their personal effects, including their wallet. A lack of support services can mean a disproportionate number of these regional migrants end up unhoused in their new communities.

A loss of routes to rural and remote communities has also resulted in higher costs of travel: in Labrador, a person used to be able to fly from Nain in northern Labrador to Kuujjuaq on Quebec’s North Coast a couple of times per week. Now, one would have to fly from Nain to Happy Valley-Goose Bay to Halifax to Montreal, and then to Kuujjuaq. Far-flung Inuit communities are often connected to each other by family, and barriers to travel between them have social, cultural, and economic consequences. Many participants attributed both the loss of routes and the high costs of remaining routes to limited competition within the Canadian aviation industry and the consequent monopolization by a small number of airlines following deregulation in the 1980s. A participant in Happy Valley-Goose Bay described this as having cost the Canadian North “*mega, mega bucks*”. A reliance on air transportation as a means of shipping essential goods, the only way of transporting goods to roadless communities when sealifts and barges are unavailable, perpetuates the high costs of groceries and other basic goods in northern communities.

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<sup>18</sup> Canadian Port Authorities are established by the federal minister of transport but operate as arms-length, self-supporting bodies. Not all ports in Canada operate as port authorities (Transport Canada 2020).

## Housing quality and availability

Many participants connected the quality and availability of housing in their communities to both the current state of local and regional infrastructure as well as future infrastructure development. In both larger communities and small towns, participants routinely described a lack of affordable housing and its negative effects on local social and economic development. In High Level, for example, participants pointed to a lack of housing as a limiting factor on the community's ability to both attract new workers and retain newcomers. In Kenora, session attendees described how a lack of housing options means the city is unable to retain medical professionals, eroding the region's healthcare services. They shared anecdotes of nurses recruited to the community who left soon after arriving due to their inability to find housing. One attendee shared that they had met someone working in a local care home who was living in the care home themselves for lack of an alternative. In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, one person shared that for many young people from the region's remote Inuit communities, leaving home for an education or employment opportunities can mean never returning, as there would be no place for them to live.

When housing is available, the cost can be prohibitive; even in Arctic communities, rental costs can rival those in large cities. In Tuktoyaktuk, participants described monthly housing costs of anywhere from \$500 to over \$2000; the cost of utilities, including heating oil, can add additional thousands of dollars a month. Attendees in Tuktoyaktuk shared stories of local elders using their own limited funds to support their children and grandchildren's households; conversely, other elders reported struggling to afford their household costs but being reluctant to ask their families for help. While government-subsidized housing can help some residents, there are not enough subsidized units to meet local needs. At the same time, new, market-priced units are being built in the community; however, these units are typically out of reach for locals who already struggle to afford housing.

Participants described the quality of available housing as inadequate, particularly but not exclusively in remote communities. This was attributed in large part to the use of designs and materials intended for more southern climates; the rigours of a northern climate can wear these materials out much faster, increasing the cost of maintaining homes in northern communities.<sup>19</sup> In Churchill, participants described how many local homes had been built during the 1970s according to southern standards, and how community members are now stuck trying to maintain these homes without access to appropriate materials. One participant related how they hadn't had hot water in their home for several months in the fall and winter because they were unable to acquire the parts needed to fix the problem. Limited, or non-existent, road access was also cited as an obstacle to both home construction and maintenance; reliance on ice and unpaved roads, with respective seasonal and weight limitations, can restrict both the transportation of home-building supplies as well as the size and amount of modular housing that can be brought into remote communities. A lack of local homebuilders and pools of skilled labour in smaller and more remote communities was also described as an impediment to expanding the housing stock.

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<sup>19</sup> In a report entitled "Sick of Waiting," former MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq showcases the abysmal living conditions of many residents in Nunavut (Qaqqaq 2021).

## Soft infrastructure and access to goods and services

The high cost of goods and poor access to services were common topics of discussion amongst all participating communities. For more remote communities dependent on barge shipments and sealifts in the summer and air transportation for goods and people the rest of the year, the cost of basic goods like food and clothing can be exorbitant. The cost of groceries is compounded by a wide-spread paucity of local food production, making these communities dependent on imported fresh and packaged foods.

For many communities, the supply chain ensuring needed goods arrive in a predictable and timely manner is fragile: weather affects when and whether air or marine shipments occur, and serious disruptions to road or rail can mean extended periods of suspended shipments. In northern BC, participants pointed to the serious flooding in the southwest of the province in 2021, severing supply lines to northern communities and resulting in bare grocery shelves. In Corner Brook, sailings delayed due to weather can quickly mean shortages there and on the rest of the island. For the most remote communities, the consequences can be particularly drastic. For example, when the rail line connecting Churchill, MB to the rest of the country was damaged by floods in 2017, goods had to instead be brought into the community by air and ice road for eighteen months. This reduced availability and increased prices of goods, constituting a serious financial burden for residents, some of whom were forced to leave the community permanently as a result.

Participants in most communities also described poor, and often diminishing, access to medical services. Participants from Prince Rupert to Corner Brook reported having to travel to larger communities for even basic, primary care, while one participant in Happy Valley-Goose Bay shared how they were “so sick” of people asking who their doctor is, as they, like so many community members, could not maintain one (“no one stays. They’re here for a year and then they leave”). Many session attendees felt that existing local healthcare services are quickly being eroded by communities’ inability to attract and retain medical professionals, something in which infrastructure deficiencies were felt to play a large role: housing shortages, high cost of living, and the difficulty and expense involved in travelling to and from many remote and rural communities make it difficult to entice new residents. Professionals, such as doctors, nurses, and teachers, who leave to pursue other opportunities are hard to attract back to northern communities, increasing the deficit in healthcare services and resources.

Attendees also recounted their perception of deliberate and increased centralization of medical services by provincial governments, concentrating even basic services in regional centres like Terrace, BC and cities like St. John’s; poor transportation infrastructure between communities can make accessing these services challenging. For more remote communities, air travel might be the only way to access medical care of any kind, which can be expensive and leave patients in difficult circumstances without access to their support network. While patients may be flown out at the expense of the public healthcare system, depending on the seriousness of their needs, family members are not. A session attendee in Happy Valley-Goose Bay shared that their grandchild had been born seven weeks early and that, while the child was flown to St. John’s for treatment, his parents had to organize and pay for their own travel to join him. There is also poor support for out-of-town hospital patients once they’re discharged: participants shared anecdotes about patients being left

to find their own way back to their communities after treatment. The lack of healthcare resources extended to an absence, or insufficiency of, mental health and addiction services.

Educational resources were frequently described as deficient, particularly opportunities for post-secondary education. Limited local opportunities paired with limited access to online learning platforms due to poor internet connectivity means that community members either have to forgo post-secondary training or education, reducing their economic opportunities, or must leave their communities, families, and social support systems. Due to reduced employment opportunities back home, many young people who leave to pursue their education elsewhere never return to their home communities, undermining the local labour force and resulting in a diminishing pool of skilled labour needed to support local development. One participant in High Level thought that expanded educational options in the community would give young residents *“a reason...to be educated, to be engaged in the work force, and to stay home”*.

Overall, participants described large gaps in both transportation and communications infrastructure; issues with housing, cost of living, and service access were described as being both a result and consequence of these deficits. Unreliable or absent travel infrastructure was described as a barrier to attracting new business and investment and as a limiting factor on local and regional economic opportunities. Transportation issues were also described as a problem for attracting and retaining new residents and limiting the capacity of existing residents to access and maintain employment. One participant in High Level described many of their region’s potential assets, including its residents, as *“stranded resources”* trapped by poor infrastructure. In Alberta and Ontario, participants felt that better connective infrastructure would be necessary to maintain the viability of smaller rural and remote communities.

Participants largely attributed current infrastructure issues to a severe lack of financial resources and government indifference. Many stated that the nature of infrastructure funding, particularly from the federal government, is competitive, pitting smaller communities against cities in a zero-sum game in which rural communities and regions lose out due to their low population densities and the perceived lower priority given to rural regions by governments and policymakers. This sentiment is illustrated by an anecdote from Thompson where a participant described meeting with the provincial minister of infrastructure. During this meeting, the need for improvements such as rest stops to the region’s major artery, Highway 6, was brushed off as being a matter for the private sector rather than government. Given the dependence of so many northern Manitoba residents on the highway, this was seen as a dismissal of the region’s safety needs and efforts to attract business and tourism to northern communities.

## **2. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS FACED BY NORTHERN COMMUNITIES**

In addition to identifying current infrastructure gaps in their communities and regions, participants discussed several barriers and challenges affecting maintenance and integrity of existing infrastructure as well as any future potential corridor or infrastructure development. Challenges are the issues and problems currently or persistently facing a community while barriers are factors inhibiting or undermining a community’s ability

to address their stated challenges. In this section, we discuss geographical challenges, including remoteness and the cost of infrastructure maintenance in northern climates; and demographic and human resource challenges, such as the lack of skilled local labour. We also detail issues of northern alienation raised by participants, including discussions of social and political marginalization, the exploitation of northern resources, and southern policymakers' poor understanding of northern needs. The section finishes with participant perspectives on government as a barrier to desired northern development.

### **Geographical challenges**

Participants often pointed to geography when discussing challenges to infrastructure maintenance, expansion, and development. Long distances between communities, and between communities and major urban centres, make travel and transportation expensive for vehicle owners and businesses. Residents without access to private vehicles are often left with no options, limiting their ability to access services or travel safely. Small populations spread over large regions offer poor potential returns on investment for the private sector, and geographic isolation can make northern communities a hard sell to new residents.

Participants outlined the elevated cost of building and maintaining infrastructure, from roads to housing, in northern regions; one High Level attendee working in municipal development estimated that northern municipalities must allocate 30 to 40 percent more funds to equivalent infrastructure compared to their southern counterparts. This is due to the cost of importing building materials, alongside the sometimes extreme seasonal and diurnal freeze-thaw cycles that can result in significant wear on materials like concrete and asphalt. As we describe in the preceding section, building materials designed for long-term wear in southern Canada can wear out in the North in only a few years, increasing the cost of building maintenance.

A shortage of local expertise and labour means that communities often must import southern contractors and workers to execute new projects; these transient workers may not have a good understanding of the demands of building in a northern setting. For example, participants in Churchill used the newly constructed Marine Observatory<sup>20</sup> as a clear illustration of this issue. The observatory building was built close to the shore of Hudson Bay; this is an exposed site where the building is subject to particularly harsh conditions. The new road leading to the observatory was built in a location, and in such a way, that it easily accumulates snow drifts; the building's pipes run under the Churchill River and remain frozen until late spring. As a result, proposed scientific research contracts have been turned down due to the observatory building being unusable. Southern contractors may also not account for the demands of a northern climate on their own equipment, resulting in cold-dead batteries, cold-thickened oil, and plastic parts made brittle and breakable by the cold. Any inevitable equipment failure means waiting for parts and expertise to arrive from the south.

Local and regional geography can also determine how, whether, and in what direction development is possible. Increasingly unstable permafrost is already undermining connective infrastructure and structures in the Arctic with implications for future

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<sup>20</sup> The Churchill Marine Observatory was established by the University of Manitoba to support and facilitate researcher access to Arctic and marine ecosystems, including Canada's only Arctic deep-water port (University of Manitoba 2023).

development. One participant in Kugluktuk shared that train infrastructure could be an ideal alternative to road development in the territory but conceded that much of the land might be already too unstable for that to be a viable option. In Yukon, participants pointed to places in the territory where roads are being converted back to gravel (from being paved), as this is easier to maintain when the ground becomes unstable. In more remote communities, such as Tuktoyaktuk and Churchill, waste management is complicated by both frozen soil and the cost of exporting waste out of the communities over long distances.

### **Demographic and human resources challenges**

One of the most common challenges facing communities we spoke with was that of attracting and retaining new residents and workers. Attracting new community members from southern regions to northern communities is challenging given the relatively high cost of living (particularly in more remote regions) and the comparative lack of amenities such as high-speed internet. A lack of job opportunities also discourages southern migrants and may impact the ability of a household to stay in a northern community long term: people may be reluctant to move to, or stay in, a community if their spouse is unable to find employment, even if they themselves are gainfully employed. Residents may also leave to pursue educational or employment opportunities and decline, or be unable, to return.

A participant in Timmins shared that the inability to attract or retain the “right” people can mean either hiring the “wrong” people, i.e., those underqualified for the job, or leaving jobs vacant for long periods. This was seen as a particular issue for the municipal and mining sectors in the region. This lack of local capacity is paralleled by a corresponding deficit in community members able to take on other necessary roles in the community, such as unpaid work with non-profits and charity organizations. Existing residents end up taking on “*five different hats*,” performing multiple formal and informal jobs in the absence of sufficient human capital, which can lead to burn-out amongst the community’s most active and capable members.

There is also the issue of transient workers. Where local capacity or expertise is unavailable, communities may have to import professionals and workers from elsewhere. However, participants felt that such people rarely stayed in the community long term and so did not contribute to local capacity-building. This was particularly an issue in natural resource communities, where resource projects typically bring in large numbers of temporary workers to supplement local labour during development and construction phases. While these projects can bring significant amounts of money into a region’s communities, some participants felt that they could also negatively affect longer-term development by monopolizing local resources and labour and increasing crime rates.

### **Northern exclusion and alienation**

Across the communities we spoke with, participants consistently expressed feelings of being ignored, marginalized, and misunderstood by southern Canada and by decision-makers largely based in southern Canadian cities. Participants discussed numerous challenges relating specifically to these perceived defects in the relationship between north and south.



### Poor understanding of northern needs

Many participants felt that neither the federal government nor their respective provincial governments<sup>21</sup> have a good understanding of the needs and priorities of northern communities or an appreciation of the unique challenges of living in the north. They ascribed this to a generally poor understanding of northern life on the part of the southern Canadians, whom they see as dominating governing bodies. Aspects of living in northern regions that participants felt are poorly appreciated by southern residents include their diminished access to goods and services, the high cost of living, the high costs of gas and heating oil, severe winters, the long distance between communities, a lack of educational opportunities, and even a lack of options to leave towns. One participant in High Level described southern residents having “42 ways of getting anywhere,” while many northern communities lack even a single year-round, ground-based route out of town. Participants from Quebec to BC to the Northwest Territories felt that “the South doesn’t understand the needs of northerners.”; a participant in Timmins opined that “southern Ontario probably thinks we all live in igloos.” Worse, some felt that southerners are actively hostile to northern interests: one attendee in Fort St. John described how northerners are sometimes dismissed as “a bunch of rednecks voting Conservative,” despite northern regions being the source of the resources — including energy — that support southern cities. The result of this is that some participants in the provinces felt that they have more in common with their counterparts in the territories than those in the southern parts of their own provinces.

A limited understanding of northern Canada was attributed to both lack of interest and lack of information; one participant in High Level pointed to the poor quality of data generally available on northern regions, singling out Statistics Canada in particular for its “deplorable” data quality. This has compelled some regions to collect and collate their own data, such as the 2021 State of the Region Report compiled by the Alberta Northwest Species at Risk Committee covering Clear Hills County, the County of Northern Lights and Mackenzie County (Alberta Northwest Species at Risk Committee 2021). Lack of data regarding population density and housing costs were two areas where a lack of high-quality data was cited as preventing infrastructure development and investment. Poor data can also undermine northern policy creation, though this was also blamed on a qualitative disconnect between northern Canadians and southern policymakers. For example, in Churchill, participants pointed to federal regulations that require watercraft to maintain a certain distance from beluga whales; however, this was considered to be an unrealistic standard in a place where whales are readily attracted to boats. As one attendee shared, “as soon as you put your boat in the water, the whales come.” In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, a participant pointed to how they could no longer hunt geese in the spring; they conceded that communities were unlikely to starve without the goose hunt but stressed that it’s an important part of local culture.

Ultimately, many participants felt that policies designed by governments based in the southern parts of the country are imposed on northern communities, regardless of whether they’re appropriate, and that policymakers are failing to consult with, and listen to, stakeholders and experts who live in the North, instead relying on southern models and assumptions. This results in northerners trying to “fit square pegs in round holes — we have

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<sup>21</sup> Participants in the territories generally spoke more of a disconnect between their regions and the federal government rather than between the southern and northern parts of the territories themselves.



to *MacGyver* [policy].” A “one glove fits all” approach was described as at best ineffective and at worst damaging. What is needed instead are regulations that are sensitive and appropriate to northern communities’ geography and day-to-day reality.

### **Marginalization of northern interests**

Many participants felt that the geographical isolation of their communities was mirrored by an isolation from political and policy decisions made in provincial and territorial capitals largely located in the southern regions of their respective jurisdictions. In Ontario communities, southern Ontario — home to both the provincial and national capitals — was perceived as the provincial seat of power, and it was felt that northern Ontario in general “gets forgotten by both Toronto and Ottawa.” Participants felt that their communities’ needs go unheeded by the provincial government and that decisions made by Queen’s Park<sup>22</sup> reflect “what’s good for southern Ontario” without consideration for more northern and remote regions. These feelings were echoed in northern Alberta, where participants expressed frustration at the perceived political dominance of Edmonton and Calgary at the expense of other communities: “When [people] hear about Alberta, they think Calgary. But what about us?” In Manitoba, one participant described Winnipeg<sup>23</sup> as “the enemy of the North,” and others agreed that the provincial government appears uninterested in either the problems or potential of northern Manitoba. “There’s no immediate concern for the North” on the part of politicians and policymakers; for them, “Manitoba only exists at the perimeter of Winnipeg.”

Northern needs and priorities were often seen as being dismissed by southern decision-makers. In Whitehorse, one participant pointed out that a recent major Rogers Communications outage in southern Canada<sup>24</sup> resulted in a CRTC inquest; in northern communities, outages are routine, but are just dismissed as being part of living in the North. In Tuktoyaktuk, participants described how Sachs Harbour<sup>25</sup> missed out on its annual barge delivery of goods, something participants felt was at least in part due to the reliance of the territorial government — responsible for the planning and operation of barge deliveries — on advisors and organizers based in Hay River and Yellowknife rather than those living in the Arctic.<sup>26</sup> In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, session attendees shared how they felt that Newfoundland “looks down” on Labrador and doesn’t really consider it an equal part of the province. As a result, Labradoreans have “spent years hoping for something from those ignorant people down in the Confederation Building,”<sup>27</sup> but continue to have their priorities neglected.

Overall, northern voices, experiences, expertise, and needs were broadly felt to be dismissed or given lower priority than their southern counterparts; one participant in Whitehorse

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<sup>22</sup> Queen’s Park, Toronto is the seat of the Ontario provincial legislature; the term is often used to refer to the provincial government more generally.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Winnipeg’ is often used to refer broadly to Manitoba’s provincial government and policymakers.

<sup>24</sup> In July 2022, a nearly 12-hours internet and cellular outage impacted millions of Rogers customers across the country (Gilfillan 2022).

<sup>25</sup> Sachs Harbour is located on Banks Island in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. The missed delivery required goods to be shipped by air instead at significantly higher cost (Blake 2022; Ulrich 2022).

<sup>26</sup> The Northwest Territories minister of infrastructure, Diane Archie, reassured the community that goods would be flown in at no additional costs and without increasing the prices of the transported goods (CBC News 2022).

<sup>27</sup> The Confederation Building in St. John’s is the seat of Newfoundland and Labrador’s provincial legislature.

described a “southern hegemony” amongst Canada’s policy- and decision-makers, who treat northern communities and jurisdictions like “backwaters” to the rest of the country. As a result, the North continues to be left out of conversations about national policy despite “lip service” about northern inclusion. The same participant questioned, “what is it going to take for the rest of Canada to consider the North as part of the conversation?”

### Exploitation of northern resources

Many communities, particularly in natural resource regions, described feeling underappreciated by southern Canada for their contributions to the country’s economy. In northern BC, an attendee pointed out that the oil produced in the Peace Region<sup>28</sup> is a significant contributor to Canada’s wealth. Similarly, participants in Sept-Îles felt that their region contributes disproportionately to the provincial and national economies as the second-largest export region in Quebec, and yet only has 0.4 percent of the province’s population.<sup>29</sup> Despite the dependence of Quebec’s metropolitan regions — such as Montreal, Quebec City and Outaouais — on hydroelectricity produced in the North Shore region, participants felt residents in these cities often don’t understand, and so don’t appreciate, where their power comes from.

This is a common refrain we heard from many participant communities: that the North is seen as a site of wealth and resource extraction for the south, while relatively few benefits accrue to the residents of extractive regions. Participants in Chibougamau felt that southern Canada sees the North as a resource region, where investments may go to things like new dams while roads remain dangerous and difficult to navigate and infrastructure falls into disrepair. In northern Saskatchewan, participants in Île-a-la-Crosse pointed to the region’s persistent poverty despite being rich in natural resources; little, if any, of the income from natural resource exploitation, including forestry and mining, has made its way to the region’s First Nations and Métis communities. The forestry industry was singled out, with one attendee noting that despite the sector’s profitability in northern Saskatchewan, no one attending the community session had seen any benefits from the industry, and industry has made no meaningful investment in the region’s communities. Meanwhile, resource harvesting disrupts local trapping, hunting, and other traditional activities. Participants also felt that the lack of profit-sharing, keeping the region resource-rich but economically poor, ensured that the region and its residents remain vulnerable to outsiders looking to exploit northern Saskatchewan’s natural resources.

In Happy Valley-Goose Bay’s session, participants described a long history of outsiders exploiting Labrador’s natural resources. They pointed specifically to the region’s hydroelectricity projects, such as Churchill Falls, whose output is largely exported from the region even while many northern Labrador communities remain dependent on diesel generators for electricity. The project has “killed off Grand Falls,”<sup>30</sup> required the flooding of large tracts of forests and resulted in methylmercury contamination of surrounding waters (Anderson 2011). Mining projects such as that at Voisey’s Bay were also discussed for their failure to bring benefits to nearby communities or add any value to the copper and cobalt being extracted from the site. Participants connected the lack of revenue from resource

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<sup>28</sup> Fort St. John is located in this region in northeastern British Columbia

<sup>29</sup> This statement was provided by a participant, and the research team was unable to verify or refute its accuracy due to a lack of readily available intra-provincial trade data.

<sup>30</sup> An older name for Churchill Falls and one still favoured by some residents.

extraction being returned to Labrador communities with the region's infrastructure deficits and felt that Labrador's resources are being exploited for the benefit of southern interests — and companies — at the expense of the region's residents. One participant concluded that they were *"getting pissed off about the idea that the North exists to serve the South."* A participant in Kenora echoed this grievance, sharing that southern Ontario *"takes everything out of here and gives nothing back."* In Alberta, someone asserted that *"the North has been supplying the South with a lot of things,"* and that it's past time for northern communities to get their fair share of benefits.

### **Lack of investment in northern communities and regions**

Many communities felt that there persists a lack of investment on the part of government in infrastructure for northern regions and communities. Some participants contrasted spending on northern infrastructure with that spent in their provinces' southern regions. For example, in Fort St. John, participants pointed to the quality and quantity of highways on Vancouver Island in comparison to northern BC despite the less-significant economy of the former. In Grande Prairie, attendees described the investment in natural resource development around Edmonton, while the Grande Prairie region, home to large natural gas reserves, does not receive the same level of support. When northern regions do receive investment, it can sometimes be resented by those outside the region: in Sept-Îles, participants shared that the construction of Route 138 along portions of the North Shore resulted in complaints from people elsewhere in Quebec, who felt that the road's price tag was excessive for the number of people it would serve.

When money does go to northern regions, it is often drastically insufficient relative to the need, as southern decision-makers routinely fail to recognize the increased cost of infrastructure construction and maintenance in the North. Participants also pointed to a lack of appreciation for the size of many northern regions and municipalities and the corresponding size of investment needed to effectively connect communities. Attendees saw reluctance on the part of government to invest in their regions, which was having a knock-on effect of undermining potential future infrastructure development or investment by private businesses. After discussing the region's infrastructure deficits and the difficulty of addressing them, one participant in Whitehorse opined that things were in such poor shape that the region was *"not even at the level that southern money would look at this place as somewhere to invest."*

### **The role of government in perpetuating and reinforcing identified challenges**

Participants identified several ways in which they felt that governments — provincial, territorial, and federal — are standing in the way of local and regional interests and efforts to achieve identified development goals.

#### **Government as an obstacle to development**

In many cases, participants saw existing government policies and processes as significant obstacles to desired development, especially when it comes to interjurisdictional collaboration. A participant in High Level shared the following example: the communities of Beaver River First Nation, located approximately 50 km from High Level, received federal funding for a water treatment plant but did not receive corresponding funding to repair or

replace the Nation's water cisterns, which were reducing water quality. Mackenzie County supported the plan that the funds for a water treatment plant be redirected to link the Nation's communities to Mackenzie County's existing distribution system. However, the federal government would only approve funds for the treatment plant. Conversely, the province would provide funding for a distribution system, but only if there was an extended boil-water advisory. These circumstances combined to prevent the County and the First Nation from collaborating on an effective solution to the latter's inability to access potable drinking water.

This participant offered the above example in the context of the current efforts of another First Nation, Tallcree, to receive water services, a process described as being similarly stifled by jurisdictional issues between federal and provincial governments. In one instance, there was a successful collaboration between a municipality and a First Nation, wherein High Level's drinking water infrastructure was expanded to nearby Dene Thá communities. However, this was accomplished through grant money from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) rather than funding from a Canadian government or agency. A similar expansion of sewage infrastructure is now needed, but no programs currently exist that would allow the municipality and the First Nation to jointly fund this project. This participant explained that *"we work with our neighbour"* but sometimes *"government gets in the way."*

Whitehorse participants also described interjurisdictional issues, and the specific failure of the federal government to facilitate interjurisdictional collaboration. Whitehorse is currently facing the possibility of losing its current tidewater access in Skagway, Alaska. Yukon has previously relied on this access to export ore; however, Skagway is in the process of decommissioning its port in favour of serving more cruise ship traffic and moving its ore terminal to Haines. Despite discussions between the territorial government and the port to find a solution, none has yet been found. Participants felt that, given the importance of maintaining the territory's tidewater access, federal and state officials should be taking a more active role in discussions rather than *"leaving Whitehorse to handle it on its own."*

In Labrador, participants described a provincial government that is bureaucratic, slow-moving, and lacking a culture of innovation. All these factors undermine local and regional development goals. Past experiences with development in the province show a repeated failure on the part of the provincial government to start, but not complete, major projects, while still leaving behind significant environmental damage. One participant pointed to the fragmented and siloed nature of government portfolios, which can both inhibit collaboration across jurisdictions and undermine communications between government and communities. In Kenora, participants felt that the municipality's persistent focus on tourism is undercutting local social and economic development. In Thompson, an attendee employed in education described how a great deal of work has gone into expanding educational access in the region and bringing opportunities and resources to the same level as those available further south, but that efforts have been *"limited by the dinosaurs in Winnipeg."*

In Tuktoyaktuk, participants felt that governments are failing to hold construction companies accountable for local infrastructure projects that run over time and budget. For example, session attendees pointed to a new addition to the local high school which has been in progress since 2018 and is still nowhere near completion; local housing projects were routinely subject to similar delays. While participants criticized contractors for their

lack of reliability, the government was faulted for failing to enforce the timelines of contracted projects. Participants also questioned governments' ability to respond to emergency situations while consistently failing to act proactively to address issues before they become urgent. One person pointed to how quickly the federal government had acted to mobilize funding and resources for Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees and couldn't understand why it seemed necessary to wait for something bad to happen before addressing concerns on home soil.

### **Representation and funding**

Many participants described feeling like they and their communities lack a meaningful voice in both provincial/territorial and federal governments, attributing this to insufficient representation. Small populations were seen as the main reason for this, particularly where those populations are spread over large areas.<sup>31</sup> Rural and remote communities were seen as having little voting power and as having their interests routinely dismissed in favour of more populated regions. One participant in Thunder Bay described the community as effectively not having a voice in Toronto and that the region's lack of representation in Queen's Park is its "*biggest political disadvantage.*" Participants in Timmins felt that governments are more likely to put money into communities and regions that will help them retain seats, and that having a representative in the ruling party will get a community more attention and access to funds. In Grande Prairie, participants felt that the concentration of votes in Calgary and Edmonton have resulted in a lack of rural voices in provincial policymaking. Elsewhere, session attendees felt like these circumstances are being aggravated by poor relationships between constituents and their representatives: in Tuktoyaktuk, participants complained that the community's MLA had yet to visit or hold a public meeting in Tuktoyaktuk or any other community in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region they represent.

As funding for local and regional development comes principally through provincial and territorial governments, a lack of voice at this level of government, and poor relationships between constituents and representatives, can seriously affect potential development: "*they are the ones with the power and authority to find money for different projects . . . they're holding back progress for smaller communities*" shared a participant in Tuktoyaktuk. Larger projects may also require federal support. For example, one participant in Sept-Îles, in describing the possibility of linking the North Shore region by road to Labrador, pointed out that the region itself simply does not have the resources or "*political clout*" to pursue such a large-scale project on its own.

In Grande Prairie, participants agreed that rural and northern municipalities and regions typically lack the financial resources needed to act on behalf of their own interests; without meaningful representation, those interests become neglected. In Tuktoyaktuk, participants felt that, despite communities' best efforts to communicate their needs to government, their voices are still not being heard or respected, and that "*whenever we bring [issues] up, we get tossed under the table.*" Participants in Churchill suggested that small communities, particularly those in remote areas, need someone to help the community navigate and work with different levels of government and to manage government bureaucracy: "*We need someone who can help us speak on the same level as the government.*" This resource would better enable communities to speak on their own behalf and be heard by policymakers and

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<sup>31</sup> For example, Mackenzie County, where High Level is located, is the largest county in Canada at almost 80,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

politicians. When funds are made available, there are often strings attached: an attendee in Whitehorse described the position of the federal government as “*our way or the highway*,” resulting in inefficiencies and misdirected funds.

### 3. PERSPECTIVES ON INDIGENOUS PRIORITIES, DEVELOPMENT, AND CAPACITY

In this section, we cover issues described as being unique to or disproportionately affecting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. The main issues discussed by participants include racism, the legacies of past development, perspectives on future potential development, and development capacities within and between Indigenous communities.

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and participants routinely mentioned that all the issues raised during the community sessions — poor connective infrastructure, lack of access to key services, the exploitation of resources without shared benefit, interjurisdictional roadblocks, etc. — are experienced with greater severity by Indigenous communities. For First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, lack of access to educational, employment, and healthcare resources was described as particularly acute. As an example, in Thompson and Timmins, participants described how residents of the region’s remote First Nations communities migrate to larger centres in search of educational and employment opportunities as well as services such as healthcare. However, even these larger communities are often lacking in the kind of supportive resources needed by these newcomers, who then become more vulnerable to homelessness, violence, and substance abuse. A lack of affordable transportation options can also prevent them from returning to their home communities. Thus, while all residents of these communities suffer from poor access to services, Indigenous Peoples suffer the greatest consequences.

In Timmins, participants also felt that the local police do not always demonstrate a good understanding of the circumstances that can lead to homelessness and substance abuse, and often resort to cookie-cutter approaches that do nothing to address root causes. Participants did not feel that available services and processes to handle local social issues properly consider the community’s northern context, which includes a large Indigenous population with unique and unaddressed needs. In several communities, participants also pointed to the specific vulnerability of Indigenous women and girls, including a lack of affordable transportation and housing, and of resource development operations with their associated transient labour and man camps. Participants pointed to racism, the legacies of past development, and a lack of local capacity as issues that disproportionately and negatively affect Indigenous communities and individuals.

#### Racism

Some participants spoke explicitly about the racism experienced by Indigenous communities and individuals. In discussing the disproportionate burden of social ills borne by the First Nations residents of the community, participants in Timmins attributed this in no small part to issues of systemic racism. Racism was described as an “*underlying issue*” in Timmins and one that residents were failing to “*own*” and talk about. One participant described the failure of the settler<sup>32</sup> community to engage with issues of racism against

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<sup>32</sup> This was the term used routinely by participants, and so we also use it to refer to non-Indigenous communities and governments.



Indigenous Peoples and how the same community remained poorly educated about Canada's history of colonialism and trauma faced by Indigenous Peoples, e.g., treatment by the federal government. This participant expressed that both systemic racism and the reluctance to confront it remain a significant barrier to collaboration between settler and Indigenous communities on priorities such as social programs and local infrastructure.

In Kenora, one participant noted that while the municipality focuses on tourism as a key driver of the local economy, little attention is paid to the even more significant economic contribution of the money flowing into Kenora from the 12 First Nations communities in the region. They described how difficult it can be to be a First Nations consumer in Kenora due to persistent racism. They shared that when the Wabaseemoong First Nation north of Kenora was experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak early in the pandemic, members of the Nation were denied service in Kenora, and rumours were spread about members spitting on groceries. Racism in the area remains *"rampant,"* but without First Nations money, *"Kenora would be in trouble."*

### **The legacy of development**

Communities like Île-a-la-Crosse described how a history of natural resource exploitation in northern Saskatchewan has done little to nothing to enrich the region's Métis and First Nations communities. Previous waves of development in the region have not only failed to benefit Indigenous communities but have actively harmed them. As an example, participants described the loss of language amongst the region's communities, including their own. One participant shared that *"Most of us [here] have some capacity to speak, but those younger, they don't have that. Before the road went in, [and] industry came, everyone was fluent. It's cultural genocide."* This experience was credited as one of the reasons for the high amount of distrust amongst Indigenous Peoples when it comes to new projects and a feeling that Indigenous communities are considered a barrier for project proponents to overcome: *"we're merely in the way of what they're trying to achieve, while the corporate world [decides] what's good for us."*

In Thompson, participants discussed instances, both historic and contemporary, wherein settler governments have made promises to, or agreements with, First Nations governments or communities but failed to follow through or act according to either the spirit or the letter of a given agreement. For example, agreements exist recognizing the existence and use of traditional territories in northern Manitoba, but associated obligations have not been fulfilled. A prime instance of this was Article 6 of the 1977 Northern Flood Agreement, created to compensate First Nations in northern Manitoba who lost communities, sacred sites, and hunting, fishing, and trapping territories following the construction of the Churchill River diversion. Article 6 of the agreement guarantees clean drinking water to affected First Nations. Land transfer agreements have been made with government and industry, but foot-dragging by both actors has led to delays, and First Nations communities in Manitoba continue to miss out on development opportunities and economic activity. The flooding required by new hydro projects also displaced First Nations communities. Given this experience, one participant asked, *"can you blame us for not trusting the government?"*



In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, participants described the lack of power that Indigenous communities often have when faced with unwanted development, citing the proposed expansion of the Baffinland development in Nunavut as an example.<sup>33</sup> Participants spoke of how governments will talk a lot about the importance of consultation with Indigenous Peoples, but that agreements always seem to come out in the government's favour. One participant at this session described how a local women's centre had warned of the potential negative social consequences of the Muskrat Falls<sup>34</sup> project and how their warnings had proved prescient. They then questioned why other communities, particularly those on Labrador's remote north coast, would want to open themselves up to the potential negative consequences of corridor development. In Kenora, participants shared another contemporary example of how Indigenous communities are left out of decisions about development and land use. CP Rail returned a piece of land to a partnership of First Nations and the City of Kenora. The city still holds this land — Tunnel Island — in trust due to a lack of agreement on a shared vision, leaving it in developmental limbo (University of Manitoba Natural Resources Institute n.d.). However, when it was suggested that the land just be completely given back to First Nations, *"that didn't go over well,"* with people questioning what First Nations would then do with the land and opining that they *"didn't want it to go to waste."*

In Timmins, session attendees expressed concern about potential incursion on traditional Indigenous territories and the involvement of Indigenous communities in potential corridor development. Participants described a poor local understanding of the meaning of treaties or the significance of being treaty people with a corresponding exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from discussions about development. One participant framed it as: *"[Indigenous] people are often not invited to the table. If they are, they're not heard. If they're heard, they're not in a place of influence."*

### **Attitudes towards future development**

Given the legacies of past development on Indigenous communities, questions regarding future development were approached with wariness by some participants. Given this experience, and the Canadian Northern Corridor Research Program's affiliation with the University of Calgary,<sup>35</sup> one participant in Kenora expressed concern that corridor development could just be another way of putting in more pipelines and expanding resource extraction operations. They noted that while a corridor might make sense from a geographical perspective, its development risked taking the historic approach of large infrastructure projects which have treated the land they're built on as *"empty land — no one lives there,"* resulting in the displacement of communities.

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<sup>33</sup> Baffinland Iron Mines proposed an expansion of its operations in Mary River, Nunavut. The expansion was heavily opposed by residents, and it was not given permission to proceed by the Nunavut Impact Review Board.

<sup>34</sup> Muskrat Falls is a hydroelectricity installation on the Lower Churchill River. The project has been highly criticized for poor oversight and insufficient testing of the economic assumptions used to justify its construction (LeBlanc 2020).

<sup>35</sup> Many participants strongly associated the University of Calgary with the oil and gas sector, resulting in a routine assumption that the research team would be biased in favour of the fossil fuel industry.

In Thompson, several participants expressed that local Nations may be interested in certain developments *“as long as our people are taken care of,”* and that development is pursued while keeping in mind that *“Mother Earth is dying.”* One participant described their Nation as being *“open for business,”* so long as their processes are respected, and the Nation and its members benefit from any development. However, within the same session, other participants remained distrustful of any potential development led by non-Indigenous governments or other outsiders, pointing out that First Nations have always gotten the *“shit end of the stick”* when it comes to development and dealing with settler governments.

Participants in Île-a-la-Crosse were similarly leery of any development plans brought in by outsiders and felt that corridor development seemed like just another potential project that would leave communities out of key discussions. They agreed that discussions about, and research into, economic development need to take place, particularly given the quantity of untapped natural wealth in northern Saskatchewan. Many participants clarified that there is interest in development in the region, but that development must take place on the terms of the region’s communities and prioritize local interests over those of outsiders. One participant shared that *“we’re coming out of a colonized context, and now those same people want to bring solutions that are going to harm us even more;”* however, *“we never get to be part of these discussions ... we need to be a part of it.”* A participant described the situation of needing development but being rightly concerned about potential effects as a catch-22: *“we want the jobs, we want that better life. But we want to stay intact as a people.”* Another attendee agreed that they want to see economic development for the benefit of the community’s children, but that they also need to see *“our language and our culture and our rights respected.”*

Ultimately, one issue all participating communities agreed upon was that corridor development would not be viable, either from a practical or an ethical perspective, without the participation of Indigenous communities. Most participants endorsed the necessity of Indigenous leadership in any potential corridor or large-scale infrastructure development. This is due to the fact that corridor development would take place on the traditional territories of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities,<sup>36</sup> and the potential negative consequences of development that would likely disproportionately affect Indigenous communities.

In High Level, participants were clear that any corridor development would require the participation and buy-in of the region’s Indigenous communities, as well as consideration of treaty rights and traditional land-use patterns. They stated that many Indigenous communities in Mackenzie County are working hard to maintain their cultural and linguistic heritages; if corridor development opens the area and new populations move in, particular attention and support would need to be given to cultural and social practices, such as language education in Indigenous communities, to ensure their survival.

In Whitehorse, participants described participation by Yukon First Nations as *“absolutely essential”* for any potential corridor development. Potential corridor routes would depend heavily on First Nations’ land-use plans and claims, though participants noted that involvement in a corridor project would be particularly important for those Nations

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<sup>36</sup> Some participants specifically referenced treaty territories, unceded territories, etc., while others described all of Canada as occupying ancestral Indigenous lands.

whose land claims have yet to be settled (an opinion echoed in other communities). Some of the potential negative social and economic effects of corridor development could also be mitigated by First Nations ownership of infrastructure, which would allow First Nations to have greater control over the pace of development and to manage projects according to their own communities' capacities. Ultimately, participants agreed that nothing could happen in Yukon without First Nations engagement and project co-development.

Participants in Fort St. John shared the ways in which First Nations and local or regional governments have successfully collaborated on some projects, including a partnership between the City of Fort St. John and Doig River First Nation to create an urban reserve within the city. Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments often still work separately, particularly on large projects such as land-use plans. However, participants felt that if they continue to work together on smaller issues and build trust between communities, then they will eventually be able to tackle bigger issues together. In this context, Indigenous participation in a corridor project is non-negotiable; as one participant said, *"I hope that goes without saying nowadays."* Participants emphasized that it would be key that Indigenous governments are not treated as additional stakeholders in a corridor project, but as rightsholders and decision-makers on the same level as non-Indigenous governments.

### **Developmental capacities**

Though participants were in agreement about the necessity of First Nations', Métis, and Inuit engagement in a corridor development process, there were also serious concerns regarding the capacity of Indigenous communities to be involved and to advocate on behalf of their own interests. Many Indigenous communities face the same issues when it comes to infrastructure maintenance and development as non-Indigenous communities, often with the added challenges of greater remoteness and, in the case of First Nations, limitations on how reserve lands can be developed. One participant in Timmins described how, for First Nations in particular, the operation of existing infrastructure networks and the potential for expansion are limited by federal government processes and restrictions on development on reserve and Crown lands. For example, winter roads must be planned for up to a year ahead of use, but the federal funding schedule doesn't always align with affected communities' needs and priorities. And for First Nations communities facing a deficit of reserve lands, efforts to access Crown lands are hampered by red tape; processes for infrastructure development on both reserve and Crown lands can take five years or longer.

In Thompson, participants described how the differences between First Nations and Métis relationships with the federal government affect potential development. First Nation reserves are considered Crown land, and so are subject to federal processes and restrictions. In contrast, Métis communities<sup>37</sup> operate like municipalities and land can be owned outright, allowing greater freedom to develop community lands and access larger and more diverse funding streams. Participants felt that this difference has contributed to the significant economic discrepancies between First Nations and Métis communities in their region. Participants also acknowledged that First Nations in different provinces and territories may have greater practical authority over their lands than others. Participants

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<sup>37</sup> Métis settlements are a form of local government unique to Alberta. There are geographical communities elsewhere that may be predominantly Métis or who identify their communities as Métis communities, but they do not have status outside of their province's municipal governance frameworks.

in Thompson pointed to the Sahtu and Tłı̄cho First Nations in the Northwest Territories as examples of Nations that have been able to stand against unwanted development like dam-building and hydraulic fracturing for oil and natural gas.

Conversely, a participant in Île-a-la-Crosse noted that there are discrepancies between how First Nations and Métis are able to make their voices heard. They felt that First Nations hold a greater amount of leverage when it comes to negotiating with the federal government due to their treaty rights, and that Métis communities “*should have the same negotiating power as anyone else in Saskatchewan.*” They argued Métis need to receive greater recognition and be major players in future development. Another participant added that many Indigenous communities, particularly Métis communities such as *Île-a-la-Crosse*, are still struggling to understand and assert their Section 35 rights.<sup>38</sup>

Participants in Île-a-la-Crosse spoke extensively about the lack of capacity in the First Nations and Métis communities of northern Saskatchewan. They described a need for community empowerment and to create spaces and capacity for collaboration amongst communities because “*Indigenous People [and] citizens of the North have to come together and maximize what we get [out of development].*” This will require increased involvement of northern Saskatchewan’s Indigenous communities and their residents in political decision-making and in discussions about development in the region. Participants felt that in order to be able to discuss something like corridor development in any meaningful way, the Indigenous communities of northern Saskatchewan first need the resources and opportunity to have conversations amongst themselves about potential development.

However, this capacity — to have communities meet and discuss priorities, concerns, and processes — is currently missing. One participant described how northern Saskatchewan is simultaneously resource-rich and economically poor, making the region vulnerable to outsiders looking to exploit its natural resources, while its communities “*don’t even have the time to talk amongst ourselves, to come up with our own strategies and solutions to our own issues.*” Opening the region to further development, which participants worried corridor development would do, will only cause communal harm if communities don’t have the resources available to voice their perspectives and priorities.

One participant expressed that to meaningfully engage in the consultation processes that would come with development, and for Indigenous rights-based groups to counterbalance the influence of interest-based groups (such as project proponents), the region’s communities need to “*get together and get our ducks in a row*” before projects proponents arrive and start pushing their own agendas through. They stressed the importance of communities’ ability to consult with each other without the interference of outside bodies and interests. These opportunities must be made available to communities “*before we can even talk about the feasibility of things like [a corridor].*”

The difficulty is that “*nobody is willing to sponsor these conversations here.*” Participants suggested that any further engagement on infrastructure development (including any future discussions about potential corridor development) must include support for community conversations independent of any formal engagement with researchers or consultants. This could also include sponsoring independent experts (i.e., independent of

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<sup>38</sup> Section 35 of the *Constitution Act (1982)* recognizes and affirms the rights and status of Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Government of Canada 2021a).

any research team, project proponent, etc.) to ensure participating communities have the necessary tools to assert their perspectives and argue for their rights and interests. For example, one participant asserted that communities have to find ways to protect themselves and their interests, which in Western society usually means making legal agreements. As an economically poor region, communities in northern Saskatchewan don't typically have the legal resources needed to defend themselves against powerful outside interests. Without appropriate support, communities and their interests *"are going to be displaced by people with better English and better lawyers."*

Another attendee suggested that there should be support provided to communities to train their own experts (i.e., through support for education and training), who could then act as communities' lawyers, lead environmental assessments, etc. Someone else described having the opportunity to *"develop our own visionary model,"* which would require developing communities' capacities, and doing so soon: *"we don't want to be left behind, developing a model while they're breaking ground in northern Saskatchewan."* Similarly, another participant stated, *"We know this is coming, so help us get ready and help us protect what's left of our society."* These concerns about capacity were echoed in other communities, though not discussed as thoroughly. For example, in Tuktoyaktuk, participants were clear that their community could not and should not have to pursue its social and economic development goals on its own. They noted funding and capacity-building support are needed and necessary for meaningful discussions and collaboration between communities and different levels of government.

Elsewhere, some participants felt that the potential for Indigenous communities to speak and act on their own behalf are being actively undermined. For example, in Thompson participants felt that settler-colonial procedures, such as non-Indigenous governments granting hunting permits on traditional territories without discussion or consultation with First Nations, undermined the Nations' authority and their rights to manage their own land. One participant described the federal government as intent on keeping First Nations as wards of the state despite the latter's interest in independence and self-government. In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, participants described how non-Indigenous governments often seemed to pit Labrador's Indigenous groups<sup>39</sup> against each other to undermine potential unity and continue to exploit the land. Attendees felt that pulling the three main groups together to work towards their mutual interests could have an immeasurable impact on the region's future development: *"Labrador would be laughing. I just can't imagine what would happen if we could get these groups to agree."*

#### **4. INTEREST IN AND CONCERNS ABOUT POTENTIAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT**

While many participants described clear potential benefits from corridor development, there was also a great deal of caution and skepticism, often within the same community. Even participants and communities who expressed enthusiasm about the potential for large-scale corridor or infrastructure development shared several important concerns regarding development processes and the management of local and regional impacts. Below we describe participants' positive perspectives emphasizing the potentially beneficial aspects of corridor and infrastructure development; negative perspectives

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<sup>39</sup> The main Indigenous groups in Labrador are the Inuit, the Innu, and the NunatuKavummiut. The NunatuKavummiut, or Southern Inuit, do not have federal status.

reflecting key concerns and potential issues that may come with large-scale development; and what would need to be addressed for communities to support successful corridor development.

## **Positive perspectives on corridor development**

### **Environmental**

Participants felt that there were aspects of corridor development that would address environmental concerns. Consolidating multiple forms of linear infrastructure into a streamlined footprint could reduce the ecological footprint of infrastructure development and preserve both agricultural lands and wildlife habitats. The potential for restored or expanded rail networks would reduce transportation emissions and have a more modest environmental impact than expanding road networks.

### **Connectivity**

Many participants centered on ideas of connectivity when considering how corridor development might benefit their communities. Improved road and cellular communications infrastructure would make it easier to move about a given region and would also make travel safer for residents, tourists, and commercial traffic. Participants also saw improved connectivity as a way of keeping more residents in their communities and preventing brain-drain. In Thunder Bay, participants suggested that improved internet connectivity and reliable access to affordable air travel could support the growth of the local knowledge economy. Specifically, Thunder Bay's proximity to Toronto by air, combined with the growing popularity of remote work, could allow more residents to live in Thunder Bay while maintaining employment in southern Ontario. Community members in Corner Brook felt that a corridor, or network of corridors, that better connects central Newfoundland and supports development in rural communities would help preserve shrinking communities by increasing access to economic and educational opportunities and thereby retaining more residents, particularly young residents. One participant added that *"the quality of life is incredibly attractive in Newfoundland and Labrador . . . but they have to have the right amount of connectivity."*

Participants in more remote communities, such as Kugluktuk, raised the potential for improved access to air travel. Specifically, they agreed that more affordable airfare and improved routing would enable easier travel to southern centres for healthcare, employment, education, and other services and opportunities, and would allow for more travel between the territory's communities. Being able to maintain close connections with family and community is of crucial social and cultural importance, particularly for the territory's Inuit residents. Corridor development could support better connections between remote and northern communities in other regions as well, contributing to better regional connectivity.

Improved transportation infrastructure linking rural and remote communities to more populated regions could also encourage more people to visit or even move to those communities. In Sept-Îles, participants felt that if more people had the opportunity to see what the North Shore region has to offer and see what kind of life can be had there —



that *“il y a un vie à faire là”*<sup>40</sup> — then the region could experience needed population growth. Increased tourist access was discussed in many communities, including Thunder Bay, Kenora, and High Level. In Prince Rupert, participants suggested that the community could, with appropriate support, become a stop for cruise ships. Amongst other things, this could help boost the market for locally caught seafood, which is currently largely exported.

Other communities also discussed the potential for new avenues of economic growth that could come with appropriate corridor and infrastructure development. In High Level, participants recounted Mackenzie County’s status as an agricultural area and suggested that improved transportation infrastructure could allow the region to expand domestic and international agricultural exports. They also argued that greater government investment in the region’s infrastructure via corridor development could create an incentive for more investment by the private sector. This idea was echoed in Kenora where participants remarked on the likelihood of improved infrastructure encouraging more developers and manufacturers to move into the area, and the reduced costs that could come with more efficient transportation of goods could also foster greater diversification in the local economy by encouraging new businesses to establish themselves in the region.

In Chibougamau, participants described how limited rail infrastructure is holding back the region’s mining sector. Improved transportation infrastructure would increase the efficiency and profitability of existing nickel operations and encourage interest in the region’s other metals and strategic minerals, creating greater export opportunities. In Hay River, participants noted that better connections to places like Fort McMurray and upgraded rail infrastructure could facilitate more efficient transportation of products like grain and potash to southern Canada, while improved energy infrastructure could connect the Northwest Territories to the continental power grid and bring desired natural gas north from High Level.

In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, one resident suggested that focusing on the development of a corridor for communications infrastructure would be both beneficial to, and popular with, Labradorians. They asserted the value of supporting and fostering certain media that could take advantage of expanded infrastructure — namely, radio — describing how good media and a strong communications network can be a strong social glue, particularly in a region where the population is spread over such a large area. The participant shared how they used to listen to Kahnawake radio<sup>41</sup> while living in Montreal and how members of Kahnawake First Nation had told them how valuable it was for the community to be able to maintain their own radio station and newspaper. The participant pointed out that, while many people will argue that radio isn’t that important now, given what’s available via the internet, not everyone has internet access, and illiteracy remains a significant issue in Labrador. More localized communications networks would also support the dissemination of important information, such as impending development projects, and might allow for greater connections between northern communities within and outside of Labrador. Increased connectivity could support regional unity and enable communities to *“better stand up to the South and not be overrun by developments we don’t want.”*

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<sup>40</sup> “There is a life to be made there.”

<sup>41</sup> K103.7 is a community radio station owned and operated by the Mohawk community of Kahnawake near Montreal.



Many participants felt that the increased connectivity and new economic opportunities that could accompany corridor development could have the overall effect of improving the quality of life in northern and remote communities. Greater connectivity could lower the cost of living by making the transport of goods easier and more efficient, and a lower cost of living could act as an incentive for retaining existing residents and attracting new ones. Corridor development could support much-needed economic diversification and bring services, including education and healthcare, in the North to parity with those available in the south. More transportation options, including passenger rail, could reduce car dependency and facilitate travel between communities, supporting important social and cultural linkages and making it easier for community members who leave to stay in contact with family and community support systems.

### **Resiliency and security**

The idea of corridor development as a potential factor in building local and regional resiliency in the North was a common topic of discussion, with a specific focus on agriculture and food security. As we describe above, communities such as High Level noted their regions' existing agricultural capacities and suggested that corridor development could enhance these, allowing them to play a greater role in *"feeding the North."* The re-establishment of previously existing transportation infrastructure, such as the railway in Newfoundland, could reinvigorate flagging agricultural sectors. Some places, like Labrador, were described as having great but untapped agricultural potential. New transportation networks, and enhanced redundancy in existing ones, would support food security by ensuring the integrity of supply chains. For example, in Corner Brook, participants described the island supply-chain's reliance on a single major port in St. John's. That port was described as having minimal capacity for expansion due to spatial constraints; to keep Newfoundland an attractive and viable place to live, a greater network of ports — for example, in Corner Brook, Marystown, Argentia and Long Harbour — will be needed.

Elsewhere, participants suggested that corridor development could foster economic diversification, allowing many communities and regions to reduce their dependency on extractive resource cycles and stabilize local economies. At the same time, where natural resource extraction remains desirable or necessary, corridor development could help build greater security and resiliency into transportation routes. In Thunder Bay, one participant gave the example of Enbridge's Line 5, which currently transports large volumes of crude oil and natural gas liquids from Western to Eastern Canada. However, the line runs through the US,<sup>42</sup> raising concerns about energy security and the potential for the US to close the line. To illustrate this danger, the participant described recent issues regarding the section of pipeline that runs under the Straits of Mackinac.<sup>43</sup> A pipeline through northwestern Ontario would help address these concerns.

Corridor development was also described as potentially fostering security in both an international and more local context. In Grande Prairie, participants saw value in corridor development as part of the large-scale, strategic infrastructure needed by the country to stay internationally competitive. In Kugluktuk, participants felt that it would be to

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<sup>42</sup> Enbridge's system exits Canada in southern Manitoba, where Line 5 then runs through Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan before reconnecting with facilities in Sarnia, Ontario.

<sup>43</sup> As of early 2023, the state of Michigan was engaged in a lawsuit with Enbridge to have Line 5 closed due to safety concerns regarding the aging pipeline.

the benefit of the whole country to be concerned with northern infrastructure development given the recent focus on the strategic value of the Canadian Arctic: *“the Arctic is a strategic place, and you can’t have a strategic place without some level of infrastructure.”*

Participants in High Level described a different sort of security that could result from corridor development. They described how a national corridor vision would support the creation of a coherent regional development strategy; give residents the security of knowing what kind of development could happen and what wouldn’t be permitted; and consolidate the ecological footprint of infrastructure development, protecting the natural spaces that participants found such an appealing part of living in the North. They also described the appeal of planning for *“multiple generations.”*

## Negative perspectives on corridor development

### Environmental

Environmental concerns were common amongst the communities we spoke with. Many participants were worried about how corridor and infrastructure development would affect wildlife and wildlife habitat. The potential effects on caribou migration and calving grounds were specifically noted in Alberta, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and Ontario. Participants in Whitehorse described how the lack of active rail lines has limited the expansion of forestry operations in the territory to the benefit of the region’s caribou populations; corridor development that revives the use of Yukon’s railways could foster growth in the forestry sector and undermine the health of caribou herds. In Churchill, participants outlined the potential effect of port expansion on area whale populations. In Grande Prairie, attendees discussed how a corridor could provide an advantage to predators, negatively affecting prey species. A participant in Tuktoyaktuk gave the example of increased caribou harvesting seen along the territory’s ice roads and wondered what the effect of more all-season roads could be.

In Thompson, one participant described how their community<sup>44</sup> already has a recurring problem with southern hunters flying north to harvest *“massive”* numbers of caribou on the community’s traditional territories. Unlike the community, these hunters are not using the caribou as a food source, resulting in great waste, and amounting to what the participant described as theft of both a local food source and a cultural resource for First Nations communities in the region. A further concern is the potential effect of corridor development on the ability of northern residents to access country foods. Multiple communities shared how important hunting, trapping, foraging, and fishing are for meeting the nutritional needs of their members. As a participant in Churchill described, a visit to the local grocery store to see the cost of fresh food makes it clear why so many residents still rely on the land to feed their households. In addition, for Indigenous communities, access to traditional lands and the ability to access the plants and animals thereon has a critical cultural and social dimension that many worried would be threatened by corridor development.

Some participants also worried that corridor development would lead to the expansion of oil and gas infrastructure to the detriment of the environment; one participant in Churchill felt that the oil and gas industry would *“love to grab on”* to corridor development for its

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<sup>44</sup> This participant was from a remote community in northern Manitoba and had travelled to attend the session in Thompson.

own interests. Participants worried about the increased risk of oil spills and gas leaks that expanded infrastructure in remote and northern regions would bring. There was also concern about the potential for marine spills should oil be channelled through renewed port facilities. Another major concern was that corridor development would be focused on, or even encourage, increased natural resource extraction, exacerbating climate change and its accompanying destructive consequences. In Newfoundland, a region with a long history of mining operations, participants worried about impacts such as the deforestation that came with quarry development; one participant asked, *“how much more of the natural environment [will] be destroyed because of projects like this?”*

Finally, a participant in Kenora raised several practical environmental issues that could come with corridor development, including the potential for expanded transportation infrastructure encouraging more diffuse development. This could present an increased risk to life and property in regions vulnerable to wildfire. Moreover, low-density development would increase the existing challenges of service delivery, which the participant had already described as strained in their region. Expanding rail services in remote areas could itself increase the risk of wildfires where sparks from passing trains ignite nearby brush. Conversely, the herbicides used to keep tracks clear of brush come with their own set of problems, including environmental contamination and risks to human health. One attendee in High Level described a need for a *“balanced working landscape”* that balances development opportunities with strong environmental protections.

### **Past experiences with development**

In many communities, past experiences with large-scale infrastructure development made them wary of the prospect of corridor development. In several cases, communities had not seen the benefits of development promised by project proponents, developers, and operators. Specific examples participants gave were jobs and investment in local communities. In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, participants noted that mining projects such as Voisey’s Bay haven’t resulted in significant employment gains for Labradorians. In northern Manitoba, communities’ experience with Manitoba Hydro<sup>45</sup> made some participants leery of large-scale development. In Île-a-la-Crosse, attendees reported seeing little benefit from the large forestry and mining operations in their region. For example, when new mines were opened in the 1980s, the project proponents promised a certain number of local jobs. These initial jobs did materialize, but when substance abuse among workers<sup>46</sup> led to job losses, outsiders were brought in to support mine operations. Moreover, the legacy of addiction persists in the region, while communities lack resources such as treatment facilities to address it.

Participants in the Île-a-la-Crosse described a history of broken promises from industry in the region. Examples include investment in local communities that never meaningfully materialized, and Impact Benefit Agreements benefitting industry more than communities:

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<sup>45</sup> The Manitoba Hydro Churchill River Diversion involved flooding large swathes of northern Manitoba, resulting in loss of access to traditional territories and displacement of communities.

<sup>46</sup> The link between commercial resource extraction and its negative effects on the well-being of Indigenous communities has been investigated extensively across Canada (Booth and Skelton 2011; Brisbois et al. 2019; Mitchell 2019; Nightingale et al. 2017). Continuous settler-colonial practices that undermine traditional Indigenous cultures, languages, and practices, coupled with natural resource extraction, which contributes to rapid social and environmental changes, place communities and their well-being at an increased risk due to the influx and abuse of legal and illegal substances.

*“They’re like pimps, and anything that goes back to the community is based on crumbs from the profit.”* One attendee connected these broken promises with researcher questions during the engagement session about community needs, describing them as the same kind of questions they’d heard before from resource projects: *“What do you want — education, jobs, roads? Every industry has come in and said these things and not delivered.”*

Many participants were particularly concerned that corridor development would be primarily oriented towards natural resource exploitation rather than community interests. In Corner Brook, participants noted that mining and mineral extraction have historically driven development in Newfoundland without any long-term strategy for economic, social, or environmental sustainability. In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, attendees were concerned that if corridor development were to focus on the expansion of resource extraction activities, it would fail to address Labrador’s pressing social, economic, and environmental priorities. In Tuktoyaktuk, participants acknowledged that development in the region, including the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway, was primarily driven by interest in resource extraction rather than concern for community development: *“that road wasn’t built for us; it was built for our resources.”*

Communities were often concerned about the changes that could come with the expansion of “Roads to Resources”<sup>47</sup> in their regions. As we discuss above, expanded road networks come with significant negative environmental consequences. In Kugluktuk, participants described known issues that have come with new roads in the North, including the increased harvesting of caribou using ice roads around Yellowknife, road development in the Kivalliq region disrupting caribou movements, and the new social and cultural challenges the all-season road to Inuvik brought. In Tuktoyaktuk, participants shared that while the new highway has brought more tourism dollars to the community, it has yet to foster significant local development and has allowed for an easier flow of drugs and alcohol into the hamlet. Serious social issues, including a high suicide rate, have also persisted, leading participants to feel that the alleged benefits of increased connectivity had not materialized.

In Churchill, where many participants recalled the flooding and resulting community dislocations that have accompanied hydropower development in the province, one attendee described how *“we’ve been bounced around by inconsiderate industrial people.”* Another was concerned with development, whether of a corridor or specific infrastructure projects, being pushed through regardless of community consent or interest. They felt that, too often when people talk about bringing new things to Churchill, it rarely seems to be something that would be to the community’s benefit; large projects are taken up by decision-makers and others in positions of power while the community *“just gets crushed.”* One participant at the same session, who identified themselves as being a relative newcomer, described coming from a region that *“never says no”* to a mega-project and that has seen serious negative consequences from pursuing *“jobs for jobs’ sake”* without considering long-term social and environmental effects.

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<sup>47</sup> The “Road to Resources” was a program initiated in the 1950s by former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, framing his vision of a road to the Canadian Arctic (Kent 1982).

## Distrust

Previous experiences with infrastructure and natural resource development contributed to many participants' feelings of distrust and wariness towards potential corridor development. As we describe above, some participants questioned whether corridor development would be pursued with the goal of connecting communities or just to access new natural resource areas. Others wondered whether the corridor concept was a meaningful or effective way to address the priorities relevant to their communities and suggested that interest in, or endorsement, of corridor development would likely be politically motivated. One participant pointed to one of the major motivations behind building the railroad in Canada — concerns regarding American expansionism — and wondered if something similar was behind the contemporary corridor concept. In Kenora, an attendee felt that while a corridor might make sense from a geographical perspective, its development could risk repeating the country's historical approach to large infrastructure projects, which have treated the lands they are built across as “empty,” resulting in, among other things, violent displacement of communities.

Another Kenora participant asserted that existing corridor projects, such as those in China and Australia,<sup>48</sup> do not present an appealing precedent: “*China isn't a good example of what we should be doing [and] in Australia, there's been a lot of protest.*” They continued, sharing that, “*as a First Nations person . . . I'm skeptical and suspicious*” of potential corridor development and wondered, “*now what treaty right am I going to have to try and defend if this happens?*”, pointing to the success of local First Nations in protesting the proposed Energy East pipeline project and their experiences with Ontario Power Generation.<sup>49</sup> Ultimately, some participants felt that their feelings and concerns about development didn't really matter. A participant in Thompson expressed that “*the government's gonna [sic] do what the government's gonna do,*” and that projects like corridor development would happen regardless of affected communities' support or lack thereof. In Kenora, an attendee worried that corridor development would open the doors for future projects to circumvent or override local interests.

## Social issues

Participants expressed concerns about the negative social effects that corridor development and subsequent infrastructure construction could have on their communities. A key concern was the potential influx of new people, both new residents and transient labour. The increased connectivity that would accompany corridor and large-scale infrastructure development could bring new workers and residents, who could support local and regional development goals, to remote and northern communities. At the same time, participants were concerned that influxes of new residents would exacerbate already-tight real-estate markets and high home and rental prices, which would risk pushing out existing community members. Population growth, particularly over a relatively short period of time, would also put pressure on already stretched social, educational, and healthcare services; in Grande Prairie, one participant described how “*government is already trying desperately to raise service availability.*” Smaller communities would struggle even more

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<sup>48</sup> The participant did not clarify which project in Australia they were referring to; in the case of China, they were referring to the Belt and Road initiative, which involves international infrastructure investment by the Chinese state.

<sup>49</sup> First Nations groups in Ontario, alongside environmental NGOs, have criticized Ontario Power Generation's plans to dispose of nuclear waste on First Nations lands (Ontario Clean Air Alliance 2012; CBC News 2018).

to cope with new population growth; even where an increased population means more tax dollars, it takes time for those tax dollars to make their way into government coffers and for government in turn to expand services.

In Île-a-la-Crosse, participants expressed concern over the community being overwhelmed by newcomers following the economic opportunities that would arise with corridor development or other large-scale projects. This was echoed in others' concerns about losing certain highly valued aspects of their communities to rapid population growth. In Timmins, an attendee described the city as close-knit, "*where everyone knows each other,*" and worried about maintaining that closeness with immigration and demographic change. In Grande Prairie, one participant mused that a lot of small communities in the area like themselves the way they are and might not be interested in greater connectivity if it would change that. Participants in Churchill described a place where residents could leave their car keys in the ignition without concern for theft, and one whose remoteness is part of its appeal; greater connectivity could change the "*rhythm*" of the community and change the local culture, "*the things we find so special about Churchill.*" One attendee shared that the high level of trust between neighbours in the community was exactly why they had chosen to live in Churchill after having grown up in a large Canadian city.

While many communities acknowledged that they likely don't currently have the labour needed to support corridor and large-scale infrastructure development, they were uncomfortable with the idea of transient labour forces. Like new residents, temporary workers would increase pressure on healthcare, housing prices, and law enforcement. Many participants acknowledged the known issues surrounding man camps, including the increased presence and use of alcohol and drugs. They also raised concerns over the increased risk of crime, particularly crimes directed at women and girls and more specifically the dangers to Indigenous women and girls. Transient labour and man camps are issues that communities associated with natural resource operations — mining, forestry, and oil and gas — were particularly aware of, having first-hand knowledge of their effects. Some communities, including Prince Rupert and Kenora, felt that the need for man camps would be a deal-breaker for any future development.

In a related vein, many participants were concerned about the potential issues increased connectivity could bring beyond demographic changes, including easier access to drugs and alcohol; this concern was particularly acute for remote communities already struggling with widespread substance abuse issues. Some participants felt that greater access to previously remote communities would lead to increases in crime in general, and one participant pointed to the potential for increases in drug and human trafficking. In Kenora, participants worried about what increased tourist access would mean for communities already struggling with serious infrastructure deficits. In Prince Rupert, attendees expressed concern about how increased access to wilderness areas would affect local fish and wildlife. Many participants expressed that being able to 'get out in nature' was one of the appeals of living in remote and northern communities, and worried about how corridor and infrastructure development could reduce that access.



In Whitehorse, participants discussed how large-scale development can result in atypically large amounts of money flowing into communities unaccustomed to wealth, with corresponding social effects. Negative social effects were also associated with the end of these periods of increased economic activity when the flow of extra money stops. In this light, participants in Hay River asserted that an expansion of social services and access to healthcare needs to occur in tandem with corridor development, or the development of any major infrastructure. Economic opportunities will not be enough; workers, both new and amongst existing residents, need social support as well.

## **Other considerations regarding corridor development**

### **Conditions for achieving successful corridor and large-scale infrastructure development**

Participants discussed several conditions that they felt would have to be met in order to maximize the potential success of corridor development. Most communities agreed that a project of this scale would require a great deal of leadership by the federal government and buy-in from provincial and territorial governments; some participants were particularly skeptical about the possibility of the latter. Federal leadership would be particularly important in creating a shared, long-term strategy for corridor and infrastructure development to ensure, amongst other things, that routine changes to government do not derail development. This is because corridor development will require a long timeline and sustained support to be successful. Federal leadership will also be key to bringing together the varied interests of different stake- and rights-holders. As participants in Chibougamau noted, each new project has its own needs and priorities, and proponents will support infrastructure that specifically aligns with their particular needs, resulting in disconnected infrastructure planning and development. What this means is that corridor development cannot depend on private initiative or investment and must be led by government.

It will also require widespread acceptance and recognition that potential benefits will accrue to the whole country, not just the North. The “*buy-in*” of southern Canadians and “*southern taxpayers*” will be crucial; this could involve framing corridor development as something like a “*nation-building concept*” addressing the interests of all Canadians and being pursued in “*the name of the common good.*” Establishing a comprehensive, integrated, and national vision prior to execution would increase the kind of credibility required to complete such a large-scale project. In Chibougamau, participants felt that a key part of promoting corridor development would involve conducting extensive feasibility studies to measure and quantify the potential economic importance and impact of corridors. One attendee noted the need to demonstrate feasibility and to discuss and analyze foregone economic opportunities due to the lack of something like a corridor in a given region. They asserted that where feasibility has been demonstrated, and a strong economic argument for a corridor has been made, people will come around.

Participants also emphasized the role of the federal government in reducing the existing regulatory burden, which they saw as undermining both potential infrastructure projects and the kind of interjurisdictional collaboration that would be needed to execute such a large-scale vision. While it was agreed that regulation is generally a good thing and ensures the protection of both people and the environment, participants in Fort St. John argued that regulatory redundancy, such as having to go through parallel processes with different



levels of government, can deter investment and hinder economic development. Despite Canada's wealth of resources and stable political climate, investors may still choose to take their money elsewhere if regulatory processes are less onerous: *"our advantages [are being] lost to redundancy."* Participants expressed that supportive regulation would be key to accomplishing a large, multi-jurisdictional project like a corridor, namely a regulatory framework that everyone concerned can understand and work with. Moreover, determining a set of common regulations for corridors would provide infrastructure developers with a clear path with minimal interjurisdictional hassles. Participants felt that planning from the outset what a corridor will look like physically is less important than building out appropriate and effective theory and regulation.

Some communities pointed to specific approaches that should be employed in corridor development to ensure that the outcomes are sustainable and equitable. In Île-a-la-Crosse, participants asserted that the only way to safeguard communities' interests in corridor and infrastructure development is to pursue development from a rights-based approach that's driven by northern people, for the benefit of northern people. The kind of social licence<sup>50</sup> needed for future large-scale development will require finding a balance between the economy and the environment (a sentiment echoed in other communities) and *"it's northern people who really have to give that social licence."*

In the same session in Île-a-la-Crosse, attendees also felt that the potential for significant environmental impacts from corridor development (and any resulting infrastructure and resource development) will require higher environmental standards than currently exist. Communities should be able to set their own environmental standards, as those currently set by the federal and provincial governments are *"too lax."* In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, participants were also concerned with environmental oversight, pointing to the current difficulty with getting cumulative environmental effects reports for smaller projects, let alone something on the scale of a corridor. In Thompson, several participants stated that so far as potential development in the region goes, even new mining developments could be acceptable to residents so long as they're done in a safe and environmentally sound manner. This would require *"hawks"* responsible for closely monitoring mining operations, and strong regulations to back them up.

Several communities also discussed the need to address potential corridor development, and infrastructure development more broadly, from the perspective of regional interests and needs. In some communities, there was a strong regional identity that did not always align with existing jurisdictional borders and policies. For example, participants in Kenora, which is in the northwest corner of Ontario, described their community as having a stronger cultural and economic relationship with Manitoba than with its own province. This relationship was brought into sharp focus early in the COVID-19 pandemic, when provincial border closures prevented Manitobans from travelling to their cottages while residents of Kenora couldn't travel to Winnipeg (the closest urban centre) to access goods and services. Local residents also used to be able to travel to Manitoba for certain medical services, but are now forced to go to Thunder Bay, a 5.5-hour drive compared to two hours to Winnipeg. Participants in other communities in the northern parts of the provinces expressed that they identified more strongly with other northern communities than with more southern

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<sup>50</sup> "The term 'social licence to operate' (SLO) developed out of recognition by mining companies of the ongoing risks of operating without approval from the local community or key stakeholders" (Collins and Kumral 2021).

communities in their own provinces. Participants felt that this shows the importance of understanding regional, rather than provincial, perspectives when it comes to policy and development.

In other communities, participants were interested in the idea of regionalism but felt that poor connective infrastructure is undermining its potential. For example, in Corner Brook participants shared that regional decision-making would be crucial for ensuring that Newfoundlanders benefit from future development, but that this approach is currently difficult as the island's towns tend to think of themselves as discrete entities rather than as part of a larger region. Better connectivity could foster stronger regional identities: *"When people see themselves as connected . . . then decentralization happens."* Corner Brook participants advocated for a regional approach to development, asserting that eastern Quebec, Labrador, and Newfoundland should be treated as a unit when considering connective infrastructure, given the ways that development in one province or region affects residents in bordering regions. Participants in Sept-Îles agreed that the lack of a continuous connection between Quebec's North Shore and Labrador is undermining the potential for regional collaboration. In Churchill, participants described the region's past experiences with development to emphasize the necessity of regional collaboration and leadership to ensure equitable future development.

### **The necessity, feasibility, and potential weaknesses of corridor development**

Some communities and participants who expressed favour for corridor development also shared concerns regarding its necessity and viability. Some discussions centered around the wisdom of developing new corridors rather than improving existing infrastructure and adapting existing corridors. For example, in Thunder Bay, participants noted that there already is an east-west corridor in the region containing road, rail, and power lines, and that expanding or adapting this existing right of way would minimize the environmental impacts that would come with new construction. Moreover, participants expressed that adding new linear infrastructure when existing roads and rail are already undermaintained and have significant quality issues was a poor economic investment. In Churchill, participants similarly argued that the existing corridor — the rail line — needs investment and attention. In Whitehorse, a participant felt that while consolidating infrastructure into a multimodal corridor might be a good idea from an environmental perspective, it wouldn't address the current issue of a lack of redundancy, which might be better addressed by multiple routes.

Other participants wondered if multi-modal corridors might be something of an outdated concept: a Churchill attendee asked how necessary it really is to build new networks of powerlines or fibreoptic networks when there is potential in the not-too-distant future for small-scale nuclear reactors and satellite internet is already gaining ground. Local and regional energy microgrids were also discussed as an alternative to connecting remote regions and communities to larger energy networks. In Whitehorse, a participant suggested that rather than expanding existing land-based transportation routes, government should perhaps look at innovative alternatives like airships instead. In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, monorails were suggested as a potential alternative to road and rail where difficult or unstable terrain makes developing the latter challenging.

There were also questions regarding the feasibility of corridor development, particularly regarding geographical and financial challenges. In Kenora, participants questioned the feasibility of a corridor project that would require the support of so many different Indigenous groups, using as an example the decades-long process that was required to twin the Trans-Canada highway through the Kenora region. Though underway as of 2022, the development process took 20 years to complete.<sup>51</sup>

In Timmins, participants discussed how the effects of climate change are already being seen on existing connective infrastructure (e.g., the effects of increased flooding and wildfire damage and permafrost melting), with implications for both maintenance and expansion, leaving many communities struggling to keep up with the costs of repair. One participant at that session raised a related point that *“there’s an implied economic assumption tied to [corridor development]”*; namely, that of *“business as usual.”* With climate change, energy transitions, and the potential for more decentralized infrastructure (like regional energy grids), how would corridor development align with so many *“moving pieces”*? In Whitehorse, one participant noted there are already places in Yukon where paved roads are being replaced with gravel, as the latter is easier to maintain as the ground becomes unstable due to permafrost loss. Given the expected increase in disruptive events because of climate change, attendees in High Level felt that co-locating key infrastructure in a shared footprint could make it more vulnerable to events like wildfire.

Participants also expressed concern regarding the size of a national corridor project, both in terms of scale and cost. In several communities, participants felt that the scale of the concept would make it easy for community-level priorities to be subsumed by a national-level strategy. In Churchill, there was seen to be a risk of neglecting the *“microscale”* and failing to consider the potential effects of corridor development on individual communities. In Kenora, participants suggested that any potential corridor strategy needed to be *“regionalized”* to allow communities and regions the capacity and leeway to address their most relevant concerns. A related concern was the potential cost of a national corridor project; some participants pointed to Canada’s small population relative to its area, suggesting that the potential financial burden of such a large project would make it infeasible. As we discuss above, participants pointed out that the cost of building anything in northern Canada is high compared to the country’s south — even gravel roads can cost millions of dollars — correspondingly making it hard to justify the cost of a national corridor network.

In Whitehorse, participants described how social licence for large projects in the region has historically been based on natural resource extraction. However, with issues like climate change and national security coming more to the fore, these, along with social prerogatives, will be what drives or inhibits large-scale development. They agreed that there are potential social benefits to a corridor as well as the possibility of reducing the negative environmental effects of infrastructure development, but worried that there is not a clear economic argument for corridor development. New infrastructure in the North is often built for the purpose of resource exploitation — particularly mining — and it is the expected profit generated by accessing new resources that justifies, and pays for, the new infrastructure. This means that unless natural resource development is an integral part of a corridor strategy, there likely isn’t a strong economic argument to be made for such

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<sup>51</sup> The participant drily noted that, given this timeline for potential corridor development, *“so maybe in 20 years, I’ll be standing here with my protest sign!”*

a project. On the other hand, some communities, like Happy Valley-Goose Bay, felt that premising corridor development on resource exploitation would be a dead end so far as social licence is concerned. In Kugluktuk, one participant described a corridor whose primary purpose is natural resource development as *“a bit backward,”* and that a focus on resources was short-sighted, when economic diversification should be the long-term goal.

However, several participants pointed to the potential social or moral imperative that could drive a corridor project. In High Level, participants conceded that there is likely a poor *“business case”* to be made for corridor development and that the *“economics don’t play out,”* as is often the case for development in northern regions with small populations and low return on investment. Instead, the *“social economics”* would have to *“take the front seat,”* acknowledging that the benefits of attracting and keeping residents and businesses by offering a quality of life and access to services comparable to southern Canada would outweigh strictly monetary returns.

Participants in Grande Prairie agreed that, in the short-term, more than strictly economic factors need to be considered and *“the economics will come afterwards.”* For example, bringing northern internet access up to par with southern norms would allow northern residents access to the same online educational and employment opportunities as southerners, an area in which they are currently disadvantaged. Participants argued that a long-term perspective will be important when considering the potential pay-off of corridor development, which might have to take a *“build it and they will come”* approach: having a framework developed in advance of infrastructure development could help speed up the construction of actual projects, while building out key connective infrastructure will encourage development in currently un- and underdeveloped areas. One person gave the example of building new energy infrastructure in the Northwest Territories,<sup>52</sup> describing how it won’t be paid off for many decades but addresses an immediate need and is part of a longer-term vision for the region. They added that if corridor development were to be driven by, and pursued in the name of, a social imperative rather than a strictly economic argument, strong leadership by the federal government would be particularly crucial.

There were concerns about the idea of setting aside land for a corridor; one participant in Kenora asked how a blanket approval for infrastructure development could be granted and how land could be set aside without a clear idea of what it would be used for. Another attendee at that session noted that priorities change, and wondered what would happen when conflicting priorities or opportunities arose in the future. This was echoed elsewhere, with participants in Sept-Îles discussing the complicated and competing demands involved with potential corridor development, including in their region protection of the river and the surrounding environment, equitable economic development, and the protection of Indigenous lands and rights.

Finally, many participants acknowledged that different communities have different infrastructural needs and will be interested in different levels of connectivity. For example, in Kugluktuk, session participants were divided regarding the need for greater road connectivity in their region given the potential effects on wildlife, but all agreed that more reliable and affordable high-speed internet is needed. Similarly, in Thompson, one attendee suggested that *“it would be ideal to have roads to all out communities in the North”;*

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<sup>52</sup> The participant did not specify the project they were referring to.

another countered, asking “*do those communities want those roads?*” In Happy Valley-Goose Bay, a participant stated that better connectivity will look different for different communities; some places may not want to be connected by road or rail but do need better access to services. And in Whitehorse, Hay River, and High Level, participants felt that some communities value their smallness and remoteness and may not want corridor development to occur in their areas. Participants in Timmins described a potential reluctance on the part of some residents in their own community to accept the kind of significant changes that corridor development could bring.

Conversely, some communities were explicitly interested in the prospect of corridor development and the opportunities it could bring. In Grande Prairie, participants were eager to be involved in potential developments, pointing to the decline Peace River<sup>53</sup> has experienced by being closed to new business, resulting in those businesses choosing to settle in Grande Prairie and Fort St. John instead. There was also great interest in Fort St. John, where one participant expressed that “*there shouldn't be anyone who can't see the potential benefit of something like this.*” In Hay River, participants were concerned that some communities, including their own, could be bypassed by corridor development, turning existing communities into ghost towns. In both cases, participants were clear that they wanted their communities to have a say in what development would happen in their region and in how their residents might benefit from it. As a participant in Timmins noted, even if the potential benefits of development in a given region are realized, there's no guarantee of an even or equitable distribution of those benefits. Many communities currently lack the resources to advocate on their own behalf to ensure that their interests are not dismissed and that they receive their share of benefits.

## **5. DEVELOPMENTAL POTENTIAL OF NORTHERN COMMUNITIES AND THE CANADIAN NORTH**

Participants across the communities we spoke with described great potential in their communities and regions, and in northern Canada more broadly, for social and economic development. In this section, we share participant perspectives on the scale and nature of development that could be achieved in northern communities with appropriate vision and support.

Participants often described their regions as natural resource powerhouses, but more importantly as untapped stores of skills, labour, and expertise with a great deal to offer other northern regions and the rest of Canada. For example, in Corner Brook, participants described the untapped wealth of knowledge in smaller communities, where the experience of working close to the land and sea possessed by many locals gives them a deep knowledge and perspective on issues relevant to infrastructure development, such as environmental changes and impacts. Participants felt that there's “*no such thing as unskilled labour,*” and that it's important to find space for this kind of knowledge in the province's development vision.

Several larger communities described their existing status as de facto regional hubs and their potential to become vibrant and productive northern urban centres. In High Level, participants emphasized the community's location at the crossroads of provincial highways

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<sup>53</sup> Peace River is a community in Alberta about 200 km northeast of Grande Prairie.

35 and 58<sup>54</sup> and its status as a rail hub and energy hub. High Level serves as a grain terminal for the surrounding region and is connected to Hardisty, AB (home of a large tank farm and a nexus of oil and natural gas pipelines) and Norman Wells, NWT (an oil extraction site). Thunder Bay sits on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence shipping route and has connections to major forestry and mining regions, making it well-positioned to be a hub for domestic and international trade. Participants in Fort St. John noted the unique density of natural resources available in the Peace Region, including natural gas, oil, and forest products. With the construction of the Site C hydro dam, the region will become an “*electricity capital*” able to provide power as far away as California.

Other participants described the potential of their communities to become hubs for trade and transportation. In Thompson, participants noted that northern Manitoba has a great deal of unexplored natural resource potential, including deposits of lithium, a key component in electric vehicle batteries. One participant in Grande Prairie described the region as a Goldilocks zone in the context of climate change and how the community could become a destination for climate migrants as more southern regions become less habitable. Participants in Tuktoyaktuk described existing port facilities in their community, which, paired with the new Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway, puts the hamlet in a position to become a supply point for other communities in the Beaufort Delta: “*I really believe Tuk could do a lot for the rest of the Northwest Territories because of where we’re located.*” In Churchill, some participants saw the community’s port as being well-positioned to be part of the supply chain for communities in Nunavut: instead of shipping goods from Eastern Canada, they could be sent by rail to Churchill and then sent to the Arctic by sea. This could extend to housing, whereby modular homes could be prepared in Churchill and shipped north. This would have the added benefit of growing the pool of skilled labour in the community and increasing local employment. Such an arrangement could be part of developing a closer relationship between Churchill and Nunavut, particularly the Kivalliq region just up the coast of Hudson’s Bay.

These last two examples point to another common thread in our discussions with communities: northern resiliency and self-sufficiency. Many participants emphasized the need, and potential, for northern regions and communities to support each other and to build their shared capacity for self-sufficiency. Communities like Hay River, Fort St. John, Prince Rupert, and High Level described their existing role as a nexus between southern and northern regions and how, with appropriate infrastructure investment, they could expand their connections to remote and northern regions, opening access to stranded natural and human resources. Improved connective infrastructure throughout the North wouldn’t just mean a greater ability to receive goods and services from the south; it would enable greater resilience within northern Canada itself by, amongst other benefits, reducing dependence on southern transportation and trade routes.

Greater capacities for agriculture and food production were highlighted as a key part of building northern resiliency and self-sufficiency. In some places, such as Churchill and Prince Rupert, this could involve an expansion of infrastructure such as greenhouses to supplement imported and expensive fresh produce. Some communities are already in agricultural regions, which some participants expected would expand as climate change

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<sup>54</sup> Highway 58 is the only major east-west route in northern Alberta, while Highway 35 is one of only two paved roads connecting the Northwest Territories to southern Canada.



brings longer growing seasons to northern regions. In High Level, participants described how improved transportation infrastructure could allow the surrounding region of Mackenzie County to expand its agricultural exports, including to northern Canada. Expanded agricultural and transportation capacity could also reduce the cost of animal feed and support meat production; this could, in turn, reduce the region's, and the North's, dependency on imports from southern Canada: *"our region could help feed the North."* In other places, like Corner Brook on the island of Newfoundland, participants described how their region had formerly had greater agricultural capacities that were undermined by the loss of the island's railway; this left farmers on the island's west coast unable to get their goods to market.

Multiple communities discussed the need to re-establish lost infrastructure and invest in existing infrastructure to support local and regional resiliency. Participants in Thunder Bay, Prince Rupert, and Churchill routinely felt that their existing port facilities are underused and lacking in much-needed investment. In Thunder Bay, session attendees described how the port on Lake Superior is used for shipping grain and renewable energy infrastructure (e.g., importing equipment for wind and solar energy farms), but with appropriate investments and upgrades it could become part of an energy corridor, shipping Canadian oil and gas to European markets. Prince Rupert already plays a limited role in transporting goods in and out of northern BC; strengthening Prince Rupert's capacities as a marine hub between northern and southern BC could increase resiliency and security in the supply chain. Many participants in Churchill described a central role for a revitalized port in Churchill's future. One participant described a *"future Churchill"* as looking much like a *"Churchill 50 years ago,"* with dozens of grain ships passing through the port every year and reliable train service several days a week. They described Churchill as having been part of a corridor in the past and that, with the community now in control of the port and rail line, there is an opportunity to revitalize that corridor.

However, many participants noted that without greater investment, northern regions will continue to fall short of their development priorities and goals. Appropriate funding and investment are currently lacking for even some of the most basic development projects. For example, in Tuktoyaktuk, a large amount of scrap metal currently sits on community lands. With appropriate support, this metal could be removed and recycled, generating some additional income for the community. Additionally, support for tourism infrastructure in Tuktoyaktuk would both allow it to better take advantage of the flow of visitors from the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway's completion and help the community cope with the impacts of increased visitor numbers. Participants in several communities, including Fort St. John, Whitehorse, and Sept-Îles felt that their regions *"punch above [their] weight"* in terms of their contributions to provincial, territorial, and national economies, but receive comparatively little back in terms of investment in infrastructure and social development. A participant in Fort St. John opined that the province of BC, and the country as a whole, will inevitably have to *"look north"* and recognize the current economic importance of the region and its future potential, asking *"what does it take for the government to acknowledge that?"* Ultimately, many participants expressed skepticism regarding governments' willingness to invest in northern communities and their development potential.



## DISCUSSION

Through the community engagement process, the research team heard many diverse sentiments and perspectives regarding infrastructure and related issues in northern communities. Here, we summarize the issues raised and discuss three key, interrelated themes that emerged: the persistent inequities between northern and southern Canada; the disproportionate effect of infrastructure deficits and development on Indigenous communities; and the potential for a regional approach to corridor and infrastructure development.

### **There are persistent inequities in infrastructure access and development between northern and southern communities in Canada**

Research participants routinely felt that the value of their regions is often reduced to their natural resource wealth such as fossil fuels, minerals, forestry products, and hydropower. Consequently, they felt that their communities and regions continue to be stripped of their wealth without any compensating benefits accruing to the local population. At the same time, communities are left to grapple with the drastic social and environmental changes resulting from resource extraction activities including displacement, unstable local economies, increased crime and poverty, poor individual and community health outcomes, and loss of access to the land. Participants attributed this situation in no small part to the persistent marginalization of northern and rural voices and perspectives in business, politics, and policy, referring to the reliance of key decision makers — themselves largely based in southern regions and communities — on southern-informed interests, norms, and assumptions. Participants routinely stated that northern voices and perspectives are rarely given the same platforms and weight as those of the more populous south. As a result, participants felt that great inequities persist between communities in northern and southern Canada in terms of access to resources, services, and opportunities — resulting in frustration, anger, and resentment.

The inequities described by participants between Canada's north and south were recognized by the Government of Canada in its *2019 Arctic and Northern Policy Framework* (ANPF):

For too long, Canada's Arctic and northern residents, especially Indigenous people, have not had access to the same services, opportunities, and standards of living as those enjoyed by other Canadians. There are longstanding inequalities in transportation, energy, communications, employment, community infrastructure, health and education. While almost all past governments have put forward northern strategies, none closed these gaps for the people of the North, or created a lasting legacy of sustainable economic development. (Government of Canada 2019, 2).

The ANPF, which sets out a long-term strategy for development in Canada's North and Arctic, was lauded as a major accomplishment due to its co-development approach between diverse stakeholders, including the three territorial governments; over 25 Indigenous partners representing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis; and the governments of Manitoba, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador. Everett (2022, 178) notes the ANPF

is the first update to Canada's northern strategy in a decade, and, in comparison to previous strategies which took a top-down approach, the ANPF "includes the views and priorities of northerners within regional decision making." The ANPF is accompanied by several partner chapters that discuss regional circumstances, priorities and challenges for local communities and their infrastructure.<sup>55</sup>

However, despite its recognition as a unique strategy, "critics have questioned the hasty release of what seems to be a partially-developed document, coming just a day before the federal government announced Canada's 2019 federal election" (Kikkert and Lackenbauer 2019, 1). Lackenbauer and Kikkert (2022) assert that the policy does not represent a significant change of direction, as it fails to establish practical priorities for federal policy implementation or provide resources for development, which are crucial for addressing the infrastructure gaps across mid- and northern Canada that the ANPF identifies. Infrastructure gaps, particularly across northern Canada, are well documented: the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board (2016) identified serious issues with port facilities, runways, roads, bridges, telecommunications and other infrastructure in northern Canada; Nunavut Tunngavik's (2020, 12) report details large gaps in housing, sanitation, and drinking water access, describing the territory's infrastructure as "operating close to or beyond its projected useful lifespan"; and the Canadian Climate Institute found that northern Canada's already fragile infrastructure is not prepared to weather the challenges that will come with increased climate change (Clark et al. 2022). Policy strategies intended to close these gaps, such as the ANPF, remain vague and ambiguous, leaving northern communities' needs unaddressed.

Participants noted that it would benefit northern residents and southern Canada to bring northern infrastructure to parity, as far as is practicable, with southern Canada. As described above, northerners often feel that the North is viewed as a treasure chest from which southern interests can extract great wealth without contributing to northern communities. However, in doing so, participants felt that not only are they currently being cut a raw deal, but that much is being left on the table. By failing to support development in northern regions, southern interests leave great potential pools of skills and expertise untapped, undermining the potential of the North to become a prosperous economic region in its own right. Economic productivity in the territories is undermined by poor infrastructure; Fellows and Tombe (2018) project that lowering trade costs in the territories, including improving northern transportation infrastructure, could add \$6.5 billion to the national GDP and increase territorial GDP by \$4.7 billion. Many participants were eager to see the North become more self-sufficient and less dependent on the south — many spoke of northern sovereignty, of being less under the control of southern policymakers and bureaucrats, and the capacity to act meaningfully on the interests of northern residents — but emphasized that the serious infrastructure gaps present a nearly insurmountable obstacle to reaching this goal.

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<sup>55</sup> ANPF partner chapters were provided by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (Inuit Nunangat Chapter); the Government of Northwest Territories; the Government of Nunavut; and a pan-territorial chapter provided by the governments of Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and Yukon (Government of Canada 2022b).

## **Infrastructure deficits and development disproportionately impact Indigenous communities**

Governments, non-governmental bodies, and researchers widely acknowledge that there is a wide and persistent infrastructure gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in Canada (The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships 2016; Nunavut Tunngavik 2020; First Nations Financial Management Board 2022). The infrastructure deficit amongst First Nations alone is estimated to be at least \$25 billion, with some estimates running even higher (The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships 2016). Nunavut, with an 85 percent Inuit population, has no regional power grid, meaning all 25 of its communities are dependent on diesel power plants. Moreover, an estimated 85 percent of the territory's water treatment infrastructure is in poor condition, and 41 percent of housing needs major repair (Nunavut Tunngavik 2020). The First Nations Financial Management Board (2022) has detailed how fragile infrastructure systems are contributing to poor social, economic, and health outcomes for First Nations communities.

Nunavut Tunngavik (2020) describes the ways that infrastructure gaps overlap and reinforce each other in Indigenous communities. For example, the higher cost of off-grid electricity makes wastewater treatment more expensive; this can make developing more housing challenging, resulting in overcrowding and a deteriorating housing stock. Inadequate transportation infrastructure makes it difficult to import needed building supplies for repairs and new home construction. Inadequate access to high-speed internet can mean an inability to access educational and employment opportunities. Forgoing education can lead to poor economic outcomes, compounding existing individual and communal issues of poverty and contributing to insufficient pools of local skilled labour. Similarly, Indigenous youth are often required to move away from their communities to access educational opportunities, sometimes as early as secondary school, leaving behind important familial, communal, and cultural support systems. The risks these young people are exposed to in having to leave home for school are discussed in devastating detail by Talaga (2017), who documents the dangers of being young, Indigenous, and far from home.

Conversely, Indigenous communities often bear most of the negative effects of large-scale development. Canada's history is replete with development projects that have displaced communities, including flooding communities and lands by the Churchill River Diversion for hydroelectric development in northern Manitoba, seizure of Inuit lands for military infrastructure in Labrador, and expulsion of First Nations from the Cypress Hills in Saskatchewan for railway construction. Projects have also been guilty of poisoning Indigenous populations, as in the infamous case of Grassy Narrows, a First Nation in northern Ontario that experienced devastating mercury poisoning stemming from pulp and paper operations in the region. Culturally and nutritionally significant traditional lands have also been damaged, destroyed, and confiscated in the course of large-scale development; this last can be seen in British Columbia's forestry sector's long history of harvesting through clear-cutting, opposition to which made international headlines during the War of the Woods in the 1990s.

Participants described how large-scale development has also routinely brought crime, substance abuse, and violence to their communities, while damaging traditional social and cultural life. Indigenous communities experience significant vulnerabilities that non-

Indigenous communities largely do not. For example, as recounted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the residential school system inflicted on First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities undermined family and community structures; targeted Indigenous cultural practices, spiritual beliefs, and languages for destruction; and subjected individuals to trauma and abuse.<sup>56</sup> These consequences are long-term and are still experienced by Indigenous individuals and communities today. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls revealed to Canadians the disproportionate rate at which Indigenous women and girls experience violence and death, and the inadequate responses of governments and the criminal justice system.<sup>57</sup> Large development projects are already known to have disruptive impacts on associated communities (e.g., Ruddell 2011); the existing vulnerabilities of many Indigenous communities put them at greater risk for negative effects associated with development (DesBrisay 1994).

What distinguishes Indigenous communities from their non-Indigenous counterparts in the potential and realized effects of development and underdevelopment is the intersection of remoteness, infrastructure deficits, and the legacies of colonialism in Canada. These legacies are far too broad and complex to examine in detail in this report, from flawed treaty processes and the legacy of residential schools to contemporary anti-Indigenous attitudes and the *Indian Act*. However, their inclusion is essential in approaching any future type of infrastructure development, which must consider the intersectional inequalities that specifically affect Indigenous communities, and must assess the vulnerabilities that could be either mitigated or exacerbated by certain types of development.

Many Indigenous participants indicated that their communities are interested in development that could bring benefits and prosperity to their members, and participants (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) universally agreed on the necessity of meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities for corridor and other large-scale development. Participants called on the need for greater Indigenous leadership on development issues. Given the effects of development and underdevelopment on Indigenous communities, it is morally and practically necessary to prioritize and defer to Indigenous communities, government, and leadership in the planning and execution of infrastructure projects and workable, sustainable, and equitable strategies for infrastructure development at local, regional, and national scales. There are many examples of successful large-scale development led by Indigenous communities. These include Wataynikaneyap Power in northern Ontario, which is constructing transmission lines to connect remote First Nations communities to the provincial grid and to power future development projects in the region; Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek (Gull Bay) First Nation's solar energy generation and storage microgrid; and Tsawwassen First Nation's wastewater treatment system, which Baird and Podlasly (2020) estimate creates more than \$2.5 billion of economic development on the Nation's lands. Facilitating further leadership will involve, amongst other things, increasing local capacity; this could include providing funding and opportunities for collaboration between Indigenous communities and organizations that will enable meaningful participation and engagement with potential future development opportunities.

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<sup>56</sup> The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's reports can be accessed via the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation ([www.nctr.ca](http://www.nctr.ca)).

<sup>57</sup> The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls final report can be found at [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca).

## **Future large-scale infrastructure development, and potential corridor development would benefit from a region-informed approach**

The community engagement process revealed the tension inherent in governing and administering Canada's diverse geographic, economic, and cultural regions. As we discuss above, many participants felt a deep divide exists between northern and southern Canada, but participants also noted other 'regionalities.' For example, in Kenora, participants described how their region in northwestern Ontario often feels greater affinity with Manitoba than the rest of their own province. This connection is practical as well: it's easier for area residents to travel to Winnipeg for goods and services than to Thunder Bay (or even further south), while Manitobans frequent the cottage country surrounding Kenora. Participants in Grande Prairie and Fort St. John described themselves as part of the Peace Region, and those in both Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador felt it would make sense to approach contiguous areas of Quebec and Labrador as a single region when considering potential development. Many participants felt that these existing regional connections have been neglected or under-valued.

Along with these perceptions of existing regions outside of formal provincial and territorial definitions, there was concern that the existing corridor concept is too large from both theoretical and practical standpoints. Many participants articulated the need for a national infrastructure strategy and understood that the corridor concept offered one potential framework for this. However, they were concerned that a national-scale infrastructure plan would risk neglecting more regional and local concerns vis-à-vis infrastructure development. Some communities already expressed feeling overlooked by their respective provincial and territorial governments, and worried that a high-level conceptualization of development would perpetuate or worsen that neglect. Participants identified the idea of sweeping pre-approvals, with implications of a macro-scale review and approval process that would override more micro- and meso-scale concerns as one such problem with corridor development. Canada is a collection of informal but unacknowledged regions in addition to formal jurisdictional geographies. Accordingly, a national vision for corridor development risks ignoring relevant regionalities. The existing concept was seen as too large, because it appears to envision development only on a national scale rather than allowing space for the assertion of regional interests and priorities.

Taken together, this leads to the potential appeal of a regional approach to development integrated into a larger, national strategy. An approach to corridor or large-scale infrastructure development that allows for the assertion of regional priorities and the addressing of regional-level needs could be more effective than a one-size-fits all approach and could also support greater regional control of planning and strengthen communities' abilities to make their perspectives heard in meaningful ways, contributing to greater social and economic parity between regions. A similar regional development approach was adopted in the European Union (EU) with the goal of reducing regional economic and social inequities across EU member states (European Commission 2023). The EU's cohesion policy became a key instrument in addressing uneven levels of wealth, unemployment, and capital investment between regions. Structural funds are deployed within programs that are supported by a multi-annual framework based on socio-economic analysis, and by the formulation of a clear strategy with priorities and objectives, which are prepared

by the regions themselves (Brunazzo 2010). These programs are screened and adopted by the European Commission, and most funds are delivered to regions affected by specific problems (e.g., those experiencing industrial decline and higher unemployment rates than the EU average). Regional development programs are co-funded by several institutions, including the European Commission and national governments. In addition, partnerships are fostered between all governmental levels, including regional and local organizations. Program delivery is regularly evaluated for its effectiveness, and plans are adjusted as socio-economic and geopolitical circumstances change.

One of the challenges to this approach is that regionalism is often viewed as a negative force in Canadian society and politics, one that has contributed to both Quebec separatism and Western alienation. Wright (1993) argues that avoiding strong regionalisms is what holds together a country of such diversity; see also Buckner (2000); Montpetit, Lachapelle, and Kiss (2017). Furthermore, regionalism can be rooted in a variety of economic, social, and cultural sources, stemming from “different causes in different regions and at different levels of analysis” (Cochrane and Perrella 2012, 830). Taking the above examples, Quebec separatism has historically been fuelled by the position that Quebec is a unique society, distinguished by language and culture from the rest of Canada but subject to Anglo-American political and economic forces (Changfoot and Cullen 2011). Western alienation on the other hand, has been attributed to the perceived neglect of the interests of the western Canadian provinces — British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba — by a federal government more concerned with Eastern Canada or, more specifically, Ontario (Berdahl 2021).

However, region-specific economic development bodies already exist in the form of seven federal regional development agencies, responsible for overseeing and supporting economic growth and diversification in their respective regions. These include Prairies Economic Development Canada, the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.<sup>58</sup> Regional strategic environmental assessments, undertaken jointly by provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments with responsibilities for a given region, have been identified as an important potential tool to better assess cumulative and long-term impacts of large-scale development projects (Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment 2009).<sup>59</sup> Participants in Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories routinely described ways that the territories could act more collaboratively as a single region to pursue their shared interests. Those in contiguous, cross-border regions (Quebec-Labrador, Ontario-Manitoba, Alberta-BC) often felt their interests would be better addressed beyond intra-provincial restrictions.

More recently, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada initiated a regional assessment in the Ring of Fire area, working with the province of Ontario, Indigenous groups, federal authorities, non-government organizations, and the public to determine appropriate activities, outcomes, and boundaries of the regional assessment. The assessments are studies in “areas of existing projects or anticipated development to inform planning and

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<sup>58</sup> The other four agencies are the Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CED), the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor), the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario), and Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan).

<sup>59</sup> An example of a RSEA is the 2014 Environmental Stewardship Initiative which is “a \$30 million collaborative partnership between the Province (BC), First Nations and industry to produce high quality, accessible and trusted environmental information to ensure a positive environmental legacy” (Northeast Roundtable 2020).



management of cumulative effects and inform future project impact assessments” (Impact Assessment Agency of Canada 2021). Regional assessments are supposed to help the federal government better understand the regional context and priorities and provide more comprehensive analyses to help inform future impact assessment decisions (Impact Assessment Agency of Canada 2022). However, multi-level governmental regional assessments, jointly undertaken by federal, provincial/territorial, Indigenous, and municipal governments are not routinely undertaken in Canada.

Taking a regional approach to development could facilitate more effective, efficient, equitable and, for communities, meaningful development in a process that lets more residents feel heard and their communities’ needs prioritized. For example, the formulation of a nation-wide digital infrastructure framework could help improve broadband speed and availability across Canada. This framework could incorporate several strategies to deliver funding programs informed by region-based assessments to address local needs and priorities. Through these assessments, communities themselves could advocate for their digital requirements, and the federal government could offer targeted funding support and enable cooperation between government and private stakeholders to support regions that face severe challenges, for example those that don’t meet the current service objective of 50 Mbps download/10 Mbps upload and unlimited data plans.



## CONCLUSION: LESSONS FOR FUTURE ENGAGEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### LESSONS FOR FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

Over the course of the community engagement process, the research team identified some key lessons regarding future engagement around infrastructure and corridor development. In some cases, these lessons were new and unexpected; in others, they reflected some of the known weaknesses of the CNC Research Program. All lessons point to ways to improve and strengthen future community engagement processes to produce meaningful outcomes for researchers and community participants, as well as governments and project proponents.

### ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES

As we discuss in the “What We Heard” section, participants universally agreed that any potential corridor or large-scale infrastructure development would require engagement with Indigenous communities and governments, and space for Indigenous leadership and the assertion of Indigenous rights, interests, and priorities. This requires policymakers, proponents, and developers to be thorough and proactive in their engagement efforts and be willing to bear the costs of meaningful engagement. This would include activities like travelling to all affected communities, regardless of their remoteness, or covering the costs of community members to come to engagements elsewhere; ensuring that Indigenous languages are an integral part of the engagement process; and sponsoring independent experts, such as lawyers or engineers, to support communities during the process. It could also include sponsoring community conversations independent of formal engagement with researchers or consultants. This was one of the key suggestions made by participants in Île-a-la-Crosse, who pointed to the need for communities to talk amongst themselves without the interference of outside interests or voices.

Engagement with affected non-Indigenous communities would also have to start early in any development process — *“while [the corridor] is still an idea and not a full-fledged project.”* Just as importantly, engagement would need to be ongoing, rather than one-off instances, and be part of building relationships with communities. Participants noted that, in most cases, discussions and consultations with communities only happen once a project is underway and after proponents make substantial financial investments, limiting how much influence communities have in project design and execution. A universal theme was that communities need to be consulted in advance of project conceptualization: *“the community has to be engaged way before you even start to think of, ‘we’re going to build a road.’ Once you get to that statement, you’ve already spent a lot of money. And maybe the community doesn’t want it, or they want something different.”* Early consultation would also reduce the potential for costly project changes later in the process. One participant summarized that *“early and often”* would have to be the by-words of future engagement.

Participants also emphasized openness, transparency, and *“intellectual honesty”* as necessary and crucial to ensuring community buy-in and benefit. Establishing credibility would involve discussing the pros and cons of potential development, as well as managing public expectations in a sensitive and sincere manner. For example, letting people know that their ideas may not ultimately be incorporated into a project but ensuring that they know why this might be the case and that their perspectives are still being considered.

All of this applies equally to future research engagement as it does to engagement more directly targeting corridor and infrastructure development. Communities should be brought into the research process as early as possible, ideally during the period of project design. Early and ongoing involvement in the research process fosters transparency and trust between researchers and community members and allows the latter a role in framing research questions and engagement strategies. This also fosters a sense of ownership and control for participants. For researchers, open, trusting, and longer-term relationships with communities can result in higher quality data and greater credibility, and the potential for future collaborations with those same communities.

Researchers must also invest in reaching more, and more remote, communities to maximize the inclusion of all voices. Though the goal of the research team in this instance was diversity rather than representativeness, several participants expressed discomfort with the engagement program's narrow reach and expressed frustration at the exclusion of so many communities that could be affected by corridor development. This illustrates the importance participants themselves placed on representation, indicating that this should also be a priority for researchers. The inclusion of more communities in future engagement processes would also support the involvement of more marginalized communities and individuals who do not always have access to engagement opportunities with researchers, developers, or policymakers.

### **Trust and capacity-building**

Local capacity to participate in engagement related to potential corridor or infrastructure development was an issue for several communities. At the most basic level, processes and mechanisms are needed to help participants become familiar with research and engagement materials prior to the start of any formal engagement processes. This could include easier access to, or the direct provision of, relevant and accessible materials (e.g., research documents translated into local languages and free from excessive or unnecessary jargon) or planning multiple engagement activities that would give participants the time and opportunity to acquaint themselves with relevant materials.

More meaningfully, future engagement — whether for research or development purposes — should find ways to contribute positively to community capacities beyond the project at hand. Community capacity is the ability of a community to articulate, advocate for and act in its interests and according to its self-defined priorities (Chaskin 2001). This depends significantly on the collective skills and resources of a community's members. Community engagement processes can support local capacity-building through a variety of methods including, but not limited to:

- Offering training opportunities, either in skills needed during the engagement process or in other locally desired areas;
- Employing community members who already possess relevant skill sets, such as organizers and translators at fair and mutually agreed-upon rates;
- Fostering relationships between the community and external experts to support the community in addressing local deficits in expertise;

- Offering services to support local projects or priorities (e.g., helping a local organization access and navigate funding opportunities, volunteering expertise to a local initiative); or
- Providing funding to support local initiatives like the community conversations discussed above.

The key aim of local capacity-building is fostering a mutually beneficial relationship between researchers and communities, which is crucial to successful and meaningful community engagement. However, this is a form of engagement that requires long timelines and significant funding, both of which the current Research Program did not have access to.

## Language

Some of the words and terms employed by the research team were seen as problematic or inappropriate by some participants, particularly amongst those who identified as Indigenous.<sup>60</sup> In particular, the term ‘consent’ was used, both in materials and in presentations, during early engagement sessions when researchers were going over the program’s ethics protocols. In Institutional Research Ethics Board processes, “consent” is the common term used to denote a participant’s agreement to take part in a research project and to frame the conditions under which they do so. However, for Indigenous communities in particular, the term also has significant and complicated nuances, given its association with the concept and practice of consultation for infrastructure projects. One participant described the use of the word as “*under-handed*” and as the kind of thing community members are used to looking out for when dealing with project proponents, as proponents will often try to get away with using “*sneaky*” language and techniques in their dealings with communities. The research team amended this language in later engagement activities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN CANADA

**Based on the preceding research and discussion, we offer the following policy recommendations to address some of the key issues raised.**

- Mid- and northern Canadian communities are diverse. To address local infrastructure needs and gaps, we suggest a regional needs-based assessment approach be taken to identify differences and commonalities of infrastructure priorities among these communities. Regional needs-based assessments capture local contexts and help inform a more nuanced national policy framework of best practices. This will help inform future infrastructure development projects, and limit the harms experienced by communities and their most vulnerable members. Similarly, impact assessments of proposed infrastructure projects should reflect a regional design that includes the perspectives and concerns of all potentially affected communities. **The federal government, in cooperation with municipal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners, should invest in a region-based assessment to determine local infrastructure priorities across mid- and northern Canada.**

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<sup>60</sup> We use the term identified here, as the only way researchers were able to identify a participant as Indigenous was through that participant’s disclosure during engagement activities.

- Community members often stated that they lacked the capacity to advocate for their own interests. This may be due to the absence of resources or expertise required to be effective in this role. Training opportunities to support community members can help them navigate the regulatory and legislative landscape related to infrastructure and natural resource development. As such, these opportunities must be a priority to help communities advocate for and support their interests and priorities, thus ensuring more equitable and inclusive projects in the future. Shared ownership agreements between communities and the public or private sectors may also be a tool to ensure local needs are addressed while distributing the burden of funding more evenly among community members. This is particularly important for remote and Indigenous communities.

**Resources and guidance must be provided to communities to enhance their capacity as advocates for local priorities at provincial, territorial, and federal levels.**

- The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDRIPA) came into force in June 2021. Presently, the Government of Canada is working in consultation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis groups and leaders to develop an action plan for the implementation of UNDRIPA (Government of Canada 2023). During this process, and to support the calls to action<sup>61</sup> identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the recommendations provided by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,<sup>62</sup> all orders of government should pay particular attention to the principles of FPIC and consider the ways they can be incorporated into legislative frameworks to support Canada’s path to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

**The federal government, in line with its consultations on the implementation of UNDRIP, should identify ways to incorporate the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent into legal and regulatory frameworks for infrastructure and natural resource development.**

- Federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal decision-makers should consider enhancing analyses of infrastructure projects to include equity as a key objective. Understanding the effects of infrastructure development and related land-use decisions on communities must include vulnerable populations. Analyses should focus on identifying intersectional vulnerabilities that could be mitigated or exacerbated by certain projects and types of development. For example, planning all-season roads should consider the economic benefits (e.g., enhancing transportation efficiency), the environmental impact, and the potentially adverse outcomes for populations dependent on an intact ecosystem for subsistence-based lifestyles and food sovereignty. **Social benefit-cost analyses<sup>63</sup> of infrastructure developments must consider intersectional vulnerabilities and equity-deserving groups, including Indigenous Peoples.**
- Despite Canada’s diversity, a common priority expressed across all communities was the need for access to affordable and reliable internet. The digital divide in Canada is a long-standing challenge, and the COVID-19 pandemic brought this issue into stark relief.

<sup>61</sup> To redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) has provided several Calls to Action.

<sup>62</sup> The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019) has published a master list of report recommendations organized by theme and jurisdiction.

<sup>63</sup> Social benefit-cost analyses involve the evaluation of the potential social benefits and costs of a given project “in order to assess the validity of the project and to make decisions regarding [its] implementation” (Petohleb Černeha, Klun, and Devjak 2013, 59).

During restrictions on personal mobility due to public health measures, the internet became essential for accessing public services such as education and healthcare, and for staying connected with loved ones. The development of a corridor or corridors should incorporate digital infrastructure that is reliable and affordable. While governments have already devised several strategies to address the digital divide in Canada, internet access should be considered an essential service; without it, community well-being can be significantly undermined. A framework should incorporate diverse strategies to deliver funding programs based on regional assessments and the identification of local digital needs and priorities. **Communities require access to reliable and affordable internet access, which requires key support from governments.**

- Remote communities sometimes struggle to participate in democratic processes, such as impact assessments and government hearings. Funding mechanisms already exist to support public engagement and Indigenous consultation during an assessment at several key stages, including planning, impact assessment and the participation in review panels. Additionally, funding should be provided to remote and Indigenous communities for the purpose of fostering participatory processes. Community-driven research and development are crucial, and support robust engagement initiatives, and thus outcome measures. For instance, communities can contribute essential knowledge at the planning phase of project-specific regional or strategic assessments while ensuring stewardship of data and information. This approach also helps to improve bilateral relations and garner trust among involved parties. **Federal, provincial, and territorial governments should support civic engagement among smaller and remote communities by allocating funding to participation in democratic hearings and processes (e.g., impact assessments).**
- Climate change and its environmental consequences for northern Canada, such as permafrost melting, will contribute to accelerated degradation of existing infrastructure. Innovations to help mitigate the impact of climate change on critical infrastructure is crucial. Outdated infrastructure in poor repair, such as roads and bridges, pose health and safety hazards to community members who rely on these routes. Accidents could be prevented if project planning, for example for a road, incorporated sufficient safety features, such as shoulders and rest stops for drivers. These are of particular importance when inclement weather conditions turn travelling into a hazard. In addition, research participants stated that environmental hazards, such as wildfires, could be prevented with sufficient maintenance. The example of clear cutting along railway lines to prevent sparks from igniting brush was provided. With climate change potentially triggering more devastating environmental disasters in the future, such measures will improve both infrastructure and community resilience. **Safety features and maintenance to mitigate the impacts of environmental hazards must be incorporated into any infrastructure development or maintenance.**

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# Rock Sampling

The Alberta Geological Survey (AGS) is unlocking some of Alberta’s geological secrets through its whole rock lithochemical analysis initiative. Data collected from this work will improve our knowledge of Alberta’s mineral potential, specifically for critical minerals, by producing high-quality chemical composition data for thousands of rock samples. The results are now freely available for [download](#).

Lithochemical analysis will identify if the rock has elevated base metals, precious metals, or critical minerals and the locations where these metals are elevated. In addition, the source region of the rock will determine if the area is a candidate for further investigation to assess its economic potential.

The AGS analyzed a large collection of rock samples from the AGS Mineral Core Research Facility (MCRF) in Edmonton.

Rock samples from the Canadian Shield and the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin (WCSB) were analyzed. Shield samples were taken from the AGS Godfrey collection, which contains more than 18 000 samples collected between 1958 and 1972 in northeastern Alberta. WCSB samples are mostly from Alberta plains and were collected by past AGS teams from surface rock formations found and subsurface core. These collections have not been previously subject to extensive lithochemical analysis.

Whole rock lithochemical analysis is ongoing, and datasets will be published as they become available. Over the next few years, the AGS will analyze the datasets and produce interpretive reports and interactive maps.

## Highlights

Data from this initiative will improve our knowledge of Alberta’s mineral potential, specifically for critical minerals, by producing high-quality chemical composition data for thousands of rock samples.



### A lithochemical

analysis is often used to classify rocks based on their chemical composition. The geochemical signatures include details about the rock’s origins, the environment in which they were formed, and their alteration history.

The lithochemical analysis includes major oxides (e.g., silicon dioxide) and trace elements (e.g., copper).

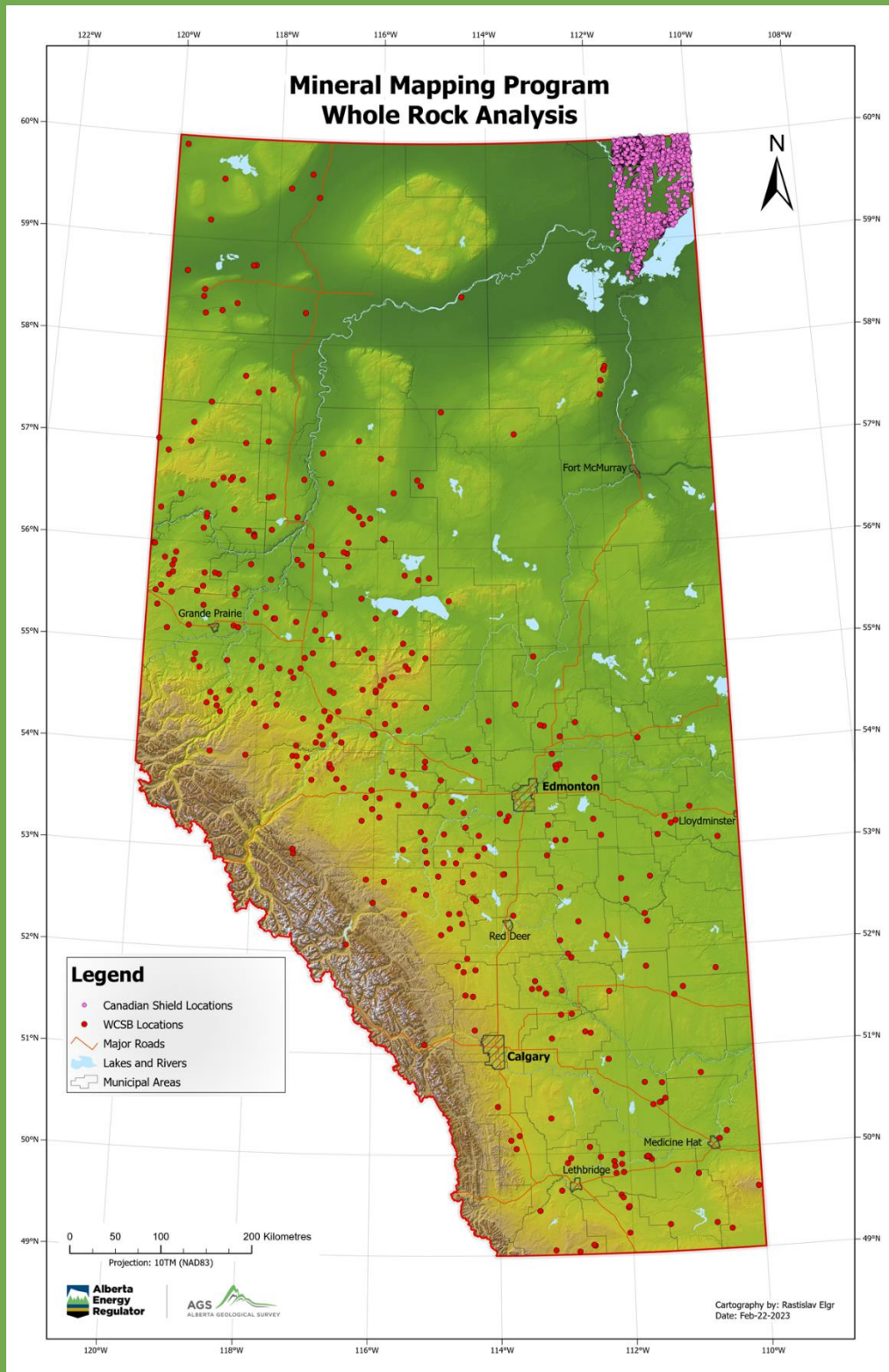


This is the largest collection of whole rock lithochemistry from the Canadian Shield in Alberta.



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Thousands of rock samples from across Alberta were analyzed for whole rock litho-geochemistry. These samples were collected from the Canadian Shield in north east Alberta and from the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin.



# Airborne Geophysics

The Alberta Geological Survey (AGS) conducted an airborne geophysics program between 2021 and 2023. The data is now available for download on the AGS website. Four airplanes equipped with specialized instruments collected geophysical data about the magnetic and gravitational properties of rock in regions of Alberta where the information was outdated, missing, or incomplete. The AGS will use the information to create new maps and to update the [Interactive Mineral Map](#) viewer.

Airborne geophysics is often the first step in exploration because magnetic and density data can be used together to identify rock types, potential faults, and fractures in the subsurface geology. Faults and fractures are geological features that can help to reveal mineral resource potential. Until now, this information was incomplete for areas within north-central Alberta and outdated for regions including the Canadian Shield in northeast Alberta and parts of southern Alberta.

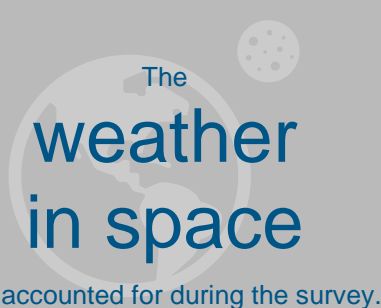
The aircraft travelled over 730,000 km in a criss-cross pattern. The airplanes overflew the survey areas passing back and forth from east to west, generally, and then north to south, travelling 200 m above the ground. The distance between passes was optimized to ensure that the data set was comprehensive and consistent.

Each plane was equipped with state-of-the-art magnetic and gravity instruments. The instruments are precise and sensitive to environmental conditions like natural fluctuations in weather, both on the ground and in space. In fact, space weather, including magnetic diurnals (the phenomenon responsible for aurora borealis), was accounted for and managed during data collection.

The airborne geophysics program conducted by the AGS is the largest, most advanced survey of its type in modern Canadian history.

## Highlights

Airborne geophysics is an environmentally friendly way to survey large areas as it does not disturb the land.



The weather in space was accounted for during the survey.

### 732 422 line-km

of new data were collected and filled in missing data for regions including the Canadian Shield in northeast Alberta and north-central Alberta.

Magnetic properties of rocks vary based on composition, current state, and previous geologic history.



Gravitational properties depend on rocks density.

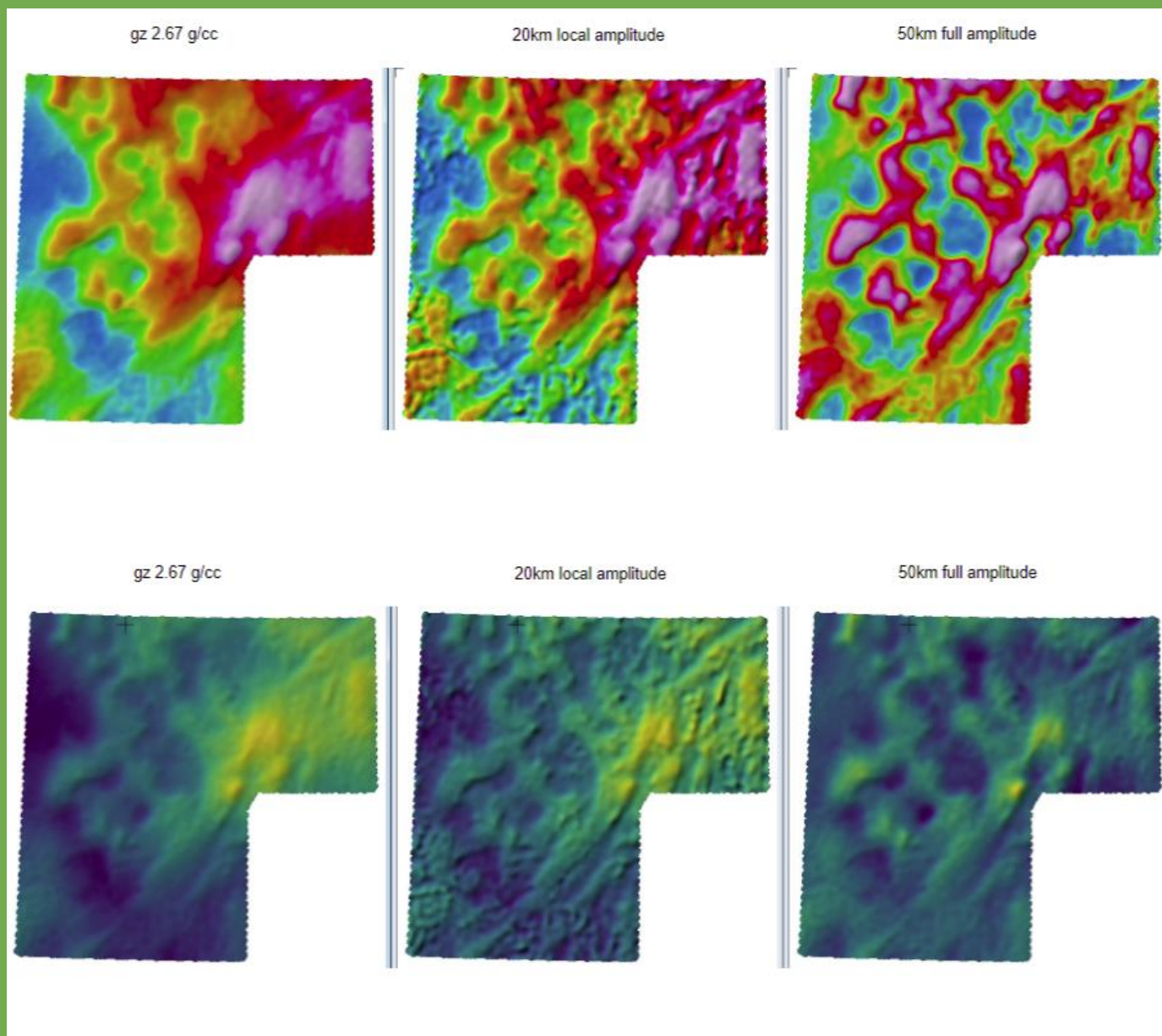


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Selected gravity maps along the Great Slave Lake Sheer Zone (GSLSZ) in northwestern Alberta. The colour gradients reflect rock density variation. Warm colours (orange to violet) reflect higher densities measured in grams per cubic centimeter (g/cc).

### GSLSZ Gravity Automatic Gain Control



This project is funded by the Department of Energy's [Renewing Alberta's Mineral Future](#) strategy.

# Brine Geochemical Data

The Alberta Geological Survey (AGS) analyzed the geochemical make-up of brine samples from about 250 producing oil and gas wells from across Alberta. The results are now freely available for [download](#). Brine, which is highly salty water produced along with oil and gas, can host various minerals, including elements like metals. Minerals have important uses in everyday life and can be used for ingredients in daily use items such as batteries, TVs, and hospital equipment. The quantity and type of dissolved minerals in brines is linked to where they are found underground. The AGS's analysis of the brine samples provides valuable information about Alberta's brine-hosted mineral potential.

Samples were extracted from oil and gas wells where brines are currently produced during normal operations and sent to a lab for analysis. Wells were selected to ensure that the samples represented the subsurface conditions and were collected from geological formations spanning different

periods. Over half of the samples were collected from Devonian-aged formations because of the greater potential for minerals such as lithium. The samples were collected from depths between 400 m and 3200 m, and the average collection depth was about 1500 m.

The tests were intended to describe the geochemistry (integrated geology and chemistry) of each sample. The results provided information about the type and concentration of minerals and trace metals found in the brine samples. The lab also tested the brines for naturally occurring isotopes of elements like hydrogen and oxygen, which reveals information about the source and movement of brines within and between geological formations.

The AGS's analyses of properties like trace metals and isotopes are the largest such data set in Alberta and will continue to grow in the future. In addition to the raw data now available, the AGS will produce public reports about Alberta's brine-hosted mineral potential.

## Highlights

Brine-hosted minerals are found in saline (salt) water and extracted through wells.



The **Devonian era**

represents a period spanning between about 419 and 358 million years ago.

Trace metals are metallic elements that occur naturally in low concentrations.



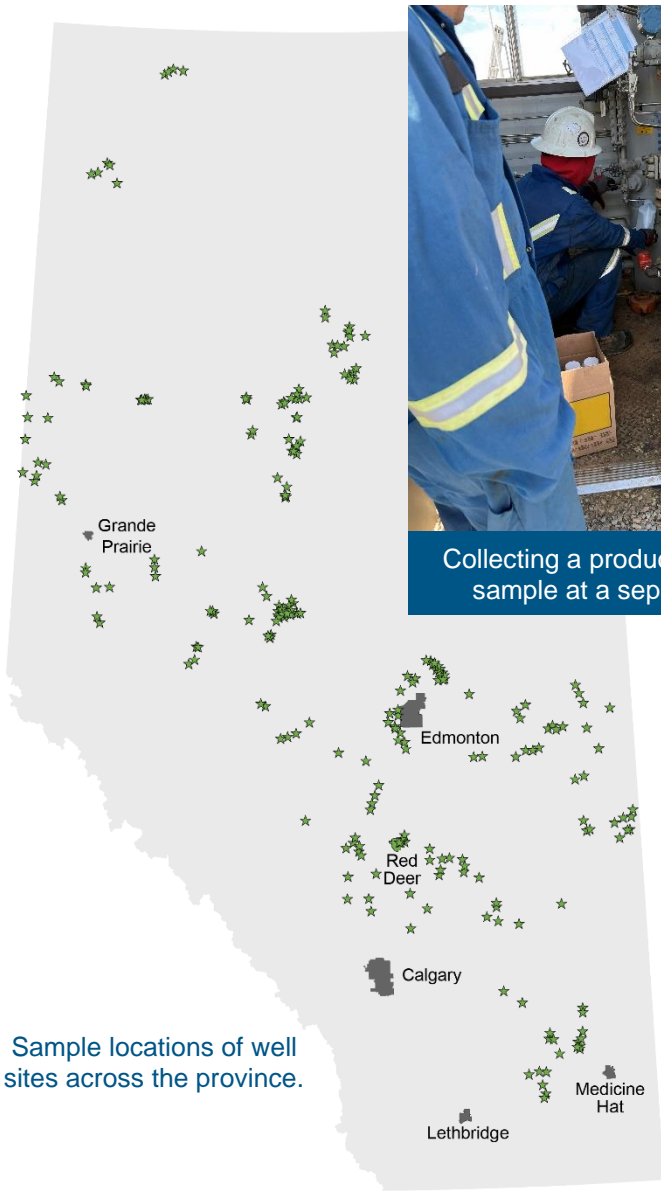
Isotopes are different forms of an element (including metals) that have the same number of protons but different numbers of neutrons.



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Brine samples were collected from about 250 producing oil and gas wells across Alberta. Here's what that looks like.



Sample locations of well sites across the province.



Collecting a produced brine sample at a separator.



A brine sample.



A wellsite that was sampled.

# Core Scanning

The Alberta Geological Survey (AGS) has published extensive mineral information using advanced photography and scanning technology called hyperspectral imaging (HSI). Using this technology, the AGS has examined more than 50 000 metres (m) of Alberta core samples and has made 35 terabytes of raw data available to the public.

The data will provide new insights into the geology of Alberta, assist in the identification and characterization of mineral occurrences, investigate mineral occurrences that may have been previously overlooked, and highlight areas of interest where further mineral exploration is warranted.

HSI uses a range of electromagnetic radiation frequencies from 1000 to 12 000 nanometres (nm), which includes the visible near-infrared (VNIR), short-wave infrared (SWIR), and long-wave infrared (LWIR). The visible light spectrum, for comparison, ranges from 380 nm for violet light to 750 nm for red light.

The traditional method for mineral classification is X-ray diffraction (XRD) analysis. Although this technique is effective

for analyzing minerals, it can be time consuming, costly, and (most significantly) destructive. XRD requires samples to be cut from the core with a rock saw, crushed into a fine powder, and then analyzed by XRD equipment to determine the minerals that compose the rock. In contrast, HSI uses a nondestructive approach that does not require cutting the core for a physical sample.

The scanned cores were selected from the core inventory at the Alberta Energy Regulator’s Core Research Centre in Calgary and the AGS’s Mineral Core Research Facility in Edmonton. Cores were selected based on geospatial distribution and intersected stratigraphic formations.

The [raw data](#) are now publicly available and can be reviewed and analyzed by geoscientists, academics, and the mineral exploration industry. The AGS will also analyze the data to create new information products such as interactive maps and interpretive reports. These products will provide insights for a general audience.

## Highlights

The AGS has examined more than 50 000 metres (m) of Alberta core samples and has made 35 terabytes of raw data available to the public.

Analysis using HSI is several orders of magnitude faster than XRD.

**20** vs **1000 m**  
 XRD samples analyzed per day vs cores scanned per day with HSI

“Hyper” indicates that the target spectrum is beyond visible light.

“Hyperspectral” refers to the wavelength of infrared features (e.g., VNIR, SWIR, LWIR).



A unique camera is used for each target spectrum (e.g., VNIR, SWIR, LWIR).

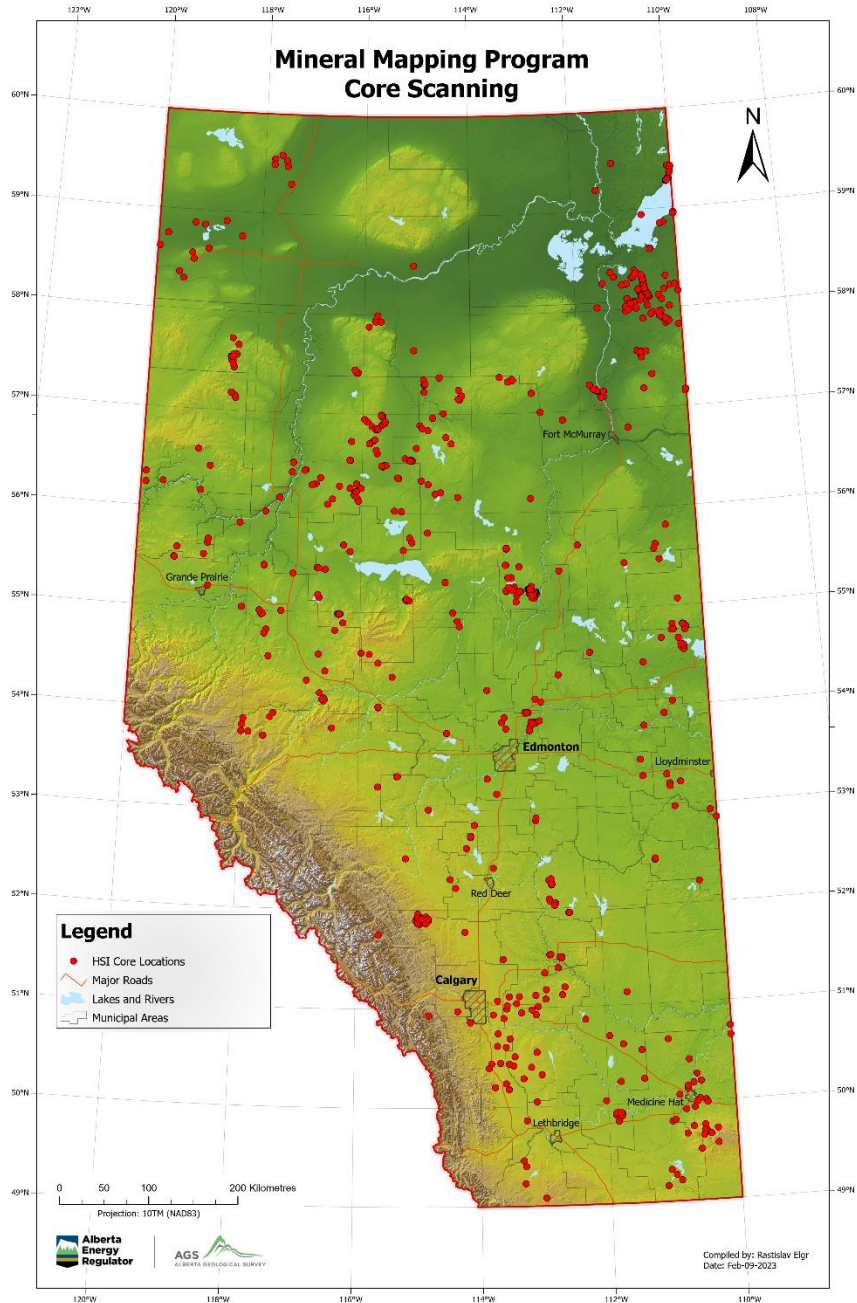
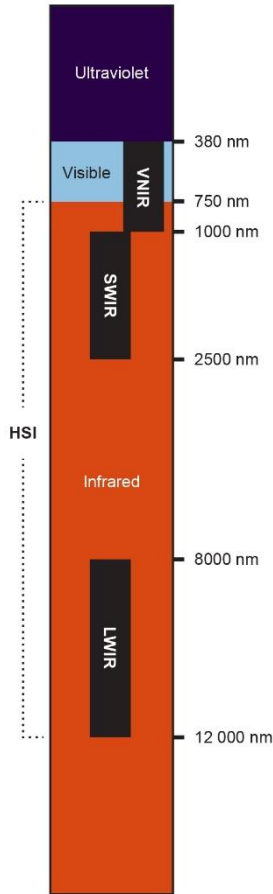


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Core inventory from AER's Core Research Centre and AGS's Mineral Core Research Facility provides broad geospatial distribution of core intersecting various stratigraphic formations across the province.

### HSI Spectrum

HSI uses a range of electromagnetic radiation frequencies from 1000 to 12 000 nanometres (nm), which includes the visible near-infrared (VNIR), short-wave infrared (SWIR), and long-wave infrared (LWIR). The visible light spectrum, for comparison, ranges from 380 nm for violet light to 750 nm for red light.



# Remote Sensing

The Alberta Geological Survey (AGS) has obtained high-quality data on mineral potential in the northeast and west-central Alberta from satellite imagery. The satellite imagery will help detect surface rock exposures with the potential to host a variety of commercially valuable minerals. A report is available for [download](#) noting the key findings, which will aid in informing future fieldwork by qualified geoscientists.

The high-resolution imagery was taken by a constellation of specialized satellites. The satellites are equipped with instruments to record light in the visible, near infrared, and short-wave infrared wavelengths. Each mineral has a unique signature based on specific light wavelength absorption and reflection, allowing geologists to identify them. (Like the

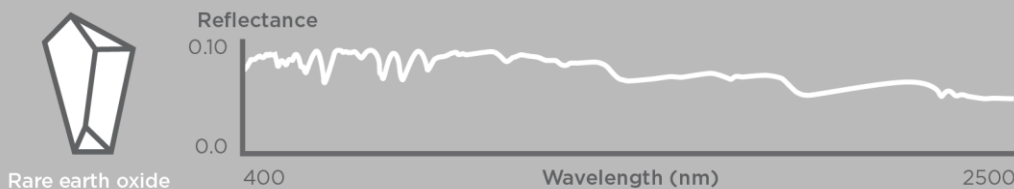
leaves on a tree that appear green to the human eye because leaves reflect light with a green wavelength.)

AGS geologists gathered data from areas in Alberta with favourable potential for critical minerals, such as the area around Leland Lake in northeast Alberta near the Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories boundaries. This region is a potential source of minerals, including uranium and rare-earth elements. Data was also gathered for west-central Alberta north of Grande Prairie, where a known iron deposit exists; this will help delineate surface occurrences of iron. Data from high-resolution imagery can be used in conjunction with other geophysical and geological data to aid in mineral exploration.

## Highlights

Satellite imagery helps provide information about the vegetation and geology on the land surface, and it is especially helpful to collect data in remote and hard to access locations.

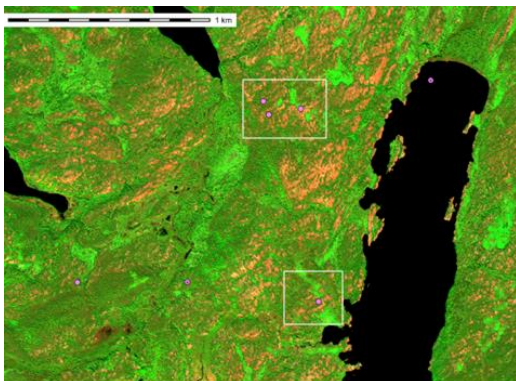
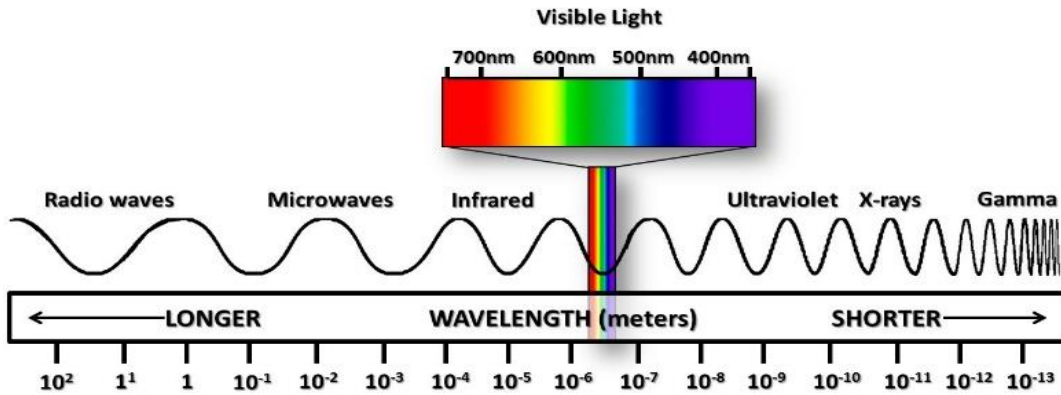
Instruments record light in the visible, near infrared, and short-wave infrared wavelengths. Each mineral has a unique signature based on specific light wavelength absorption and reflection, allowing geologists to identify them.



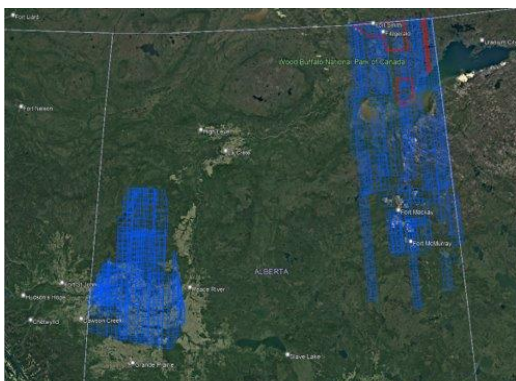
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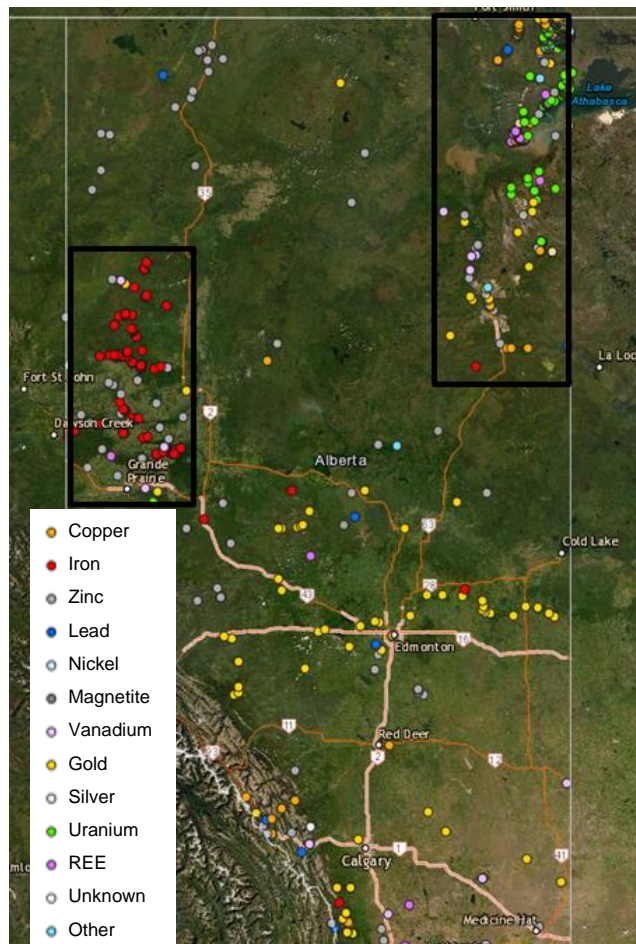
# High-resolution satellite imagery collected from northeast and west-central Alberta.



Recent exploration area (2005–2007) east of Bayonet Lake (not shown), with high uranium concentrations associated with pegmatites and yellow chloride staining.



Areas where high-resolution satellite imagery was collected in 2021 (blue) and 2022 (red).



Areas for satellite imagery (black) were selected based on the metallic mineral occurrences (e.g., uranium, rare earth elements, and iron).



Mineral resource development is part of the Government of Alberta’s strategy to diversify the energy and resource sector. As such, the Government of Alberta is expanding the Alberta Energy Regulator’s (AER) mandate to include the regulation of minerals. Once fully proclaimed into law, the Mineral Resource Development Act (MRDA) will establish the AER as the life-cycle regulator for the province’s mineral resources. Historically, several regulators oversaw mineral development. The transfer of this oversight to a single regulatory authority will promote the safe, efficient, orderly, and environmentally responsible development of mineral resources from the application stage to reclamation and closure.

### Why are we regulating minerals?

The Government of Alberta wants to capitalize on the province’s mineral potential and become a preferred international producer and supplier of minerals and mineral products while promoting resource conservation, environmental protection, and public safety.

Many different minerals, including rare earth elements, can be found throughout Alberta. They can be used in batteries, portable devices, TVs, toothpaste, buildings, eyeglasses, computers, vehicles, hospital equipment, and many other daily-use items.

### What minerals will the AER regulate?

According to the *MRDA*, AER-regulated minerals will include most metallic and industrial minerals, including lithium, limestone, uranium, iron, zinc, lead, gold, diamonds, silver, and rare earth elements, to name a few. To support the engagement period, we have categorized minerals as either brine-hosted or hard rock minerals.

1. Brine-hosted minerals are typically found in underground salt water and are mostly extracted using wells. Mineral extraction from brines will look like a traditional well operation on the landscape.

Update: After a series of engagements in 2022 and the partial proclamation of the *MRDA*, the AER became the life-cycle regulator of brine-hosted minerals in March 2023.



2. Hard-rock minerals are mined using traditional mining or quarrying techniques and will look similar to other surface or underground mining operations on the landscape. However, minerals can be extracted from the rock by dissolving them in place (i.e., in situ) and processing them on the surface. In situ extraction involves minimal ground disturbance.

Update: The AER will start engagement on the hard-rock phase of mineral resource development in June 2023. These engagements will inform future regulatory requirements before the *MRDA* is fully proclaimed.



### Rare earth minerals are used for ingredients in:



Batteries



Toothpaste



Glasses



Portable devices



Vehicles



Hospital equipment

Find out more at [aer.ca](https://aer.ca).



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Recognizing people and organizations who make a positive difference in the lives of Alberta seniors.

**Nomination Deadline: November 15, 2023**

[alberta.ca/mssa](https://alberta.ca/mssa)

